

Summary of changes

Pre-Consultation Changes

- All personalisation errors and grammatical errors have been reviewed and rectified.

Post-Consultation Changes

- The Licensing Team jointly received a response from the Mid Suffolk Disability Forum who work in conjunction with the Suffolk Disability forum, and they have suggested the following amendments to ensure the policy is not using any discriminatory wording:
 - Under Section 3 General conduct the following condition has been added: *“All Reasonable assistance will be afforded to passengers with disabilities”*
 - Under Paragraph 4.1 the title is now *“Passengers with Assistance Dogs”*
 - Under Paragraph 4.2 the title is now *“Passengers who are Wheelchair Users”*
 - Paragraph 4.2.3 has been amended to read *“Before any movement the driver must ensure that a passenger travelling in their wheelchair is wearing a seatbelt unless the passenger is exempt and ensure brakes of the wheelchair have been applied.”*
 - Paragraph 4.3.1 has been amended to read *“Exemption from lifting wheelchairs or people who are wheelchair users or have mobility difficulties and from transporting assistance dogs may only be obtained by individual drivers on medical grounds.”*
 - Under 6.22.2 now states *“Passengers using a wheelchair”* and helper has been changed to *“assistant”*
 - Under 6.22.4 now states *“Passengers who travel in their Wheelchairs”*
 - Under 6.22.5 now states simply *“wheelchair accessible”*
 - Under paragraph 11.13.1 now states that *“This policy should be in line with the requirements under the Equality Act 2010 and any disabled and vulnerable passengers **must not** charge extra for their journey’s.”*
- The Licensing Team have included the following statement at 2.19.4 *“The BTEC Level 2 course in an Introduction to the Role of a Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver will incorporate disability awareness and safeguarding.”* This has been included as the Mid Suffolk Disability Forum raised that this should be included to ensure Drivers are aware of this obligation.

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- Under 3.1.2 the Licensing Team are proposing this to be amended to *“The driver when hired to drive to a particular destination shall proceed to that destination by the shortest/quickest route.”* This was proposed by a Babergh driver and the team have amended as it brings greater clarification in that a driver should not prolong a journey to incur a greater fare.
- Under 3.4.2 the Licensing Team are proposing to reword the condition to *“The driver shall not eat in the vehicle unless they have a medical need”*
- Under 6.1.7 the Licensing Team are now proposing to amend the condition to *“Be capable of carrying at least 4 passengers, be fitted in right-hand drive (an exception regarding right hand drive will be made in the case of a stretched limousine) and shall have an engine of capacity which is capable of enough power to carry the number of passengers it is licensed for including luggage.”* This was raised as a comment by a Babergh driver. The team felt this was more appropriate wording.
- Under 6.1.8 the team are proposing to remove *“Electric Vehicles (EV) shall have a minimum range of 140 miles.”* This was raised by a Babergh driver. The trade are aware of the needs of their business so therefore we shouldn't stipulate minimum mileage.
- Under 6.1.8 the team are also proposing to amend the condition to *“Hybrids in addition to the above minimum engine size capacity shall be of the following type: Plug-in (PHEV), Self-Charging or Range Extender (REX or Series Hybrid).”* The team on review of the consultation response cannot see a reason why it shouldn't be included as it is a vehicle that would be better for the environment than a purely fossil fuelled vehicle.
- The Licensing Team have removed the condition under 6.1.12 that states *“The following categories of vehicle are unacceptable to be licensed: City Cars, Supermini, Small Family (this includes SUVs and MPVs of this category/size), and Cabriolets.”* The already listed conditions regarding, door provision, engine capacity and interior dimensions will prevent any of this type of vehicle from being licensed.
- Under 6.1.13 the Licensing Team are proposing to reword the condition to *“Vehicles should have no damage affecting the structural safety of the vehicle and must not have been written off for insurance purposes however category N will be considered on a case-by-case basis with the reasons for write off provided to the team by the relevant insurance underwriter.”*
- Under 6.15.1 the team are proposing to remove the following wording *“on the side facing the front and the name of the company, or its telephone number, or “TAXI”, or any combination of the three on the side facing towards the rear of the vehicle. The roof sign and lettering shall be of an appropriate size to enable it to be read clearly from a distance of 14 metres.”* This was raised by a Babergh driver. The team feel the additional wording is unnecessary.

