



**To:**  
**All members of the**  
**Licensing Committee**

*Please reply to:*  
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Date: 27 November 2024

### Supplementary Agenda

#### **Licensing Committee - Wednesday, 4 December 2024**

Dear Councillor

I enclose the following items which were marked 'to follow' on the agenda for the Licensing Committee meeting to be held on Wednesday, 4 December 2024:

- |               |   |                      |
|---------------|---|----------------------|
| <b>4.</b>     | <b>Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2024-2029</b>   | <b>3 - 134</b>       |
|               | To consider and approve the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy 2024-2029 following consultation.                              |                      |
| <br><b>5.</b> | <br><b>Setting of Fees &amp; Charges for the licensing of Hackney Carriages, Private Hire, and Private Hire Operators 2025-2026</b> | <br><b>135 - 148</b> |
|               | To consider and approve the proposed taxi and private hire fees and charges.  |                      |

Yours sincerely

Christeen Abee  
Corporate Governance

To the members of the Licensing Committee

Councillors:

**Spelthorne Borough Council, Council Offices, Knowle Green**

**Staines-upon-Thames TW18 1XB**

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S.A. Dunn (Chair)  
M.J. Lee (Vice-Chair)  
M. Arnold  
C. Bateson

S. Bhadye  
T. Burrell  
R. Chandler  
D.C. Clarke

J.T.F. Doran  
K.M. Grant  
B. Weerasinghe

Substitute Members:

Councillors: S.M. Doran, R.V. Geach, M. Gibson,  
K.E. Rutherford, O. Rybinski and P.N. Woodward

# Licensing Committee



4 December 2024

<b>Title</b>	Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy 2024-2029
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report Author</b>	Lucy Catlyn, Principal Licensing Officer
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	n/a
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Environment
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>Committee is asked to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy 2024-2029 following consultation</li> <li>• Recommend to Council for the scheme of delegations to include the Chair of Licensing with Senior Environmental Health Manager to make minor amendments to the policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	The Licensing Authority must update their Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy. The proposed changes will further increase public safety.

## 1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Policy has had a public consultation and several comments have been received by the Trade</li> <li>• Licensing Committee now needs to approve the Policy in light of the comments submitted by the Trade and responses by Spelthorne’s officers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Policy must be updated to consider the Statutory Standards and Best Practice Guidance issued by the Department for Transport to safeguard the public.</li> </ul>
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Licensing Committee is asked to approve the Policy for adoption as it has been drafted or make amendments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once approved by Licensing Committee the policy will come into effect.</li> </ul>

- 1.1 This report seeks to obtain Licensing Committee's approval to finalise the Revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy following public consultation.
- 1.2 The Council in its role as the Licensing Authority for the hackney carriage and private hire vehicle trades has a paramount obligation to ensure the safety of the public.
- 1.3 The revised Policy has been drafted to incorporate the Statutory Standards and Best Practice Guidance issued by the Department for Transport.

## 2. Key issues

- 2.1 The Department for Transport (DFT) recommends in the statutory taxi and private hire standards that all licensing authorities make publicly available a cohesive policy document that brings together all their procedures on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing. This should include but not be limited to policies on convictions, a fit and proper person test, licence conditions, and vehicle standards.
- 2.2 The existing policy does not include the changes from the statutory taxi and Private Hire Standards or the updated Best Practice Guidance. The policy has been rewritten to be in line with this.

## 3. Comments received about the 'Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy (2024-2029)' from the licensed trade during the consultation.

- 3.1 The Licensing Authority has received from the existing hackney and private hire trade seven comments during the public consultation. These are attached at **Appendix B**. Most of the comments are on emissions which are outlined at section 4 separately to the other comments received which are below:
- 3.2 **Not permitting third party Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS)** e.g. by Surrey County Council for school run work.
  - The Licensing Authority is not permitted to have the same DBS Enhanced check. A letter from the Home Office confirming the position is attached at **Appendix D**.
- 3.3 **Lowering of age and time limits for statements of good conduct.**
  - The relevant part of the government statutory standards is attached at **Appendix E**. This outlines a suggestion where an applicant has previously spent three or more continuous months outside of the UK the Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS) may not be a complete picture of a criminal record. The standards state that an extended period outside the UK before the age of 18 may be less relevant, however it is for the Licensing Authority to consider its decision on each case by its own merits.
  - The Licensing Authority proposes to implement at 8.9 of the draft policy the following to safeguard the public: *"...if you, from the age of 10 years, spent **3 or more continuous months** living outside the United Kingdom, evidence of a criminal record check from the country/countries covering the relevant period is required. This will normally be in the form of a 'Certificate of Good Conduct' issued through the relevant embassy or consulate, which details any convictions or other matters arising against the applicant while resident in that country. It is your responsibility to obtain such documents and to pay any fees. This requirement is in*

*addition to the DBS disclosure. Where you are unable to obtain the above, you must give a statement outlining the reasons and provide references from appropriate bodies as to your conduct in the country that satisfy us. This includes any time spent overseas during the course of a licence. “*

**3.4 New policy on no longer issuing any Private Hire, Hackney Carriage, or Private Hire Operator licence until all documentation has been submitted (e.g. medical and DBS).**

- The Council will always try to remind drivers when documents are due, however there is no statutory requirement to do so, further, businesses should not rely on the Council to remind them.

**3.5 Disagreement over tests imposed by new policy.**

- The tests that have been outlined in the policy are in line with the statutory Government requirements.

**3.6 Comment asking for disabled wheelchair vehicles to have extra licensing years.**

- This comment appears to be a request for vehicles to be licensed for longer than 15 years of age if they are wheelchair accessible. It is proposed to keep the 15-year limit for all vehicles, whether they are wheelchair accessible or not due to public safety.

**4. Comments on Electric Vehicle received from the trade**

4.1 Most of the comments are surrounding the emissions and vehicle policy changes proposed for electric vehicles for new cars from 1 October 2028. These are attached at **Appendix B**. The main comments together with the Council's response below:

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response from Council</b>
Cost of purchasing vehicles	Although new vehicles carry a premium on petrol/diesel alternatives, the second-hand vehicle market indicates electric vehicles are becoming much more affordable. E.g. a new Tesla Model 3 electric car costs £39,990, however the same car that is 4-years old can be purchased second hand for £14,000. <sup>1</sup>  The majority vehicles that are presented for Licensing are second hand. There is a handful of Chauffeurs who present new vehicles.
Restrictions on charging and time it takes to charge.	Depending on the speed of the charger that is being used it will dictate how long it takes to charge. This can be typically range from an overnight charge at home to a rapid 30-minute charge at a rapid charger. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [5 Brilliant new EVs... and 5 equally brilliant second hand alternatives - Fully Charged Show](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy 2023 -2030 - Spelthorne Borough Council](#)

	It is anticipated that drivers could also charge at home if they have off street parking and more infrastructure will be in place as time goes on.
Replacement of batteries	Typically, manufacturers offer an 8 year/100,000-mile battery warranty, these vary from manufacturers. Battery replacements are typically not needed in line with this, and they are expensive, but it is hoped it is very rare you would have to replace a battery. The cost would depend on which vehicle it is. <sup>3</sup>
Limits the vehicles and how many passengers can take. A comment states there are no zero-emission MPVs (multi-purpose vehicles) available	As we understand this is incorrect as all vehicles of all classes are now being offered as electric cars.  There are multi-purpose vehicles available that hold 6 plus passengers
Limited impact on environment due to the low number of licensed vehicles operating from the Spelthorne area.	Although the overall numbers are low, the Council has declared a climate emergency and must consider Spelthorne's air quality management area. Licencing authorities must consider electrification and climate impacts in line with Government Best Practice Guidance.

4.2 Further supplementary information for consideration is at **Appendix C**.

## 5. Options analysis and proposal

5.1 There are both advantages and disadvantages associated with the inclusion of policy on electric vehicles in this 2024 review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy. The proposed policy is a requirement for new vehicles to be fully electric from 1 October 2028.

5.2 **Option A (Recommended):** To approve the policy as drafted. Recommend to Council for the scheme of delegations to include the Chair of Licensing with Senior Environmental Health Manager to make minor amendments to the policy.

5.3 **Option B:** make changes to the policy as drafted with the same amendment to the delegation.

5.4 **Option C:** - To not approve the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy 2024-2029.

5.5 Not updating the policy will mean that the Council does not have a policy which is drafted with the Best Practice Guidance and Statutory Standards in mind. It is imperative that the current Policy is brought up to date and failure to do this could result in the Council not having a robust and up to date policy which will compromise public safety and confidence in the Council. All Councils are expected to review their policies in line with government guidance.

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<sup>3</sup> [Electric Car Battery Life: How Long They Last and What to Know \(caranddriver.com\)](https://www.caranddriver.com/electric-car-battery-life/)

## **6. Financial management comments**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications for the Council resulting from this change.
- 6.2 For the trade the cost of replacing glazing in vehicles (for compliance with existing window policies) can amount to several thousands of pounds. Therefore, if the policy is approved to allow factory fitted glass this would save the trade money.
- 6.3 In addition, the trade is required to complete extra tests, however these are being put forward in line with the Department for Transport expectations.
- 6.4 Higher costs to the licenced trade associated with licensing their vehicles have direct implications as the trade would transfer these costs to the public through higher fares being charged, this could be particularly relevant where vehicles are hired from companies located outside of the Spelthorne area.

## **7. Risk management comments**

- 7.1 By updating the policy as outlined it will minimise risk to public safety and any challenges on licensing issues for taxi and private hire licensing.
- 7.2 Should the Council adopt an emissions policy that from 1 October 2028 all new vehicles must be electric as per the draft policy it could potentially result in drivers leaving Spelthorne and obtaining Licenses elsewhere. If this happens then it could result in either:
  - (a) Either no or few vehicles and drivers available.
  - (b) Longer wait for the public to get a vehicle.
  - (c) Potentially higher costs to the public to get a vehicle.
  - (d) More vehicles being driven in Spelthorne that are not licensed by Spelthorne.

## **8. Procurement comments**

- 8.1 There are no procurement issues associated with this report.

## **9. Legal comments**

- 9.1 The Statutory Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles Standards was issued under the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and came into effect on 20 July 2020. The Act enables the Secretary of State for Transport to issue statutory guidance on exercising Taxi and Private Hire licensing functions to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm when using these services. The Act places a statutory duty on public authorities that have licensing functions under taxi and private hire vehicle legislation to have regard to any such guidance. These functions include developing, implementing, and reviewing their taxi and private hire vehicle licensing regimes.
- 9.2 The Statutory Standards and Best Practice Guidance sets out a framework of policies that licensing authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions. The overriding consideration in relation to licensing hackney carriages and private hire vehicles is public safety.
- 9.3 The Standards require local authorities to take them into account and if a decision is made to depart from the Standards, authorities are required to give clear reasons for the departure. If the Council does wish to depart from the Standards, it should also document reasons for the departure.

- 9.4 The Standards have informed the amendments to the Council's policy. The newly drafted policy sets out the Council's approach to hackney carriage and private hire licensing to provide transparency and consistency for both those working in the industry, passengers, other road users and members of the public.
- 9.5 Under section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 local authorities must have due regard to the need to exercise their functions in a way that is designed to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and advance equality of opportunity. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 there is a public sector equality duty, which requires local authorities to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity when exercising their functions. The Council's newly drafted Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy has regard for the public sector equality duty and the need to protect the needs of disabled people and those with a relevant protected characteristic.
- 9.6 There is no law that requires the Council to adopt the Statutory Standards. However, there is a strong expectation that local authorities will do so, and there is a risk of legal challenge, and reputational risk, in the event where an incident occurs which could have been prevented from happening if the Council had adopted these new Standards.
- 9.7 Having reviewed the comments to the proposed policy at Appendix B, it should be noted that there is a possibility of judicial review of the policy, in relation to its approach to the licensing of electric vehicles. A proper consultation on the proposal to implement this new policy will minimise the risk of legal challenge if the policy is implemented. In addition to the Council following the correct process in implementing this policy, it will strengthen its position by having good reasons for implementation.

## **10. Other considerations**

- 10.1 Refresher training will add further to increasing public safety in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation and County Lines. We have approximately 100 drivers in total. The costs are minimal to the trade.
- 10.2 Existing drivers to undertake training and/or assessment focussed on attitudes and behaviours. Existing Drivers to complete refresher training every three years – all existing drivers to complete this by 1 October 2025.

## **11. Equality and Diversity**

- 11.1 An equality and diversity assessment has been carried out and an issue has been identified that people who rely on taxis as a mode of transport (to hospital etc). They may be detrimentally affected by drivers leaving and getting licenced elsewhere by a Council who does not have a 2028 Electric Vehicle policy for all new taxi licenses. This could mean there is a longer wait for a taxi, no availability or a higher cost.

## **12. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**

- 12.1 The current policy has been drafted in line with input from the Council's Pollution and Sustainability and Climate team.
- 12.2 Following the governments best practice guidance, the sustainability and climate change team worked in collaboration with the licensing team to produce policy changes on emissions and electric vehicles. This is in keeping with the Council's



climate change strategy key action 23 to “*Deliver EV taxi programme to encourage taxi companies and drivers to invest in electric fleets*”. Additionally, the policy reflects the Councils commitments in declaring a climate emergency and reflects the corporate priority for the environment.

**13. Timetable for implementation.**

23 July 2024	Licensing Committee for approval on consultation on draft policy
26 July-26 August 2024	1-month Public Consultation
4 December 2024	Licensing Committee for approval of final policy to consider any comments.

**14. Contact**

14.1 Lucy Catlyn, 01784 444295, [l.catlyn@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:l.catlyn@spelthorne.gov.uk) or [licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk)

**Background papers:** There are none

**Appendices:**

- Appendix A- Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy 2024-2029
- Appendix B– Comments to Consultation
- Appendix C – Emissions Supplementary Information
- Appendix D – Home Office Letter
- Appendix E – Statutory Standards

**Documents referenced within this report**

- Department for Transport Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards: [Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-standards)
- Department for Transport Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice Guidance for Licensing Authorities in England: [Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance for licensing authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance-for-licensing-authorities-in-england)

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# **HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY 2024-2029**

**Effective: (insert date)**  
**Version 1.1 – draft for consultation**

Euro 4 Petrol and Euro 6 Diesel

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<b>Appendix B</b>	<b>Penalty Points Scheme</b>	
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<b>Appendix D</b>	<b>Standard Private Hire Driver and Dual Hackney Carriage Driver Licence Conditions</b>	
<b>Appendix E</b>	<b>Standard Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions</b>	
<b>Appendix F</b>	<b>Standard Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions</b>	
<b>Appendix G</b>	<b>Additional licence conditions for private hire vehicles benefiting from plate exemption</b>	
<b>Appendix H</b>	<b>PH Operator – Standard Licensing Conditions</b>	

**\*page numbers will be inserted when the policy is adopted\***

## **1. Introduction**

Spelthorne Borough Council ('the Council') is the Licensing Authority under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 responsible for regulating the Hackney carriage (HC) and Private Hire (PH) trades operating in the Borough.

The original policy was adopted on 23 May 2017 and came into force on 14 July 2017. It was updated and published on 21 November 2019. A temporary amendment was made to the policy on 12 July 2022. Public Consultation on this policy took place between (insert date) and (insert date). The policy was approved by the Council on (insert date).

The Council will review this policy every five years, or sooner in light of any significant changes to legislation or guidance and consult on any proposed amendments. If the Council make any changes, then the policy will be re-

published. However, when and where necessary, minor amendments will in accordance with the Council's Constitution<sup>1</sup>.

This policy sets out the requirements and standards that must be met. In exercising its discretion in carrying out its regulatory functions, the Council will have regard to this policy document. However, each application or decision to take enforcement action will be considered on its own merits.

## 2. Principles

In exercising the principles of protecting the public the Council will adopt and carry out its HC and PH licensing functions with a view to promoting the following:

- The protection of the public, safeguarding children and the vulnerable and the prevention of crime and disorder,
- To promote public confidence in the HC and PH services
- The safety and health of the public and drivers
- Vehicle safety comfort and access
- Encouraging environmental sustainability,
- Promoting the vision of Spelthorne as a place to live, work and visit.

These aims and objectives will be taken into account by the Council when making decisions. The Council will continue to work in partnership with the industry, its neighbouring authorities, the Police, local businesses, and local people towards the promotion of the aims and objectives.

Where licence holders and prospective applicants do not uphold the expectations placed upon a professional licensed service, consideration will be given to suspending or revoked their licence or refusing their application.

Licenses are only granted to people who satisfy the Council that they are fit and proper people to hold such a licence. The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that they are a fit and proper person, and not for the Council to provide that they are not.

Being a fit and proper person is not simply a question at the time of the application; it is a continuing requirement, and if at any time the conduct or behaviour of the licensee falls below the acceptable standard, action may be taken against the licence.

## 3. Definitions

This document sets out the policy that the Council will apply when making decisions about new applications and licences currently in force. This policy applies to:

- Hackney Carriages (HC); being a vehicle available to transport the public with no more than 8 passenger seats, which is licensed to ply for hire. This

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<sup>1</sup> [Constitution - Spelthorne Borough Council](#)

means that it may stand at ranks, be hailed in the street by members of the public or undertake pre- booked work.

- Private Hire Vehicles (PHV): licensed to carry no more than eight passengers and must be booked in advanced through a licensed private hire operator. They cannot stand or ply for hire nor use any designated taxi ranks.
- Private Hire Operators (PHO): are required to take and record the bookings for private hire vehicles. Bookings must be recorded, and records be made available for inspection. The PHO is also responsible for the actions of the drivers that they use and the condition of the vehicles that they use.
- Hackney Carriage (HC) and Private Hire (PH) Drivers: Licensed individuals who have undertaken certain tests and checks. Only a licensed driver can drive a licensed vehicle.

#### **4. Legislation, Byelaws, Guidance and Best Practice**

The Department of Transport (DfT) has national responsibility for the HC and PH legislation in England and Wales. The DfT has produced updated Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards in July 2020 (hereafter the 2020 Guidance)<sup>2</sup> to reflect an increasing appetite to improve safeguarding provision. The Council has taken account of the DfT guidance and Best Practice Guidance.<sup>3</sup>

HC and PH activity are governed by two principal pieces of legislation, the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, in both cases as amended by subsequent legislation. These have been interpreted by the senior courts over the years (the High Court and the Court of Appeal, and ultimately, the Supreme Court).

In addition, the Council has byelaws relating to Hackney Carriage activity. The Council will in addition have regard to guidance issued by the Department for Transport, the Town Police Clauses Acts 1889, the Public Health Act 1875 and the Local Government Act 1972 and the Road Traffic Act 1988 Part 11 (a) Construction and Use of Vehicles and Equipment in this policy. The policy also reflects changes due to the Deregulation Act 2015.

Each application will be considered on its own merits, taking into account all the relevant circumstances, legislation, guidance and this policy.

Once a licence has been granted, the licensee will be subject to all the above and the conditions attached to any licence.

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<sup>2</sup> [Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

<sup>3</sup> [Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance for licensing authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

The Council will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. In addition, licensees must comply with their duties under the relevant parts of the legislation.

A licence will not be issued until the appropriate fee is paid and cleared funds have been received.

Once the fee is paid no refund will be given unless there are clear and compelling reasons with evidence provided. This is at the discretion of the licensing authority.

## **5. Shared Information**

The Licensing Authority may share all information with other public bodies such as other councils, the Police, Home Office Immigration Compliance Enforcement, National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN), Driver Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Information will only be released in response to a properly made formal request and where there is a valid reason to do so, for example investigation of a criminal offence.

Where drivers either have been or are currently licensed with other authorities, the Council will carry out checks with those authorities for any information that may be relevant to the application being considered.

The Council reserves the right to consider information from internal and external sources as part of its licensing activities and to share information supplied by applicants with other enforcement bodies, e.g. the Audit Commission, the Police etc, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and any statutory code or guidance made under that Act.

Applicants for HC or PH driver licences should be aware that - in the event that the Council opts to refuse an application for or suspends or revokes an existing HC or PHD driver licence for any reason - information will be submitted for inclusion on the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN)'s National Register of Refusals and Revocations (NR3). Further information about how this information is stored can be found on the relevant privacy notice, available from the NAFN.

## **6. General Principals**

### **6.1 Tariff**

The tariff is a maximum figure that HC drivers can charge based on a range of factors including time of day or night and special occasions such as bank holidays. The tariff does not apply to PH vehicles or pre-booked journeys where the cost is agreed in advance. Drivers may charge any amount for a journey provided it does not exceed the fare on the meter. HC vehicles must carry a tariff card within the vehicle which is readily available upon request. In HC vehicles the tariff card must be clearly visible and legible from the passenger area.

This policy statement sets out the Council's approach to making licensing decisions. It will only be deviated from in exceptional circumstances based upon the merits of those circumstances and provided that the overall principles of the Policy are not undermined.

## 6.2 Enforcement

The DfT guidance is clear on the necessity of enforcement to maintain high standards of public safety. All enforcement will be proportionate and transparent. While the ultimate authority is the court, the expectation is that enforcement will be carried out by licensing officers overseen by the Licensing Committee and the associated Licensing sub-committee.

Any enforcement system needs to deal with persistent, low level breaches up to serious, possibly, criminal behaviour. There are grades of sanctions from informal advice and warnings through to suspension and revocation of licences. The majority of enforcement will be for relatively minor offences or breaches and will be undertaken by licensing officers. The councils operate a points-based enforcement scheme. The points system does not affect the driver's or operator's rights of appeal to the magistrate's court.

## 6.3 Submission and Processing of applications

If an application to renew is **submitted** by the applicant to the Licensing Authority after the licence expiry, the application will be treated as a new licence and will need to meet all requirements involved for a new licence.

For operators, this will mean they are no longer permitted to take bookings until a new licence has been granted. For vehicles, the vehicle must not be used for the carriage of passengers for hire and reward until a new licence has been granted. For drivers, they will not be permitted to drive any vehicles licensed by the Council until a new licence has been granted. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Council consider departing from this part of the Policy.

The Council aims to process applications as efficiently as possible. However, there may be occasions where there are peaks in demand or other pressures placed upon the service. If a **valid** application has been submitted in line with this policy and conditions and the licence expires in the meantime the applicant can carry on working under their licence.<sup>4</sup>

Applicants and licence holders are expected to allow 10 working days (starting with the first working day after) the submission of a complete, valid application for licences to be processed and issued.

In instances where the licensing authority has not received a full application in line with this policy **(this includes medical & DBS) then the application will**

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<sup>4</sup>Cartledge v Gedling Borough Council | [Institute of Licensing](#)



**be incomplete. Where a medical is due part way through a licence and expires the Council may suspend the licence for public safety.**

New driver applicants should allow a longer timeframe as additional checks are required and the timescales are dependent on third parties. Where the Council must check an applicant's right to live and work in the UK, the applicant should allow extra time for this check and be aware no decision will be made until the right to live and work check has been completed.

The Council will not be held responsible for any delays or periods of expiration associated with the incomplete or late submission of applications.

#### **6.4 Licence Fees**

Licence fees will be reviewed annually. Fees will be calculated using the methodology approved by Licensing Committee with the aim of ensuring full cost recovery.

All applications must be accompanied by the appropriate fee.

The Council will not refund any part of the licence fee if a licence is surrendered, suspended or revoked.

#### **6.5 Vehicle Accessibility**

The Council will encourage the provision of accessible vehicles through financial incentives in vehicle application fees. There will be a separate fee set for wheelchair accessible HC and PH vehicles and published in the fees and charges.

#### **6.6 Limitation of numbers**

The Council do not limit the maximum number of HC or PH vehicles.

#### **6.7 Whistleblowing**

The purpose of this Policy is to protect the wider public using HC and PHVs. However, it is in the application of these policies (and the training and raising of awareness among those applying them) that protection will be provided. Where there are concerns that policies are not being applied correctly, it is vital that these can be raised, investigated and remedial action taken if required. It is therefore recommended that any staff follow the Council's Whistleblowing procedures to raise concerns so that these can be dealt with openly and fairly.

Members of the licensed trade are also encouraged to report concerns relating to public safety and will not face licensing action for bringing concerns to the authorities' attention.

The failure of a member of the trade to report incidents which they are aware of might however call into question their suitability to hold a licence.

A copy of the Council's Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing) is available on our website.<sup>5</sup>

## **6.8 Lost Property**

Drivers and operators are expected to take all reasonable steps to ensure property is returned to its rightful owner within 48 hours of discovery. Drivers must check their vehicle after each hiring to identify any lost property.

Where drivers working for companies or operators cannot return items directly to the passenger, they must present the item to the Council or booking company within 48 hours of discovery. The Council will keep the item for up to 28 days and after such time will dispose of the item/s as the Council feels fit.

The company or operator shall keep a record of all lost property for at least 28 days and attempts must be made and recorded to trace the original owner.

## **6.9 Updating the Council – applicable to all licences**

It is essential that the Council has up to date contact details for licence holders. It is also vital that the Council is notified of any change in circumstances which may compromise the applicant's suitability at the earliest opportunity.

If a licence holder changes their name, address, other contact details (including telephone number or email address) or operator during the term of their licence, they must inform the licensing team in writing within seven days.

If a licence holder receives a conviction, caution, fixed penalty notice or is subject to arrest or criminal proceedings of any sort then they must notify the Council within 48 hours.

If a licence holder's medical status changes then they must notify the Council within 48 hours.

Licence holders who fail to keep the Council up to date as required are likely to be considered unsuitable to continue to hold a licence.

## **7. Compliance and Enforcement**

- 7.1** Section 61 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the relevant council to suspend, revoke or refuse to renew a licence if the licensee has been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty, indecency, violence; failure to comply with the provisions of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847; failure to comply with the provisions of Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976; has been convicted of an

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<sup>5</sup> [Comments, compliments and complaints - Spelthorne Borough Council](#)

immigration offence or had to pay an immigration penalty, or any other reasonable cause.

A suspension or revocation can take immediate effect if that is necessary in the interest of public safety under section 61(2B). This will be clearly detailed in the decision notice.

The council operates a penalty points scheme full details of which can be found in **Appendix C**

The principal purpose of HC & PH licensing is to protect the public and promote public safety. In doing this, the Council aims to provide the delivery of efficient, targeted and proportionate regulatory services to provide a positive approach to those regulated, and promoting confidence in the service in the eyes of those who use it.

The Council will follow the Regulators Code and the Council's Enforcement Policy and will base any enforcement action on the seriousness of the breach and the possible consequences arising from it. A range of tools and powers, including mystery shopping, to ensure compliance will be used. Compliance assessment is ultimately to ensure that the driver or operator is a "fit and proper" person to hold a licence and/or the vehicle is safe. The safety of passengers, pedestrians and other road users is paramount.

The Council has a procedure whereby the general public can submit service requests / complaints / concerns about licensed drivers and operators. In considering the most appropriate action to take in relation to a complaint, the credibility of both the complainant and the licence holder will be taken into account. In addition if anyone wishes to complain about the service provided by the Council there is a Complaints procedure available on the website.

Under section 51(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council may attach conditions that it considers 'reasonably necessary' to private hire driver's licences. This includes dual licensed hackney carriage and private hire driver's, as well as holders of private hire driver (only) licences.

Applications are normally granted subject to the Council's Standard Licence Conditions contained within this Policy, however further, additional conditions may be attached on a case by case basis.

Where appropriate referrals will be made to other agencies such as the Police, Disclosure and Barring Service, HM Customs & Excise and both Adult and / or Child safeguarding teams. The Council will respond to complaints made by the public and referrals from other agencies & bodies. In addition officers will undertake proactive inspections and testing as either day to day activity or as part of programmed operations. Licensing decisions are taken on the 'civil' standard of proof and in line with the statutory guidance, the benefit of the doubt will **not** be given to the licence holder when making any decision.

The Council aim to achieve and maintain a consistent approach making our decisions. In reaching any decision the Council will consider the following criteria:

- seriousness of any offences or breach of conditions
- licence holder's past history, including previous advice and warnings issued
- consequence(s) of non-compliance
- likely effectiveness of the various enforcement options
- danger to the public

Having considered all relevant information and evidence, the normal options are one or more of:

- take no action
- take informal action
- issue statutory notices (stop notices etc.)
- suspend a licence
- revoke a licence
- prosecution

As well as complying with legislation and licence conditions, it is essential that licence holders comply with reasonable requests for information or assistance from licensing and/or Police officers. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

The Council will apply the guidelines set out in **Appendix 2** when a licence holder is convicted, cautioned for or charged with any of the offences or other information (including complaints from the public) is received to indicate that the licence holder has conducted themselves in a way outlined by the offence. For example, if a complaint has been received about a licence holder which has not resulted in a conviction, in the interest of public safety the policy and sanction for that offence will still be applied.

Before making our decision, the Council will consider the seriousness of the conviction, caution, endorsement or other information which has been provided to us.

## **7.2 Statutory notices**

If a defect in a licensed vehicle is found, including a breach of licensing conditions or vehicle specification, the Council may serve notice in writing requiring the vehicle (or the taximeter in the vehicle) to be examined at the vehicle testing station or by a taximeter examiner nominated by the Council.

If a defect in a licensed vehicle is found upon inspection which causes the vehicle to fail the MOT then a statutory notice may be served preventing the vehicle from being used until the defect is remedied and the vehicle passes the test.

### **7.3 Suspending or revoking a licence (vehicles) the Council may suspend a vehicle licence where:**

- the Council has reasonable grounds to suspect that the condition of the vehicle is dangerous or poses a risk to passengers or other road users. For example, there is damage to the vehicle, the tyre tread is insufficient, or the vehicle has been involved in a collision
- the insurance is no longer valid.
- the vehicle has not completed the vehicle test at the required interval, or failed the test
- the vehicle is non-compliant with its licence conditions or other licensing policy requirement

The suspension will be lifted once the Council are satisfied that the reason for the suspension has been addressed and the vehicle complies with the Council's policy requirements.

### **7.4 The Council may revoke a vehicle licence where:**

- The proprietor regularly presents a vehicle for inspection which is in unsatisfactory condition
- The proprietor is no longer considered suitable to hold a licence
- The vehicle is dangerous and poses a risk to passengers or other road users and suspension of the licence is not appropriate. For example, if there is no reasonable prospect of repairing the damage, such as an accident write-off.

