

Policy for the grant of Hackney Carriage Licences

Approved by Licensing Committee 4th November 2009

The Council will licence any suitable vehicle for use as a hackney carriage vehicle.

The licence will be granted for a period not exceeding twelve months.

For the purposes of this policy a suitable vehicle means a fully enclosed four wheel passenger vehicle with a M.1 European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA), or an UK Low Volume Approval or an Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA) and which meets the following criteria;

- manufactured from new as a right hand drive vehicle;
- constructed or adapted to seat in comfort at least 4 passengers and not more than 8 passengers;
- has two or more passenger doors of sufficient size to allow safe ingress and egress of passengers;
- has one or more passenger doors on the near-side (kerbside) of the vehicle;
- the front windscreen and front side windows have a visible light transmission of not less than 75% and all other windows have a visible light transmission of not less than 70;
- has an engine capacity of more than 1575cc;
- has no side facing seats;
- each provided seat has a minimum width of 407mm per passenger measured at the narrowest part of the seat and each passenger seat is fitted with a seat belt;
- each provided seat is accessible without the need to remove or fold, or tip up any other seat;
- the boot or luggage compartment is of sufficient size to carry a reasonable amount of luggage relative to the seating capacity;
- the boot or luggage compartment is separated from the passenger compartment by a suitable barrier;

The Head of Environmental Services and Commercial Services Manager will authorise appropriate officers (in accordance with the Council's constitution) to licence suitable motor vehicles (as described above) as a hackney carriage vehicle. Before licensing a motor vehicle as a hackney carriage vehicle the authorised officer will also be satisfied that the following requirements are met:

The applicant must be the proprietor or part-proprietor of the vehicle. "Proprietor" means the legal owner (or part-owner) or the person (or registered company) having possession of the vehicle under the terms of a hire purchase agreement.

The vehicle is not currently licensed by another local authority as a hackney carriage or a private hire vehicle.

The vehicle has a valid MOT Certificate (VT20) issued not more than 30 days before licence application.

The vehicle has valid certificate (or cover note) of motor insurance cover for hackney carriage use.

The vehicle is fitted with an approved taximeter capable of being sealed to prevent tampering.

The vehicle is fitted with an approved illuminated roof sign or roof-light showing only the word "Taxi" to the front.

The vehicle is not more than 119 months old on the day the licence is issued except where the vehicle is constructed or adapted to load and convey wheelchair bound passengers the vehicle is not more than 143 months old on the day the licence is issued. The age of the vehicle is reckoned from the date of first registration shown on the Vehicle Registration Certificate (V5 or V5c).

The vehicle, if constructed or adapted for wheelchair bound passengers, can convey them securely in either the forward or rear facing position and all wheelchair restraints are BSI or CE marked, in good condition and operate correctly. Lifting equipment, if fitted for the purpose of loading passengers into the vehicle, complies with the requirements of the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 and is certified as safe.

The vehicle if converted or modified after manufacture to run on an alternate fuel supply, is required to have a valid fuel conversion installation certificate or safety report presented for inspection and any additional fuel cut-off switches correctly identified.

The vehicle exterior is in a good clean condition. The paint work is of a satisfactory appearance with no evidence of;

- significant damage to the external body panels,
- crudely repaired or, insecure body panels,
- significant rusting or corrosion,

The vehicle interior is in a good clean condition and,

- the upholstery, headlining, carpets, door trims are not damaged or soiled,
- all passenger doors close securely and passenger courtesy lights operate,
- devices designed for opening any passenger windows are in place and operate correctly,
- all passenger doors can be opened from inside and outside the vehicle correctly,
- passenger seat adjustment mechanisms are in good working condition,
- the luggage space is clear and uncluttered,
- any two way radio equipment, in-car mobile phone equipment, in-car navigation system or in-car CCTV is fitted safely and securely and not likely to present a risk to the safety of passengers or the driver.
- The taximeter is fitted safely and securely and the tariff display can be read clearly by any passengers

Where in the opinion of the authorised officer the vehicle fails to meet one or more of the Council's hackney carriage licensing conditions a licence will not be issued and the proprietor of the vehicle will be given the details of the reasons in writing.

The proprietor of the vehicle on receipt of written reasons for not issuing the licence may request the Licensing Sub-Committee to exempt the vehicle from some or all of the requirements of the Council's hackney carriage licensing policy conditions.

The Licensing Sub-Committee when considering whether to licence the vehicle as a hackney carriage will hear all the oral or written representation made by the proprietor of the vehicle or his agent together with any other relevant oral or documentary evidence. The Licensing Sub-Committee when granting the licence may exempt the specific vehicle from certain licence conditions or may impose other licence conditions specific to that vehicle provided safety of the travelling public is not compromised.