

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy Review

About you

Q1 Are you responding as:

- Licensed hackney carriage driver
- Licensed private hire driver
- Licensed operator
- Licensed vehicle proprietor
- Member of the public
- Other

If other, please specify.

About the taxi policy

We have made changes to the current policy, often called the taxi policy. The purpose of the policy is to explain how the council undertakes its functions when licensing hackney carriage and private hire vehicles. The primary focus being on safeguarding and public protection, particularly, the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Q2 Do you agree or disagree that the policy is easy to understand?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q3 Do you agree or disagree that the policy provides enough protection for children and vulnerable adults?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you disagree, what do you think should be added or removed from the draft policy to improve it?

Q4 Do you agree or disagree that the policy includes everything you think should be in such a policy?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you disagree, what do you think should be added or removed from the draft policy to improve it?

About vehicle standards

The Government has recently published new national standards for taxi and private hire licensing (Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards). The Department for Transport therefore expects these recommendations to be implemented unless there is a compelling local reason not to.

Q5 Do you think that any of the requirements of the new national standards for taxi and private hire licensing should be left out of our new policy and if so, which ones and why?

- Yes, there should be one or more left out
- No

If yes, which do you feel should be left out and why?

We are proposing a new policy on vehicle emissions and the age of licensed vehicles. Adoption of these new policy requirements for new and existing vehicles will enable Durham licensed vehicles to meet similar, improved standards required by several other councils in our region. This will help to reduce traffic pollution and improve local air quality.

This means:

New licences: From the date of adoption of this policy in 2021, all new applications for licensed vehicles will only be accepted if the vehicle to be licensed is less than 4 years old from the date of registration.

Existing vehicles: Adopt a maximum 8-year vehicle life with a start date of 1st April 2024. This means that from 1st April 2024 all diesel and petrol engine vehicles will be Euro 6 or above. All existing licensed vehicles that are more than 8 years old will not be re-licensed after 1st April 2024.

Wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV): Existing licensed WAVs will have an extra 2 years added to the age restriction. This means that all existing licensed WAVs that are more than 10 years old will not be re-licensed after 1st April 2024.

Zero emission vehicles: Fully electric and zero emission (at source) vehicles would be exempt from the age restriction/emissions policy.

Q6 Do you agree or disagree with the proposals on vehicle emissions and the age of licensed vehicles?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you disagree, which ones and why not?

About driver and passenger safety

We are proposing a new policy in respect of previous convictions and offences. We propose to follow the Department of Transport's recommendations on the assessment of previous convictions developed by the Institute of Licensing.

Q7 Do you agree or disagree with the proposed adoption of the new policy in respect of previous convictions and offences as developed by the Institute of Licensing?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you disagree, which policy proposals do you disagree with and why?

We are proposing a new policy on drug testing. In view of a significant number of drivers with cautions and/or convictions for drug related offences the council would require drug and alcohol tests on drivers on both an intelligence led and random basis.

Q8 Do you agree or disagree with the proposed intelligence led and random drug and alcohol testing?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you disagree, which policy do you disagree with and why?

Currently we require all new drivers to have been trained on the prevention of child sexual exploitation before being licensed. We consider that this training is so important that all drivers should do refresher training periodically. We are proposing a new requirement for refresher training on the prevention of child sexual exploitation every three years.

Q9 Do you agree or disagree with our proposals for drivers to do refresher training on the prevention of child sexual exploitation every three years?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you disagree, please state why.

We do not currently require drivers to have been trained in disability awareness. Many drivers who work under contract and carry people with disabilities do have to undergo such training. We think it important that all drivers are disability aware and we are proposing that all drivers must be trained in disability awareness.

Q10 Do you agree or disagree that all drivers should be trained in disability awareness?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you disagree, please state why.

The Government has acknowledged the potential risk to public safety when passengers travel in taxis and private hire vehicles. The use of CCTV can provide a safer environment for the benefit of taxi/private hire vehicle passengers and drivers by:

- deterring and preventing the occurrence of crime
- reducing the fear of crime
- assisting the police in investigating incidents of crime
- assisting insurance companies in investigating motor vehicle accidents.

Q11 Do you agree or disagree that all taxis and private hire vehicles should have internal CCTV fitted as standard?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you disagree, please state why.

Where an applicant has 6 points on their DVLA driving licence for minor traffic or similar offences, we propose that they will be required to undertake a driver improvement scheme at their own expense. The licensing authority holds a list of current providers of the driving improvement scheme.

Q12 Do you agree or disagree that applicants with 6 points on their DVLA driving licences should be required to undertake a driver improvement scheme?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you disagree, please state why.

Q13 Do you have any other suggestions or comments to make?

About you

Q14 Are you

- Male
- Female

Q15 What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75+

Q16 Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person? (This may include any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity which has a substantial effect on your day to day life. Long-standing means it has lasted, or is likely to last, for over a year.)

- Yes
- No