### **7.5 Suspending, revoking or refusing to renew a licence (drivers)**

The Council may suspend or revoke a driver's licence if the licence holder:

- is convicted of any offence involving dishonesty, indecency or violence
- is convicted of an offence under or has failed to comply with the relevant taxi and private hire legislation or
- for any other reasonable cause

Any other reasonable cause can include, but is not restricted to:

- a suspension of your DVLA licence (either due to 'totting up' or disqualification imposed for specific offences)
- a medical issue
- other offences not included in Appendix 2, but still indicating that the licence holder is of unsuitable character
- a culmination of minor transgressions or continual non-compliance with licensing requirements
- any action that presents a risk to the public or is likely to undermine public confidence in the licensing regime
- obstruction of or being abusive towards an authorised officer, or disregarding the advice, warnings or sanctions of an authorised officer

If a driver's licence is suspended this will normally be for a defined period and the Council will inform the licence holder of our reasons. The Council will normally only suspend a licence where the relevant behaviour can be addressed within a reasonable timescale. In other cases the licence will

normally be revoked. However, the Council reserves the right to utilise suspensions as a punitive measure so that drivers can have a defined period to reflect on their conduct.

If the Council consider it is in the interest of public safety to suspend or revoke a licence with immediate effect, we will do so and we will inform the licence holder of our reasons.

### **7.6 Suspending, revoking or refusing to renew a licence (operators)**

The Council may suspend, revoke or refuse to renew a private hire operator's licence:

- if the licence holder commits any offence under or fails to comply with relevant taxi and private hire legislation or
- there is any conduct on the part of the operator, including convictions, which falls below the standards expected by the Council of professional, licensed private hire operators, or
- there is any material change of the circumstances of the operator on the basis of which the licence was granted, or
- the operator seeks to negate local control by not using vehicles and drivers licensed by the Council within its jurisdiction, or
- for any other reasonable cause

Any other reasonable cause can include, but is not restricted to:

- other offences not included in **Appendix A**, but still indicating that the licence holder is of unsuitable character
- a culmination of minor transgressions or continual non-compliance with licensing requirements
- any action that presents a risk to the public or is likely to undermine public confidence in the licensing regime
- using unlicensed drivers or vehicles
- using uninsured or unsafe vehicles
- obstruction of or being abusive towards an authorised officer, or disregarding the advice, warnings or sanctions of an authorised officer

If an operator's licence is suspended this will normally be for a defined period and the Council will inform the licence holder of our reasons. The Council will normally only suspend a licence where the relevant behaviour can be addressed within a reasonable timescale. In other cases the licence will normally be revoked. However, the Council reserves the right to utilise suspensions as a punitive measure so that operators can have a defined period to reflect on their conduct.

### **7.7 Common Law Disclosure**

The DBS is not the only source of information that should be considered as part of a fit and proper assessment for the licensing of taxi and private hire vehicle drivers. Common Law Police Disclosure ensures that where there is a public protection risk, the police will pass information to the employer or regulatory body to allow them to act swiftly to mitigate any danger.

Common Law Police Disclosure replaced the Notifiable Occupations Scheme (NOS) in March 2015 and focuses on providing timely and relevant information which might indicate a public protection risk. Information is passed on at arrest or charge, rather than on conviction which may be some time after, allowing any measures to mitigate risk to be put in place immediately.

### **7.8 Decision making**

Where an applicant is unable to demonstrate that they fulfil the requirements of this Policy, applications may be refused. If an applicant does not meet the required standards but wishes for their application to be considered by us, it will be referred to the Senior Environmental Health Manager who may refer the decision to the Licensing Sub Committee for a hearing. This will be the case for both new applicants and existing licence holders.

The Senior Environmental Health Manager in conjunction with the Chair of the Licensing Sub Committee have authority to suspend or revoke licences with immediate effect on the grounds of public safety. In cases where immediate action is not considered necessary, issues such as new offences will be referred the Senior Environmental Health Manager in the first instance.

The Council will make a record of the reasons for our decision and will provide the applicant with a copy of that document. Police would also be notified.

### **7.9 Prosecution**

The Council recognises that it is a significant step to prosecute, however, will consider prosecution in appropriate cases where there is sufficient evidence and it is in the public interest to do so.

To protect public safety and promote public confidence in the licensing regime, the Council will generally consider that prosecution is appropriate in the majority of cases, but will take into consideration:

- the overall seriousness of the offence and harm caused
- if the offender also encouraged others to commit offences
- the offence was pre-meditated
- the offender showed disregard for the law
- the offender stood to gain from the offence
- the victim, if any, was vulnerable, suffered damage or felt threatened by the offence
- there is significant environmental harm
- the offence had a discriminatory element, for example on the basis of protected characteristics
- the offender has previous convictions or cautions that are for offences that have some similarity with the current one
- there is likelihood that further offences might be committed.

### **7.10 Appeals**

If the Council suspends, revokes or refuses a licence, a record of the reasons for our decision will be made and we will provide the licence holder with a copy of that document.

The licence holder may appeal to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days of the decision. The Council would recommend that appellants seek legal advice.

Once a licence has been suspended or revoked, the licence holder (or former licence holder) may appeal to the Magistrates Court in order to challenge the council's decision. There is no other recourse available to the licence holder (or former licence holder) should they wish to have the decision to suspend or revoke their licence reversed.

The Council will normally defend any appeal and seek full recovery of its costs from the appellant.

## **8. Driver Requirements**

### **8.1 Guidance on suitability to hold a licence**

The Council may attach such conditions to a Private Hire / Hackney Carriage driver's licence as are considered reasonably necessary. The Council's standard conditions are set out in **Appendix D**.

The Council has also made byelaws that are specifically applicable to Hackney Carriage drivers / proprietors. The existing Hackney Carriage byelaws are set out in **Appendix C**.

Drivers are expected to familiarise themselves with licence conditions and comply with the requirements associated with being a professional licence holder.

All drivers must satisfy the Council that they are fit and proper people to be granted a drivers' licence and must then remain a fit and proper person for the duration of that licence. The fitness and propriety of a driver will be monitored and assessed throughout the period that the licence is held.

Applicants are expected to act with honesty and integrity throughout the application process. Existing licence holders are always also expected to act professionally at a time a licence is held and consequently both applicants and existing licence holders must therefore fully and accurately disclose any information that is requested. This includes information regarding previous convictions, warnings and reprimands, arrests, current investigations and pending criminal and civil proceedings.

The Council aims to ensure that PH and HC services delivered within the Borough are of a good standard. The application and compliance procedures are designed to ensure these standards are maintained, monitored for compliance and appropriately enforced.

The sections below, therefore, apply equally to HC & PH drivers unless indicated.

### **8.2 Fit and Proper person test**

Euro 4 Petrol and Euro 6 Diesel



The Council considers that licensed drivers are in a position of trust, and therefore the Council must ensure that applicants / licence holders are and remain fit and proper to hold a licence. This requirement is contained within Sections 51 and 59 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (Part II).

The term “Fit and Proper Person” for the purposes of taxi and Private Hire licensing is not legally defined. However, in determining whether a person is fit and proper to hold a licence, those tasked with determining licences / applications are effectively asking the following question of themselves:

***“without any prejudice, and based on the information before you, would you allow a person for whom you care, regardless of their condition, to travel alone in a vehicle driven by this person at any time of day or night?”***

If the answer to the question is an unqualified ‘yes’, then the person can be considered to be fit and proper. If there are any doubts in the minds of those who make the decision, then further consideration should be given as to whether a licence should be granted to that person.

Applicants must prove they are fit and proper on the balance of probability. The DFT standards state that “this means that an applicant or licensee should not be given the benefit of the doubt”. If the committee or delegated officer is only 50/50 as to whether the applicant or licensee is fit and proper, they should not hold a licence. The threshold used here is lower than for a criminal conviction (that being reasonable doubt) and can take into consideration conduct that has not resulted in a criminal conviction.

When considering whether a person is fit and proper to hold a licence (which includes both new and renewal applicants, and existing licence holders), the Council have our own suitability criteria and this can be found in **Appendix A**. This applies to all vehicle, driver and operator licence holders and applicants.

These guidelines should be regarded as examples of issues that may lead to us considering you are not fit and proper. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of the issues that may be taken into consideration.

The Council may not be satisfied that a person is a fit and proper person to hold a driver’s licence for any good reason. If adequate evidence of good character is not available, or if there is good reason to question or doubt the evidence produced, then that in itself could amount to good reason to refuse an application.

An applicant who does not satisfy these guidelines will not necessarily be barred from obtaining a licence. The Council will consider each case on its own merits, considering any relevant circumstances or mitigating factors.

The overriding consideration in compiling and interpreting these guidelines is the safety of the public. The Council have a duty to ensure that those licensed

to drive HC & PH vehicles are suitable persons to do so. The Council need to satisfy ourselves that applicants and licensed drivers are safe drivers with good driving records and adequate experience; sober; courteous; mentally and physically fit; honest and not persons who would take advantage of their employment to abuse or assault passengers.

A driver has direct responsibility for the safety of their passengers, direct responsibility for the safety of other road users and significant control over passengers who are in the vehicle. As those passengers may be alone, and may also be vulnerable, any previous convictions or unacceptable behaviour will weigh heavily against a licence being granted or retained.

Both applicants and existing licence holders must therefore fully and accurately disclose any information that is requested. This includes information regarding previous convictions, warnings and reprimands, arrests, current investigations and pending criminal and civil proceedings.

In addition, the Council will also consider further information sources such as the Police (including abduction notices), Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards, other licensing authorities and statutory agencies, and other information/complaints received. This list is not exhaustive.

If a driver, acting in their capacity as the holder of a different licence (for example vehicle proprietor's licence or private hire operator's licence) fails to comply with the byelaws or conditions attached to that licence, or has that licence revoked for reasons of being unsuitable to hold that licence, the Council will consider this to reflect on their character as a licensed driver and they should expect to have their licence to drive a vehicle suspended or revoked.

### **8.3 Driver Application process**

The Council issues drivers licences that enable:

- the driving of both HC and PH Vehicles (dual licence), or
- the driving of PH Vehicles only.

The type of licence applied for or held will be determined by which of the Council's knowledge tests the applicant has passed.

Licences will be issued for a maximum period of three years but the Council can grant licences for a lesser period if deemed appropriate. This will usually be when the applicant has time limited 'right to work' status with the licence only being granted in line with the time limits dictated by the applicant's immigration status.

The sections below apply equally to PH and HC drivers unless indicated.

It is the policy of the councils that every application for a licence to drive a HC and/or PH vehicle must be accompanied by satisfactory evidence of the following matters and that applications that are incomplete will not be deemed to have been valid until such time as they are complete.

All **new** applicants will have **6** months from the application form submission to complete the application process. After this time any incomplete application will be closed, and any subsequent application will be treated as a fresh application.

HC Driver Licensees will be required to comply with the current Hackney Carriage Byelaws detailed in this policy. Attached at **Appendix C**.

Where a licence is found to have been obtained using false or incomplete information the licence may be revoked with immediate effect. Anyone obtaining or attempting to obtain a licence using false or misleading information may be subject to further enforcement action including, prosecution and reporting the matter to other enforcement agencies including the police.

Applicants will be required to disclose if they have been/are licensed as a driver with a previous/current authority. The councils reserve the right to check the details of applicants with any previous/current licensing authorities, in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation to aid the determination of the application.

#### **8.4 Application form & Fee**

An application form must be completed by the applicant. Failure to complete the appropriate form could result in an application being delayed or declined. Knowingly or recklessly making a false declaration or omitting any material information required when applying for a licence is an offence. Where an applicant has knowingly made a false statement or declaration the application will normally be rejected or refused.

It is the driver's responsibility to apply in good time so their application can be determined before their existing licence expires. A completed, valid renewal application should be submitted no less than 10 working days, but no sooner than 8 weeks before the expiry date.

Failure to pay the full fee could result in an application being delayed or declined. A list of current fees and charges is published on the Council's website [www.spelthorne.gov.uk](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk)

#### **8.5 Identity**

To prove their identity, all applicants must provide an authenticated form of photographic identification (for example photographic driving licence). Applicants from outside the UK must provide:

- (a) a passport with a valid stamp from the Home Office to say that they have leave to remain in the country indefinitely; or
- (b) a passport with a valid UK visa, which allows the holder to work as a private hire or Hackney Carriage driver (student visas will not be

accepted), and which has at least six calendar months remaining at the time of application.

A licence will only be granted until the expiry of the visa and will only be renewed or extended with the production of the passport and another valid visa issued by the Home Office. The Licensing Authority reserves the right to verify, at any time, a licensee's entitlement to remain in the UK. The Council will not accept letters issued by the Home Office when a visa application is pending.

To comply with the Immigration Act 2016, the councils are required to check eligibility to live and work in the UK for all applicants for driver and operator licences. Applicants will be required to provide evidence at time of application.

For applicants with a limited time to remain in the UK, the licence will only be granted for the period of permission to remain and may only be granted for a shorter period. The licence maybe extended should the applicant's right to remain in the UK be made permanent.

If an applicant has extended leave to remain (pending a decision) the licence cannot be granted for more than six months, and again may only be granted for a shorter period. The licence may be extended should the applicant's right to remain in the UK be made permanent.

If a licensee loses the right to remain in the UK during the period of a licence, the licence ceases to have effect and the licence (and badge for drivers) must be returned within seven days to the relevant council.

## **8.6 Proof of right to work in the UK**

All applicants for licensed driver badges must prove that they have a right to work in the UK. The Council will follow the guidance published by UK Borders and Immigration (or their successor bodies) on establishing proof of right to work.

In addition to requiring documents, the Council may also make direct enquiries to the UK Border and Immigration to verify the details of an applicant's right to work.

If the UK Border and Immigration is currently determining a licence holder's right to live or work in the UK, and they are entitled to live and work in the UK pending final determination of that application, the Council will issue a licence for a maximum of 6 months from the date of our decision. It is the licence holder's responsibility to contact the council at least 15 working days before the licence expires so that the licensing authority can contact the UK Border and Immigration to check their rights.

If an applicant is unable to provide satisfactory proof of their right to work in the UK, there will be no option other than to refuse to grant or refuse to renew the licence, or if circumstances came to light during the duration of a licence, to revoke it.

Applicants who cannot provide evidence of indefinite right to work will only have their licence granted for the period of their right to work. Licences may be extended if the period of right to work is extended. There is no discounted fee for licences.

If after referring to UK Borders and Immigration (or their successor bodies) guidance, the Licensing Authority are still unsure about an applicant's right to work in the UK, they will undertake further enquires with UK Borders and Immigration (or their successor bodies). If it transpires the applicant is illegally in the UK (due to illegally entering or overstaying for example) the Licensing Authority will assist UK Borders and Immigration (or their successor bodies) or the Police in their enquiries as necessary.

### 8.7 **HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) requirements**

All applicants must demonstrate that they are registered with HMRC for tax purposes. This is done by providing a tax code from the HMRC website. Further information can be found here: [Complete a tax check for a taxi, private hire or scrap metal licence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/about/tax-checks)

### 8.8 **Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS)**

Enhanced Disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service is required as these disclosures include details of live and spent convictions, police cautions and other relevant information that indicates that a person poses a risk to public safety.

In addition to this, requests will be sent to the police, following the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018, to obtain any information that may be relevant when determining an application.

Both HC and PH drivers are included as "exceptions" within the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (the "Exceptions Order"). All drivers will be asked to disclose on their application form any caution or conviction even if it is spent for other purposes and those will be revealed on the DBS certificate.

New applicants must provide an Enhanced DBS Certificate which includes a check of the Adult and Child Barred Lists which is no more than **one calendar month old** at the date of submission of the certificate.

The Council is no longer carrying out paper DBS checks. All licence holders must subscribe to the Disclosure and Barring Service Online Update Service, this will be required by a condition placed on the licence. Any costs associated with maintaining this subscription must be met by the licence holder. **If a licence holder fails to sign up to the update service, or fails to maintain subscription during the period that the licence is in force, then the licence may be suspended or revoked.**

All new applicants must declare on the application form any convictions, cautions or fixed penalty notices they have received. All licence holders shall

notify the Council of any convictions or cautions received during their licence period. Failure to inform the Council of any convictions, arrest, current investigations, cautions and fixed penalty notices during the licence period may result in suspension or revocation of the licence.

**A licence will not be granted or renewed in the absence of a current Enhanced DBS Disclosure Certificate. Should drivers not have a DBS in place there will be no 'grandfather rights' for a licence to be given without a certificate.**

The Council will use the update service to monitor the criminal record of licence holders. Checks will be made at a frequency of not less than once every **six months**. The update service can be used when a licence is renewed – if there are no changes recorded on the DBS certificate then a full DBS check will not be required. In all other cases a full Enhanced DBS check will be required before a licence is renewed.

The Council is committed to ensuring that the licensed trade is fit and proper, this will entail periodic audits of licensed drivers to ensure that material changes are identified and acted upon.

Any licensee may be required to undertake a further DBS check at any time as directed by the Council.

The Council will only accept DBS certificates which are applied for through Spelthorne Borough Council's Licensing Service or their nominated third party provider. The Council **does not accept DBS certificates issued to other local authorities, including Surrey County Council for school contracts.**

### **8.9 Certificate of good conduct**

As DBS checks do not cover convictions in countries outside the United Kingdom, if you, from the age of 10 years, spent **3 or more continuous months** living outside the United Kingdom, evidence of a criminal record check from the country/countries covering the relevant period is required. This will normally be in the form of a 'Certificate of Good Conduct' issued through the relevant embassy or consulate, which details any convictions or other matters arising against the applicant while resident in that country. It is your responsibility to obtain such documents and to pay any fees. This requirement is in addition to the DBS disclosure. Where you are unable to obtain the above, you must give a statement outlining the reasons and provide references from appropriate bodies as to your conduct in the country that satisfy us.

This includes any time spent overseas during the course of a licence.

The date of the letter must be within three months of the date of the application. Certificates are required to be translated and certified as a correct translation at the cost of the applicant.

Where an individual is aware that they have committed an offence overseas which may be equivalent to those listed at **Appendix A** you should consider seeking independent expert or legal advice to ensure that you provide information that is truthful and accurate.

### 8.10 Previous Convictions

In relation to the consideration of previous convictions and cautions recorded against applicants and licensees. The DfT guidance recommends that, when considering an individual's criminal record, the Council must consider each case on its merits, but to take a particularly cautious view of any offences involving violence, and sexual attack. It recommends that councils have a clear policy for the consideration of criminal records that must address:

- the type of offence
- the number of offences
- the number of elapsed years since the offence.

The Council may also draw appropriate inferences from repeat incidents or patterns of such issues which may not necessarily have resulted in formal action.

All applicants will need to demonstrate their fit and proper person status through a full disclosure of their full criminal history.

Relevant offences at the time of writing are set out in **Appendix A**.

### 8.11 Medical Examination

The Council requires Group 2<sup>6</sup> Standards of Medical Fitness as applied by the DVLA to the licensing of lorry and bus drivers, as the appropriate standard for licensed HC and PH drivers.

Applicants shall provide a completed medical examination form supplied by the Council and **completed by their own General Practitioner** (or a Doctor working at their registered GP's practice) on first application and every 5 years thereafter until aged **65** years when **annual** examinations are required. Licence holders with certain medical conditions (for example certain neurological or cardiovascular conditions) may also be required to submit annual forms and adhere to additional requirements in order for them to retain their driver's licence.

To ensure currency and relevance the licensing authority will require applicants to submit a suitable medical report which is dated no more than three months prior to the initial application.

Holders of Public Service Vehicle (PSV) and / or Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) Licences, where the holder is able to produce proof of current medical examination less than 3 months old, will not be required to undergo a medical examination on first application.

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<sup>6</sup> [General information: assessing fitness to drive - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Licence holders must advise the Council of any deterioration or other change in their health that may affect their driving capabilities within 48 hours of the change occurring.

Medical reports which may indicate that an applicant may not meet the Group 2 DLVA standard will be referred to the Council's independent medical advisor.

Where a LEO or the Council's independent medical advisor has reason to believe that an applicant's ability to drive may be impaired by a specific medical condition, the applicant, or their GP, or in the case of eyesight requirements, an optician, may be asked to provide further information at any time following the submission of the medical assessment form. The Council may require a new medical assessment, at the licensee's expense, if they have reason to believe that a licensee's medical status may have changed.

**No licence will be issued, or remain in force until medical confirmation that the DVLA Group 2 standards have been met has been received.**

Licensed drivers are under a legal duty to carry guide, hearing and other prescribed assistance dogs in their vehicles without additional charge. Drivers who have a medical condition which is aggravated by exposure to dogs may apply to the Council for exemption from the duty on medical grounds. If an application is successful, they will be issued with an exemption certificate, and also be issued with a notice of exemption. The notice of exemption must be exhibited in the vehicle by fixing it, facing outwards, either on the windscreen or in a prominent position on the dashboard.

Licensed drivers are under a legal duty to provide assistance to wheelchair users, including loading/securing/unloading the wheelchair and assisting the user in and out of the vehicle, and carrying luggage at the request of the hirer, without additional charge. Drivers who have a medical condition which prevents them from offering this assistance may apply to the Council for exemption from the duty on medical grounds. If an application is successful, they will be issued with an exemption certificate, and also be issued with a notice of exemption. The notice of exemption must be exhibited in the vehicle by fixing it, facing outwards, either on the windscreen or in a prominent position on the dashboard.

Any application for exemption will need to be supported by medical evidence including the appropriate tests and clinical history (provided by the applicant) and confirmed by the Council's medical advisor.

## **8.12 Driving Licence**

Applicants must have held a full UK, Northern Ireland, European Economic Area (EEA) or exchangeable driving licence (a person can only use an exchangeable licence for twelve months, after which it must be exchanged for a UK licence) for at least twelve months prior to application (this excludes the holding of a provisional licence).



A photo card driving licence meeting these requirements must be submitted with the application form (including renewal applications) and will be checked against the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) information issued. Any prospective applicant who does not hold a photo card driving licence must obtain one before the application is made. The address on the DVLA licence must be the same as the addresses on any other paperwork submitted with the application. The Council may carry out spot checks on a random basis to ascertain any changes to the status of the DVLA licence.

On each renewal a DVLA check code will be required full details will be provided on the renewal form.

### **8.13 Practical Assessments for Licensed Drivers and Applicants**

Applicants must produce a certificate confirming that they have passed a Blue Lamp Trust Enhanced Driving Test for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers, or equivalent. The assessment should be no more than 12 months old when first applying to the Council.

At the discretion of the Principal Licensing Officer (PLO), where an applicant is to be employed by a company exclusively using specially adapted minibus vehicles for the sole purpose of Blue Badge school runs, a certificate for an alternative, equivalent test for competence to drive minibuses may be supplied.

### **8.14 Knowledge Tests**

To maintain the high standards that the councils expect of licensed drivers, new applicants will be required to undertake an assessment of competence. This will take the form of a test and will contribute to satisfying the requirement to be a 'fit and proper person'.

Applicants with a disability that may affect their ability to undertake a written test, such as dyslexia, must provide written confirmation from a suitably qualified professional such as a doctor or consultant. Based on the recommendation of the professional the applicant will be given appropriate support. The need for such support must be identified at the time of the original application.

The knowledge test will be in a form and structure determined by the relevant council and may be administered by a third party. All applicants must pass the Council's: -

- English & Numeracy test
- Licence Conditions test.
- Geographical test

Together, all the required tests above are designed to assess the applicant's understanding of both oral and written English.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Section 6.9 Best Practice Guidance [Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance for licensing authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance-for-licensing-authorities-in-england)

Where there is a reasonable cause to believe that there is a need to assess a licence holder's English language literacy and numeracy skills or knowledge of licensing requirements an authorised officer may require them to undertake such testing at the drivers own expense within such timescale as the officer prescribes.

### **Test Retakes**

Applicants who fail to achieve the pass mark in the test will be invited to take a different test on another occasion. They will not be 'fit and proper' to hold a licence until they have achieved the required pass mark.

An applicant will only be permitted to take a test three times in a year. The year period will start from the date of the first test.

Applicants who fail a test must wait for a minimum of a two-week period before re-sitting the test.

### **8.15 Highway Code and Relevant Legislation**

All Applicants are expected to have a good knowledge of the Highway Code and the relevant provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and the Town and Police Clauses Act 1847.

### **8.16 Training in the Assistance of Disabled Persons**

All applicants must be able to show that they have undergone training in Disability Awareness to a standard acceptable to the Licensing Authority. Refresher training will be required every 3 years. The councils identify training providers (which may include the relevant council itself) from time to time and applicants will be informed of the available courses and any cost at the time of application.<sup>8</sup>

Applicants must produce a certificate confirming that they have passed a Blue Lamp Trust Disability Awareness Training<sup>9</sup>, or equivalent. The assessment should be no more than 12 months old when first applying to the Council.

The form and structure of the training will be determined by the relevant council and may be administered by a third party.

All existing drivers will need to complete this by **1 October 2025**.

### **8.17 Safeguarding, Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE) and County Lines Training**

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<sup>8</sup> Section 6.3 Best Practice Guidance [Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance for licensing authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance-for-licensing-authorities-in-england)

<sup>9</sup> [THE BLUE LAMP TRUST | DRIVEN BY SAFETY](https://www.bluelamptrust.org/)

All new applicants for a driver licence must complete safeguarding, child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSAE) and county lines training prior to the issue of a licence.

Applicants must produce a certificate confirming that they have passed the Safeguarding Adults and Child Sexual Exploitation Training<sup>10</sup>. The assessment should be no more than 12 months old when first applying to the Council.

Existing drivers must complete refresher training every 3 years. The Council will expect all existing drivers to have completed their refresher training by **1 October 2025**.

The form and structure of the training will be determined by the relevant council and may be administered by a third party.

### 8.18 Driver Proficiency

The Road Safety Statement published in 2019 stated that:

The need to improve road safety does not end with the driving test; nor does it exclude those who drive or ride professionally or as part of their job.

Licensing authorities should require taxi and private hire vehicle drivers, as professional drivers, to display a higher degree of driving aptitude and diligence than a private motorist. This is considered appropriate and proportionate and is consistent with other elements of taxi and private hire vehicle driver licensing, for example, medical and vision assessments.

The ability to drive a car is tested when obtaining a driving licence. Nevertheless, evidence shows that driving behaviours are a significant contributor to road collisions. Factors such as fatigue, distractions and excess speed contribute significantly to collisions; excess speed alone accounted for 12 percent of all road traffic collisions in 2021 and 25 percent of those that resulted in a fatality. As professional drivers, for whom time is money, an appreciation of the effect of additional distractions and pressures which can negatively influence their driving behaviours is particularly relevant.

Licensing authorities should require taxi and private hire vehicle drivers to undertake training and/or assessment focussed on attitudes and behaviours, such as those provided by IAM Roadsmart and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), **at first application and renewal** (typically every 3 years). Where an authority has specific concerns about the driving ability of a driver, for example through passenger complaints, it would be appropriate for the authority to consider whether the driver in question should

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<sup>10</sup> Safeguarding Adults and Child Sexual Exploitation Training [LearnUpon](#)

undertake a practical driving ability training course or assessment to address those concerns.<sup>11</sup>

The Council will nominate the provider and this will be communicated to the trade. The Council expects all drivers to have completed this by **1 October 2025**.

### **8.19 The National Register of Taxi Licence Revocations and Refusals**

The Licensing Authority provides information to the National Register of Taxi Licence Refusals, Suspensions and Revocations (NR3) a mechanism for licensing authorities to share details of individuals. This is necessary for assessing whether an individual is a fit and proper person to hold a Hackney Carriage or private hire driver licence.

Where a Hackney Carriage or private hire driver licence is revoked or suspended, or an application for one refused, the relevant council will automatically record this decision on NR3.

This is a mandatory part of applying for a Hackney Carriage and private hire driver licence.

The Licensing Authority will provide details of the reasons for each decision to another licensing authority following receipt of the necessary data sharing request.

Information will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Any searches, provision or receipt of information of or under NR3 are necessary for the relevant councils statutory licensing functions of ensuring that all drivers are fit and proper to hold the applicable licence. It is not intended that any NR3 data will be transferred out of the United Kingdom.

### **8.20 Licences and Badges**

The Licensing Authority issue a plastic card driver badge. All drivers must wear one driver's badge visible on your external clothing at all times when you are driving or working with a private hire vehicle or Hackney Carriage and failure to do so is a criminal offence [under s54 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976] when using a private hire vehicle and byelaw number 12 when using a hackney carriage.

You must display the second copy (large copy of your badge) in a position which is plainly and clearly visible to your passengers at all times whilst you are working as a taxi driver.

## **9 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licenses**

Applications will not be accepted if the vehicle is already licensed by any other licensing authority (or Transport for London).

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<sup>11</sup> Section 6.4 Best Practice Guidance [Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance for licensing authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance-for-licensing-authorities-in-england)

Legislation limits HC or PH vehicle licences to a maximum period of 12 months

### **9.19 Grant of Licence**

The Council will grant vehicle licences for HC with the standard conditions at **Appendix E**. The Council has also made byelaws that are specifically applicable to Hackney Carriage drivers / proprietors. The existing Hackney Carriage byelaws are set out in **Appendix C**.

The Council will grant licences for PH vehicles with the standard conditions at **Appendix F**.

Proprietors are expected to familiarise themselves with licence conditions and comply with the requirements associated with being a professional licence holder.

If vehicles and/or proprietors do not satisfy the requirements the Council will refuse the application.

Proprietors who do not comply with the conditions can expect to have their licences revoked.

### **9.20 Refusal of applications**

If the Council refuse your application, we will make a record of the reasons for our decision and we will provide the applicant with a copy of that document. Police would also be notified.

When new or renewal driver licence applications are refused, or existing driver licences revoked, because the individual is thought to pose a risk to a child or a vulnerable adult, the Council will refer this to the DBS and Police.

An applicant may appeal the Council's decision (within the statutory time period) to:

- the Magistrates' Court (for refusal of private hire applications, or refusal to renew hackney carriage vehicles), or
- Crown Court (for refusal to grant a new hackney carriage).

The Council would recommend that appellants seek legal advice. The Council will normally defend the decision and seek full recovery of its costs from the appellant.

### **9.21 Test of Fitness and Propriety**

The Council considers that licensed vehicle proprietors are in a position of trust, by virtue of the fact that they are responsible for ensuring the maintenance of vehicles which are used to transport members of the public. Licensed vehicles can also travel with a considerable degree of inconspicuousness and as such can be used as cover for illegal transportation. Therefore the Council must ensure that applicants / licence holders are suitable persons that will ensure that they will maintain their

vehicles so that they are roadworthy at all times, and not allow the vehicle to be used for criminal or other unacceptable purposes.

