

Proposed improvements and substantive changes

1.0 Safeguarding

- a) Purpose clearly set out and strengthened with respect to child sexual exploitation.
- b) Emphasis on safeguarding significantly increased with a more robust position being taken in respect of who will be accepted as a 'fit and proper person'; additional checks beyond the DBS check will be undertaken and greater use made of intelligence and behaviour/misconduct information.
- c) Additional information/evidence for drivers required at time of application, including proof of identity and the right to work in the UK.
- d) Appendix dealing with the relevance of criminal convictions and cautions fully revised to reflect the current position in relation to the rehabilitation of offenders and the more robust position that the Council intends to take with respect to dealing with applicants who have previous convictions and cautions, in particular where patterns of behaviour feature.
- e) Clarification of the convictions and other penalties that must be notified to the Council during the period of any licence.
- f) Requirement for applicants to be able to converse orally and in writing in English has been clearly set out rather than implied.
- g) Encouragement, on a voluntary basis, for all hackney carriages to be black in colour and all private hire vehicles to be NOT black to increase distinction between the vehicle types to improve public safety by increasing public awareness of the different types of vehicles available.
- h) Additional conditions incorporated into the private hire operators' licence to raise standards, to induce operators to take a greater responsibility for the role they have to ensure public safety and to provide the Council with increased control and a more robust basis for enforcement action where this is necessary.
- i) The Council's interpretation of the meaning of 'plying for hire' is clearly set out to ensure drivers and operators are fully aware of the Council's position and expectations; operators are required to ensure drivers fully understand this.
- j) Increased restriction on the use of the words taxi, cab and hire on vehicles and advertising medium.
- k) Clarification provided confirming that magnetic attachment of side plates on private hire vehicles are not permitted.
- l) New front plate requirement for both hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.
- m) Additional signs required to be displayed inside vehicles.
- n) Hackney carriage roof signs not to include any other words other than 'TAXI' and the light must be connected to the meter switch.

2.0 Public health/safety

- a) Purpose clearly set out and further strengthened with respect to reducing detrimental environmental impact.

- b) Introduction of European Emission Standards for vehicles to control emissions that impact on air quality and public health.
- c) Introduction of NCAP safety ratings for vehicles.
- d) Additional requirements and alternative options with respect to the carrying of a spare wheel in vehicles.
- e) Additional requirements for vehicle ramps.
- f) Advertising of alcohol and tobacco is prohibited on vehicles and the manner by which advertising materials are permitted to be displayed is clarified.
- g) Introduction of specific controls in respect of LPG converted vehicles.
- h) Specific levels for public liability and employer's liability indemnity insurance required and type of insurance required for each licence type is clarified.
- i) Specific requirements for the licensing of limousines, novelty vehicles and vintage vehicles included.
- j) Appendix dealing with medical conditions removed; instead there is reference in the main body of the Policy directing applicants/licence holders to the relevant current guidance issued by the DVLA.
- k) Condition requiring vehicles to carry a first-aid kit and fire extinguisher removed. (The need, or otherwise, for these is controlled by health and safety at work legislation, which is specifically excluded from this Policy.)

3.0 Preventing fraud

- a) Additional requirements apply to the use of taximeters to reduce risk of overcharging and fraudulent use.

4.0 Equality and economy

- a) Encouragement, on a voluntary basis, for all hackney carriages in zones 1, 2, 3 and 5 to be wheelchair accessible.

5.0 Conduct

- a) Increased clarity around the conduct expected from drivers, including the unacceptability of racist behaviour.
- b) Introduction of a requirement for private hire vehicles to 'pull back' to specified parking areas when working in the Telford & Wrekin Council area and to a 'safe place' when in the Shropshire Council area; committed to reviewing the Shropshire position on this in 2018.
- c) Hackney carriage proprietors to encourage appropriate order of working ranks.

6.0 Administration

- a) Scope clearly set out.
- b) Sets out the licensing process, including how decisions are made and by whom, giving all stakeholders clear guidance on the likely outcome of applications in particular circumstances.

Appendix F

- c) Tighter controls on the application process to prevent applications remaining in the system unnecessarily.
- d) In addition to licence conditions, the main legal requirements applicable to each licence type are set out for clarity.
- e) Previously agreed policies relating to executive vehicles and intended use of hackney carriages brought into the Policy; all now available for stakeholders in a single policy.
- f) Methods of consultation and communication with stakeholders to be determined as required rather than specifically set in the Policy.
- g) Clarity on the timescale for reviewing the Policy.
- h) Clarity on the legislative framework.
- i) Appendix dealing with the executive vehicles removed.