

The Council will licence any suitable motor vehicle for use as a private hire vehicle.

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

For the purposes of this policy a suitable motor vehicle means a fully enclosed four wheel passenger vehicle with a M.1 or M.2 European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA) or a 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 sufficient doors of sufficient size to allow safe ingress and egress of passengers;
- where only one passenger door is fitted, that door is on the near-side (kerbside) of the vehicle;
- has an engine with a minimum power output of 75 kW.
- has no side facing seats;
- each provided seat has a minimum width of 407 mm per passenger measured at the narrowest part of the seat and each passenger seat is fitted with a seat belt
- 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 private hire vehicle. Before licensing a motor vehicle as a private hire 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 private hire vehicle or hackney carriage.

The vehicle is not of such design or appearance as to lead any person to believe it is a hackney carriage.

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 private hire use.

The vehicle can be no more than 10 years old on the day the licence is issued unless the vehicle is constructed or adapted to load and convey a wheelchair user whilst they remain seated in their wheelchair, in which case there is no upper age limit. The age of the vehicle is reckoned from the date of first registration shown on the Vehicle Registration Certificate (V5 or V5c).

Licence holders for vehicles that are more than 7 years of age at the time the licence is issued must produce a further MOT 6 months after the licence is issued. This further MOT must be no more than one month old.

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, a valid fuel conversion installation certificate or safety report is presented for inspection and any additional fuel cut-off switches are 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.

Where in the opinion of the authorised officer the vehicle is not a suitable motor vehicle, or fails to meet one or more of the Council's private hire vehicle 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 private hire vehicle licensing policy conditions.

The Licensing Sub-Committee when considering licensing of a vehicle for private hire 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.