In determining whether a person is suitable to hold a vehicle proprietor's licence, those tasked with determining applications are effectively asking the following question of themselves:

***“Would I be comfortable allowing this person to have control of a licensed vehicle that can travel anywhere, at any time of the day or night without arousing suspicion, and be satisfied that he/she would not allow it to be used for criminal or other unacceptable purposes, and be confident that he/she would maintain it to an acceptable standard throughout the period of the licence?”***

If the answer to the question is an unqualified ‘yes’, then the person can be suitable. If there are any doubts in the minds of those who make the decision, then further consideration should be given as to whether a licence should be granted to that person.

The safeguarding of the public is paramount. All decisions on the suitability of an applicant or licensee should be made on the balance of probabilities. This means that **an applicant or licensee will not be ‘given the benefit of the doubt’**. If the committee or delegated officer is only “50/50” as to whether the applicant or licensee is suitable to hold a licence having considered the above test, they should not hold a licence.

Vehicle licences may be applied for by a company or partnership and as such the above test will be applied to each of the directors or partners in that company or partnership.

In order to assess the suitability of an applicant for a vehicle licence (and to inform decision makers when answering the question above), the Licensing Authority will undertake whatever checks and apply whatever processes it considers necessary to ensure that licences are not issued to, or used by, unsuitable people. In assessing the suitability of an applicant or licence holder, the Council will take into consideration the following factors:

- Criminality
- Right to work
- General conduct / standards of behaviour including online behaviour
- The conduct as an individual holding a licence, including but not limited to complaints and other information received during the application process or course of the licence
- The individual's history of vehicle maintenance, including passing of MOT and vehicle test without initial failures
- The conduct of the applicant in making the application (e.g. whether they have acted with honesty and integrity during the application process).
- The previous licensing history of existing / former licence holders (including honesty and integrity).

- Whether the applicant has had a licence suspended, refused or revoked by another licensing authority.

In relation to the consideration of convictions, cautions, warnings, arrests, reprimands and other 'relevant information', the Council has adopted the policy set out in **Appendix A**. The terms of this policy will have immediate effect.

The policy at **Appendix A** will be used to determine the suitability of an existing licence holder should it be necessary to consider action in relation to the licence during the licence period.

However, it is important to acknowledge that in many cases individuals that license a vehicle may already be licensed as a driver. As the Council undertakes DBS checks for drivers it will not require those licensed drivers seeking to licence a vehicle to provide a basic DBS check as part of the application process and instead will rely on the fact that the applicant is considered as fit and proper to hold a driver licence when considering their suitability to hold a vehicle licence. Should the individual cease to hold a driver licence a basic DBS certificate should be required immediately.

Similarly in cases where a proprietor exercises their right to transfer a vehicle a licence, the Council will require the new proprietor to obtain a basic DBS certificate, if they are not already a licensed driver.

If a proprietor, acting in their capacity as the holder of a different licence (for example a driver's licence or private hire operator's licence) fails to comply with the byelaws or conditions attached to that licence, or has that licence revoked for reasons of being unsuitable to hold that licence, the Council will consider this to reflect on their character as a licensed proprietor and they can expect to have their proprietors licence suspended or revoked.

### **General**

- 9.22** The Licensing Authority will only accept complete applications comprising all the necessary evidence. Incomplete or missing evidence may result in the application being rejected.
- 9.23** Applications received after a licence has expired will be considered as new application.
- 9.24** Using a vehicle, as a PH vehicle or HC, when it does not have a valid PH vehicle or HC proprietors licence is a criminal offence.
- 9.25** As the vehicle cannot be separated from the licence, the vehicle must be owned or leased by the licensee. Proof of ownership of the vehicle must include:
- The original of the vehicle registration document (logbook/V5), certificate of registration for the vehicle (the new keeper's supplement section of the V5 document) will be accepted in the case of vehicles that are not licensed

at the time that the application is made, and the vehicle has recently been purchased by the applicant (documentary evidence will be required).

- Receipt for the purchase of the vehicle, or documentary evidence of any leasing arrangement with a vehicle leasing company must also be provided where the applicant does not own the vehicle.
- Insurance or insurance cover note for the vehicle. The document must state that the vehicle is insured for use as a Hackney Carriage or as a private hire vehicle (as appropriate).
- Current MOT certificate

### **9.26 Temporary Replacement Vehicle**

If a licensed HC or PH vehicle has been involved in an accident or is otherwise incapacitated, an application can be made for a replacement vehicle to be licensed on a temporary basis. The existing vehicle licence will need to be returned to the Council, and the replacement vehicle will be granted the same licence number. Should the original vehicle be repaired, it will need to be reinspected before being used again.

Any replacement vehicle must meet the relevant council's specification for Hackney Carriage or private hire vehicles and where the original vehicle was wheelchair accessible, the replacement must meet the same specification.

### **9.27 Transfer of Interest.**

A 'transfer' is the sale of a licensed vehicle (including the paper licence and licence plate) from one person to another as opposed to when a proprietor wishes to license a vehicle as a HC or PH vehicle which is not currently licensed as such, which is an application for a 'new vehicle licence'.

If an existing proprietor sells (or transfers) a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle currently licensed by the Council, they must notify us of the name and address of the new proprietor within 14 days of the date of transfer.

### **9.28 Change of Vehicle**

If an existing proprietor wishes to change their licensed vehicle, please check that it complies with the policy requirements above before completing a purchase. The Council is not responsible for applicants purchasing vehicles which are unsuitable.

### **9.29 Accidents**

If at any time the vehicle is involved in an accident, however minor, the proprietor must inform the Council within 72 hours. An accident report form will then need to be completed and submitted to the Council within this timeframe.

If a vehicle is still being used following an accident, it will be required to be presented for inspection at the Council's as soon as possible after the



accident has taken place. The appointment must be arranged and paid for by the proprietor. Failure to present the vehicle for inspection following an accident may result in the vehicle's licence being suspended until such time as the vehicle is presented for examination.

If the vehicle is so damaged that it cannot be driven, then the vehicle proprietor must inform the Council via the accident form and provide photographic evidence of the vehicle's condition that clearly illustrates the reasons why the vehicle cannot be driven / presented for examination. The proprietor must advise the Council once it is repaired and book an appointment for a vehicle inspection. Evidence that the vehicle has been repaired to the required standard will need to be provided e.g. receipts/reports.

If the vehicle is not going to be repaired, the proprietor is responsible for removing the external plate, internal plate and returning these to the Council.

### **9.30 Lost, stolen or damaged licences**

If a proprietor loses a paper licence or the vehicle plate, or the plate has been stolen or damaged they will need to notify the Council within 48 hours of discovery, and request a replacement. There is a fee which must be paid before a replacement is issued.

### **9.31 Display of vehicle licence plates**

The external licence plate supplied by the Licensing Authority shall be securely fixed to the outside rear of the vehicle. The licence plate remains the property of the council. If required to do so at any time the licence holder must return the plate to the council within seven days.

The Council also issues internal vehicle licence plates which must be displayed inside the windscreen on the top of the near side (passenger side).

### **9.32 Exemption from displaying a private hire licence plate**

The Licensing Authority recognises operators may wish to cater for an 'exclusive' or important corporate client base and provide a vehicle of a prestige model and specification without the display of a licence plate or vehicle signage. An operator may apply for an exemption to the requirement to display a licence plate for the following approved work only:

- Exclusive chauffeured work where the dignity or security of the person would be affected if they were to be seen in a plated licensed vehicle, or
- Other 'special' journeys where the client specifically requests a vehicle of a prestige make and specification at the time of booking and pays a recognisably higher fee for that service compared to that charged for a non-exempt vehicle displaying corporate identity.

For clarification the Policy requires that in order to be considered for a 'plate exemption' the vehicle must carry out exclusively chauffeured or other special

work and as such there is a distinguishing feature between 'chauffeured' work and taking a business person to the airport for example.

To apply for an exemption you must supply the following documents:

- completed private hire vehicle application form, detailing the reasons for exemption
- letters from clients demonstrating the vehicle is required for chauffeured work and why the display of a plate would be detrimental to the client, for example a discreet service required by a well-known person seeking as much anonymity as possible.
- three months of booking records for all operators the driver works for, demonstrating that the vehicle is primarily used for chauffeured work (for new applications, three months of booking records must be provided after the plate exemption has been given).
- invoices for each named client who has supplied a letter in support of your application for the same period as the booking records (for new applications, three months of booking records must be provided after the plate exemption has been given)

The Council will also consider factors such as the list price of the vehicle, specification of vehicle and volume of exclusive or chauffeured work.

An exemption will only be granted where the Council is satisfied that the vehicle will be used exclusively or primarily for 'chauffeured' private hire work. It is expected that 'primary use' means at least 90% of the work for **businesses (not schools or other authorities)** with an account with the operator, as evidenced via a minimum of three months booking records. The Council may undertake an audit of booking records at any point during the exemption to ensure that the vehicle is being used for chauffeured work.

Exemptions may be withdrawn at any time by the Council and if the licence holder cannot prove that the vehicle is used exclusively or primarily for 'chauffeured' private hire work.

Exemptions are subject to annual review and licence holders must reapply each year.

If an exemption request is refused or withdrawn, the operator may ask for the Council to reconsider the decision by providing new, relevant information within 21 days of that decision. The Council aims to reconsider any such application within 10 working days of receipt. An officer with delegated authority will consider the information before making a final decision. The Council will make a record of the reasons for the decision and provide the operator with a copy of that document. There is no right of appeal to the Magistrates' Court.

If the Council grant an exemption, we will issue your licence subject to the additional conditions at **Appendix F**.

### 9.33 Vehicle testing

Euro 4 Petrol and Euro 6 Diesel

## **MOT and Vehicle Inspection Test (VIT)**

Vehicles are required to pass a standard MOT test and the VIT.

MOT Testing must be done annually for vehicles over the age of one year and six monthly for vehicles over the age of five years.

VIT tests will be undertaken annually at the Council Offices.

Applicants must include an MOT certificate with their application form, which is the result of a test carried out in the 14 days prior to the date of application for grant or renewal of the licence.

Checks will be undertaken from time to time and penalty points will be awarded for failure to meet the timescales for MOTs to be conducted.

LEOs will consider MOT advisories and decide a course of action on a case by case basis. Where the MOT indicates that they may be defective, applicants would normally be required to replace tyres or repair to British Standard BS AU 159 (with evidence of this to be provided). At the discretion of LEOs, advisories on MOTs will usually be required to be fixed within one month of the MOT - with evidence to this effect to be provided. Failure to comply with this requirement would usually result in the issue of penalty points to a driver's hackney carriage or private hire driver licence and in some cases in the suspension of the vehicle licence. Other issues, including those relating to aesthetics, will be taken on a case-by-case basis and LEOs may at their discretion request that applicants have faults remedied within a reasonable time frame in order to promote a certain standard of vehicle for consumption by the HC and PH using public.

If the vehicle has not passed the vehicle test it cannot be used as a licensed vehicle even during the duration of an existing licence and any existing licence will be suspended.

Vehicle tests should not be used as a mechanism for identifying faults to be rectified. As such, the Council takes a serious view of proprietors who fail to present their vehicle for inspection in a satisfactory condition.

If the vehicle fails an inspection due mid-term or upon renewal, this will demonstrate to the Council that the proprietor is not complying with vehicle maintenance and licence conditions.

### **9.34 Vehicle Specifications**

#### **Emissions**

On 14 October 2020 the Council declared a climate emergency. The Council encourages drivers and operators to adopt more efficient licensed vehicles, which reduce the levels of CO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emitted. The use of alternative fuels

and improved technology such as fully electric vehicles will further reduce local emissions.

The Council currently have a 10 year age limit for non-wheelchair accessible and 12 for wheelchair accessible. If a driver currently has a ULEZ compliant car then their age limit of when it will be last licensed will now be extended to 15 years old. For new vehicles between the policy being adopted and 30 September 2025 if the vehicle is not ULEZ compliant then a 10 year age limit for non-wheelchair accessible and 12 for wheelchair accessible will apply.

<b>From 1 October 2025</b>	<b>From 1 October 2028</b>	<b>From 1 October 2028</b>
New - will only be granted to ULEZ compliant vehicles. The maximum a license will be granted is when the vehicle is 15 years old.	New non-wheelchair accessible vehicle-licence will only be granted if the vehicle is zero emissions (electric) with no age limit	New wheelchair accessible - will only be granted to ULEZ and/or electric compliant vehicles. The maximum a license will be granted is when the vehicle is 15 years old.
Renewal of currently licensed vehicles at the time of this policy being adopted - The maximum a license will be granted is when the vehicle is 15 years old.	Renewal of currently licensed vehicles at the time of this policy being adopted - The maximum a license will be granted is when the vehicle is 15 years old which must be ULEZ compliant	Renewal wheelchair accessible - The maximum a license will be granted is when the vehicle is 15 years old which must be ULEZ compliant

To further support the uptake of Ultra- Low and Zero Emission vehicles, there is no minimum engine size for hybrid/LPG, electric or other alternatively powered vehicles.

Due to the nature of the technological advancement of zero emissions vehicles and emissions standards this policy will be continuously reviewed.

### **9.35 Vehicle Type and Design**

All vehicles must have at least four passenger doors (not including the boot door) for the use of persons conveyed in the vehicle and a separate means of ingress and egress for the driver.

All vehicles which are the subject of a licence application must be manufactured or adapted to carry up to eight passengers not including the driver; this number includes any passengers who may be seated in wheelchairs if the vehicle is capable of transporting such passengers. Where a vehicle has been altered, adapted or modified only Type Approval Certificates granted after alteration, adaptation or modification will be accepted.

Any vehicle that has been purpose built, or any vehicle that has been modified or converted to carry a disabled person confined to a wheelchair, will be considered for licensing provided the vehicle complies with the requirements and guidelines laid down by the councils.

For reasons of public safety, the councils will not accept any vehicle that has been subject to such damage as to be categorised as a 'write-off' by a relevant insurance company under the Code of Practice for the Disposal of Motor Vehicle Salvage. This includes Category S (formerly C) and Category N (formerly D) vehicles. This is because the history of the reasons for a write off cannot be established.

Any vehicle with a 'Q' plate registration will not be licensed as 'Q' plates are issued for vehicles which are either not originally registered in the UK and proof of age was unavailable at registration or for vehicles that have been built using a significant proportion of used parts. 'Q' plates are also used to disguise stolen or accident damaged vehicles.

The councils will not license purpose built hackney carriage vehicles as private hire as this can confuse members of the public.

### **9.36 Insurance**

It is required that all insurance documents must be shown before a licence is issued. This requires:

- A valid certificate of insurance or cover note confirming that insurance is in place for each driver of the vehicle and specifying use as either a HC or PH Vehicle.
- A HC vehicle requires insurance to cover public hire and hire and reward.
- A PH vehicle requires insurance to cover hire and reward.
- A cover note will be accepted, and the licence will be issued on the understanding that a certificate of insurance will be produced at the earliest opportunity.

The council will undertake periodic auditing of licensed vehicles to verify that the vehicle is appropriately insured.

### **9.37 Meters and Fare Charts**

#### **Hackney Carriages**

All HC vehicles must be fitted with a taxi meter. Meters used to calculate fares must be accurate, display the correct time and be capable of displaying the various tariffs as approved by the Council (including extra charges recoverable under the approved Table of Fares). The meter shall be calibrated and set to the Council's agreed charging distances and tariffs currently in force and sealed by the meter agent.

Meters will be checked for accuracy by a measured mile distance or by waiting time during the vehicle test, or upon request by an authorised officer.

Meters must be positioned in order that the fare must be clearly displayed to the passenger throughout the journey and positioned in a manner so as not to obstruct the view of the driver.

Meters in use must not facilitate fraudulent use. Any signs of tampering including the breaking of any seals will result in a suspension notice being issued. For the suspension notice to be removed, the vehicle meter must have been resealed and calibrated by an approved meter company and presented to the Council for inspection.

The Council's fare chart must be displayed clearly in the vehicle at all times for passengers to view.

### **Private Hire Vehicles**

Private hire vehicles are not permitted to be fitted with a taximeter.

#### **9.38 Roof Signs**

The roof sign must be affixed to HC vehicles at all times. The only exceptions to this are:

- when the vehicle is parked off the street at a proprietor's home or
- in a private taxi office car park for security reasons or
- when the vehicle is undergoing maintenance work or is being cleaned.

In the above cases the roof sign must be put back on the vehicle before the vehicle is used on the highway.

There is no exception to the roof sign unless the vehicle is a London style cab or other similar vehicle that has a built-in taxi roof sign.

In the event of the Council not being satisfied that a roof sign meets the specification, the conditions of the vehicle licence will have been breached and the proprietor requested to remedy the defect. The licensee of the vehicle may then be subject to a penalty within the Penalty Points Scheme and if not suitably rectified will then have the sanction of law imposed.

#### **9.39 Seating and Interior dimensions**

Licensed vehicles should have:

- Rear headroom that is adequate for passengers to sit comfortably and in any event for their head not to touch the ceiling above them;
- The distance between the rear of the forward seat or dashboard and the front face of the passenger seat should measure a minimum of 660 mm per passenger.

- Licensed Vehicles should have rear legroom that is adequate for passengers to sit comfortably and in any event for their knees not to touch the seating in front of them;
- Fitted fully operational seat belts, one for each passenger to be carried, fully compliant with British Standards except where the law specifically provides an exemption.

### **Seating**

Where a vehicle provides separate seats for each person, the vehicle shall be licensed to carry one person for each separate seat provided – submit to them meeting the Council's minimum size requirements of 410mm wide;

Where the vehicle is fitted with continuous seats, the vehicle shall be licensed to carry one person for each complete length of 410 mm measured in a straight line lengthwise across the front of such a seat, to a maximum not exceeding the number of seatbelts fitted.

Where the vehicle is fitted with continuous seats and with arms to separate the seating spaces, the arms shall be ignored in measuring the seat, if the arms can be folded back or otherwise put out of use, to a maximum not exceeding the number of seatbelts fitted.

Where the seating in the licensed vehicle can be rearranged, the proprietor must ensure that no more seats than are stated on the licence, including wheelchair(s), are fitted in the vehicle whether occupied or not. Once the vehicle has been tested and approved by the Council the seating layout must not be altered without further approval except for the temporary accommodation of a wheelchair in vehicles approved for such purpose.

Vehicles with a third row of seats:

- All passengers must have access to a door, one of which must be on the nearside of the vehicle.
- In cases where there is no door adjacent to a row of seats, no passenger must have to pass through a gap of less than 300mm at the narrowest point to exit the vehicle via the rear side doors.
- The middle row of seats must have more than one seat capable of fully tilting and which meet the necessary exit dimension of 300mm at both exit points.

### **9.40 Tyres**

Tyre treads are designed to remove water efficiently and effectively from the road surface and provide maximum grip. All tyres fitted to the vehicle must have at least 1.6 mm tread depth throughout a continuous band in the centre 3/4 of the tread and around the entire circumference of the tyre, as per MOT requirements.

Tyres fitted to a motor vehicle or trailer must be fit for purpose and be free from any defects which might damage the road or endanger any person. Fit for purpose means that a tyre must:

- be compatible with the types of tyres fitted to the other wheels,
- not have any lump, bulge or tear caused by separation or partial failure of the structure,
- not have a cut or tear in excess of 25mm or 10% of the sectional width of the tyre, whichever is the greater, and which is deep enough to reach the ply or cord,
- not have any part of the ply or cord exposed.
- be correctly inflated to the vehicle / tyre manufacturer's recommended pressure.

All replacement tyres fitted to licensed vehicles must be new (i.e. not have been used previously on any other vehicle) and have been fitted by a reputable vehicle maintenance company / contractor. Vehicle proprietors are required to retain invoices / receipts to show that any tyre that is purchased meets this requirement.

The fitting of part worn tyres to licensed vehicles is not permitted.

#### **9.41 Spare Wheels**

Vehicles must carry a jack and tools for changing the wheels including a locking wheel nut tool if security bolts are fitted to the vehicle (not required for vehicles with run flat tyres or original manufacturers inflation kit). Together with:

- a) a spare wheel suitable for immediate use and properly maintained, OR
- b) if the spare wheel is of the temporary space saver type, it may only be used to complete the particular journey or hiring the vehicle is engaged on when the wheel change is necessary, OR
- c) Original manufacturer's tyre inflation kit with all fittings and un-used. Or
- d) Run flat tyres to the original manufacturer's specification.

#### **9.42 Smoking**

The Health Act 2006 prohibits the smoking of tobacco or any other substance by anyone in a licensed hackney carriage or private hire vehicle. The legislation applies at all times whilst the vehicle remains licensed, thus smoking remains prohibited when the vehicle is not hired or not for hire. Every licensed vehicle is required to carry appropriate signage under the Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2007. Guidance and signs are available from the Smoke Free England website.

To avoid any doubt and promote a professional image of the licensed trade, the use of electronic or vaporising devices is not permitted in licensed vehicles at any time.

#### **9.43 Access for wheelchair users and equipment**

Euro 4 Petrol and Euro 6 Diesel



The Council are committed to social inclusion and ensuring that disabled residents have a variety of opportunities to enjoy a high quality of life. For this reason, the councils consider it important that disabled residents have access to all forms of public transportation.

All wheelchair accessible vehicles must be able to load a wheelchair using the access equipment by the side or rear access doors. The side access door must be the door situated on the nearside of the vehicle, i.e. the kerbside when stopped in a normal road.

The aperture of the door into which the access equipment is fitted shall have minimum clear headroom in its central third of 1220mm (48 inches). The measurement shall be taken from the upper centre of the aperture to a point directly below on either the upper face of the fully raised platform or the upper face of the ramp fully deployed on level ground. A locking mechanism shall be fitted that holds the access door in the open position whilst in use.

### **Equipment**

A wheelchair accessible vehicle shall be fitted with either of the following forms of wheelchair access equipment:

Ramps- Any purpose designed access ramp that is carried must be lightweight and easy to deploy. The installed ramp shall have visible reference to a safe working load of 250 kg and certified to BS6109.

A ramp for the loading of a wheelchair and occupant must be available at all times for use, as a minimum, at the nearside passenger door on all new vehicles presented for licensing. The ramp must have a safety lip, be 70cm wide, as a minimum, and comprise a single non-slip surface. It is desirable for this facility to be available at the offside passenger door also. An adequate locking device must be fitted to ensure that the ramp does not slip or tilt when in use. Provision must be made for the ramp to be stowed safely when not in use.

Wheelchair lift – a purpose designed wheelchair lift shall conform to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER). Vehicles presented for inspection with a wheelchair lift will require a valid LOLER certificate. All equipment used to lift people requires inspection every six months. The LOLER regulations require that records of inspection must be kept for two years or until the next inspection as a minimum.

The wheelchair access equipment shall be fitted such that it terminates at the interior floor level so as to allow smooth entry/exit of the wheelchair.

The wheelchair must always be carried in a secure and stable position as recommended by the vehicle manufacturer or conversion company. In the case of purpose-built vehicles i.e. London style taxis, this position will be facing the rear of the vehicle. In the case of vehicles which have been specially converted for the purpose of conveying wheelchairs, the converter's

recommendations shall be followed. Please note this will always be either facing the front or rear of the vehicle. Wheelchairs must never be carried facing sideways in a vehicle.

A system for the effective anchoring and securing of wheelchairs shall be provided within the vehicle in all spaces designated as wheelchair spaces. The system and the devices used to secure a wheelchair to the vehicle shall comply with the relevant standards laid down in European Directive 76/115 EEC (as amended by 90/629 EEC) or the UK equivalent standard.

All wheelchair tracking must comply with European Standard UNECE Regulation 14 (EC Directive 76/115 EEC) or the UK equivalent standard.

Each wheelchair user shall be provided with a disabled-person seatbelt, which fastens to the structure of the vehicle either permanently or temporarily by use of approved fixings to the position of the wheelchair. This is required by (European Directive 76/115 EEC or the UK equivalent standard and Regulations 46 and 47 Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986).

A VOSA certificate of compliance following a post conversion inspection or construction to agreed standards will indicate compliance with the above standards.

The council is aware of the different demands for private hire vehicles, particularly those involved in providing transport through school contracts for disabled children. Operators also need to be aware of their liabilities under health and safety legislation in respect of staff that they employ to ensure that they provide a safe system of work for the driver.

The Council will encourage the provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles through financial incentives in vehicle application fees. There will be a separate annual fee set for wheelchair accessible taxi vehicles and published in the fees and charges book.

#### **9.44 CCTV**

The council will not require enhanced security or CCTV measures in vehicles. Operators and drivers may install such equipment, but its use must be clearly indicated by signs in the vehicle including contact details for the system manager/operator. All such equipment and images must be operated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, GDPR and the ICO code of practice for surveillance cameras. It is the responsibility of the driver/operator to ensure compliance.

Audio recording on video equipment must not be enabled by default. Audio must only be used when the driver feels there is a threat to themselves or another person. If the audio is turned on, then the driver must make the person being filmed aware that audio recording is taking place.

When requested by a Licensing Officer investigating a complaint or incident drivers must release all relevant recordings free of charge within 36 hours of the request.

#### **9.45 Windows**

No vehicle shall be fitted with tinting film over and above that included at manufacture.

#### **9.46 Signage and advertising**

Vehicles are required to display signage to state how a complaint can be made to the Council.

Any advertisements on any vehicles must be legal and comply with the advertising standards agency code of practice.

#### **9.47 Limousines and Special Event Vehicles**

Any limousines or 'special event' vehicles with 8 seats or less which are used to transport passengers for hire or reward must be licensed as Private Hire Vehicles. Hire and reward has a wide definition in case law which goes further than the simple test of paying a fee for the journey.

The Council considers the following types of vehicles to be 'special event vehicles' in the context of licensing:

- decommissioned emergency service vehicles
- vintage vehicles
- sporting or performance vehicles
- courtesy cars used for transporting customers to and from specific venues such as hotels and nightclubs
- other non-standard type converted vehicles used for special events.

The above list is not exhaustive, and other types of vehicles may be considered from time to time. When considering an application for a special event vehicle, the Council will have regard to the general requirements for Private Hire vehicles contained within this policy and relevant appendices.

All vehicles used for these purposes must meet relevant British or European standards. Any alterations to a manufacturer's standard specification will require M1 EWVTA. Any subsequent changes to the vehicle will invalidate this approval.

When a vehicle has been imported into this country, the importer must produce a declaration from the testing authority (DVSA) that the vehicle will never carry more than eight passengers.

Drivers of limousines and special event vehicles must complete the licensing application process in the same way as any other licensed driver.

Three-wheeled motor vehicles such as Tuk Tuks or similar will not be licensed as HC or PH Vehicles.

## **10 Private Hire Operator Licenses**

**10.1** A Private Hire Operator (PHO) means a business or person who makes provision for the invitation or acceptance of bookings for PH vehicles. A licensed PH vehicle must only be booked through and despatched to a customer by a PHO, who must ensure that every licensed hire vehicle is driven by a person who holds a licence issued by the same Authority that issued the vehicle licence. This authority must be the same authority that issued the operator's licence, and this is known as the 'trinity' of licences.

Any person who makes provision for inviting or accepting bookings in the Spelthorne Borough, or who dispatches PH vehicles licensed by SBC must first obtain a Private Hire Operator's Licence from the Council.

All PHOs must satisfy the Council that they are fit and proper people to be granted a Private Hire Operators licence and must then remain a fit and proper person for the duration of that licence. The fitness and propriety of an operator will be monitored and assessed throughout the period that the licence is held.

Applicants are expected to act with honesty and integrity throughout the application process. Existing licence holders are also expected to act professionally at all times a licence is held and consequently both applicants and existing licence holders must therefore fully and accurately disclose any information that is requested. This includes information regarding previous convictions, warnings and reprimands, arrests, current investigations and pending criminal and civil proceedings.

## **10.2 Fit and Proper Test**

All PHO must satisfy the Council that they are fit and proper people to be granted a PHO licence and must then remain a fit and proper person for the duration of that licence. The fitness and propriety of an operator will be monitored and assessed throughout the period that the licence is held. The fit and proper test will apply to each of the directors or partners. PHO must advise the Council of any change in directors or partners.

Applicants are expected to act with honesty and integrity throughout the application process. Existing licence holders are also expected to always act professionally a licence is held and consequently both applicants and existing licence holders must therefore fully and accurately disclose any information that is requested. This includes information regarding previous convictions, warnings and reprimands, arrests, current investigations and pending criminal and civil proceedings.

To assess the suitability of an applicant (and to inform decision makers when answering the question above), the Licensing Authority will undertake whatever checks and apply whatever processes it considers necessary to ensure that licences are not issued to, or used by, unsuitable people. In

assessing the suitability of an applicant or licence holder, the Council will take into consideration the following factors:

- Criminality
- General conduct / standards of behaviour including online behaviour.
- The conduct as an individual holding a licence, including but not limited to complaints and other information received during the application process or course of the licence.
- The conduct of the applicant in making the application (e.g. whether they have acted with honesty and integrity during the application process).
- The previous licensing history of existing / former licence holders (including honesty and integrity).
- Whether the applicant has had a licence suspended, refused, or revoked by another licensing authority.
- Business practices demonstrated by the applicant (for example standard of record keeping, procedures, training and vetting of staff, compliance with other regulatory requirements, financial practices etc)
- Awareness of safeguarding, equalities and public safety matters, and procedures to ensure promotion of the same through the operation.
- Policies and practices to promote the safety and welfare of drivers under their control.

The Council will also consider further information sources such as the Police (including abduction notices), Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards, other licensing authorities and statutory agencies, and other information/complaints received.

If an operator, acting in their capacity as the holder of a different licence (for example driver's licence or vehicle proprietor's licence) fails to comply with the byelaws or conditions attached to that licence, or has that licence revoked for reasons of being unsuitable to hold that licence, the Council will consider this to reflect on their character as a licensed operator and they can expect to have their licence to operate suspended or revoked.

### **Safeguarding, Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE) and County Lines Training**

All new applicants for a PHO a driver licence must complete safeguarding, child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSAE) and county lines training prior to the issue of a licence. If the applicant/PHO is an existing driver, then the certificate can be used for the PHO purposes.

Applicants must produce a certificate confirming that they have passed the Safeguarding Adults and Child Sexual Exploitation Training<sup>12</sup>. The assessment should be no more than 12 months old when first applying to the Council.

