



<b>Licensing and Regulatory Committee</b>	<b>Thursday, 21 September 2023</b>	<b>Matter for Information and Decision</b>
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**Report Title:** **Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy Review (September 2023)**

**Report Author(s):** **Tracey Aldwinckle (Licensing Enforcement Officer)**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To agree changes to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy (hereafter the Policy) for consultation with hackney carriage and private hire drivers before bringing back a report to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee for decision.
<b>Report Summary:</b>	To propose changes to the Policy for consultation at this time to promote low emission licenced vehicles, encourage more wheelchair accessibility, and clarify age and executive criteria.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	<b>That consultation takes place with licenced drivers on the proposed changes outlined in section 2 and a further report be presented to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee for decision.</b>
<b>Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):</b>	<p>David Gill (Head of Law &amp; Democracy / Monitoring Officer) (0116) 257 2626 <a href="mailto:david.gill@oadby-wigston.gov.uk">david.gill@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Jon Wells (Senior Strategic Development Manager) (0116) 257 269 <a href="mailto:jon.wells@oadby-wigston.gov.uk">jon.wells@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Tracey Aldwinckle (Licensing Enforcement Officer) (0116) 257 2689 <a href="mailto:tracey.aldwinckle@oadby-wigston.gov.uk">tracey.aldwinckle@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Strategic Objectives:</b>	<p>Our Communities (SO2)</p> <p>Our Council (SO1)</p> <p>Our Environment (SO4)</p> <p>Our Partners (SO5)</p>
<b>Vision and Values:</b>	<p>"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision)</p> <p>Customer &amp; Community Focused (V1)</p>
<b>Report Implications:-</b>	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	<p>Economy / Regeneration (CR9)</p> <p>Key Supplier / Partnership Failure (CR2)</p>

Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
<b>Statutory Officers' Comments:-</b>	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
<b>Consultees:</b>	None.
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None.
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>1. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (2021)</b>

## 1. Background and context

- 1.1 The national cost of living crisis has had profound implications on the taxi trade, with many of Oadby and Wigston drivers and vehicle owners experiencing hardship. Fuel prices and the cost of vehicles are two key contributors with fuel now costing on average 39% more than 2021. The average price of a second hand vehicle has also risen by 27.36 % or £4,119 in three years since March 2020.
- 1.2 Vehicles which are commonly used as taxis for wheelchair users such as the Citroen Berlingo, Peugeot Tepee, VW Caddy, Ford Transit, command high prices. At this time there are only 5 wheelchair accessible vehicles licenced out of 400.
- 1.3 We are seeing a national drive for low emission cars and many city areas have declared low emission zones, for example Bath, Birmingham, Bristol, Derby , Leeds, Liverpool Manchester and Nottingham. In our Borough we have now installed 30 EV charge points on four of our car parks: Wigston Pool and Fitness Centre, Aylestone Lane, East Street and Countesthorpe Road Car Park.
- 1.4 When the Policy was approved in 2021, the focus was to encourage a newer fleet of vehicles in the Borough, however we have noticed many drivers and vehicles have migrated to the City of Wolverhampton Council. Despite this many vehicles have remained working within the borough and the Licensing Team have as a result lost enforcement powers on the drivers and the vehicles which still operating but licensed by Wolverhampton. The present Policy age limits are:
- a. Vehicles to be licensed for the first time must be under 4 years of age
  - b. Vehicles to be renewed from 1/4/22 must be no older than 10 years
  - c. Vehicles to be renewed from 1/4/23 must be no older than 9 years
  - d. Vehicles to be renewed from 1/4/24 must be no older than 8 years
  - e. Vehicles to be renewed from 1/4/25 must be no older than 7 years
  - f. Vehicles to be renewed from 1/4/26 must be no older than 6 years

## 2. Proposed Consultation

- 2.1 It is proposed, with the Committees agreement, to consult drivers and operators on the following changes:
- a. Vehicles to be licensed for the first time must be a EURO 6 and under 6 years of age as opposed to age limits as set out above in 1.4
  - b. Promoting low emission vehicles by providing a reduced fee for fully electric and ULEV vehicles. 50% reduction on the fee for fully electric and 25% for ULEV.
  - c. Encouraging more wheelchair accessible vehicles to be licenced by offering a 25% fee reduction and removing age criteria changes.
  - d. Introduce more frequent testing and inspection of licensed vehicles to three times a year (from the current twice a year).
  - e. Vehicles to be renewed shall be no older than 10 years.
  - f. Providing clarity on the Policy on the definition of executive vehicle so that there is a defined list of suitable vehicles. It is proposed that an executive vehicle will not be licensed for the first time if over 4 years of age.
- 2.2 The consultation will be sent to all our current drivers and operators for comment. A further report will be brought to the next Licensing and Regulatory Committee after this has closed for decision.