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- Under 6.15.4 the Licensing Team are proposing to remove *“Self-adhesive identification signs as approved by the Council, indicating that insurance is invalid unless the vehicle is booked by private hire, must be affixed to the drivers’ door and front passenger door panels of the vehicle. These signs should not be tampered with in any way and must be displayed at all times whilst the vehicle has current private hire vehicle plate affixed.”* This proposed condition is unlikely to prevent the illegal hire of private hire as we hope and would be an unnecessary additional cost for the trade.
- In conjunction with the above the team are proposing to remove 6.16.5 (iii) *“No signs whatsoever, other than the identification signs approved and supplied by the Council (see 6.15.4 above) must be affixed to the drivers’ door and front passenger door panels of the vehicle.”*
- Under 6.16 the Licensing Team are proposing to reword the condition to *“Any advertising in or on the vehicle must be restricted to the name, logo or insignia, telephone number, free-phone number, fax number, email address or web site of the owner or operator of the vehicle. Advertising of other businesses or products or services is **not** permitted, including art works, emblems, symbols, slogans, or other displays of any kind.”*
- Under Section 6.16.4 the team are proposing the wording to be amended to *“For saloons and estate cars the lettering of all advertising/graphics etc must be a maximum height of 15 cm.”* This was raised by a Babergh driver. The positioning of the company advert should be down to the discretion of the trade.
- Under Section 6.16.4 the team are proposing the wording to be amended to *“For minibuses, transits and people carrier type vehicles, the lettering of all advertising/graphics etc must be a maximum height of 25 cm. In addition, the single word “Taxi”, to a maximum height of 30 cm, may be displayed.* This was raised by a Babergh driver. The positioning of the company advert should be down to the discretion of the trade.
- Under Section 6.16.5 the team are proposing the wording be amended to *“For saloons and estate cars the lettering of all advertising/graphics etc must be a maximum height of 15cm.”* This was raised by a Babergh driver. The positioning of the company advert should be down to the discretion of the trade.
- Under Section 6.16.5 the team are proposing the wording to be amended to *“For minibuses, transits and similar people carrier type vehicles, the lettering of all advertising/graphics etc must be a maximum height of 25cm.”* This was raised by a Babergh driver. The positioning of the company advert should be down to the discretion of the trade.
- Under Section 6.20.2 the team are proposing to put *“Hackney Carriage only”* after metered fare, metered extras and tariff code shown on the meter, i.e. tariff 1,2,3 or 4; to ensure this is clear for Private Hire drivers. This was raised by a Babergh driver.
- Under 6.22.2 the Licensing Team are proposing to add the following bullet point *“Hackney Carriage vehicles must be side loading”*. This was raised as a comment by a Babergh driver.

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The team felt it was appropriate to add this clarification as it is the only appropriate way to load a wheelchair at the rank.

- Under 6.22.4 the Licensing Team are proposing to reword the condition to *“The licensed driver of a wheelchair accessible vehicle must have received suitable and sufficient training to load and convey passengers who travel in their wheelchairs. The provision of this training is the responsibility of the Operator/licensed driver.”*
- 6.29.1 the Licensing Team are proposing this to be amended to *“ If the proprietor of a hackney carriage has affixed within the vehicle a satellite navigation system it must be of a type suitable for UK roads.”* This was raised as a concern by a Babergh driver. The team felt making the satnav usage optional was more beneficial as technology advancements means a greater number of drivers are using google maps on their smart phones instead of Satnav.
- Under Section 9.1.4 the team are proposing to include after MOT testing the following *“after one year from date of registration for Hackney carriages, thereafter annually. After three years of registration for Private Hire Vehicles and thereafter annually).”* This was raised by a Babergh driver. The team felt it necessary to clarify the required MOT testing.
- Under 9.2.4 the team are proposing to remove the following *“ METER TEST CERTIFICATE – where the vehicle is a Hackney Carriage or where a Private Hire Vehicle is fitted with a meter.”* This was raised by a Babergh driver. The certificate is superfluous and the team in practice do not require this as a matter of course.
- Under 9.4.2 the team are proposing to remove *“Prior to submitting the vehicle for testing owners must ensure that the vehicle is in good condition, i.e., mechanically sound, bodywork in a satisfactory condition and the engine and full chassis steam cleaned.”* This condition will potentially cause unnecessary damage to the electrical components of the vehicle.
- Under 9.4.3 the Licensing Team are proposing this to be amended to *“Owners of vehicles will be subject to a re-charge fee if the vehicle is required to undertake either a 6-monthly check or a safety complaint regarding the continued fitness of the vehicle is received before the next annual inspection is due.”*
- Under Section 11.2.1 the licensing team are proposing to amend to *“Where telephone bookings are made to a landline or virtual (VOIP) number which diverts to a mobile phone away from the bookings office, or a booking is made by text message the booking must be recorded in the bookings log as soon as practicable.”* To provide clarity in regard to booking via both landline and virtual methods. This was raised by a Babergh driver.