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<sup>12</sup> Safeguarding Adults and Child Sexual Exploitation Training [LearnUpon](#)

Existing PHOs must complete refresher training every 3 years. The Council will expect all existing PHOs to have completed their refresher training by **1 October 2025**.

If the applicant/PHO is an existing driver, then the certificate can be used for the PHO purposes.

The form and structure of the training will be determined by the relevant council and may be administered by a third party.

### **10.3 Right of operator to work in the UK**

The Council is mandated under the Immigration Act 2016 to require all applicants to provide documentary evidence to confirm that they may legally work in the UK.

Where an applicant is subject to immigration controls, a licence will not be issued for longer than the period that the applicant has permission to undertake paid employment in the UK.

### **10.4 Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS)**

A criminal record check on an operator is seen as an important safety measure. If an application is received from a person who is not a driver currently licensed by SBC, then the applicant will be required to provide a Basic Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

All applicants for the grant or renewal of a licence requiring a DBS check will be responsible for the costs of obtaining the DBS certificate.

All applicants must declare on the application form any convictions, cautions or fixed penalty notices they have received. All licence holders shall notify the Council of any convictions or cautions received during their licence period.

All licence holders must subscribe to the DBS Online Update Service. Any costs maintaining this subscription must be met by the Licence holder. If a licence holder fails to sign up to the update service or fails to maintain subscription during the period that the licence is in force, then the licence will be suspended or revoked.

The licence holder must give permission for the council to undertake checks of their DBS status, which will be at a frequency of not less than once every **six months**. The council will use the update service to monitor the criminal record of licence holders. The update service can be used when a licence is renewed – if there are no changes recorded on the DBS certificate then a full DBS check will not be required. In all other cases a full DBS check will be required before a licence is renewed.

If an applicant or current licence holder has spent **three** continuous months or more overseas since the age of 10 the Council will need to see evidence of a

criminal record check from the country / countries visited covering the period that the applicant was overseas.

Because of the potential lifetime relevance of some of the most serious offences mentioned in this policy, the Council will need to ensure that sufficient background checks are conducted for those applicants that have lived overseas. For EU nationals (including UK citizens) suitable checks should be available. For those countries for which checks are not available, the Council will require a certificate of good conduct authenticated by the relevant embassy.

#### Criminal record checks for PHOs and their controllers

All staff working in a “Controller” capacity for a PH Operator (whether paid or unpaid) will need to be listed on the relevant space on the Council’s application form. Applicants and every Controller working under their employ (paid or unpaid) will need to submit a standard DBS disclosure or a Police National Computer (PNC) check obtained within the last month at the time of new application.

At such a time as a new Controller begins working for the PH Operator, a standard DBS disclosure or PNC check dated within the preceding month will be supplied to the Council accordingly.

If an applicant for a PH Operator licence or one of the Controllers working for them holds a current HC Driver licence, a PH Driver licence they need not submit a further DBS check.

As above, all “controllers” must subscribe to the DBS update service and must give permission for the council to undertake checks of their DBS status, which will be at a frequency of not less than once every **six months**. The council will use the update service to monitor the criminal record. The update service can be used when a licence is renewed – if there are no changes recorded on the DBS certificate then a full DBS check will not be required. In all other cases a full DBS check will be required. If the PHO requests the Controller to carrying on working in this capacity without a new DBS check, then the Council may deem the PHO to not be fit and proper and will take action in accordance with this policy.

Where a standard DBS disclosure or PNC check brings to light convictions, cautions, reprimands, warnings, charges etc which do not necessarily lead to conviction or any other information which may call into question the character of an applicant or his/her Controller(s) – the Council may take this information into account when determining whether to grant or renew a licence. The Council needs to assure that staff members working for Operators in a controller capacity are fit and proper to do so. Controllers have access to sensitive information, such as which properties are empty, as well as information about vulnerable people.

When considering whether an individual is appropriate to carry out this role, the Council therefore expects PHOs to give regard to the same ‘Policy

regarding the relevance of convictions and other related information' which the Council itself references when determining applications from prospective drivers (attached to this document as **Appendix A**). It is not expected that PHOs will employ persons with a previous conviction, caution, court order or similar (including reprimands, warnings, charges which do not necessarily lead to conviction or any other information); which could call into question their suitability to work in a position of trust. Furthermore, where an individual is employed as a controller, but convictions later come to light which might call into question their character, PHOs would be expected to refer to the 'Policy regarding the relevance of convictions and other related information' and take appropriate action accordingly. A dim view will be taken of PHOs found to be employing persons who it might not consider fit and proper, this information may result in the Council reviewing whether it considers an individual fit and proper to continue to hold a PHO licence.

Controllers are also required to complete an online training module regarding safeguarding.

It is expected that a "fit & proper" PHO will undertake the necessary checks to ensure that controllers working under his/her employ have permission to work in the UK, failure to do so would call into question whether they are suitable to hold said PHO licence and may trigger a referral to a Licensing Sub-Committee in order for a panel of members to determine whether the licence should remain in place.

### **10.5 Relevance of Convictions and Cautions etc.**

The Council is committed to ensuring that the licensed trade are fit and proper. This will entail periodic audits of licensed operators to ensure that material changes are identified and acted upon.

In relation to the consideration of convictions, cautions or equivalent or deferred prosecution scheme, warnings, arrests, reprimands and other 'relevant information', the Council has adopted the policy set out in **Appendix A**. The terms of this policy will have immediate effect.

The policy at **Appendix A** will be used to determine the suitability of an existing licence holder should it be necessary to consider action in relation to the licence during the licence period.

### **10.6 Operator Base**

To be eligible for a PH Operator licence, applicants would normally be expected to operate from premises located within the Borough.

With the increasing popularity of app-based PH Operations there has been an influx of enquiries from prospective PH Operators who wish to work via "virtual offices". For the avoidance of confusion, a virtual office is one which need not be manned, from which any landline is redirected to a head office based elsewhere (often outside of the borough). In line with legal guidance outlined in Button On Taxis and under these circumstances, the Council is prepared to



accept applications for PH Operator licences under the proviso that the applicant agrees to supply digital records from their head office without delay on request from a LEO or other authorised officer working on behalf of the Council. Any failure to subsequently do so would immediately call into question the suitability of the applicant to hold a PH Operator licence and would usually trigger a referral to a Licensing Sub-Committee accordingly for members of the Licensing Committee to determine whether they deem it appropriate for the licence to remain in place.

### 10.7 Granting your application

If the Council grant an application, we will usually issue a licence for five years from the date of our decision. If a licence holder is subject to immigration controls as detailed below, the Council will issue a licence for a shorter period:

- If a licence holder's current right to live or work in the UK expires during the five-year period beginning on the date their application was determined, the Council will issue a licence until the date their current right to live or work in the UK expires.
- If the Home Office is currently determining a licence holder's right to live or work in the UK, and they are entitled to live and work in the UK pending final determination of that application, the Council will issue a licence for a maximum of 6 months from the date of our decision.

Under section 55(3) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council may attach conditions that it considers 'reasonably necessary' to private hire operator's licences. Applications are normally granted subject to the Council's Standard Licence Conditions contained within this Policy, however further, additional conditions may be attached on a case-by-case basis.

The decision to attach conditions to a licence may be appealed to the Magistrates Court.

### 10.8 Trading Names and Advertising

The names of any private hire operator business must not:

- be the same (or similar) to a private hire business already licensed by the Council, or
- include any reference to 'taxis' or words with a similar meaning.

### 10.9 Record Keeping

Private Hire Operators licensed by the Council must maintain records covering the following information, and provide these records to the Council upon request:

<b>Vehicles</b>	<b>Drivers</b>
Names of proprietors/drivers of each vehicle	Names of all drivers
Registration number, make, model, type, colour and engine size	Badge numbers

Plate number and expiry date of current licence	Call signs
Number of passenger seats	Expiry dates of current driver's licences
Insurance details	Date each driver joined the operator and the date any driver left the operator
Vehicle call signs	All vehicles driver is linked to
Expiry date of vehicle road tax	Right to work
Expiry date of Mot	

**Prior to each journey, the operator shall record the following information:**

- name of passenger
- contact details of passenger
- number of passengers
- details of any luggage
- whether the passenger has any disability, especially if they have an assistance dog or wheelchair
- the destination, including any multiple pick ups, drop offs or requested stops during the journey
- date and time at which the booking was made
- date and time at which the booking was allocated to the driver
- plate number and badge number of the vehicle and driver undertaking the booking
- date, time and location of the pick up
- price quoted for the booking
- date, time and location that the booking was completed
- date and time of any subsequent cancellation or amendment
- the signature (or in the case of a computer system, the identity) of the person taking and dispatching the bookings).

**Format and Retention of Records**

- If the operating base is not located in Spelthorne Borough, the operator must be able to produce any operating records in an electronic format at the request of the Council.
- The operator must keep an accurate record of every booking of a private hire vehicle or hackney carriage accepted by them. The loss of records by theft or otherwise must be reported to the Council in writing within 24 hours, and immediately to the police.
- All such records must be in English, permanent, legible, and preserved for a period of not less than 24 months following the date of the last entry.
- Records must be kept in one of the following forms: -
  - a bound book with consecutively numbered pages (loose leaf registers are not acceptable) or
  - on continuous stationery which has been generated in the form of an instantaneous print out by a computerised system. The Operator must ensure that adequate supplies of continuous stationery and

- ink cartridges are maintained, and that the printer is appropriately replenished to ensure that at all times full and legible booking details are printed, or
  - a computerised recording system which automatically generates a permanent entry onto a computer hard drive, a recordable CD or DVD or other approved server at the same time the booking is entered onto the system.
- No alterations to records may be made – any amendment must be made to the original record by way of an addition.
- Entries in the bound book, or on the digital copy generated by a computerised system, must cover a 24-hour period and must contain information in relation to only one private hire firm and no details in connection with the bookings of other private hire firms. The Operator must ensure that any booking clerk involved is competent in the recording of bookings and operating the system used.
- The records of bookings must be always maintained and kept up to date and must be made available for inspection at all reasonable times without notice by any duly Authorised Officer of the Council or any Police Officer. Such Officers must be permitted to photograph and / or remove such records howsoever kept from the premises if so required.
- The operator must have capacity to send records electronically (by email) to an Authorised officer upon request.
- The Operator must keep these records for a period of two years from the date on which the driver first commenced driving for the Operator.

Private Hire Operators licensed by the Council are expected to provide the following policies and procedures upon application/renewal. Compliance with these will be a condition of the operator's licence. Any changes must be agreed in writing by the Council and must be reviewed at the request of the Council. Any information arising from the application of these procedures (such as staff training records, or complaint records) must also be provided to the Council upon request.

#### 10.10 **Private Hire Operator Policies and Procedures**

PHO operators are expected to provide the following policies and procedures upon application/renewal. Compliance with these will be a condition of the PHO licence.

##### **(a) Procedures for Vetting Staff**

Operators or applicants for a licence are required to provide a written policy regarding their employment of ex-offenders in roles that have contact with the public, access to booking records and/or customer information, and/or oversee the dispatching of vehicles.

As with the threshold for obtaining a PHV operators' licence, those staff with a conviction for relevant offences detailed in our Conviction policy attached at Appendix B (other than those relating to driving) may not be suitable to handle the sensitive information the public may provide.

Operators must hold and maintain a register of all staff that have contact with the public, access to booking records and/or customer information, and/or oversee the dispatching of vehicles and be able to evidence that they have had sight of a basic DBS check on all individuals listed and this is compatible with their policy on employing ex-offenders. The register must also include ensuring the staff have the right to live and work in the UK.

#### **(b) Staff Training**

Training records of all staff must be maintained, and refresher training provided at appropriate intervals covering the following:

- Data protection
- Emergency procedures
- Breakdown procedures
- Customer complaints
- Lost property
- Young and vulnerable customers
- Equalities (Disability Awareness training must be undertaken)<sup>13</sup>

#### **Sub-Contracting**

If an operator sub-contracts a booking, whether to another licensed PHO or a HC vehicle, they should inform the customer and fix the price, and if using a hackney taking care not to charge more than the HC metered rate if the journey starts and ends in the relevant district. A clear record of the sub-contracting and when the customer was informed shall be kept.

The Council would expect that the operator receiving and undertaking the sub-contracted booking is subject to the same standards as operators licensed by Spelthorne Borough Council, and that the Spelthorne licensed operator receiving the original booking will have taken steps to ensure the sub-contracting operator upholds these standards.

#### **Use of Public Service Vehicles**

The use of public service vehicles (PSV) licensed drivers and vehicles to fulfil bookings accepted under a PHO licence is strictly forbidden.

Drivers of PSVs who are PCV licence holders are not subject to the same checks as PHV drivers.

#### **Licensing Compliance Procedures**

The operator shall have procedures in place to ensure all drivers and vehicles used have the required licences and are complying with the relevant conditions of the licences. This should include a record of the initial verification and of the regular checks done by the operator showing compliance with each licence.

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<sup>13</sup> Section 7.2 Best Practice Guidance [Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance for licensing authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance-for-licensing-authorities-in-england)

The operator shall have procedures in place to ensure that no bookings are passed to a driver or vehicle without a valid licence, Mot, road tax or insurance.

### **Complaints and Lost Property**

Operators must keep a record of complaints and any lost property and have procedures to resolve these. Records of complaints received, investigations undertaken, and any disciplinary action must be made available to the Licensing Authority or Police officer upon request. If an operator terminates the use of a driver, then this information including full reasons must be provided to the Licensing Authority in writing within 48 hours.

### **Data Protection**

Operators have a duty under data protection legislation to protect the information they record and as such must have written procedures for protecting the information they hold. The Information Commissioner's Office provides comprehensive guidance on registering as a data controller and how to meet legal obligations.

### **Insurance**

Before an application for a PHO licence is granted, the applicant shall provide evidence that they have taken out appropriate public liability insurance for the premises to be licensed if this premises is open to the public. Where necessary, operators must also hold employers liability insurance.

### **Reporting of Key events**

Key events which may affect the safety of the public must be reported to the licensing authority within 48 hours.

Such events may include, but are not limited to, system changes, system faults (such as the ability to drive without a licence, insurance, mot, tax), serious offences and complaints, suspensions, data breaches or losses, investigations and action taken by other regulators (including criminal investigations and the suspension/revocation of any PHO licence held with another licensing authority).

### **Operator's responsibility in relation to vehicles / drivers that are operated.**

The PHO must undertake sufficient checks to satisfy themselves that only suitable drivers and vehicles are used (and continue to be used) in the course of their business.

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## **Appendix A - Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Guidelines relating to relevance of previous convictions.**

## **1.1 Introduction**

- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the criteria considered by the relevant Council when determining whether or not an applicant or an existing licensee is a fit and proper person to hold a Hackney Carriage and/or private hire vehicle driver's licence or a private hire vehicle operator's licence.
- 1.3 Drivers and operators cannot be granted a licence unless the council is satisfied that they are a "fit and proper person" to hold that licence (see Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 ss 51 and 59 in respect of drivers; s55 in respect of operators).
- 1.4 There are no statutory criteria for vehicle licences, therefore the authority has an absolute discretion over whether to grant either a hackney carriage or private hire proprietor's licence.
- 1.5 'Fit and proper' will not be determined by a specified period of time having elapsed following a conviction or the completion of a sentence. Time periods are relevant and weighty considerations, but they are not the only determining factor.

## **2. General Policy**

- 2.1 Where an applicant has been convicted of a criminal offence, the Council cannot review the merits of the conviction [Nottingham City Relevant Council v. Mohammed Farooq (1998).]
- 2.2 "Fit and proper" means that the individual (or in the case of a private hire operator's licence, the limited company together with its directors and secretary, or all members of a partnership) is "safe and suitable" to hold the licence.
- 2.3 In determining safety and suitability the council is entitled to consider all matters concerning that applicant or licensee. The Council is not simply concerned with that person's behaviour whilst working in the hackney carriage or private hire trade. This consideration is far wider than simply criminal convictions or other evidence of unacceptable behaviour, and the entire character of the individual will be considered. This can include, but is not limited to, the individual's attitude and temperament. 38 Section 57(2)(c) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the council to consider the character of a company director or secretary, or any partner.
- 2.4 Convictions for attempt or conspiracy will be regarded as convictions for the substantive crime. A caution is regarded in the same way as a conviction. Fixed penalties and community resolutions will also be considered in the same way as a conviction.
- 2.5 Matters which have not resulted in a criminal conviction (whether that is the result of an acquittal, a conviction being quashed, decision not to prosecute or an investigation which is continuing where the individual has been bailed) can and will be considered by the Council. In addition, complaints where there

was no police involvement will also be considered. Within this document, any reference to "conviction" will also include matters that amount to criminal behaviour, but which have not resulted in a conviction.

- 2.6 In the case of any new applicant who has been charged with any offence and is awaiting trial, the determination will be deferred until the trial has been completed or the charges withdrawn. Where an existing licensee is charged, it will be for the council to decide what action to take in the light of this policy.
- 2.7 In all cases, the council will consider the conviction or behaviour in question and what weight should be attached to it, and each case will be determined on its own merits, and in the light of this policy.
- 2.8 Any offences committed, or unacceptable behaviour reported whilst driving a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle, concerning the use of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle, or in connection with an operator of a private hire vehicle will be viewed as aggravating features, and the fact that any other offences were not connected with the hackney carriage and private hire trades will not be seen as mitigating factors.
- 2.9 In addition to the nature of the offence or other behaviour, the quantity of matters and the period over which they were committed will also be considered. Patterns of repeated unacceptable or criminal behaviour are likely to cause greater concern than isolated occurrences as such patterns can demonstrate a propensity for such behaviour or offending.
- 2.10 Most applicants or licensees will have no convictions and that is clearly the ideal situation. In relation to other people, it is accepted that human beings do make mistakes and lapse in their conduct for a variety of reasons, and it is further accepted that many learn from experience and do not go on to commit further offences. Accordingly, in many cases an isolated conviction, especially if committed some time ago, may not prevent the grant or renewal of a licence.
- 2.11 It is also important to recognise that once a licence has been granted, there is a continuing requirement on the part of the licensee to maintain their 'fit and proper' status. The council has powers to take action against the holder of all types of licence (driver's, vehicle and operator's) and it must be understood that any convictions or other actions on the part of the licensee which would have prevented them being granted a licence on initial application will lead to that licence being revoked.
- 2.12 Any dishonesty by any applicant or other person on the applicant's behalf which is discovered to have occurred in any part of any application process (e.g. failure to declare convictions, false names or addresses, falsified references) will result in a licence being refused, or if already granted, revoked, and may result in prosecution.
- 2.13 This policy does not replace the duty of the council to refuse to grant a licence where they are not satisfied that the applicant or licensee is a fit and proper

person. Where a situation is not covered by these guidelines, the authority must consider the matter from first principles and determine the fitness and propriety of the individual.

- 2.14 Where an individual is aware that they have committed an offence overseas which may be equivalent to those listed in this policy, applicants are strongly advised to seek independent expert or legal advice to ensure that they provide information that is truthful and accurate. Any foreign conviction will be considered in line with this policy. Failure to disclose or accurately disclose may result in the licence being refused, revoked, or suspended.

### **3. Powers**

- 3.1 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 excludes applicants or holders of a private hire vehicle or Hackney Carriage driver's licence from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that the Council can take account of all convictions, whether spent or not. Therefore, the Council will have regard to all relevant convictions. As detailed below, this will be particularly important where there is a long history of offending or a recent pattern of repeat offending.
- 3.2 In this policy the term "disqualification" refers to the period served, to take account of the fact that a court may reduce the period of disqualification from driving. An applicant must provide evidence in advance to prove that the court agreed a reduction in the period of disqualification.

### **4. Consideration of Disclosed Criminal History**

- 4.1 Applicants can discuss what effect their offending history may have on any application by contacting the Council for advice.
- 4.2 Applicants for the grant or renewal of a driver licence will be required to obtain an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This must include a check of the adult and child barred lists. Drivers will then be required to sign up to the DBS update service.
- 4.3 The Council will not issue any licence to an individual that appears on either barred list.
- 4.4 Applicants for the grant of Hackney Carriage or private hire vehicle licence, where that person is not the holder of a current driver licence issued by the Council, must provide a basic DBS certificate to accompany every application and renewal of the vehicle licence.
- 4.5 Applicants for the grant of an operator licence, where that person is not the holder of a current driver licence issued by the relevant council, must provide a basic DBS certificate annually throughout the currency of the licence.
- 4.6 The Council is also entitled to use other records and information that may be available to it in determining applications or an entitlement to continue holding a licence. This may include information held by the Council or other licensing authorities, and information disclosed by the police.



- 4.7 It is an offence for any person knowingly or recklessly to make a false declaration or to omit any material particularly when giving information required by the application for a licence. Where an applicant has made a false statement or a false declaration on their application for the grant or renewal of a licence, the application will be refused, and if the licence has been granted it will be revoked.
- 4.8 The sole purpose of Hackney Carriage and private hire licensing is to protect the public. That is the only consideration the relevant council can consider when determining an application for a licence or whether to take action against an existing licence (suspend, revoke or refuse to renew).
- 4.9 Ideally, all those involved in the Hackney Carriage and private hire trades (Hackney Carriage and private hire drivers, Hackney Carriage and private hire vehicle owners and private hire operators) would be persons of the highest integrity. In many cases that is true, and the vast majority of those involved in these trades are decent, upstanding, honest and hardworking individuals. Unfortunately, as in any occupation or trade, there are those who fail to conform to those standards.
- 4.10 Drivers and operators cannot be granted a licence unless the authority is satisfied that they are a “fit and proper person” to hold that licence (see Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976<sup>14</sup> ss 51 and 59 in respect of drivers; s55 in respect of operators).
- 4.11 There are no statutory criteria for vehicle licences, therefore the relevant council has an absolute discretion over whether to grant either a Hackney Carriage or private hire proprietor's licence.
- 4.12 “Fit and proper” means that the individual (or in the case of a private hire operator's licence or vehicle proprietors licence, the limited company together with its directors and secretary, or ‘all members of a partnership’) is “safe and suitable” to hold the licence.
- 4.13 It is also important to recognise that once a licence has been granted, there is a continuing requirement on the part of the licensee to maintain their safety and suitability. The Council has powers to take action against the holder of all types of licence (driver's, vehicle and operator's) and it must be understood that any convictions or other actions on the part of the licensee which would have prevented them being granted a licence on initial application will lead to that licence being revoked.
- 4.14 Any dishonesty by any applicant or other person on the applicant's behalf which is discovered to have occurred in any part of any application process (e.g. failure to declare convictions, false names or addresses, falsified

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<sup>14</sup> Section 57(1) and 57(2)(c) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows a local authority to consider the character of a company director or secretary, or any partner.

references) will result in a licence being refused, or if already granted, revoked, and may result in prosecution.

- 4.15 As the direct impact on the public varies depending upon the type of licence applied for or held, it is necessary to consider the impact of particular offences on those licences separately. However, there are some overriding considerations which will apply in all circumstances.
- 4.16 Generally, where a person has more than one conviction, this will raise serious questions about their safety and suitability. The relevant Council is looking for safe and suitable individuals, and once a pattern or trend of repeated offending is apparent, a licence will not be granted or renewed.

## **5. Drivers**

- 5.1 As the criteria for determining whether an individual should be granted or retain a hackney carriage driver's licence are identical to the criteria for a private hire driver's licence, the two are considered together.
- 5.2 A taxi driver has direct responsibility for the safety of their passengers, direct responsibility for the safety of other road users and significant control over passengers who are in the vehicle. As those passengers may be alone, and may also be vulnerable, any previous convictions or unacceptable behaviour will weigh heavily against a licence being granted or retained.
- 5.3 As stated above, where an applicant has more than one conviction showing a pattern or tendency irrespective of time since the convictions, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are a 'fit and proper' person.
- 5.4 In relation to single convictions, before a licence will be granted the following time periods should elapse following completion of the sentence. "Sentence" means the period of imprisonment imposed (not simply the time served), the date of conviction if a fine was imposed, completion of any disqualification from driving, or the end of whichever lasts longer if more than one penalty was imposed.

## **6. Crimes Resulting in Death**

Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime which resulted in the death of another person or was intended to cause the death or serious injury of another person they will not be licensed.

## **7. Exploitation**

Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime involving, related to, or has any connection with abuse, exploitation, use or treatment of another individual irrespective of whether the victim or victims were adults or children, they will not be licensed. This includes slavery, child sexual exploitation, grooming, psychological, emotional, or financial abuse, but this is not an exhaustive list.

**8. Offences Involving Violence**

Where an applicant has a conviction for an offence of violence, or connected with any offence of violence, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

**9. Possession of a Weapon**

Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of a weapon or any other weapon related offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

**10. Sex and Indecency Offences**

Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence involving or connected with illegal sexual activity or any form of indecency, a licence will not be granted.

In addition to the above, the Council will not grant a licence to any applicant who is currently on the Sex Offenders Register or on any 'barred' list.

Those given a jail sentence of more than 30 months for sexual offending are placed on the register indefinitely. Those imprisoned for between six and 30 months remain on the register for 10 years, or five years if they are under 18. Those sentenced to six months or less are placed on the register for seven years, or three-and-a-half years if under 18. Those cautioned for a sexual offence are put on the register for two years, or one year if under 18.

**11. Dishonesty**

Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence of dishonesty, or any offence where dishonesty is an element of the offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

**12. Drugs**

Where an applicant has any conviction for, or related to, the supply of drugs, or possession with intent to supply or connected with possession with intent to supply, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of drugs, or related to the possession of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed. In these circumstances, any applicant will also have to undergo drugs testing at the time of application and every subsequent renewal at their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.

**13. Discrimination**

Where an applicant has a conviction involving or connected with discrimination in any form, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

**14. Motoring convictions**

Hackney Carriage and private hire drivers are professional drivers charged with the responsibility of carrying the public. Any motoring conviction demonstrates a lack of professionalism and will be considered seriously. It is accepted that offences can be committed unintentionally, and a single occurrence of a minor traffic offence would not prohibit the grant of a licence or may not result in action against an existing licence.

Subsequent convictions reinforce the fact that the licensee does not take their professional responsibilities seriously and is therefore not a safe and suitable person to be granted or retain a licence.

**15. Drink driving/driving under the influence of drugs/using a hand-held telephone or handheld device whilst driving**

Where an applicant has a conviction for drink driving or driving under the influence of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed. In these circumstances, any applicant will also have to undergo drugs testing at their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.

Where an applicant has a conviction for using a held-hand mobile telephone or a handheld device whilst driving, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the conviction or completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed, whichever is the later.

**16. Other Motoring Offences**

A minor traffic or vehicle related offence is one which does not involve loss of life, driving under the influence of drink or drugs, driving whilst using a mobile phone, and has not resulted in injury to any person or damage to any property (including vehicles). Where an applicant has 7 or more points on their DVLA licence for minor traffic or similar offences, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.<sup>15</sup>

A major traffic or vehicle related offence is one which is not covered above and any offence which resulted in injury to any person or damage to any property (including vehicles). It also includes driving without insurance, or any offence connected with motor insurance. Where an applicant has a conviction for a major traffic offence or similar offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

**17 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Offences**

- 17.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for an offence concerned with or connected to Hackney Carriage or private hire activity (excluding vehicle use),

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<sup>15</sup> Section 4.42 on Institute of Licensing – Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants and licensees in the hackney and private hire trades [guidance-on-suitability-online-pdf-2.pdf \(instituteoflicensing.org\)](https://www.instituteoflicensing.org/guidance-on-suitability-online-pdf-2.pdf)

a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.<sup>16</sup>

## 18 **Vehicle Use Offences**

- 18.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence which involved the use of a vehicle (including Hackney Carriages and private hire vehicles), a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.<sup>17</sup>

## 19 **Private Hire Operators**

- 19.1 A private hire operator (“an operator”) does not have direct responsibility for the safety of passengers, other road users or direct contact with passengers who are in the private hire vehicle (except where they are also licensed as a private hire driver). However, in performing their duties they obtain and hold considerable amounts of personal and private information about their passengers which must be treated in confidence and not revealed to others, or used by the operator or their staff for criminal or other unacceptable purposes.
- 19.2 As stated above, where an applicant has more than 1 conviction, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are a safe and suitable person.
- 19.3 Operators must ensure that any staff that are used within the business (whether employees or independent contractors) and are able to access any information as described above are subject to the same standards as the operator themselves. This can be effected by means of the individual staff member being required by the operator to obtain a basic DBS certificate. If an operator is found not to be applying the required standards and using staff that do not meet the Relevant Council's overall criteria, that will lead to the operator's licence being revoked.
- 19.4 As public trust and confidence in the overall safety and integrity of the private hire system is vital, the same standards will be applied to operators as those applied to drivers, which are outlined above.

## 20 **Vehicle Proprietors**

- 20.1 Vehicle proprietors (both Hackney Carriage and private hire) have two principal responsibilities. • Firstly, they must ensure that the vehicle is always maintained to an acceptable standard. • Secondly, they must ensure that the vehicle is not used for illegal or illicit purposes.

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<sup>16</sup> Section 4.44 Institute of Licensing Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants and licensees in the hackney and private hire trades [guidance-on-suitability-online-pdf-2.pdf \(instituteoflicensing.org\)](https://www.instituteoflicensing.org/guidance-on-suitability-online-pdf-2.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Section 4.45 Institute of Licensing Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants and licensees in the hackney and private hire trades [guidance-on-suitability-online-pdf-2.pdf \(instituteoflicensing.org\)](https://www.instituteoflicensing.org/guidance-on-suitability-online-pdf-2.pdf)

- 20.2 As stated above, where an applicant has more than one conviction, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are a safe and suitable person to be granted or retain a vehicle licence.
- 20.3 As public trust and confidence in the overall safety and integrity of the private hire system is vital, the same standards will be applied to proprietors as those applied to drivers, which are outlined above.

## 21 Licences Issued by Other Licensing Authorities

Applicants who hold a licence with another Council should not automatically assume that their application will be granted by this Relevant Council. Each case will be decided on its own merits.

Licensees who are licensed by multiple authorities are expected to inform all such authorities of the authorities that they are licensed by and to advise each authority of any changes in this respect; and should expect those authorities to share information regarding their conduct and to take it into account as appropriate.

## 22 Protected Cautions and Convictions

- 22.1 Standard and Enhanced DBS certificates will include details of convictions and cautions (excluding youth cautions, reprimands, and warnings) recorded on the Police National Computer (PNC). PNC records relating to protected cautions and convictions will not automatically appear on the certificate.
- 22.2 The rules regarding the automatic disclosure of convictions or cautions are set out in legislation. This states that a certificate must include the following:

<b>Disposal</b>	<b>Age when given/sentenced</b>	<b>How long ago</b>
Caution for specified offence	18 or over	Any time
Caution for non-specified offence	18 or over	Less than 6 years
Conviction for specified offence	Any age	Any time
Conviction resulting in custodial sentence	Any age	Any time
Conviction for non-specified offence	18 or over	Less than 11 years
Conviction for non-specified offence	Under 18	Less than 5 and a half years

- 22.3 A 'specified offence' is one which is on the list of specified offences agreed by Parliament which will always be disclosed on a Standard or Enhanced DBS certificate, regardless of how long ago it was given. This includes where a

specified offence receives a caution (but not youth cautions, reprimands or warnings).

- 22.4 The list includes a range of offences which are serious, relate to sexual or violent offending or are relevant in the context of safeguarding. The specified offences list covers those committed in England and Wales, however, the legislation also covers equivalent offences committed in other jurisdictions including overseas when they are recorded on the PNC. It is not possible to capture a definitive list of all equivalent offences under the law of all other jurisdictions.
- 22.5 Where an individual is aware that they have committed an offence outside England and Wales which may be equivalent to an offence on the list they should seek independent expert or legal advice to ensure that they provide information that is truthful and accurate.
- 22.6 More information on the DBS filtering guide can be found online.<sup>18</sup>

## **23 Rehabilitation**

- 23.1 The date of the court conviction is to be taken as the start date of the rehabilitation period, unless a sentence of imprisonment or corrective training exceeding 48 months was imposed, in which case the offence is never rehabilitated.
- 23.2 Each application will be considered on its individual merits considering the person's previous history of behaviour to determine if they meet the 'fit and proper person' criteria, and it may be that, having regard to the particular circumstances of any application, it would be right to depart from the policy. Initial consideration of applications will be undertaken by the licensing officer.
- 23.3 A decision to refuse, revoke or suspend the licence can be appealed under the Public Health Act 1936 to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days of the date on which the relevant Council's decision was served.
- 23.4 Information relating to rehabilitation periods can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rehabilitation-periods>.

## **24 Summary**

- 24.1 To summarise, a criminal history in itself may not automatically result in refusal and a current conviction for a serious crime may not bar an applicant permanently from becoming licensed. However as public safety is the sole consideration, applicants with criminal convictions must recognise that the Relevant Council will give careful and serious consideration to any such application. In truly exceptional circumstances there may be occasions when an application can be allowed before the stated period free from conviction has elapsed.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance/dbs-filtering-guide>

- 24.2 It is the view of the relevant Council that any person who has criminal convictions and therefore must wait before an application is successful is more likely to value their licence and act accordingly.

## Appendix B – Penalty Points Scheme

1. Hackney Carriage (taxi) and Private Hire Operators, drivers and vehicles are principally governed by a “regulatory framework” including: -
  - I. Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
  - II. Town Police Clauses Act 1847.
  - III. Council’s Taxi Byelaws.
  - IV. Rules, Regulations and Conditions for taxi and private hire licences and vehicles as approved by Spelthorne’s Licensing Committee.

### Town Police Clauses Act 1847

Section	Offence
40	Giving false information on application for HC(V) proprietor's licence
44	Failure to notify change of address of HC(V) proprietor
45	Plying for hire without HC(V) proprietors licence
47	Driving a HC(V) without HC drivers' licence.
47	Lending or parting with HC drivers' licence
47	HC(V) proprietor employing unlicensed driver
48	Failure of HC(V) proprietor to hold HC drivers' licence



48	Failure of HC(V) proprietor to produce HC drivers' licence
52	Failure to display HC(V) plate
53	Refusal to take a fare
54	Charging more than the agreed fare
55	Obtaining more than the legal fare
56	Travelling less than the lawful distance for the agreed fare
57	Failing to wait after a deposit to wait has been paid
58	Charging more than the legal fare
59	Carrying another person than the hirer without consent
60	Driving HC(V) without proprietor's consent
60	Allowing another to drive HC(V) without proprietors' consent
61	Drunken driving of HC(V)
61	Wanton / furious driving / wilful misconduct causing injury / danger
62	Driver leaving HC(V) unattended
64	HC driver obstructing other HC(V)'s

### **Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976**

Section	Offence
49	Failure to notify transfer of HC(V) proprietors' licence
50(1)	Failure to present HC(V) for inspection as required
50(2)	Failure to inform local authority where HC(V) is stored if requested
50(3)	Failure to report an accident to local authority
50(4)	Failure to produce HC(V) proprietors' licence and insurance certificate
53(3)	Failure to produce HC driver's licence
57	Making false statement or withholding information to obtain HC drivers licence
58(2)	Failure to return a plate after expiry of notice, revocation or suspension of HC(V) proprietor's licence

61(2)	Failure to surrender driver's licence after suspension, revocation or refusal to renew
64	Permitting any vehicle other than HC(V) to wait on HC stand
66	Charging more than the meter fare for a journey ending outside the district without prior agreement
67	Charging more than the meter fare when HC(V) used as private hire vehicle
69	Unnecessarily prolonging a journey
71	Interfering with a taximeter
73(1)(a)	Obstruction of an authorised officer or constable
73(1)(b)	Failure to comply with requirements of authorised officer or constable
73(1)(c)	Failure to give information or assistance to authorised officer or constable

### **Private Hire Trade Offences**

#### **Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976**

Section	Offence
46(1)(a)	Using an unlicensed PH(V)
46(1)(b)	Driving a PH(V) without a PH driver's licence
46(1)(c)	Proprietor of a PH(V) using an unlicensed driver
46(1)(d)	Operating a PH(V) without a PH operator's licence
46(1)(e)	Operating a vehicle as a PH(V) when the vehicle is not licensed as a PH(V)
46(1)(e)	Operating a vehicle as a PH(V) when the driver is not licensed as a PH driver
48(6)	Failure to display PH(V) plate
49	Failure to notify transfer of PH(V) licence
50(1)	Failure to present PH(V) for inspection as required
50(2)	Failure to inform local authority where PH(V) is stored if requested
50(3)	Failure to report an accident to local authority

50(4)	Failure to produce PH(V) licence and insurance certificate
53(3)	Failure to produce PH drivers licence
54(2)	Failure to wear PH driver's badge
56(2)	Failure by PH operator to keep records of bookings
56(3)	Failure of PH operator to keep records of vehicles operated by him
56(4)	Failure to produce PH operator's licence on request
57	Making false statement or withholding information to obtain PH driver's or operator's licence
58(2)	Failure to return plate after expiry of notice, revocation, or suspension of PH(V) licence
61(2)	Failure to surrender driver's licence after suspension, revocation, or refusal to renew
67	Charging more than the meter fare when HC used as PH vehicle
69	Unnecessarily prolonging a journey
71	Interfering with a taximeter
73(1)(a)	Obstructing of authorised officer or constable
73(1)(b)	Failure to comply with requirement of authorised officer or constable
73(1)(c)	Failure to give information or assistance to authorised officer or constable

### Transport Act 1980

Section	Offence
64(2)(A)	Driving a PH(V) with a roof sign which contravenes s64(1)
64(2)(b)	Causing or permitting a PH(V) to be driven with a roof sign which contravenes s64(1)

### Equality Act 2010

Section	Offence
165	Failure to comply with duties when carrying wheelchair passengers
168	Refusing to carry an assistance dog in a Taxi

Section	Offence
170 (1)	The Private Hire Operator refusing to accept a booking where the passenger has an assistance dog
170 (2)	Making an additional charge for an assistance dog
170 (3)	Driver of Private Hire Vehicle refusing or failing to undertake a booking where the passenger has an assistance dog

2. The primary objective of the penalty points scheme is to improve the levels of compliance with the regulatory framework and to help improve standards, safety, and the protection of members of the public affected by the actions of taxi, private hire drivers and operators. The scheme also seeks to improve the level of transparency and consistency in which the licensing system is administered and enforced.
3. Council officers (i.e. Licensing Enforcement Officers or the Principal Licensing Officer) will investigate allegations of offences under the regulatory framework, by licensed operators, drivers, or vehicles owners. When considering what action to take the Council officers will take into account all available and appropriate evidence, such as eye witness accounts and their reliability, the views of the licensee who may be affected by the outcome of the investigation, etc. The outcome of investigations may result in: -
  - I. No further action being taken.
  - II. A "Penalty points Notice" being awarded against a driver, operator, or owner of a vehicle (see pages 13 and 14). The officer will apply a fixed number of penalty points for each offence as specified in the table below.
  - III. A formal written warning.
  - IV. Immediate suspension of a licence (if the public safety condition is fulfilled).
  - V. Referral to the Council's Licensing Sub-Committee.
  - VI. Administer of a formal caution or Prosecution.
4. Once these investigations have been concluded, letters will be sent to all persons/organisations involved in the allegation(s) detailing the findings and decision of the Council officer. A record of the decision will be kept on the relevant licensed drivers, licensed vehicle owner's, or operator's file, including copies of any "Penalty Points Notice(s)" issued, where applicable.
5. The aim of a penalty point scheme is to work in conjunction with other enforcement options and does not preclude or prejudice the Council's ability to take other actions that it is entitled to take under the regulatory framework. It provides a formal and cumulative enforcement approach.
6. The purpose of the scheme is to record confirmed breaches or offences and to act as an ongoing record of a driver's, licensed vehicle owner's or operator's

behaviour and conduct, to ascertain whether they are a fit and proper person to hold such a licence.

7. Penalty points will remain on a driver's, licensed vehicle owners for a period of **three years from date of incident**. For operator's they will remain on record for a period of **five years from the date of incident**. Points issued will be confirmed in writing within 10 working days from the completion of an investigation.
8. The Council officers specified in paragraph 3 above have been given delegated powers by Spelthorne's Licensing Committee to administer penalty points to licensed taxi or private hire drivers, private hire operators or licensed vehicle owners.
9. If a licensee wishes to appeal against the issue of a "penalty points notice" they must do so in writing within 10 working days from the date of issue of such a notice, to the Council's Senior Environmental Health Manager who, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive will have the discretion to: -
  - I. uphold the Council officer's decision – retain the number of points on the "penalty points notice"; or
  - II. cancel the issue of the "penalty points notice" to the licensee.

There is no appeal beyond the decision made by the Senior Environmental Health Manager in conjunction with the Deputy Chief Executive. However, should a licensee be subsequently reported to the Licensing Sub-Committee for accumulating 12 or more penalty points, they can raise the validity of the points issued.

10. Significant breaches of conduct, which are identified through officer observations or through complaints from the public or the trade, will be subject to investigation by Officers and may be reported to the Licensing Sub-Committee for a decision on whether the driver, operator or a licensed vehicle owner is a fit and proper person, whether penalty points have been awarded.
11. The Licensing Sub-Committee, when dealing with matters referred to them following the accumulation of penalty points, will consider the circumstances, the seriousness of the breaches of the regulatory framework, the quality of the evidence before it and the compliance history of the individual driver, licensed vehicle owner or operator. The Licensing Sub-Committee may decide to:-
  - I. Suspend a licence; or
  - II. Revoke a licence; or
  - III. Take no action.
12. If a driver's, licensed vehicle owner or operator's licence is either suspended or revoked they will have the right to appeal against the Licensing Sub-Committee's decision to the Magistrates' Court

## PENALTY POINTS SCHEME

With reference to relevant legislation stated in the table below, the following abbreviations have been used:

- Town Police Clauses Act 1847 – TPCA 1847.
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 – LG(MP)A 1976.
- Road Traffic Act 1988 – RTA 1988.

The trigger point for a licensed driver, vehicle owner or operator to be referred to the Council's Licensing Sub-Committee is a total of 12 penalty points accumulated within a 12-month period. The comprehensive lists of offences/breaches which will attract penalty points are listed in the table below:

	<b>Offence/breach of Condition</b>	<b>Fixed Points</b>
	<b>Administrative offences</b>	
<b>1</b>	Using unlicensed vehicle or vehicle without the relevant motor insurance cover (i.e. insured for use as a private hire or taxi for hire and reward).	<b>12</b>
<b>2</b>	Driver not holding a current DVLA Licence.	<b>12</b>
<b>3</b>	Providing false or misleading information / failing to provide relevant information or the relevant fee (including dishonoured cheques).	<b>6</b>
<b>4</b>	Failure to submit a licensed vehicle that is 5 years old, or more for a 6 monthly Mot and provide documented proof to the Council that it has passed such a test within 4 weeks of the due date of the Mot test.	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	Continuing failure, after a further 4 weeks has elapsed, to provide documentary evidence that a licensed vehicle has passed a 6-month Mot.	<b>4</b>
<b>6</b>	Failure to provide proof of appropriate motor insurance cover within a specified time when requested by a Council officer.	<b>4</b>
<b>7</b>	Continuing failure, after a further 4 weeks has elapsed, to provide documentary evidence that a licensed vehicle has the appropriate motor insurance cover.	<b>4</b>
<b>8</b>	Failure to produce specified documents within a specified timescale when requested by a Council Officer in writing.	<b>4</b>
<b>9</b>	Continuing failure to provide relevant documents to a Council officer, as requested in writing – for every 4 weeks that elapse.	<b>4</b>
<b>10</b>	Failure to produce a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle for inspection/testing when requested by a licensing officer.	<b>4</b>
<b>11</b>	Continuing failure, to provide a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle for inspection/testing within the timescale specified by the Licensing Officer.	<b>4</b>

12	Failure to maintain records in a suitable form of the commencement and cessation of work of each driver each day.	6
13	Failure to produce on request records of drivers' work activity.	6
14	Failure to notify, in writing, a change in medical circumstances	6
15	Failure by a private hire operator to maintain proper records of drivers or vehicles registered with his/her business.	4
16	Failure to keep or produce records of private hire bookings.	6
17	Failure to notify the Council, in writing, of any motoring or criminal convictions within 48 hours of conviction or caution during period of current licence.	4
18	Failure to submit a licence renewal application until after the expiry date of an existing one.	6
19	Misleading use of the words 'Taxi' or 'Cab' on advertising materials.	3
20	Failure to comply with any other licence conditions set by the Council.	3 per licence breach
21	Failure to notify the Council when involved in an accident whilst using a licensed vehicle.	4
21	Failure to notify the Council in writing, of a change of postal address, telephone number or e-mail address within 14 days (two week).	3
	<b>Conduct of driver, licensed vehicle owner or Operator offences</b>	
22	Using a vehicle subject to a suspension or revocation order issued by the Council.	12
23	Obstruction of an authorised officer or police officer wishing to examine a licensed vehicle.	12
24	Failure to carry an assistance dog without requisite exemption.	12
25	Serious misconduct or behaviour of a licensee	12
26	Failure to behave in a civil and orderly manner	6
27	Plying for hire by private hire drivers.	12
28	Unreasonable prolongation of journey	6
29	Failing to activate the meter or charging more than the metered fare for journeys inside the borough	12
30	Carrying more passengers than the capacity stated on the vehicle licence.	6
31	Failure of private hire operator to provide a valid criminal record check for a controller working under his/her employ on request of an authorised officer	6
32	Failure of private hire operator to provide a pass certificate in respect of Barnardo's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults & CSE training module for a controller working under their employ on request of an authorised officer	4
33	Failure of private hire operator, hackney carriage driver, private hire driver to provide a pass certificate in respect of Barnardo's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults & CSE training module.	4

<b>34</b>	Failure of hackney carriage driver, private hire driver to provide a pass certificate in respect of Disability awareness training and/or Driver conduct, attitude, and behaviour training <b>by 1 October 2025.</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>35</b>	Smoking or vaping in vehicle by either the driver or any passenger(s).	<b>4</b>
<b>36</b>	Eating and/or using a mobile phone which was not hands free while vehicle was in motion.	<b>4</b>
<b>37</b>	Failure to wear private hire or hackney carriage driver's badge.	<b>4</b>
<b>38</b>	Refusal to accept hiring without reasonable cause	<b>4</b>
<b>39</b>	Failure to observe rank discipline – taxi drivers (e.g. plying for hire outside the markings of one of the borough's taxi ranks).	<b>4</b>
<b>40</b>	Failure to issue a receipt on request	<b>4</b>
<b>41</b>	Failure to give assistance with loading/unloading luggage to or from any building or place.	<b>4</b>
<b>42</b>	Failure to attend punctually at appointed time and place without sufficient cause.	<b>4</b>
<b>43</b>	Failure to display the fare card.	<b>3</b>
<b>44</b>	Waiting or stopping on a double yellow road line, bus stop or private land (without the owner's permission) unless requested by a paying customer present in the vehicle.	<b>3</b>
<b>45</b>	Failure to comply with any other licence conditions set by the Council	<b>3 per licence breach.</b>
<b>46</b>	Any other inappropriate behaviour, as defined by Council Officers in accordance with Spelthorne's licence conditions	<b>Sliding scale: 1-12 points depending on the severity of the issue</b>
	<b>Condition of vehicle offences</b>	
<b>47</b>	Using a non-approved or non-calibrated taximeter	<b>12</b>
<b>48</b>	Displaying any feature on a private hire vehicle that may suggest that it is a taxi vehicle.	<b>6</b>
<b>49</b>	Displaying any feature on a taxi that may suggest that it is a private hire vehicle.	<b>6</b>
<b>50</b>	A licensed vehicle with illegal tyres	<b>4 per tyre</b>
<b>51</b>	Failure to use authorised roof light on a hackney carriage vehicle.	<b>4</b>
<b>52</b>	Failure to display the external/internal licence plate or signs as required.	<b>4</b>
<b>53</b>	Failure to report to the Council, in writing, within 72 hours, of an accident or damage to licensed vehicle, which would cause the vehicle to breach a licence condition(s).	<b>4</b>
<b>54</b>	Unsatisfactory condition of vehicle, interior or exterior.	<b>4</b>



<b>55</b>	Displaying unsuitable or inappropriate sited signs or advertisements in or on the vehicle.	<b>3</b>
<b>56</b>	Leaving car unattended on a rank appointed by the Council	<b>3</b>
<b>57</b>	Failure to comply with any other licence conditions set by the Council.	<b>3 per licence condition.</b>

For certain infringements, points may be issued to one or several persons (drivers, proprietors, or operators) depending upon the nature of that infringement.

Certain matters are specific to hackney carriages, private hire drivers or private hire operators.

**Penalty Points Notice:**

The penalty points imposed will be recorded on your personal file and will be considered when an application for renewal of a licence is made to the Council, or when considering any other enforcement action against you. If you accrue 12 points in any 12-month period, your licence will be reported to the Council's Licensing Sub-Committee for them to consider whether or not you are a fit and proper person to hold such a licence.

If you want to check how many penalty points have been awarded to you in the past 12 months, please contact the Licensing team.

If you think this notice should not have been served, you have the right to have the decision reviewed. A request to have this notice reviewed must be made in writing to the Senior Environmental Health Manager within 10 working days of the date of the award of the penalty points, stating why you think the points should not have been awarded. If you have been unable to appeal within this timescale, for example, because you have been away on holiday, then you should contact the Licensing Team as soon as possible on your return. If you can provide proof that you were away, then consideration will be given to allow a reasonable extension to the appeal period.

The award of penalty points under this scheme does not prevent you from facing enforcement action by any other agency, such as the Police.

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact:

Spelthorne Borough Council  
Licensing  
Council Offices  
Knowle Green  
Staines-upon-Thames  
TW18 1XB  
Telephone number: 01784 444202  
Email: [licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.spelthorne.gov.uk](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk)

## Appendix C

### BYELAWS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGES (COPY)

BYELAWS made under section 68 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, and section 171 of the Public Health Act 1875, by the Council of the Borough of Spelthorne with respect to hackney carriages in the District of the Borough of Spelthorne

#### 1. Interpretation

Throughout these byelaws "the Council" means the Council of the Borough of Spelthorne and "the district" means the District of the Borough of Spelthorne

#### 2. Display and Condition of Vehicle Licence No. and Plate

- (a) The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall cause the number of the licence granted to him in respect of the carriage to be legibly painted or marked on the outside of the carriage, on plates supplied by the Council for that purpose and affixed thereto.
- (b) A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall: -
  - i) not wilfully or negligently cause or suffer any such number to be concealed from public view while the carriage is standing or plying for hire.
  - ii) not cause or permit the carriage to stand or ply for hire with any such plate or marking so defaced that any figure or material particular is illegible.

#### 3. Standards for Hackney Carriages

The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall: -

- (a) provide sufficient means by which any person in the carriage may communicate with the driver.
- (b) cause the roof or covering to be kept water-tight.
- (c) provide any necessary windows and a means of opening and closing not less than one window on each side.
- (d) cause the seats to be properly cushioned and covered.
- (e) cause the floor to be provided with a proper carpet, mat, or other suitable covering.
- (f) cause the fittings and furniture generally to be kept in a clean condition, well maintained and in every way fit for public service.
- (g) provide means for securing luggage if the carriage is so constructed as to carry luggage.
- (h) provide a suitable fire extinguisher which shall be carried in such a position as to be readily available for use; and
- (i) provide a suitable stocked first aid box which shall be kept in such a position as to be readily available for use.
- (j) provide at least four doors for the use of persons conveyed in such carriage and a separate means of ingress and egress for the driver.

#### 4. **Taximeters**

The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall cause the same to be provided with a taximeter so constructed, attached, and maintained as to comply with the following requirements, that is to say: -

- (a) the taximeter shall be fitted with a key, flag, or other device the turning of which will bring the machinery of the taximeter into action and cause the word "HIRED" to appear on the face of the taximeter.
- (b) such key, flag, or other device shall be capable of being locked in such a position that the machinery of the taximeter is not in action and that no fare is recorded on the face of the taximeter.
- (c) when the machinery of the taximeter is in action there shall be recorded on the face of the taximeter in clearly legible figures a fare not exceeding the rate or fare which the proprietor or driver is entitled to demand and take for the hire of the carriage by (time as well as for) distance in pursuance of the tariff fixed by the Council in that behalf.
- (d) the word "FARE" shall be printed on the face of the taximeter in plain letters so as clearly to apply to the fare recorded thereon.
- (e) the taximeter shall be so placed that all letters and figures on the face thereof are at all times plainly visible to any person being conveyed in the carriage, and for that purpose the letters and figures shall be capable of being suitably illuminated during any period of hiring; and
- (f) the taximeter and all the fittings thereof shall be so affixed to the carriage with seals or other appliances that it shall not be practicable for any person to tamper with them except by breaking, damaging, or permanently displacing the seals or other appliances.

#### 5. **The Conduct of Drivers with regard to Taximeters**

The driver of a hackney carriage provided with a taximeter shall: -

- (a) when standing or plying for hire, keep the key, flag or other device fitted in pursuance of the byelaw in that behalf locked in the position in which no fare is recorded on the face of the taximeter and in which the words "FOR HIRE" are clearly visible and conveniently legible to persons outside the carriage.
- (b) Before beginning a journey for which a fare is charged for distance [and time], bring the machinery of the taximeter into action by moving the said key, flag, or other device, so that the word "HIRED" is legible on the face of the taximeter and keep the machinery of the taximeter in action until the termination of the hiring; and
- (c) cause the dial of the taximeter to be kept properly illuminated throughout any part of a hiring which is between half an hour after sunset and half an hour before sunrise, and at any other time at the request of the hirer.

#### 6. **Prohibition on the Tampering with a Taximeter**

A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall not tamper with or permit any person to tamper with any taximeter with which the carriage is provided, with the fittings thereof, or with the seals affixed thereto.

**7. Conduct at Stands**

The driver of a hackney carriage shall, when plying for hire in any street and not actually hired: -

- (a) proceed with reasonable speed to one of the stands fixed by the Council in that behalf.
- (b) if a stand, at the time of his arrival, is occupied by the full number of carriages authorised to occupy it, proceed to another stand.
- (c) on arriving at a stand not already occupied by the full number of carriages authorised to occupy it, station the carriage immediately behind the carriage or carriages on the stand and so as to face in the same direction; and
- (d) from time to time when any other carriage immediately in front is driven off or moved forward cause his carriage to be moved forward so as to fill the place previously occupied by the carriage driven off or moved forward.

**8. Prohibition on Touting**

A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage, when standing or plying for hire, shall not make use of the services of any other person for the purpose of importuning any person to hire such carriage.

**9. Behaviour of Drivers**

The driver of a hackney carriage shall behave in a civil and orderly manner and shall take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of persons conveyed in or entering or alighting from the vehicle.

**10. Prompt Attendance**

The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage who has agreed or has been hired to be in attendance with the carriage at an appointed time and place shall, unless delayed or prevented by some sufficient cause, punctually attend with such carriage at such appointed time and place.

**11. Permitted Number of Passengers**

A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall not convey or permit to be conveyed in such carriage any greater number of persons than the number of persons specified on the plate affixed to the outside of the carriage.

**12. Driver's Badge**

The driver of a hackney carriage shall, when standing or plying for hire, and when hired, wear the badge provided by the Council in such position and manner as to be clearly visible. Moreover a driver of a hackney carriage shall not lend the badge or knowingly allow it to be used by any other person.

**13. Luggage**

The driver of a hackney carriage so constructed as to carry luggage shall, when requested by any person hiring or seeking to hire the carriage: -

- (a) convey a reasonable quantity of luggage.
- (b) afford reasonable assistance in loading and unloading; and

- (c) afford reasonable assistance in removing it to or from the entrance of any building, station, or place at which he may take up or set down such person.

**14. Fares**

The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall be entitled to demand and take for the hire of the carriage the rate or fare prescribed by the tariff fixed by the Council, the rate or fare being calculated by distance unless the hirer expresses at the commencement of the hiring his desire to engage by time. Provided always that where a hackney carriage furnished with a taximeter shall be hired by distance the proprietor or driver thereof shall not be entitled to demand and take a fare greater than that recorded on the face of the taximeter, save for any extra charges authorised by the tariff fixed by the Council which it may not be possible to record on the face of the taximeter.

**15. Display of Fare Tariff**

- (a) The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall cause a statement of the fares fixed by the Council to be exhibited inside the carriage, in clearly distinguishable letters and figures.
- (b) The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage bearing a statement of fares in accordance with this byelaw shall not wilfully or negligently cause or suffer the letters or figures in the statement to be concealed or rendered illegible at any time while the carriage is plying or being used for hire.

**16. Search for Lost Property**

The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall immediately after the termination of any hiring or as soon as practicable thereafter carefully search the carriage for any property which may have been accidentally left therein.

**17. Display of Lost Property**

The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall, if any property accidentally left therein by any person who may have been conveyed in the carriage be found by or handed to him: -

- (a) carry it as soon as possible and in any event within 48 hours, if not sooner claimed by or on behalf of its owner, to the nearest police station in the District, and leave it in the custody of the officer in charge of the office on his giving a receipt for it; and
- (b) be entitled to receive from any person to whom the property shall be re-delivered an amount equal to five pence in the pound of its estimated value (or the fare for the distance from the place of finding to the office of the Council, whichever be the greater) but not more than five pounds.

**18. Penalties**

Every person who shall offend against any of these byelaws shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding Level 2 on the Standard Scale and in the case of a continuing offence to a further fine not exceed five pounds for each day during which the offence continues after conviction therefor.

**THE COMMON SEAL** of )  
**SPELTHORNE BOROUGH** )  
**COUNCIL** was hereunto )  
affixed on the ..... day )  
of ..... Two )  
Thousand in the presence of: )

The foregoing Byelaws are hereby confirmed by the Secretary of State and shall come into effect on 1 April 2000

Signed by the authority of the Secretary of State

## **Appendix D Standard Private Hire Driver and Dual Hackney Carriage Driver Licence Conditions**

Under section 51(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council may attach conditions that it considers 'reasonably necessary' to private hire driver's licences. This includes dual licensed hackney carriage and private hire driver's, as well as holders of private hire driver (only) licences. A Hackney carriage driver badge is a dual licence, and the private hire conditions apply. Applications are normally granted subject to the Council's Standard Licence Conditions contained within this Policy, however further, additional conditions may be attached on a case-by-case basis.

The decision to attach conditions to a licence may be appealed to the Magistrates Court.

### **1. Driver Licence**

The licence holder must not assign or in any way part with the benefit of the licence which is personal to the licensee.

### **2. Driver Badge**

- a) The licence holder must always when driving a licensed vehicle for hire or reward, wear the driver's badge issued by the Council on a prominent visible place on the outer clothing.
- b) The driver's badge remains the property of the Council. Upon expiry of the licence and badge (whether application to renew has been made or not) the badge and card must be returned to the Council within 7 days of expiry or other such time as the Council may specify.
- c) The badge must be returned to the Council immediately on demand if the licence is suspended or revoked.

### **3. Conduct of driver**

- a) The driver must behave in a civil and orderly manner and comply with all reasonable requirements of any person hiring or being conveyed in the vehicle.
- b) The driver must afford all reasonable assistance with luggage and to passengers leaving the vehicle or any disability aids or wheelchair.
- c) The driver must take particular care with unaccompanied children and vulnerable adults, including remaining alert to concerns over the safeguarding of passengers.
- d) The driver must take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of passengers entering or conveyed in or alighting from the vehicle, especially those passengers with a disability, and comply with instructions issued by the Licensing Authority or Private Hire Operator.
- e) The driver shall not permit the vehicle they are driving to be stationed on the Highway in unsuitable, dangerous, or illegal locations.
- f) The driver shall not drive a licensed vehicle unless they understand how to operate the vehicle and any equipment fitted to make the vehicle accessible by disabled persons.
- g) The driver must not operate the horn to signal that they have arrived.



- h) The driver or passengers must not smoke tobacco or like substance in the vehicle at any time as provided by the Health Act 2006. The driver must also not use an electronic cigarette, vaporising, or similar device in a licensed vehicle at any time.
- i) The driver must not, without the express consent of the hirer eat in the vehicle or play any radio or sound reproducing instrument or equipment in the vehicle other than for the sending or receiving messages in connection with the operation of the vehicle.
- j) The driver must ensure that the vehicle is maintained in a roadworthy and clean condition.
- k) The driver of a licensed vehicle must ensure that none of the markings / signs / notices that are required to be displayed on the vehicle are appropriately fixed/attached to the vehicle and do not become concealed from public view or be damaged.
- l) The driver of a private hire vehicle must ensure they punctually attend at the appointed time and place unless delayed or prevented by sufficient cause.
- m) Where there is a reasonable cause to believe that there is a need to assess a licence holder's English language literacy and numeracy skills or knowledge of licensing requirements because of a substantiated complaint, or an expressed concern from an identified person, an authorised officer may require, in writing, a licensed driver to undertake such testing at his/her own expense within such timescale as the officer prescribes.
- n) Drivers must undertake an inspection of any vehicle before the vehicle is used. Where more than one driver will use the vehicle during the day's running, the driver taking charge of the vehicle should make sure it is roadworthy and safe to drive by carrying out their own walkaround check. Drivers are required to retain the vehicle checklist (**Appendix I**) as proof they have undertaken the required vehicle check. If a driver is unable to produce this or it is clear that while the form has been completed, the check has not then furthered sanctions may result against them, as well as vehicle proprietors. [Driver vehicle condition checklist \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

#### 4. Fares

- a) The driver of a private hire vehicle must ensure that a notice is visibly displayed for the benefit of passengers to the effect that in the absence of a published fare scale, the fare should be agreed between passenger(s) and operator before commencement of the journey. When a fare scale is used that fare scale must be clearly displayed and must give an accurate reflection of the charge, including any specific additions (i.e. night tariff or Bank Holiday) the customer may be expected to pay.
- b) The driver must not, if driving a licensed vehicle fitted with a taximeter, cause the fare recorded thereon to be cancelled or concealed until the hirer has had the opportunity of examining it and has paid the fare.
- c) The driver must not demand from any hirer of a private hire vehicle a fare in excess of any previously agreed for that hiring between the hirer and the operator or if the vehicle is fitted with a taximeter and there has been no previous agreement as to the fare, the fare shown on the face of the taximeter.

- d) The driver must, if requested by the hirer, provide a written receipt for the fare paid, such receipt to bear the name and address of the proprietor of the vehicle together with the badge number of the driver.

## **5. Passengers**

- a) The driver must not allow/permit a greater number of persons than the number of persons specified in the licence issued in respect of that licensed vehicle.
- b) The driver must ensure they are compliant with current legislation in regard to the carriage of children in the vehicle.
- c) The driver must not, without the consent of the hirer of the vehicle, convey or permit to be conveyed any other person in that vehicle.
- d) The driver must provide all reasonable assistance to passengers and especially those with a disability. The Equality Act 2010 at section 165 places the following duties on licensed drivers driving designated vehicles, however the Council expects compliance with these requirements from a driver of any vehicle, unless they have an exemption certificate: -
  - i. to carry the passenger while in the wheelchair.
  - ii. not to make any additional charge for doing so.
  - iii. if the passenger chooses to sit in a passenger seat, to carry the wheelchair.
  - iv. to take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort.
  - v. to give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required.
    - 1) to enable the passenger to get into or out of the vehicle.
    - 2) if the passenger wishes to remain in the wheelchair, to enable the passenger to get into and out of the vehicle while in the wheelchair.
    - 3) to load the passenger's luggage into or out of the vehicle.
    - 4) if the passenger does not wish to remain in the wheelchair, to load the wheelchair into or out of the vehicle (if the vehicle can carry the passenger in a wheelchair).
- e) Duty to carry guide dogs and assistance dogs.
  - a. The driver must not fail or refuse to carry out a booking by or on behalf of a person with disabilities who is accompanied by an 'assistance dog' unless the driver has a Medical Exemption granted by the Licensing Authority and is displaying the Exemption Certificate in the approved manner or in the vehicle.
  - b. Any animal belonging to or in the custody of any passenger should remain with that passenger and be conveyed in the front or rear of the vehicle. Drivers are advised to have a blanket / towel which is kept in the boot of the licensed vehicle to be used where he/she may have concerns about excess dog hair being left in the vehicle.
  - c. No additional charge is permitted.

## **6. Found Property**

The driver must, immediately after the termination of any hiring or as soon as practicable thereafter, carefully search the vehicle for any property belonging to the hirer(s) which may have been left therein. Drivers are exempted to make reasonable

attempts to return the property to the owner. Should this not be possible within 48 hours it should be taken to the Council Offices or Private Hire Operator.

#### **7. Medical Condition(s)**

- a) The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 48 hours of any change in medical condition.
- b) The licence holder must at such time as the Council reasonably requires, produce a certificate in the form prescribed by the Council signed by a registered medical practitioner to the effect that he/she is or continues to be physically fit to be a driver of a private hire/hackney carriage vehicle.

#### **8. Convictions, Cautions, Arrest etc**

- a) The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 48 hours of any conviction, binding over, caution or equivalent or deferred prosecution scheme, charge, warning, reprimand, or arrest for any matter (whether or not charged) imposed on him / her during the period of the licence and must provide full details.
- b) What should be reported: -
  - i. Any conviction or charge (criminal or driving matter).
  - ii. Any caution or equivalent (issued by the Police or any other agency).
  - iii. Issue of any Magistrate's Court summons.
  - iv. Issue of any fixed penalty notice for any matter.
  - v. Any harassment or other form of warning or order within the criminal law including anti-social behaviour orders or similar.
  - vi. Arrest for any offence (whether or not charged)
  - vii. Any acquittal following a criminal case heard by a court.

#### **9. Disclosure and Barring Service Online Update Service**

All licence holders must subscribe to the Disclosure and Barring Service Online Update Service. Any costs associated with maintaining this subscription must be met by the licence holder. The council will use the update service to monitor the criminal record of licence holders.

#### **11. Change of Contact Details**

The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 7 days of any change of his/her contact details taking place during the period of the licence, whether permanent or temporary. The driver's contact details include name, address, telephone number and email address.

#### **12. Time Spent Overseas**

- a) The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 7 days if they have spent three or more continuous months out of the UK. Such notification must include the list of countries visited and relevant dates.
- b) The licence holder must provide a Certificate of Good Conduct for any countries visited/lived in for three or more continuous months upon their return to the UK.

#### **13. Working Hours**

Licensed drivers must not drive when their ability to do so is impaired by having worked excessive hours.

**14. Customer and other personal information**

- a) Drivers must ensure that any personal information obtained during the course of their business is stored securely, and only retained for as long as is absolutely necessary. Access to this information must be restricted to those that will use it for the purpose for which it has been collected.
- b) Drivers are expected to comply with GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

**15. Duty to Cooperate on Regulatory Matters**

Licensed drivers must co-operate with authorised officers of Spelthorne Borough Council and any other Licensing Authority or Police Force in all matters relating to the regulation of the licensed vehicle trade.

**16. Dress and Appearance of Driver**

- a) The driver must be clean and tidy in appearance and maintain a good standard of personal hygiene.
- b) If a licensed driver alters their appearance significantly, they must request a replacement ID badge from the council (paying the required fee).

**17. Traffic Collision**

If at any time the vehicle is involved in a traffic collision, however minor, the driver must inform the Council within 3 working days (by telephone or email). A traffic collision (accident report form) must be completed on the Council's website within 72 hours of the accident occurring (except in exceptional circumstances when the report must be made as soon as possible after the 72 hours deadline – an example of an exceptional circumstance would be that the driver is incapacitated due to the accident and physically unable to make the notification).

**18. Adherence to bookings**

The holder of a licence who has agreed, or whose vehicle has been hired to be in attendance at an appointed time and place shall, unless delayed or prevented by some sufficient cause, punctually attend with such vehicle at such appointed time and place, ensuring the place is in accordance with the operator and Council instructions as to where pick-ups can occur.

**NOTES**

- a) These conditions should be read in conjunction with the provisions of Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
- b) Any person who commits an offence against any of the provisions of the Act of 1976 may be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale or to such other penalty as expressly provided by the Act. The licence holder should ensure compliance at all times.
- c) The use of a vehicle not licensed as a private hire vehicle or Hackney carriage to fulfil any private hire booking is prohibited even if no fare is charged for the journey or irrespective of when, how and to whom any fare is payable.
- d) If at any time the conduct of the driver causes concern to the Council as to whether they remain fit and proper to hold a licence, the Council will investigate the conduct and if satisfied that the driver is no longer fit and proper the driver licence may be suspended or revoked.

- e) Failure to declare any conviction within the required timescale together with the nature of the conviction will be taken into account in deciding whether a licence holder is a fit and proper person to hold a hackney carriage/private hire driver licence. This may result in the suspension, revocation, or refusal to renew the hackney carriage/private hire driver licence.
- f) ANY INFRINGEMENT OF THE LICENSING CONDITIONS COULD LEAD TO SUSPENSION OF REVOCATION OF THE LICENCE.
- g) ANY PERSON AGGREIVED BY ANY CONDITION SPECIFIED IN THE LICENCE MAY APPEAL TO THE MAGISTRATES COURT WITHIN 21 DAYS FROM THE ISSUE OF THE LICENCE.

## **Appendix E - Standard Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions**

### **1. Maintenance Of Vehicle**

- a. The vehicle and all its fittings and equipment must be maintained in accordance with the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 and in accordance with the hackney carriage byelaws and all relevant statutory requirements.
- b. Bodywork should be maintained to a good condition, paintwork should be sound and well maintained and free of corrosion, inferior re-spray work and 'cover up' temporary repairs.

### **2. Alteration of vehicle**

No material alteration or change in the specification, design, condition or appearance of the vehicle must be made subsequent to the inspection of the vehicle by the Council at any time while the licence is in force and at all times the vehicle shall comply with the specifications of the Council for a licensed hackney carriage.

### **3. Glazing**

All glazing must comply with Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 regulation 32 with regards to the level of tint. Tinted films applied to the vehicle windows post manufacture are not permitted.

### **4. General condition, cleanliness and appearance**

- a) Every vehicle must be maintained in a safe and clean condition.
- b) Seats must be fully 'sprung', free of stains, tears, cigarette burns, and not threadbare. Floor coverings must not be unduly worn and present no trip hazards. Household carpeting or similar is unacceptable and must not be used. Upholstery (headlining and side panel coverings) must be free of ingrained grime, fractures and maintained in the manufacturers original style. Seatbelts must be maintained to ensure there is no deterioration and that they are fully operational.
- c) Luggage and storage areas must be kept as free space for passenger's luggage.
- d) The proprietor must ensure that the licensed vehicle has a daily safety check in accordance with the checklist provided by the Government. Driver vehicle condition checklist ([publishing.service.gov.uk](http://publishing.service.gov.uk))

### **5. Identification plate, signs, notices etc.**

- a) The following must be in place at all times:
  - i. A licence plate permanently affixed to the rear of the vehicle
  - ii. A licence sign permanently displayed in the front windscreen of the vehicle with details on how a complaint can be made to be visible within the vehicle.
  - iii. No smoking signs, as required by the Health Act 2006
- b) The signs / plates and notices must be affixed to the vehicle in accordance with the requirements set out by the council.

### **6. Equipment and fittings**

- a) The vehicle and all its fittings and equipment must, at all times when the vehicle is in use or available for hire, be kept in an efficient, safe, tidy and clean condition and all relevant statutory requirements must be fully complied with.
- b) If a Driver Safety Shield is fitted (either before the licence has been granted or during the currency of the licence) the following applies:-

- i. It must be of a make, type and design previously approved by Authorised Officers of the Council (for fittings during the licence);
- ii. it must not be changed in any way from its original design and must remain free of damage;
- iii. it must remain clear and translucent; free of scratches, clouding or stickers which would impede the drivers or passengers visibility;
- iv. it must not impede entry and egress or present a trip hazard to passengers using the vehicle; and
- v. the installation and continued subsequent maintenance must be in accordance with manufacturer's specifications and recommendations.

### **7. Meters, fares and farecards**

A meter must be fitted to the vehicle and installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The meter must be calibrated to the Council's table of fares and sealed by the meter agent, who will provide a certificate. The tariffs with which the meter has been calibrated must be displayed in the vehicle in such a position as to be visible to passengers. Such a table must show full particulars of all tariffs calibrated on the meter.

### **8. Seats and passengers**

- a) The driver must not allow/permit a greater number of persons than the number of persons specified in the licence issued in respect of that licensed vehicle.
- b) All vehicles must be fitted with fully operational seat belts, one for each passenger to be carried, fully compliant with British Standards.
- c) Be right hand drive only, except for stretch limousines.

### **9. Vehicles with a third row of seats**

- a) All passengers must have access to a passenger door, one of which must be on the nearside of the vehicle.
- b) In cases where there is no door adjacent to a row of seats, no passenger must have to pass through a gap of less than 300mm at the narrowest point in order to exit the vehicle via the rear side doors.
- c) The middle row of seats must have more than one seat capable of fully tilting

### **10. Wheelchair passengers**

- a) Wheelchair bound passengers must face either forward or rearward to the direction of travel. Rearward facing wheelchairs must be securely restrained.
- b) A full static harness or a lap and diagonal inertia-reel belt must be available for each wheelchair passenger. Whichever type of restraint is used it must engage into the same floor tracking as the wheelchair restraints or other system as approved by the Council. Such equipment must be fully adjustable for the safety and comfort of the wheelchair passenger and capable of quick release in an emergency situation.

### **11. Communication equipment**

Equipment fitted for the use of the driver to receive information on bookings must be fitted securely in the vehicle and in a manner which does not obstruct the view of the driver through the windscreen. Any wires used for connection of the equipment must not be left in a dangerous manner.

**12. Drivers**

- a) Any person who drives the vehicle for any purpose whatsoever, must hold a drivers licence issued by Spelthorne Borough Council, even when the vehicle is not being used for hire/reward. Each proprietor must, before a driver commences to drive the vehicle, satisfy him/herself that the driver holds a valid driver's licence issued by Spelthorne Borough Council by examining each driver's licence.
- b) Proprietors must ensure that all driver(s) of the hackney carriage are fully acquainted with the need to provide all reasonable assistance to passengers especially those with a disability.

**14. Roof signage**

- a) The vehicle must be fitted with an illuminated roof sign. It must carry the word 'TAXI' in black on the front of the sign together the words 'Taxi' on the back.
- b) Purpose built hackney carriages may be excluded from this specification if a sign is part of the taxi's structure.
- c) The roof sign must be connected to the taximeter so that it works in conjunction with it, i.e. when the meter is not in use the sign is illuminated and when the meter is in use the sign is NOT illuminated.

**17. Convictions, cautions, arrest etc.**

- a) The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 48 hours of any conviction, binding over, caution or equivalent or deferred prosecution scheme, charge, warning, reprimand or arrest for any matter (whether or not charged) imposed on him / her during the period of the licence and must provide full details.
- b) What should be reported:-
  - viii. Any conviction or charge (criminal or driving matter);
  - ix. Any caution or equivalent (issued by the Police or any other agency);
  - x. Issue of any Magistrate's Court summons;
  - xi. Issue of any fixed penalty notice for any matter;
  - xii. Any harassment or other form of warning or order within the criminal law including anti-social behaviour orders or similar;
  - xiii. Arrest for any offence (whether or not charged)
  - xiv. Any acquittal following a criminal case heard by a court

**18. Disclosure and barring service online update service**

- a) All licence holders must subscribe to the Disclosure and Barring Service Online Update Service. Any costs associated with maintaining this subscription must be met by the licence holder.
- b) The licence holder must give permission for the council to undertake checks of their DBS status should the council consider it necessary to do so. The council will use the update service to monitor the criminal record of licence holders.

**20. Change of contact details**

The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 7 days of any change of his/her contact details taking place during the period of the licence, whether permanent or temporary. The driver's contact details include: name, address, telephone number and email address.



**21. Customer and other personal information**

- a. Drivers must ensure that any personal information obtained during the course of their business is stored securely, and only retained for as long as is absolutely necessary. Access to this information must be restricted to those that will use it for the purpose for which it has been collected.
- b. Drivers are expected to comply with GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

**22. Duty to cooperate on regulatory matters**

Licensed vehicle proprietors must co-operate with authorised officers of Spelthorne Borough Council and any other Licensing Authority or Police Force in all matters relating to the regulation of the licensed vehicle trade.

**23. Vehicle testing**

- a) The proprietor must ensure the vehicle complies with the vehicle testing requirements.
- b) A licensed vehicle which attracts a vehicle suspension notice (VOR) for serious defects may be required, to undertake a further test to demonstrate that the vehicle is roadworthy before the suspension will be lifted. The cost of such a test is to be borne by the proprietor.

**24. Traffic collision**

If at any time the vehicle is involved in a traffic collision, however minor, the driver must inform the Council within 3 working days (by telephone or email). A traffic collision (accident report form) must be completed on the Council's website within 72 hours of the accident occurring (except in exceptional circumstances when the report must be made as soon as possible after the 72 hours deadline – an example of an exceptional circumstance would be that the driver is incapacitated due to the accident and physically unable to make the notification).

**25. Insurance**

At all times the proprietor must, during the currency of this Licence:-

- a) keep in force in relation to the use of the vehicle as a hackney carriage vehicle a policy of insurance complying with the requirements of Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1988.
- b) On being so required produce for examination at the Licensing Office within seven days of such request.

**26. Transfer of licence**

- a) If the proprietor of a hackney carriage licensed by the Council transfers his interest in the vehicle to a person not named in the licence, he must within fourteen days after such transfer give notice in writing thereof to the Council specifying the name and address of the person to whom the hackney carriage has been transferred.
- b) Following transfer, the new proprietor(s) must obtain a basic DBS certificate and meet the Council's Policy on suitability, if they are not already a licensed driver.

**27. CCTV cameras**

- a) If installed, the vehicle must carry appropriate signs informing the public that camera surveillance is active in the vehicle.
- b) Must comply with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

**28. Parking**

- a) The licence holder shall not permit the vehicle to be stationed on the Highway in unsuitable, dangerous, or illegal locations.
- b) The licence holder shall not permit the vehicle to be parked on a taxi rank where the driver is not in attendance.

**29. Dual licensing**

The vehicle is not permitted to be licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle with any other licensing authority.

**NOTES**

- a) These conditions should be read in conjunction with the provisions of Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
- b) Any person who commits an offence against any of the provisions of the Act of 1976 may be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale or to such other penalty as expressly provided by the Act. The licence holder should ensure compliance at all times.
- c) The use of a vehicle not licensed as a private hire vehicle or Hackney carriage to fulfil any private hire booking is prohibited even if no fare is charged for the journey or irrespective of when, how and to whom any fare is payable.
- d) ANY INFRINGEMENT OF THE LICENSING CONDITIONS COULD LEAD TO SUSPENSION OF REVOCATION OF THE LICENCE.
- e) ANY PERSON AGGRIEVED BY ANY CONDITION SPECIFIED IN THE LICENCE MAY APPEAL TO THE MAGISTRATES COURT WITHIN 21 DAYS FROM THE ISSUE OF THE LICENCE.

## **Appendix F – Standard Private Hire Vehicle Licence conditions**

### **1. Maintenance of vehicle**

- a) The vehicle and all its fittings and equipment must be maintained in accordance with the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 and in accordance with the hackney carriage byelaws and all relevant statutory requirements.
- b) Bodywork should be maintained to a good condition, paintwork should be sound and well maintained and free of corrosion, inferior re-spray work and 'cover up' temporary repairs.

### **2. Alteration of vehicle**

No material alteration or change in the specification, design, condition or appearance of the vehicle must be made subsequent to the inspection of the vehicle by the Council at any time while the licence is in force and at all times the vehicle shall comply with the specifications of the Council for a licensed private hire vehicle.

### **3. Glazing**

All glazing must at all times comply with Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 regulation 32 with regards to the level of tint. Tinted films applied to the vehicle windows post manufacture are not permitted.

### **4. General condition, cleanliness and appearance**

- a) Every vehicle must be maintained in a safe and clean condition at all times.
- b) Seats must be fully 'sprung', free of stains, tears, cigarette burns and not be threadbare. Floor coverings must not be unduly worn and present no trip hazards. Household carpeting or similar is unacceptable and must not be used. Upholstery (headlining and side panel coverings) must be free of ingrained grime, fractures and maintained in the manufacturers original style. Seatbelts must be maintained to ensure there is no deterioration and that they are fully operational.
- c) Luggage and storage areas must be kept as free space for passenger's luggage.
- d) The proprietor must ensure that the licensed vehicle has a daily safety check in accordance with the checklist provided by the Government. [Driver vehicle condition checklist \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

### **5. Identification plate, signs, notices etc.**

- a) The following must be in place at all times:
  - i. A licence plate permanently affixed to the rear of the vehicle
  - ii. A licence sign permanently displayed in the front windscreen of the vehicle with details on how a complaint can be made to be visible within the vehicle.
  - iii. No smoking signs, as required by the Health Act 2006
- b) The signs / plates and notices must be affixed to the vehicle in accordance with the requirements set out by the council.

**6. Equipment and fittings**

- a) The vehicle and all its fittings and equipment must, at all times when the vehicle is in use or available for hire, be kept in an efficient, safe, tidy and clean condition and all relevant statutory requirements must be fully complied with.
- b) If a Driver Safety Shield is fitted (either before the licence has been granted or during the currency of the licence) the following applies:-
  - I. It must be of a make, type and design previously approved by Authorised Officers of the Council (for fittings during the licence);
  - II. it must not be changed in any way from its original design and must remain free of damage;
  - III. it must remain clear and translucent; free of scratches, clouding or stickers which would impede the drivers or passengers visibility;
  - IV. it must not impede entry and egress or present a trip hazard to passengers using the vehicle; and
  - V. the Installation and continued subsequent maintenance must be in accordance with manufacturer's specifications and recommendations.

**7. Meters, fares and farecards**

The vehicle is not permitted to have a meter fitted.

**8. Seats and passengers**

- a) The driver must not allow/permit a greater number of persons than the number of persons specified in the licence issued in respect of that licensed vehicle.
- b) All vehicles must be fitted with fully operational seat belts, one for each passenger to be carried, fully compliant with British Standards.
- c) Be right hand drive only, except for stretch limousines.

**9. Vehicles with a third row of seats**

- a) All passengers must have access to a passenger door, one of which must be on the nearside of the vehicle.
- b) In cases where there is no door adjacent to a row of seats, no passenger must have to pass through a gap of less than 300mm at the narrowest point in order to exit the vehicle via the rear side doors.
- c) The middle row of seats must have more than one seat capable of fully tilting

**10. Wheelchair passengers**

- a) Wheelchair bound passengers must face either forward or rearward to the direction of travel. Rearward facing wheelchairs must be securely restrained.
- b) A full static harness or a lap and diagonal inertia-reel belt must be available for each wheelchair passenger. Whichever type of restraint is used it must engage into the same floor tracking as the wheelchair restraints or other system as approved by the Council. Such equipment must be fully adjustable for the safety and comfort of the wheelchair passenger and capable of quick release in an emergency situation.

**11. Communication equipment**

Equipment fitted for the use of the driver to receive information on bookings must be fitted securely in the vehicle and in a manner which does not obstruct the view of the

driver through the windscreen. Any wires used for connection of the equipment must not be left in a dangerous manner.

## **12. Drivers**

- a) Any person who drives the vehicle for any purpose whatsoever, must hold a drivers licence issued by Spelthorne Borough Council. Each proprietor must, before a driver commences to drive the vehicle, satisfy him/herself that the driver holds a valid driver's licence issued by Spelthorne Borough Council by examining each driver's licence.
- b) Proprietors must ensure that all driver(s) of the hackney carriage are fully acquainted with the need to provide all reasonable assistance to passengers especially those with a disability.

## **13. Roof signage**

The vehicle must not be fitted with a roof sign of any type.

## **14. CONVICTIONS, CAUTIONS, ARREST ETC.**

- a) The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 48 hours of any conviction, binding over, caution or equivalent or deferred prosecution scheme, charge, warning, reprimand or arrest for any matter (whether or not charged) imposed on him / her during the period of the licence and must provide full details.
- b) What should be reported:-
  - xv. Any conviction or charge (criminal or driving matter);
  - xvi. Any caution or equivalent (issued by the Police or any other agency);
  - xvii. Issue of any Magistrate's Court summons;
  - xviii. Issue of any fixed penalty notice for any matter;
  - xix. Any harassment or other form of warning or order within the criminal law including anti-social behaviour orders or similar;
  - xx. Arrest for any offence (whether or not charged)
  - xxi. Any acquittal following a criminal case heard by a court

## **15. Disclosure and barring service online update service**

- a) All licence holders must subscribe to the Disclosure and Barring Service Online Update Service. Any costs associated with maintaining this subscription must be met by the licence holder.
- b) The licence holder must give permission for the council to undertake checks of their DBS status should the council consider it necessary to do so. The council will use the update service to monitor the criminal record of licence holders.

## **16. Change of operator or driver**

The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 7 days of any change of operator through whom they works, or any change to the licensed driver. This includes occasions where a vehicle joins or leaves the employment of an operator, or where a driver starts or ends a period of hiring the vehicle.

## **17. Change of contact details**

The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 7 days of any change of his/her contact details taking place during the period of the licence, whether permanent

or temporary. The driver's contact details include: name, address, telephone number and email address.

### **18. Customer and other personal information**

- a) Drivers must ensure that any personal information obtained during the course of their business is stored securely, and only retained for as long as is absolutely necessary. Access to this information must be restricted to those that will use it for the purpose for which it has been collected.
- b) Drivers are expected to comply with GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

### **19. Duty to cooperate on regulatory matters**

Licensed vehicle proprietors must co-operate with authorised officers of Spelthorne Borough Council and any other Licensing Authority or Police Force in all matters relating to the regulation of the licensed vehicle trade.

### **20. Vehicle testing**

- a) The proprietor must ensure the vehicle complies with the vehicle testing requirements.
- b) A licensed vehicle which attracts a vehicle suspension notice (VOR) for serious defects may be required, to undertake a further test to demonstrate that the vehicle is roadworthy before the suspension will be lifted. The cost of such a test is to be borne by the proprietor.

### **21. Traffic collision**

If at any time the vehicle is involved in a traffic collision, however minor, the driver must inform the Council within 3 working days (by telephone or email). A traffic collision (accident report form) must be completed on the Council's website within 72 hours of the accident occurring (except in exceptional circumstances when the report must be made as soon as possible after the 72 hours deadline – an example of an exceptional circumstance would be that the driver is incapacitated due to the accident and physically unable to make the notification).

### **22. Insurance**

At all times the proprietor must, during the currency of this Licence:-

- a) keep in force in relation to the use of the vehicle as a hackney carriage vehicle a policy of insurance complying with the requirements of Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1988.
- b) On being so required produce for examination at the Licensing Office within seven days of such request.

### **23. Transfer of licence**

At all times the proprietor must, during the currency of this Licence:-

- a) keep in force in relation to the use of the vehicle as a hackney carriage vehicle a policy of insurance complying with the requirements of Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1988.
- b) On being so required produce for examination at the Licensing Office within seven days of such request.

**24. CCTV cameras**

- a) If installed, the vehicle must carry appropriate signs informing the public that camera surveillance is active in the vehicle.
- b) Must comply with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

**25. Parking**

The licence holder shall not permit the vehicle to be stationed on the Highway in unsuitable, dangerous or illegal locations.

**26. Adherence to bookings**

The holder of a licence who has agreed, or whose vehicle has been hired to be in attendance at an appointed time and place shall, unless delayed or prevented by some sufficient cause, punctually attend with such vehicle at such appointed time and place, ensuring the place is in accordance with the operator and Council instructions as to where pick-ups can occur.

**27. Dual licensing**

The vehicle is not permitted to be licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle with any other licensing authority.

**NOTES**

- a) These conditions should be read in conjunction with the provisions of Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
- b) Any person who commits an offence against any of the provisions of the Act of 1976 may be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale or to such other penalty as expressly provided by the Act. The licence holder should ensure compliance at all times.
- c) The use of a vehicle not licensed as a private hire vehicle or Hackney carriage to fulfil any private hire booking is prohibited even if no fare is charged for the journey or irrespective of when, how and to whom any fare is payable.
- d) ANY INFRINGEMENT OF THE LICENSING CONDITIONS COULD LEAD TO SUSPENSION OF REVOCATION OF THE LICENCE.
- e) ANY PERSON AGGRIEVED BY ANY CONDITION SPECIFIED IN THE LICENCE MAY APPEAL TO THE MAGISTRATES COURT WITHIN 21 DAYS FROM THE ISSUE OF THE LICENCE.

**Appendix G- Additional licence conditions for private hire vehicles benefiting from a plate exemption**

1. This exemption exempts the vehicle from displaying its rear vehicle licence plate.
2. All other licence conditions relating to private hire vehicles remain in force.
3. The private hire vehicle licence exemption notice issued by the Council must be carried in the vehicle and available at all times for inspection by a police officer or authorised officer.
4. An exemption will only be granted and remain valid where the Council is satisfied that the vehicle will be used exclusively or primarily for 'chauffeured' private hire work. Primary use means at least 90% of the work, as evidenced via booking records. The Council may undertake an audit of booking records at any point during the exemption to ensure that the vehicle is being used for chauffeured work.
5. Exemptions may be withdrawn at any time by the Council and if the licence holder cannot prove that the vehicle is used exclusively or primarily for 'chauffeured' private hire work.
6. Exemptions are subject to annual review and licence holders must reapply each year.



## **Appendix H - PH Operator – Standard Licensing Conditions**

### **1. Prohibition on the use of words “Taxi” and Cab”**

The operator shall not include the words “Taxi” or “Cab” whether in the singular or plural and whether they form part of another word or not, in their business name or any advertising material, letter headings or other stationary.

### **2 Record Keeping**

- a. Private Hire Operators licensed by the Council must maintain records covering the following information, and provide these records to the Council upon request:

Vehicles:

- names and address of proprietors/drivers of each vehicle
- registration number, make, model, type, colour and engine size
- plate number and expiry date of current licence
- number of passenger seats
- insurance details
- vehicle call signs
- expiry date of vehicle road tax
- expiry date of MOT
- date and brief description of all works of modification and major works of maintenance or repair carried out to the vehicle.

Drivers:

- names, date of birth and address of all drivers
- national insurance number
- driving licence number and category of vehicle for which eligible to drive
- photograph of driver;
- badge numbers
- call signs
- expiry dates of current driver’s licences
- date each driver joined the operator and the date any driver left the operator
- all vehicles driver is linked to
- right to work

Bookings:

Prior to each journey, the operator shall record the following information of every booking taken, regardless of whether it was made with the hirer or undertaken at the request of another operator, including:

- name of passenger
- contact details of passenger
- number of passengers
- details of any luggage

- whether the passenger has any disability, especially if they have an assistance dog or wheelchair
  - the destination, including any multiple pickups, drop offs or requested stops during the journey
  - date and time at which the booking was made
  - date and time at which the booking was allocated to the driver
  - plate number and badge number of the vehicle and driver undertaking the booking, including the full name of the driver
  - date, time and location of the pick up
  - price quoted for the booking, including whether or not calculated by meter
  - date, time and location that the booking was completed
  - date and time of any subsequent cancellation or amendment
  - the signature (or in the case of a computer system, the identity) of the person taking and dispatching the bookings)
- b. If the operating base is not located in Spelthorne Borough, the operator must be able to produce any operating records in an electronic format at the request of the Council.
- c. The operator must keep an accurate record of every booking of a private hire vehicle or hackney carriage accepted by them. The loss of records by theft or otherwise must be reported to the Council in writing within 24 hours, and also immediately to the police in the event of theft being suspected.
- d. Separate records must be kept at each premises from which the Operator conducts business. The records must be kept at all times at the business premises and not be removed.
- e. All such records must be in English, permanent, legible and preserved for a period of not less than 24 months following the date of the last entry.

Records must be kept in one of the following forms:-

- a bound book with consecutively numbered pages (loose leaf registers are not acceptable) OR
  - stored on a computerised system, where by a continuous report can be printed instantly. The Operator must ensure that adequate supplies of continuous stationery and ink cartridges are maintained and that the printer is appropriately replenished to ensure that at all times full and legible booking details are printed.
- f. No alterations to records may be made – any amendment must be made to the original record by way of an additional correctly and not by deleting the original entry.
- g. Entries in the bound book, or on the digital copy generated by a computerised system, must cover a 24 hour period and must contain information in relation to only one private hire firm and no details in connection with the bookings of other private hire firms. The Operator must ensure that any booking clerk

involved is competent in the recording of bookings and operating the system used.

- h. The records of bookings must be maintained and kept up to date at all times and must be made available for inspection at all reasonable times without notice by any duly Authorised Officer of the Council or any Police Officer. Such Officers must be permitted to photograph and / or remove such records howsoever kept from the premises if so required.
- i. The operator must have capacity to send records electronically (by email) to an Authorised officer upon request.
- j. The Operator must keep these records for a period of two years from the date on which the driver first commenced driving for the Operator.

### **3. Operator Business Premises**

The operator shall provide a prompt, efficient and reliable service to members of the public at all reasonable times and for this purpose shall in particular:

- a. Ensure that any telephone facilities and radio equipment provided are maintained in a sound condition and that any defects are repaired promptly.
- b. The Operator must only conduct business from the Office at the address specified on the Licence. Any operator wishing to conduct business from any additional address(es) (e.g. secondary booking offices) must make application in writing to the Council, and await approval from the Licensing Office before making use of any additional premises, in addition to any other consents required. The Council reserves the right for an Authorised Officer to inspect all such premises for suitability and compliance with the requirements of these Conditions.
- c. The Operator must not cause or permit the business premises to be used by any other person(s) for any other purpose than that connected with the conduct or operation of the private hire business. This condition will not apply if the business premises is the residential address of the licensed operator.
- d. If the premises is open to the public, the Operator must provide at the business premises an area to which the public have access for the purpose of making a booking for the services of a licensed private hire vehicle, and for the purpose of awaiting the arrival of such vehicle subsequent to any booking. The operator shall ensure that any waiting areas for customers are tidy, well lit, heated and ventilated and that there is adequate seating and is easily accessible for the disabled. This condition will not apply if the business premises is the residential address of the licensed operator.
- e. If the licensed operator employs any other person to work at the business premises, the premises must be kept clean, adequately lit, heated and ventilated and must conform to all other legal requirements.

- f. The Operator must affix a properly printed notice in a prominent position inside the business premises, so as to be easily read by any person seeking to hire a private hire vehicle/hackney carriage, stating that any complaints regarding a hiring relating to their business should be addressed to: Licensing Department, Spelthorne Borough Council, Knowle Green, Staines-Upon-Thames TW18 1XB; Tel: 01784 444202; Email: [licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk).
- g. Such notice must also state that the Council does not control the fares for private hire vehicles and that, in the absence of any fare scale published by the Operator, the fare should be agreed before the journey commences. Any fare scale in operation must be on prominent public display and be an accurate reflection of the charge, including any specific additions i.e. Bank Holidays and after midnight loading (including any waiting times) which the customer may be expected to pay.

#### **4. Conduct of Operators**

- a. The holder of this licence shall:
  - provide a prompt, efficient and reliable service to members of the public at all reasonable times.
  - ensure that when a vehicle is hired it arrives on time, unless delayed by circumstances beyond the operator's control.
- b. The Operator must not fail or refuse to accept a booking by or on behalf of a disabled person accompanied by an 'assistance dog' when the reason for failure or refusal is that the disabled person will be accompanied by the 'assistance dog'.
- c. The Operator must not accept any booking for a particular private hire vehicle / hackney carriage which would require that vehicle to carry more passengers that is licensed to carry.
- d. The operator must not allow a person in a public place to be solicited by any method to hire any of the licensed vehicles under their control.
- e. Operators must not use, or facilitate the use of, any software, technology or other device that is capable of impeding the lawful activities of enforcement agencies or the regulatory activity of the Council.

#### **5. Display of licence**

Ensure that a copy of their licence is prominently displayed where members of the public can read it.

#### **6. Change of details**

Notify the Council in writing as soon as possible and in any event within 7 days of any material change in their operational circumstances, including: -

- a) change of name and / address, e-mail address or phone number.
- b) change of the nature of the business carried on by him/ her.
- c) change of the composition of the firm, if a partnership.
- d) the address of any secondary office(s) opened by the PH Operator.

- e) details of any licensed driver whose services are dispensed with by the operator, where the circumstances of the driver's dismissal relate to his/her unsatisfactory conduct.
- f) any other change in the information given by the Operator to the Council at the time of granting the current licence.

### **7. Notification to Council**

- a) The licence holder (or directors of a limited company or partner) must notify the Council in writing within 48 hours of any conviction, binding over, caution or equivalent or deferred prosecution scheme, charge, warning, reprimand or arrest for any matter (whether or not charged) imposed on him / her during the period of the licence and must provide full details.
- b) What should be reported:-
  - xxii. Any conviction or charge (criminal or driving matter);
  - xxiii. Any caution or equivalent (issued by the Police or any other agency);
  - xxiv. Issue of any Magistrate's Court summons;
  - xxv. Issue of any fixed penalty notice for any matter;
  - xxvi. Any harassment or other form of warning or order within the criminal law including anti-social behaviour orders or similar;
  - xxvii. Arrest for any offence (whether or not charged)
  - xxviii. Any acquittal following a criminal case heard by a court

### **8. Disclosure and Barring Service Online Update service**

- a. All licence holders and controllers whether working in a paid or unpaid capacity must subscribe to the Disclosure and Barring Service Online Update Service. Any costs associated with maintaining this subscription must be met by the licence holder or individuals themselves.
- b. The licence holder must give permission for the council to undertake checks of their DBS status should the council consider it necessary to do so. The council will use the update service to monitor the criminal record of licence holders.

### **9. Change of drivers or vehicles**

The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 7 days of any change of driver or vehicle under their control. This includes occasions where a driver and/or vehicle joins or leaves the employment of an operator.

### **10. Change of details**

- a. The licence holder must notify the Council in writing within 7 days of any change of contact details taking place during the period of the licence, whether permanent or temporary. The contact details include:
  - Name
  - Address
  - Telephone number
  - Mobile phone number
  - Email address
  - Website or other social media/advertising platform addresses used
  - Company directors, including the contact details for any directors.

- Any change in the nature of the business carried out by them
- Any other change in the information given by the operator to the Council at the time of granting the current licence.

### **11. Customer and other personal information**

- Operators must ensure that any personal information obtained during the course of their business is stored securely, and only retained for as long as is absolutely necessary. Access to this information must be restricted to those that will use it for the purpose for which it has been collected.
- Operators must comply with GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
- Operators must report any breach of data protection to the Council (in addition to any requirement from the Information Commissioner) including any actions taken, within 7 days of the incident. Failure to report a breach or to investigate and resolve the matter may render the operator unsuitable to hold a licence.

### **12. Duty to Co-operate on Regulatory matters**

- Licensed operators must co-operate with authorised officers of Spelthorne Borough Council and any other Licensing Authority or Police Force in all matters relating to the regulation of the licensed vehicle trade.
- Licensed operators must ensure that any request for booking records or other information from a Licensing Authority or Police Force is provided within 24 hours.
- Where operators utilise the use of electronic communication (including text messages, emails, notifications, GPS data) to drivers or passengers, such information must be provided to the Council upon request.

### **15. Procedure for Vetting Staff**

- Operators are required to provide a written policy regarding their employment of ex-offenders in roles that have contact with the public and/or oversee the dispatching of vehicles.
- The procedure for vetting staff provided to the Council with this application must not be amended in any way unless agreed in writing by the Council.
- Operators must hold and maintain a register of all staff that have contact with the public and/or oversee the dispatching of vehicles and be able to evidence that they have had sight of a Basic DBS check on all individuals listed, and that this register is compatible with their policy on employing ex-offenders. Vetting and the register must also include ensuring that staff have the right to live and work in the UK.
- The failure of an operator to ensure that appropriate checks are carried out may call into question the operator's fitness and propriety. In addition, a failure to take appropriate action in relation to drivers that persistently breach licence conditions may also be detrimental to the continued fitness and propriety of the operator.

### **16. Staff Training**

- Operators must ensure that all staff employed in a role which has contact with PHV users and PHV drivers have undergone training, and a record of this maintained for each employee.
- Training records of all staff must be maintained, and refresher training provided at intervals where necessary covering the following areas: -

- Data Protection
- Break down & Emergency Procedures
- Customer Complaints
- Lost Property
- Young and Vulnerable Customers
- Equalities

### **17. Sub-contracting**

- a. If an operator sub-contracts a booking, whether to another licensed private hire operator or a hackney carriage vehicle, they should inform the customer and fix the price, and if using a hackney taking care not to charge more than the hackney carriage metered rate if the journey starts and ends in the relevant district. A clear record of the sub-contracting and when the customer was informed shall be kept, including the name of the sub-contractor, the details of their Private Hire Operator's licence and contact information.
- b. The Council would expect that the operator receiving and undertaking the sub-contracted booking is subject the same standards as operators licensed by Spelthorne Borough Council, and that the Spelthorne licensed operator receiving the original booking will have taken steps to ensure the sub-contracting operator upholds these standards.

### **18. Licensing Compliance Procedures**

- a. The operator shall have procedures in place to ensure all drivers and vehicles used have the required licences and are complying with the relevant legislation and conditions of the licences. This should include a record of the initial verification of the driver and regular checks done by the operator showing compliance on each licence.

The record required to be kept by the operator of each of his/her drivers, under Section 55(3) of the above Act, shall contain the following details:

- (a) name of driver;
- (b) date of birth;
- (c) address (or normal place of residence);
- (d) date the driver became available to the operator;
- (e) national insurance number;
- (f) driving licence number and category of vehicle for which eligible to drive;
- (g) photograph of driver;
- (h) date the driver ceased to be available to the operator.
- (i) date of commencement and expiry of the private hire driver licence of each driver employed by the company;

Records of a private hire driver must be kept for a period of twelve months from the date the driver ceased to be available to the operator.

- b. The operator must take all reasonable steps to ensure that all licensed drivers who carry out work on behalf of their company act in a civil and orderly manner both towards customers and any other member of the public.

- c. The operator must nominate an individual with a position of responsibility in the business to act as a compliance liaison officer to the Council and Police at the request of the licensing authority.
- d. The operator shall ensure that they comply with all requirements set out by the Immigration Act 2016, keeping copies of all documentation checked. This paperwork will be always kept securely on site and available for inspection if requested by the authorities.
- e. The operator shall have procedures in place to ensure that no bookings are passed to a driver or vehicle without a valid licence, MOT, or insurance.
- f. Records of checks carried out must be maintained and provided to the Council upon request.
- g. At the request of the Council, the Operator must supply an independent audit of their compliance procedures to the satisfaction of the Council.

### **19. Complaints and Lost Property**

- a. Operators must keep a record of complaints and any lost property and have procedures to resolve these. Records of complaints received, investigations undertaken, and any disciplinary action must be made available to the licensing authority or Police officer upon request and supplied within 48 hours. If an operator terminates the use of a driver, then this information must be provided to the Licensing authority within 48 hours.
- b. Upon request, the Operator must supply the Council with a report noting any trends or patterns of complaints.
- c. Upon request, the Operator must supply details of trip, geographic or hot spot data.
- d. The operator must notify the Council within 48 hours if any driver is subject to the operator's internal disciplinary processes or any other action that results in the driver being permanently or temporarily removed from the operator's system of allocating work to the driver.
- e. Any passenger that makes a complaint to the operator regarding the conduct of a driver that they operate (or operated at the time of the conduct) must be informed that they should also make the Council, and if appropriate the police, aware of their complaint.
- f. The Operator must provide a mechanism for customers to share concerns about other customers whom they have 'ride shared' with, and a process to ensure customers are safeguarded from sharing a trip with the same customer again at their request.
- g. The Operator must notify the council without delay if the operator receives a complaint about a driver operated by them if the complaint relates to any of the following – allegations of sexual impropriety (including the use of sexualised language), violence (including verbal aggression), theft and any other serious misconduct (including matter which may lead to police investigation and motoring related matters).
- h. Where any property is left by a customer in the business premises, or in any vehicle used for any hiring and placed in the Operator's safekeeping by the driver thereof, the Operator must endeavour to arrange to return such property to its rightful owner, failing which it must be handed in as found property to the Council within 24 hours of attempts to reunite the property with its owner being unsuccessful.



**20. Reporting of Key Events**

Key events which may affect the safety of the public must be reported to the licensing authority within 48 hours. Such events may include, but are not limited to, system changes, system faults (such as the ability to drive without a licence, insurance, mot, tax), serious offences and complaints, suspensions, data breaches or losses, investigations and action taken by other regulators (including criminal investigations and the suspension/revocation of any Private Hire Operator's licence held with another licensing authority).

**23. Compliance with licence conditions**

The operator shall ensure that the licence conditions in respect of any vehicle used by them and drivers employed or contracted to them are complied with at all times.

## **Appendix I – Daily Vehicle Checklist**

Driver vehicle condition checklist (publishing.service.gov.uk)

### Driver vehicle condition checklist

Completed by [INSERT DRIVER NAME] at HH:MM hours on DD/MM/YY

Vehicle Registration Mark: \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle Licence Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver Licence Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_

Area	Requirement	Faulty	Correct
Brakes	Foot/service brake works correctly and does not have any excess travel		
	Hand/parking brake works correctly and does not have any excessive travel		
Horn and steering	Horn control is easily accessible from driver's seat		
	Horn works when its control is operated		
	Steering has no excessive play		
Obligatory lights and lenses	All lights and indicators work correctly		
	All lenses are present, clean, in good condition and are the correct colour		

Area	Requirement	Faulty	Correct
	Stop lamps come on when the service brake is applied and go out when released		
	<p>All dashboard warning lamps work correctly, including (if fitted)</p> <p>automatic braking system (ABS)</p> <p>airbags - (SRS)</p> <p>main beam headlamp warning lamp</p> <p>parking brake warning lamp</p>		
Mirrors and glass	<p>All required mirrors are fitted and should be properly aligned and secure</p> <p>Your view of the road in all directions must not be obscured by damaged, excessively tinted or discoloured glass, or obstructions, i.e., stickers, advertisements</p> <p>All windows operational</p>		
Seats and seat belts	<p>All seats are secure</p> <p>All seat belts must operate correctly and must be free from cuts and any damage</p>		
Washers and wipers	<p>Wipers move as per manufacturer design when switched on</p> <p>Wiper blades must clear the windscreen effectively</p> <p>Washers point at the windscreen and are operational</p> <p>Washer fluid is topped up</p>		
Battery	<p>Battery is held securely in place by the correct means</p> <p>Battery is not leaking</p>		

Area	Requirement	Faulty	Correct
	Battery terminals are secure and free from corrosion		
Fluids, fuel and oil	<p>The brake fluid, engine coolant, engine oil, power steering fluid, windscreen washer fluid and water levels must be maintained at an effective level and without leaks.</p> <p>The fuel filler cap must be securely fitted and the seal is not torn, perished or missing</p> <p>There must not be any brake fluid, power steering fluid or water leaks</p> <p>With the engine off, look for puddles on the ground - if leaks are detected, trace the cause before using the vehicle</p> <p>With the engine on, check underneath the vehicle for any fuel and oil leaks - look for puddles on the ground.</p>		
Bodywork and doors	<p>All doors must shut properly, must be secure when closed and must stay open when required for passenger entrance or exit</p> <p>There must not be any sharp edges or excess corrosion</p> <p>All body panels and sills must not be loose or in danger of falling off and free from excessive damage</p>		
Exhaust (if applicable)	The exhaust be secure, free from leaks and must not emit excessive amounts of smoke..		
Tyres and wheels	<p>Check as much of your tyres and wheels as you can see. There must be:</p> <p>a minimum tread depth of 1.6mm across the centre 75% of the tread</p>		

Area	Requirement	Faulty	Correct
	<p>correctly inflated</p> <p>no deep cuts in any tyre sidewall</p> <p>no cord visible anywhere on any tyre</p> <p>no missing or insecure wheel nuts</p> <p>Space saver tyres when fitted are not sufficient for use for hire and reward- can be used merely to get the vehicle to where a full-size tyre can be fitted.</p>		
Licence Plates Discs and other identifiers	<p>Drivers must ensure:</p> <p>all required plates and mandatory signs must be in place on the vehicle before use.</p> <p>when displayed the licence plate must not obstruct/ obscure the vehicle registration plate in such a way as to hide the name of the issuing authority or other identifying details.</p> <p>taxi roof light is safe and operational (if fitted).</p> <p>Taxi meter (if fitted) seal is intact.</p>		

**WARNING: Drivers are found using a defective vehicle in breach of the duty to check could be at risk of sanction, especially if the condition of the vehicle is such that it is obvious no routine checks have occurred over a number of days.**

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## Comments to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

**\*Comments in blue are from the Climate Officer for Spelthorne Borough Council\***

Two Hackney Carriage drivers	<p>We think electric vehicles are too expensive at the moment. With so few charging point it's a bit of a conundrum. waiting to charge is too restrictive especially when working / travelling.the environmental impact of an electric battery is negligible and raises concerns .</p> <p>Replacing batteries is expensive and also poses a recycling problem, and finally diversity of models adapted to the variety of consumer needs and preferences .</p> <p>I'm writing to let you know that we don't agree with the new policy for electric vehicles that the council is considering . I think the structure is not in place for this in the borough as yet .</p> <p>Also it limits the vehicles and doesn't give us the freedom to choose how many passengers we can take . I would much appreciate you having another look at this policy .</p> <p>The electric vehicle policy states that from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2028 <u>new taxi licences</u> will only be issued to electric vehicles. This means that vehicles licences issued between the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 and the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028 will be able to renew their licences until the vehicle is 15 years old. For example, a new petrol taxi licenced on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028 will be eligible for renewal of its licence until the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2043, by which time infrastructure and costs will have likely changed significantly. This will allow for a phased transition to electric vehicles.</p>
One Hackney Carriage Driver	<p>With reference to your email regarding the use of electric vehicles from 2028, i would like to oppose the idea as it is not easy to keep charging the cars, secondly we are already driving ulez compliant vehicles which causes either no or very less emissions, i would also like to mention the cost of buying an electric car is quite higher than a petrol or diesel car.</p> <p>I hope you would consider theses issues</p> <p>The electric vehicle policy states that from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2028 <u>new taxi licences</u> will only be issued to electric vehicles. This means that vehicles licences issued between the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 and the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028 will be able to renew their licences until the vehicle is 15 years old. For example, a new petrol taxi licenced on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028 will be eligible for renewal of its licence until the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2043, by which time infrastructure and costs will have likely changed significantly. This will allow for a phased transition to electric vehicles.</p>

<p>One Hackney Carriage Driver</p>	<p><b>From:</b> Catlyn, Lucy &lt;<a href="mailto:L.Catlyn@spelthorne.gov.uk">L.Catlyn@spelthorne.gov.uk</a>&gt; <b>Sent:</b> Wednesday, August 21, 2024 5:36 PM</p> <p>Thank you for your email and comments.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unfortunately, we are not permitted to accept third party DBS. Please see this for information as to why: <a href="#">Institute of Licensing</a> – please read the letter from the home office.</li> <li>2. Please see 4.10 of the statutory standards - <a href="#">Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> as the DBS only covers UK offences we will always seek to safeguard the travelling public if applicants and existing drivers live abroad for a period of more than 6 months over 10 years of age. Please advise what your exact objection is to this please.</li> <li>3. I am not sure what else I can advise re the electric vehicles other than that I have noted your points.</li> </ol> <p>All comments need to be made on writing, I am happy to speak to you but you would need to put any comments in writing</p> <p>Thanks Lucy</p> <p><b>Lucy Catlyn</b> <b>Principal Licensing Officer</b> <b>Environmental Health and Licensing</b></p> <p><b>From:</b> <b>Sent:</b> Wednesday, August 21, 2024 1:30 PM <b>To:</b> Licensing &lt;<a href="mailto:licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk">licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk</a>&gt;; Catlyn, Lucy &lt;<a href="mailto:L.Catlyn@spelthorne.gov.uk">L.Catlyn@spelthorne.gov.uk</a>&gt; <b>Subject:</b> Re: FW: draft of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy 2024-2029</p> <p>Hello Lucy, I hope this email finds you well. I would like to bring to your attention some concerns regarding the proposed changes in the policy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Non-Acceptance of Third-Party DBS Checks:</b> The decision to no longer accept third-party DBS checks, particularly from Surrey County Council, seems both costly and time-consuming. There has been no clear justification provided for this change, and it would be helpful to understand the reasoning behind it.</li> </ol>
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	<p>2. <b>Lowering of Age and Time Limits for Statements of Good Conduct:</b> The proposed reduction in the age and time limits for the statement of good conduct appears unnecessary. Again, no explanation has been given for this change, which raises concerns about its necessity and impact.</p> <p>3. <b>Licensing of Non-Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles:</b> The new policy suggests that licenses for non-wheelchair accessible vehicles will only be granted if the vehicle is zero-emission (electric), with no age limit. While the goal of promoting electric vehicles is commendable, it may be premature for the industry to make such a transition. Here are some specific points to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There are currently no zero-emission MPVs (Multi-Purpose Vehicles) available.</li> <li>○ Electric vehicles require significant charging time. For a driver working a 10-hour shift, 3-4 hours of charging could be required, which is impractical for taxi drivers.</li> <li>○ Even if all licensed vehicles were to be converted to electric, the impact on air quality may be minimal, given the overall number of private hire and hackney carriage vehicles in operation in the area.</li> </ul> <p>I would greatly appreciate further clarification on these points and the opportunity to discuss them in more detail.</p> <p>The electric vehicle policy states that only from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2028 will <u>new taxi licences</u> of wheelchair accessible Taxis be issued to ULEZ and electric vehicles. Non ULEZ compliant wheelchair accessible vehicles licenced between the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2025 and the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2028 will be able to renew their licences until the vehicle is 15 years old. For example, a new non-ULEZ compliant wheelchair accessible petrol taxi licenced on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028 will be eligible for renewal of its licence until the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2043, by which time infrastructure and costs will have likely changed significantly. This will allow for a phased transition to electric vehicles.</p>
<p>One Hackney Carriage Driver</p>	<p>My only comments on this draft are that the “clamp down” on medical and DBS seem punitive, especially for older drivers like myself who don’t currently know how to apply for the DBS continuous update service! I have always relied on Licensing to submit the application on my behalf to date, each one lasting three years! Perhaps you might be able to assist me once more to start the process once more, so I can then sign on to the update service ( which my wife says she will help me do), as I’m informed that this can only be done from a fresh application!</p>

<p>One Hackney Carriage Driver</p>	<p>A few quick notes on the subjects written down.</p> <p>Most items I don't have any objection too like the paperwork and renewal/new applicant process.</p> <p>Tinted windows are a big thumbs up from me as it would make it easier to get a better vehicle with tinted windows than one without.</p> <p>I am fully against the 1st October 2028 section where unless i buy a wheelchair accessible car i have to buy an EV, i do not and will not be forced to buy an EV at a extortionate rate when the possibility of EV's are not going to be the car of the future and especially when a diesel car would take about 16 years to be more polluting than an EV from the point of manufacture (and this doesn't include the battery change at about 8-10 years at a cost of approx £10k if it hasn't caught alight by then).</p> <p>Disability awareness, county lines and others. I always treat people the way I want to be treated and help the disabled anyway...with respect as I do with the elderly. I don't personally see the need for these 'tests', reason being, I'm a taxi driver not a social worker and I'll be watching the road, not the people in the back. Common sense should come to mind in this situation. These may be better suited to driver's of school runs.</p> <p>Sorry if I sound blunt on certain things and no disrespect was intended.</p> <p>The electric vehicle policy states that only from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2028 will <u>new taxi licences</u> be issued to electric vehicles. Vehicles licenced between the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 and the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028 will be able to renew their licences until the vehicle is 15 years old. For example, a new petrol taxi licenced on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028 will be eligible for renewal of its licence until the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2043, by which time infrastructure and costs will have likely changed significantly. This will allow for a phased transition to electric vehicles</p>
<p>PH Driver and Operator</p>	<p>As per my conversation with Bruce today, I would like to confirm are concerns/comments as detail below in red.</p> <p>As you are well aware we Mums &amp; Sons Ltd are a Specialist Disabled Transport operator carrying out contract work for Surrey school and Adult services, Local borough therefore not operating as a normal taxi or PH company. In the past and to date we have</p>

	<p>been issued our PH vehicle licenses with an S prior to the number therefore differentiate from the others.</p> <p>I trust all is in order and await your advices</p> <p>On 25/07/2024 16:23, Licensing wrote:</p> <p>Dear All</p> <p>At a Licensing Committee meeting held on Tuesday 23 July 2024 at Spelthorne Borough Council, members agreed to consult on a draft of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy</p> <p>The document is attached &amp; I would ask that you please reply to <a href="mailto:licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk">licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk</a> with any comments <b>between 26 July 2024 and no later than 26 August 2024</b>. We would appreciate replies sooner if possible please</p> <p>The Department for Transport (DFT) recommends in the Statutory taxi and private hire standards that all licensing authorities make publicly available a cohesive policy document that brings together all their procedures on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing. This should include but not be limited to policies on convictions, a fit and proper person test, licence conditions and vehicle standards.</p> <p>The existing policy does not include the changes from the Statutory taxi and Private Hire Standards or the updated Best Practice Guidance. The policy has been rewritten to be in line with this. It is not possible to list all the changes, however the significant changes of note are: -</p> <p>Summary of Key Changes: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Removal of forms which are currently given out with licenses with conditions and instead have the one policy with the conditions attached. This will make the process more streamlined and easier for applicants/existing trade to understand the requirements. <b>Thats OK</b></li> <li>1. The Council will no longer issue any Private Hire (PH), Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Operator licence until all documentation has been submitted e.g. medical and DBS. <b>Current Procedure</b></li> <li>1. Relaxation of Window Tinting requirements to allow factory fitted windows. <b>We do run some vehicles with Limo</b></li> </ol>
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	<p>tinted windows due to clients having light sensitivity epilepsy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introducing a time limit for new drivers to complete their application of six months. This is to provide clarification on the process as it has been a recurring issue where new applicants can take extensive lengths of time to complete the process and not contact the Council for months on end. <b>Thats OK</b></li> <li>1. Introducing clarification where current medicals are not in place that the Council may suspend the licence for public safety. <b>Can you be proactive and inform us with ample notice that medicals are due.</b></li> <li>1. Applicants for the grant of a vehicle licence where they are not a holder of a current driver licence issued by the Council will be required to provide a basic DBS certificate. <b>?</b></li> <li>1. Removal of the requirement to carry a first aid kit and fire extinguisher. <b>As Mums &amp; Sons Ltd is a specialist company we will keep these on board as all our staff are First Aid trained and have had in house training on using Fire Extinguishers.</b></li> <li>1. Drivers to register on the online DBS update service. If they fail to do so or maintain subscription during the period the licence is in force the licence may be suspended or revoked. A licence will not be granted or renewed in the absence of a current Enhanced DBS Disclosure Certificate. Should drivers not have a DBS in place there will be no 'grandfather rights'. Checks will be carried out every six months at a minimum. <b>Due to Mums &amp; Sons Ltd being a specialist operator we currently have to have full enhanced DBS checks with Surrey CC and all drivers are fully registered to the DBS update service which can be accessed by yourselves. We would be happy to give your permission to carry out this service via written confirmation and providing an access code.</b></li> <li>1. No longer accepting third party DBS's completed for other job roles e.g. Surrey School runs. <b>Please see above</b></li> <li>1. Lowering of age and time limits for statement of good conducts. These will now be required if the applicant has spent three or more continuous months living outside the UK (previously six months). This will be from age 10 (previously as an adult).<sup>1</sup> <b>Thats OK</b></li> </ol>
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	<p>1. Disability awareness training. Refresher training will be required every three years. All existing drivers to complete this by 1 October 2025. New Drivers will need to complete. <b>As we are specialist disabled transport operators we currently have Disability awareness training along with Epilepsy training for all staff and a refresher course is also carried out every 3 years.</b></p> <p>1. New and existing drivers to complete safeguarding, child sexual abuse and exploitation and county lines training. Existing Drivers to complete refresher training every three years – all existing drivers to retake this by 1 October 2025. <b>As per the above we also carry out a full and certificated Safeguarding course which is refreshed every 3 years</b></p> <p>1. New and existing drivers to undertake training and/or assessment focussed on attitudes and behaviours. Existing Drivers to complete refresher training every three years – all existing drivers to complete this by 1 October 2025. <b>As Mums &amp; Sons Ltd are specialist and carry out contracts with Surrey CC all our staff are vetted and monitored throughout our contract periods and are issued with a Surrey CC Blue Badge confirming they are fit and appropriate to carry out their duties.</b></p> <p>1. Update to policy and penalty points to notify the Council, in writing, of any motoring or criminal convictions within 48 hours of conviction or caution during period of current licence. <b>Thats OK</b></p> <p>1. Introduction of 12 penalty points for failure of hackney carriage driver, private hire driver to provide a pass certificate in respect of Disability awareness training and/or Driver conduct, attitude, and behaviour training by 1 October 2025. <b>As per the above this is already in place</b></p> <p>1. New Convictions policy in line with statutory guidance and Institute of Licensing guidance. “Where an applicant has seven or more points on their DVLA licence for minor traffic or similar offences, a licence will not be granted until at least five years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.”<sup>2</sup> <b>Thats OK</b></p> <p>1. Revision of emissions policy. We currently have a 10-year age limit for non-wheelchair accessible and 12 for wheelchair accessible. If a driver currently has a ULEZ compliant car then their age limit of when it will be last licensed will now be extended to 15 years old. <b>As all of our vehicles are specially made to our specification and</b></p>
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wheelchair accessible we have always had an extra discretionary years that are added on a vehicle to vehicle basis. I would like to think this still would be the case, as our vehicles are purchased from new and carryout limited mileage within there working life.

To further support the uptake of Ultra- Low and Zero Emission vehicles, there is no minimum engine size for hybrid/LPG, electric or other alternatively powered vehicles.

Further information is detailed at **Appendix B.**

From 1 October 2025	From 1 October 2028	From 1
New - will only be granted to ULEZ compliant vehicles. The maximum a license will be granted is when the vehicle is 15 years old.	New non-wheelchair accessible vehicle- licence will only be granted if the vehicle is zero emissions (electric) with no age limit	New wh accessible granted electric vehicles a licens is when years o
Renewal of currently licensed vehicles at the time of this policy being adopted - The maximum a license will be granted is when the vehicle is 15 years old.	Renewal of currently licensed vehicles at the time of this policy being adopted - The maximum a license will be granted is when the vehicle is 15 years old which must be ULEZ compliant	Renewa accessi maximu be gran vehicle which m complia

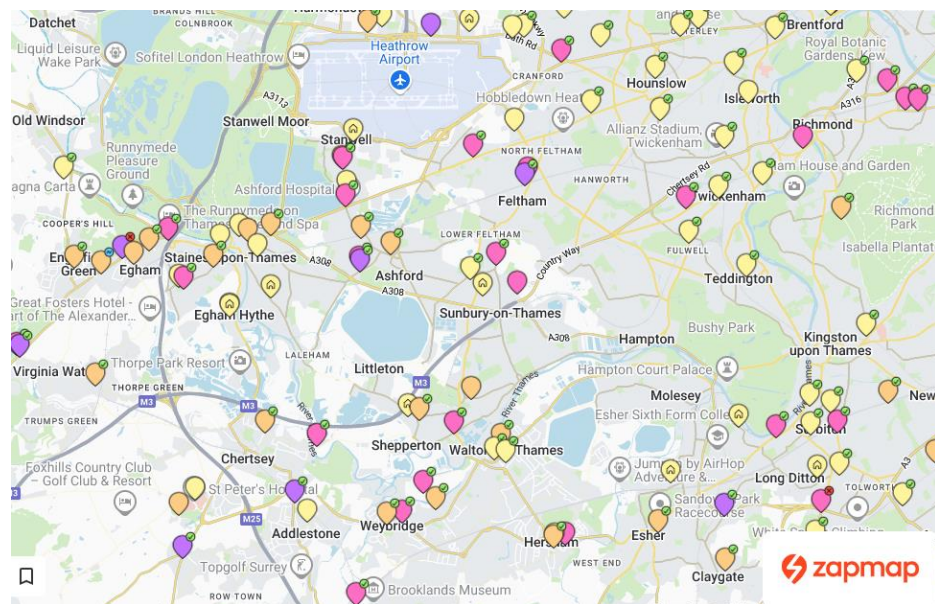
Many thanks

The electric vehicle policy states that only from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2028 will new taxi licences of wheelchair accessible Taxi's be issued to ULEZ and electric vehicles. Non ULEZ compliant wheelchair accessible vehicles licenced between the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 and the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028 will be able to renew their licences until the vehicle is 15 years old. For example, a new non-ULEZ compliant wheelchair accessible petrol taxi licenced on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028 will be eligible for renewal of its licence until the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2043, by which time infrastructure and costs will have likely changed significantly. This will allow for a phased transition to electric vehicles.

## **APPENDIX C – EMISSIONS SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

1.1 The Licensing Authority has liaised with the Council's Spelthorne Climate Team. They have advised that

- (a) Spelthorne has adopted and is working towards its electric vehicle infrastructure strategy that is prioritising the development of rapid charge points within council owned carparks. Additionally, Surrey County Council is carrying out the development of its on street ChargePoint network which will include thousands of charge points across Surrey.
- (b) Below is a Map of all active charge points in and around Spelthorne (the below does not include people's own private ones):



The colour inside the charge point markers illustrates the maximum power rating of the charge point.

- Light yellow = Slow (below 8kW)
- Golden yellow = Fast (8–49kW)
- Pink = Rapid (50-149kW)
- Purple = Ultra Rapid (150kW and above)
- Grey = Unknown speed

The circle alongside the marker indicates the status of the charge point.

- Green = Some, or all chargers available
- Blue = Charging
- Red = Out of service
- Grey = Status unknown

- (c) The Department for Transport best practice guidance document, section 8.6 on environmental considerations states the following:

*“Licensing teams should work with council colleagues with air quality and climate responsibilities to ensure taxi and private hire vehicle fleets play their part in work to tackle local emissions. Leading areas cite large-scale change in these fleets needs a longer-term strategy, with a coordinated approach across council teams and local trades, that considers licencing requirements, other supportive policies (for example, try-before-you-buy scheme), and, in the context of moving to a fully zero emission vehicle fleet, a strategy for supporting the installation of electric vehicle charge points. “*

(d) Below are a few examples of other councils making the decision to licence only to ultra-low emission vehicles and zero emission vehicles:

- Bristol City Council in 2017 mandated that new licences would only be granted to ultra-low emission vehicles and electric vehicles.
- Reading Borough Council is requiring all taxi or private hire vehicles to be electric or hybrid by 2028.
- Cambridge Council has removed the licence fee for zero emission taxis since 2018.
- Surrey County Council is encouraging and supporting the transition to electric taxis in districts and boroughs through grant schemes.

Ride share platforms such as UBER have their own climate change policies that have committed to 100% electrification of their platform and fleet by 2040. With the majority of European cities to be serviced by electrified vehicles by 2030. Therefore, any policy that aligns with electrification of Taxis will be inline with the industry. <sup>1</sup>

Table 1 below provides a summary of the number of driver and vehicle licences issued each year between January 2019 to October 2024. (Note that driver’s licenses can range from a duration 1-year to 3-years and Vehicles could be changed if e.g. accidents and changes of cars).

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Hackney Carriage Driver	66	61	48	58	43	26	302
Private Hire Driver	77	54	33	40	30	18	252
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>554</b>
Hackney Carriage Vehicle	54	53	40	50	51	35	283
Private Hire Vehicle	70	53	39	41	42	36	281

<sup>1</sup> [Our Road to Zero Emissions | Uber](#)



Total 124 106 79 91 93 71 564

- 1.2 There has been a decline in drivers and vehicles from 2019. This would be due to a variety of reasons, including retirement, ill-health, financial, and policy requirements.
- 1.3 Should the number of vehicles and drivers decline in Spelthorne due to changes in our policy on vehicles it may lead to:
- (a) Poor availability of drivers/vehicles
  - (b) No availability of drivers/vehicles either at all, or at times people require a vehicle
  - (c) Increase of waiting time for a vehicle
  - (d) Detrimental to disabled wheelchair provision of vehicles
  - (e) Increased cost to the public and wait for a vehicle to come from out of Spelthorne
- 1.4 The Licensing Authority notes the Governments current plans that from 2035 all new cars on the market must be zero emission. However, the Government acknowledged there are still significant barriers to the transition including vehicle costs, charging infrastructure, and consumer scepticism. Further information can be found in the House of Commons Library.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.5 It is proposed to remove from the draft policy the requirement for new vehicles to be fully electric from 1 October 2028. However, when the policy is reviewed the Licensing Authority will consider all available information on electric vehicles and infrastructure in Spelthorne and a public consultation will be carried out if the policy needs to be amended. The wording has been amended in the draft policy accordingly.

Strategic Sources:

[Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance for licensing authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[ModernGov - bristol.gov.uk](http://bristol.gov.uk)

[ModernGov - bristol.gov.uk](http://bristol.gov.uk)

[Promoting Zero Emissions Vehicles \(ZEVs\) policy area - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](http://surreycc.gov.uk)

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<sup>2</sup> [Electric vehicles \(parliament.uk\)](http://parliament.uk)  
[\(https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/electric-vehicles/\)](https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/electric-vehicles/)

[Electric Vehicle Taxi transition | Local Government Association](#)

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/sustainable-driving/electric-vehicles#about>

[Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy 2023 -2030 - Spelthorne Borough Council](#)



Direct Communications Unit  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Tel: 020 7035 4848  
[www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

James Button  
Ridgeway, Upper Milton  
Wells  
Somerset  
BA5 3AH

DECS Reference: TRO/0453095/22

**11 November 2022**

Dear Mr Button,

Thank you for your email of 11 October, regarding your concerns about Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for licensed drivers undertaking home to school contracts. Your query has been passed to me for response.

The Government recognises that taxis can be a high-risk environment which is why all licensed taxi drivers are eligible for the highest level of criminal record check from the DBS: an enhanced certificate with checks of the children's and adults' barred lists, as part of the 'other workforce', which licensing authorities use to inform their suitability to hold a licence. As well as a check of the barred lists, this certificate includes spent and unspent cautions and convictions (subject to filtering rules), plus any additional information thought by the local police to be relevant to the role. Whilst this is not based on these drivers being in 'regulated activity', in practice, the products of the check – an enhanced with checks of adults' and children's barred list – are the same as if they were in regulated activity with children and adults.

Regulated activities are roles that a barred individual is not allowed to do, and the workforce categories (child/adult/other) reflect which workforce they are barred from working in. In respect of conveying children specifically, a driver is defined as being in regulated activity in the children's workforce if they undertake this role frequently, e.g., once a week or more often. Therefore, a regular home to school contract falls within this definition. Further guidance on what activities constitute regulated activity with children has been published by the Department of Education (DfE): [Department for Education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk).

You suggest that all hackney carriage and private hire drivers undertake regulated activity with children both when undertaking home to school contract work and when not. However, it is important to note that an employer recruiting a licensed hire driver for

regulated activity with children, with the requisite child workforce check of the children's barred list, would not be entitled in law to see information disclosed under the adult workforce, i.e., through an enhanced with adults' barred list check. Only an employer who was employing someone in regulated activity for children and adults, would be legally entitled to see information disclosed through an enhanced DBS with check of both adults' and children's barred lists, for both the children's and adults' workforces. This therefore necessitates the need for a separate enhanced check with a check of the children's barred list, for those deciding the suitability of hackney carriage and private hire drivers to undertake home to school contract work; further to the licensing-related enhanced DBS check with check of adults' and children's barred lists held by these drivers.

The Independent Review of the Disclosure and Barring Service Regime was launched on 24 February 2022. The Independent Review is focusing on identifying key issues of concern about the current regime; considering current responses to them; assessing and advising on risks and opportunities; and will make recommendations for improvement. Included in the terms of reference for the Independent Review is the consideration of the definition of Regulated Activity; the Review's terms of reference can be found here: [Deposited paper DEP2022-0184 - Deposited papers - UK Parliament](#). The Independent Review aims to complete before the end of this year and a summary of key findings from the Independent Review may be published as appropriate.

With regard to your open invitation to Baroness Vere to attend training events, please be advised that Mr Richard Holden MP was recently appointed as the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Department of Transport. You can write to him directly at [richard.holden.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:richard.holden.mp@parliament.uk) on any event that you would like to invite him to.

Thank you for contacting the Home Office.

Yours sincerely,

**D Galway**

Public Protection Unit

Email: [Public.Enquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:Public.Enquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk)

## **Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards**

[Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

### **4.10 Overseas convictions**

The DBS cannot access criminal records held overseas, only foreign convictions that are held on the Police National Computer may, subject to the disclosure rules, be disclosed. Therefore, a DBS check may not provide a complete picture of an individual's criminal record where there have been periods living or working overseas – the same applies when an applicant has previously spent an extended period (3 or more continuous months) outside the UK. It should however be noted that some countries will not provide a certificate of good character unless the individual has been resident for 6 months or more.

Licensing authorities should seek or require applicants to provide where possible criminal records information or a certificate of good character from overseas in this circumstance to properly assess risk and support the decision-making process. It is the character of the applicant as an adult that is of particular interest, therefore an extended period outside the UK before the age of 18 may be less relevant. As with all licensing decisions, each case must be considered on its own merits. See the [Criminal record checks for overseas applicants](#) for more information on applying for overseas criminal record information or certificate of good character.

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# Licensing Committee



4 December 2024

<b>Title</b>	Setting of Fees & Charges for the licensing of Hackney Carriages, Private Hire, and Private Hire Operators 2025-2026
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report Author</b>	Lucy Catlyn, Principal Licensing Officer
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Exempt</b>	No
<b>Exemption Reason</b>	NA
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Resilience, Service Delivery
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>Committee is asked to:</b>                      Consider the proposed fees and trade representations, and either: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Confirm agreement with the proposed taxi and private hire fees and charges set out at <b>Appendix B</b>; or</li> <li>b) Agree amended fees following consideration of consultation feedback, as provided within the report and <b>Appendix C</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	In accordance with the Constitution, Committee is asked to approve the Licensing Fees for Taxi and Private Hire Licensing.

## 1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has a duty to consult with the public when they intend to amend their fees and charges in respect of taxi and private hire licensing.</li> <li>• The Council has received two responses to its consultation on the variations proposed changes to of taxi and private hire licensing fees for 2025/2026.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Government policy guidance recommends that licence fees are based on full cost recovery, thereby ensuring that taxpayers are not subsidising licensed trades.</li> <li>2. The Act specifies that the costs related to issue and administration of licences can be recovered in driver’s licence fees.</li> </ol>
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee must therefore consider the objections.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee to consider the objections and make a decision on the fees.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee must decide upon the fees, and set a date on which the fees shall come into force, with or without modifications</li> </ul>	
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- 1.1 This report seeks to inform the Licensing Committee of the consultation responses to the proposed fees for 2025/26 following trade consultation.
- 1.2 Section 53 of the Act specifies that the costs related to the issue and administration of licences can be recovered in driver’s licence fees in respect of vehicle and operator licences. In accordance with Section 70 (3) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council is required to undertake a statutory 28-day consultation when variations to operators and vehicle licence fees are proposed.
- 1.3 The proposed fees were considered by the Licensing Committee and were approved for consultation purposes at a meeting on the 1 October 2024. These fees have been set out, based on estimated officer time, and including permitted costs. The current fees are attached at **Appendix A** and the proposed fees for 2025-2026 are attached at **Appendix B**.
- 1.4 An advert was published in the Surrey Advertiser on 11 October 2024 to notify the public of the new proposed fees. The advert was also advertised at the Council Offices, and on the Council’s website. Further, all licence holders were contacted by email on 11 October 2024 to seek their views on the proposed hackney carriage and private hire licence fees.
- 1.5 The last day for comments on the consultation was 22 November 2024.

**2. Key issues**

- 2.1 The Council received two objections from licence holders for consideration by the Committee. These are attached at **Appendix B**. No comments or objections were received from the public.
- 2.2 A summary of the objections received is set out below: -

	The responder states: -	Objection from responder number	
		1	2
A	Licensing Fees have been increasing year after year whilst ‘cab fares’ have remained stagnant. The current minimum charge is £3.70 and Uber’s is £7.00. It is evident that low cab fares and increasing fees benefit the Council and neglect drivers.	X	
B	Recovering the cost of services by increasing licensing fees is essentially the council proposing that these costs should be covered by taxi drivers, which is very difficult to resonate with	X	



	The responder states: -	Objection from responder number	
		1	2
C	I can't understand how you can warrant or justify some increases as high as 10% especially for Driver Private Hire renewal. As being a renewal this surely takes less work as its a completion of a renewal form and if all in order it is then signed and a badge can be issued? It appears to me that once again operators who actually employ there staff and run there own fleet of vehicles are being penalised and having to keep on finding additional monies to fund individuals.		X
D	Can I also ask why your DBS costs are much higher than Surrey's and also 5x more than an enhanced DBS which I also get via the FA ?		X
E	We are a specialist disabled transport company and pay for all licencing costs for all of our vehicles and employees, but its coming to a point where all these increases and additional red tape being put in front of us is becoming non sustainable.		X
F	When we had lockdown due to covid we still had to renew all of our vehicle and driver licences even though you knew we weren't able to trade..... All you did was give the option to defer the renewals but then stated that you wouldn't guarantee being able to issue the licences for when our contracts went live again. Therefore leaving us no option but having to renew all licences with no monies coming in. You did mention that there would possibly be a licencing grant which maybe be available but again nothing was approved and was just lip service.		X

**Licensing responses to objections submitted: -**

- 2.3 The Licensing Committee should note that there is no formal recognised trade association in the Borough.
- 2.4 The responses in the main relate to an increase in fees which is making it difficult for the trade financially and the taxi fare tariff not being reviewed.
- 2.5 Driver response line in table above (A and B): Request for a fare chart review - the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 permits the Council to fix the fares charged by the trade =
- (a) It was the Council's intention to review the hackney carriage fare tariffs in financial year 2023/2024. Unfortunately this was not possible due to staffing issues.
  - (b) The Licensing team have had issues with staff absence due to long-term illness and two vacant posts. The vacant posts were advertised twice unsuccessfully. The two vacant posts were fulfilled this year in the last few months.
  - (c) This will now be brought to the Licensing Committee and public/trade consultation during the spring of 2025.
- 2.6 Driver response line in table above (C): I can't understand how you can warrant or justify some increases as high as 10% especially for Driver Private Hire renewal. As being a renewal this surely takes less work as its a completion of a renewal form and if all in order it is then signed and a badge can be issued? =

- (a) The current fee for a private hire renewal driver badge for 1 year is £204 and a 3 year renewal is £431. It is proposed to increase these to £236 and £457 respectively.
- On renewal all licensing checks must be carried out to ensure a driver is fit and proper. All of these checks would need to be done to ensure fitness and propriety, it is not a case of a form being completed and then signed and a badge issued as suggested. The Fees have been calculated to ensure full cost recovery.
- 2.7 Driver response line in table above (D): Can I also ask why your DBS costs are much higher than Surrey's and also 5x more than an enhanced DBS which I also get via the FA ? =
- (a) Currently DBS checks are submitted through the Surrey County Council portal and the charge for this is from 04 April 2024 is Enhanced DBS Disclosure - £50.60 (This includes £38 DBS Fee and £10.50 Administration Charge + VAT). This is the cost to the Council. Since this the Council has received communication it is increasing, however as fees and charges have been advertised we will need to ensure the cost does not go above £48.50.
- (b) It is not clear what is meant by 'FA' in the respondents comment, however all drivers must have an enhanced DBS.
- 2.8 Driver response line in table above (E): We are a specialist disabled transport company and pay for all licencing costs for all of our vehicles and employees, but its coming to a point where all these increases and additional red tape being put in front of us is becoming non sustainable =
- (a) Wheelchair accessible vehicles receive a 50% discount currently and this has been proposed again.
- (b) The Council must ensure we operate on a full cost recovery to ensure that tax payers are not paying for the taxi licensing service.
- 2.9 Driver response line in table above (F): During COVID Spelthorne Council required drivers and vehicles licences to be renewed even though they could not work and had no money coming in. It was mentioned a licensing grant may be available but nothing was approved =
- (a) The Council would not know who was awarded a grant as this is outside of Licensing remit.
- (b) During COVID Spelthorne Borough Council took the follow actions to provide support to its drivers: -
- 15 April 2020 (16.01pm) the Licensing Team emailed all Spelthorne drivers, vehicles and operators to advise amongst other things that the Chancellor of the Exchequer made available a taxable grant worth 80 per cent of their average monthly profits over the last three years, up to the value of £2,500 a month. They were also advised that we would delay a renewal application for a period of up to 3 months.
  - 29 January 2021 (12.19pm) the Licensing Team emailed all Spelthorne drivers informing them of a discretionary financial support grant scheme that they could apply for, along with details on how to apply.
  - Throughout the covid pandemic, the Licensing Team continued to provide drivers with appointments for vehicle inspection, and licence/badge renewal.

- The Licensing Team provided support and guidance to operators and drivers on how to stay safe whilst working.
- 2.10 Objections have been made and not withdrawn. Therefore, the Committee must consider the objections and set a further date on which the fees shall come into force, with or without modifications.

### **3. Options analysis and proposal**

- 3.1 The Committee may after consideration of the objections: -
- 3.2 **Option 1** – to agree the proposed fees noting the consultation responses and undertake to bring forward reviews of the policies expressly referred within a reasonable timeframe pursuant to meaningful consultation and carry out a full review of fees in the 2025/26 municipal year. **(This is the preferred option)**
- 3.3 **Option 2** – to agree the proposed fees with other amendments provided that such amendments are permitted by legislation.
- 3.4 **Option 3** – not to agree the proposed fees - while this is an option it is not realistic considering the legal considerations outlined in section 7 below.

### **4 Financial management comments**

- 4.1 If the proposed percentage fee increase is not agreed, then the income from the hackney carriage and private hire regime will not cover the costs.
- 4.2 Government policy guidance recommends that licence fees are based on full cost recovery, thereby ensuring that taxpayers are not subsidising licensed trades.
- 4.3 Lower fees would mean that the Council is not recovering its costs associated with the provision of hackney carriages, private hire, and private hire operator licensing, and the budget would be in deficit. Higher fees may result in a profit, and this would be potentially unlawful.
- 4.4 Further information regarding the calculation of fees is provided in section 7 below.

### **5 Risk management comments**

- 5.1 Fees may be challenged in the High Court (Judicial Review) or by complaint to the Local Auditor. It is therefore important that the process the Council follows is fair, open, and transparent.

### **6 Procurement comments**

- 6.1 There are no procurement issues associated with the setting of fees and charges for the licensing of hackney carriages, private hire, and private hire operators.

### **7 Legal comments**

- 7.1 The Council have fully reviewed the costs associated with granting, renewing, and maintaining compliance in line with legislation and case law.
- 7.2 Section 53 of the Act specifies that the costs related to the issue and administration of licences can be recovered in driver's licence fees in respect of vehicle and operator licences.

- 7.3 Section 70 specifies that the reasonable cost of inspecting vehicles, the reasonable cost of providing hackney carriage stands and any reasonable administrative costs in connection with the foregoing and with the control and supervision of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles can be included in the fees.
- 7.4 The legislation does not require Councils to make precise calculations to arrive at an income which exactly meets the costs. However, Councils are required, to take a reasonable and proportionate approach and should aim to set a fee level that is sufficient to cover the cost but not make a surplus.
- 7.5 Taxi fees are required by law to be cost neutral thereby reducing the risk of local taxpayers subsidising businesses, and thus ensuring that businesses do not pay more than they should.
- 7.6 The fixing of fees proposed in the attached fee schedules at Appendix B for is a function of the Licensing Committee as laid out in the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000.
- 7.7 Fees for vehicle and operators' licences – the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 Section 70(5) states: "if objection is duly made as aforesaid and is not withdrawn, the district council shall set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the variation shall come into force with or without modification as decided by the district council after consideration of the objections".
- Objections have been made and not withdrawn. Therefore, the Committee must consider the objections and set a further date on which the fees shall come into force, with or without modifications.
- 7.8 Spelthorne's Legal Team has been consulted and involved in the drafting of this report.

## **8 Other considerations**

- 8.1 There are none.

## **9 Equality and Diversity**

- 9.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out. No significant impacts were identified through the assessment.

## **10 Sustainability/Climate Change Implications**

- 10.1 Taxi and Private Hire vehicles help reduce the need for private ownership of cars. They also play a pivotal role in transporting children to/from school and supporting the night-time economy. They can also help reduce emissions to the atmosphere.

## **11 Timetable for implementation**

- 11.1 The fees will take effect on the 1 April 2025.

## **12 Contact**

- 12.1 Lucy Catlyn, Principal Licensing Officer, [l.catlyn@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:l.catlyn@spelthorne.gov.uk) or [licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@spelthorne.gov.uk)

**Background papers:** There are none.

**Appendices:**

- **Appendix A** – Current fees
- **Appendix B** – Proposed Fees
- **Appendix C** –Objections

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Appendix A: Taxi and Private Hire Fees with effect from 1 April 2024

Licence	Cost code	Fee	1 year fee	3 year fee	5 year fee
New Driver Hackney Carriage	31807 7302		£242	£395	
New Driver Private Hire	31807 7313		£242	£395	
Renewal Driver Hackney Carriage	31807 7302		£203	£452	
Upgrade Private Hire Driver to Hackney Carriage Driver (Includes 1 attempt at conditions test, 1 attempt at geographic test, vehicle check & processing & issuing driver and vehicle licence)	31807 7302	£212			
Renewal Driver Private Hire	31807 7313		£197	£410	
Vehicle Hackney Carriage	31807 7308		£254		
Vehicle Private Hire	31807 7315		£251		
Change of Vehicle	HC 31807 7308 PH 31807 7315	£175			
Discounted PH/HC vehicle with wheelchair accessibility	PH 31807 7315 HC 31807 7308		£127 / £125		
Operators	31807 7318		£366		£1027
Hackney Carriage Geographic Test & Retest	31807 7302	£73			
Hackney Carriage Conditions Test & Retest	31807 7302	£52			
Private Hire Geographic Test & Retest	31807 7313	£52			
Private Hire Conditions Test & Retest	31807 7313	£52			
English & Numeracy Test & Retest	HC 31807 7302 PH 31807 7313	£31			
DBS	HC 31807 7302 PH 31807 7313	£47			
Cancellation of booked appointment fee (payment code depends on appt type)	HC Driver 31807 7302 HC Vehicle 31807 7308 PH Driver 31807 7313 PH Vehicle 31807 7315	£42			
Reissue of PH/HC driver or vehicle licence due to any other reason	HC Driver 31807 7302 HC Vehicle 31807 7308 PH Driver 31807 7313 PH Vehicle 31807 7315	£26			
Replacement of plates	HC Vehicle 31807 7308 PH Vehicle 31807 7315	£24			

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Appendix B: Taxi and Private Hire Fees with effect from 1 April 2025

Licence	Cost code	Fee	1 year fee	3 year fee	5 year fee
New Driver Hackney Carriage	31807 7302		£249	£429	
New Driver Private Hire	31807 7313		£253	£429	
Renewal Driver Hackney Carriage	31807 7302		£233	£468	
Upgrade Private Hire Driver to Hackney Carriage Driver (Includes 1 attempt at conditions test, 1 attempt at geographic test, vehicle check & processing & issuing driver and vehicle licence)	31807 7302	£234			
Renewal Driver Private Hire	31807 7313		£236	£457	
Vehicle Hackney Carriage	31807 7308		£260		
Vehicle Private Hire	31807 7315		£257		
Change of Vehicle	HC 31807 7308 PH 31807 7315	£180			
Discounted PH/HC vehicle with wheelchair accessibility	PH 31807 7315 HC 31807 7308		£130 / £128.50		
Operators	31807 7318		£367		£1030
Hackney Carriage Geographic Test & Retest	31807 7302	£76			
Hackney Carriage Conditions Test & Retest	31807 7302	£54			
Private Hire Geographic Test & Retest	31807 7313	£54			
Private Hire Conditions Test & Retest	31807 7313	£54			
English & Numeracy Test & Retest	HC 31807 7302 PH 31807 7313	£32			
DBS	HC 31807 7302 PH 31807 7313	£48.5 0			
Cancellation of booked appointment fee (payment code depends on appt type)	HC Driver 31807 7302 HC Vehicle 31807 7308 PH Driver 31807 7313 PH Vehicle 31807 7315	£44			
Reissue of PH/HC driver or vehicle licence due to any other reason	HC Driver 31807 7302 HC Vehicle 31807 7308 PH Driver 31807 7313 PH Vehicle 31807 7315	£29			
Replacement of plates	HC Vehicle 31807 7308 PH Vehicle 31807 7315	£27			



## **APPENDIX C - OBJECTIONS TO LICENSING FEE INCREASES**

### **OBJECTION RESPONSE 1**

I am writing to you to place a formal objection to the revised taxi licensing fees. I have been working as a driver for the council for 10 years and licensing fees have been increasing year after year, whilst our cab fares have remained stagnant. The current minimum charge for a taxi is £3.70 , which it has been for years. Comparing this to taxi corporations such as Uber who's current minimum charge is approximately £7.00, it is becoming increasingly evident that our low cab fares and (once again) increasing licence fees benefit only the council and neglects drivers.

In the current economical climate, with a nation-wide cost of living crisis, please understand how difficult it has become for taxi drivers like myself to maintain the livelihoods of ourselves and our families. Increasing our fees yet our wages remaining stagnant is an incredibly hard hit for us to take and I strongly advise you to revise this decision, taking us the taxi drivers into consideration.

Furthermore, recovering the cost of services by increasing licensing fees is essentially the council proposing that these costs should be covered by taxi drivers, which is very difficult to resonate with.

I look forward to hearing back from you and am awaiting your response.

### **OBJECTION RESPONSE 2**

With regards to your email for proposed fee increases, I would like to object to all of these increases as I can't understand how you can warrant or justify some increases as high as 10% especially for Driver Private Hire renewal. As being a renewal this surely takes less work as its a completion of a renewal form and if all in order it is then signed and a badge can be issued? It appears to me that once again operators who actually employ there staff and run there own fleet of vehicles are being penalised and having to keep on finding additional monies to fund individuals .

Can I also ask why your DBS costs are much higher than Surrey's and also 5x more than an enhanced DBS which I also get via the FA ?

As you are well aware we are a specialist disabled transport company and pay for all licencing costs for all of our vehicles and employees, but its coming to a point where all these increases and additional red tape being put in front of us is becoming non sustainable. Going back to when we had lockdown due to covid we still had to renew all of our vehicle and driver licences even though you knew we wern't able to trade..... All you did was give the option to defer the renewals but then stated that you wouldn't guarantee being able to issue the licences for when our contracts went live again. Therefore leaving us no option but having to renew all licences with no monies coming in. You did mention that there would possibly be a licencing grant which maybe be available but again nothing was approved and was just lip service.

As I believe, being the biggest specailist operator in spelthorne I dont expect to have special treatment, but I also dont expect for spelthorne to money grab off the people that are keeping your borough moving.

I therefore disagree with all increases as they are not warranted.

I trust all is in order and await your advices.

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