



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE** will be held in David Hicks 1 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2022 AT 7.00 PM**

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive

Published on 11 October 2022

Note: Non-Committee Members and members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting or participate in the meeting virtually, in line with the Council's Constitution. If you wish to participate either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams please contact Democratic Services. The meeting can also be watched live using the following link: <https://youtu.be/O1h4HueBD40>

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Our Vision
<i>A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business</i>
Enriching Lives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion excellent education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background. • Support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to enable healthy choices for everyone. • Engage and empower our communities through arts and culture and create a sense of identity for the Borough which people feel part of. • Support growth in our local economy and help to build business.
Providing Safe and Strong Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people. • Offer quality care and support, at the right time, to reduce the need for long term care. • Nurture our communities: enabling them to thrive and families to flourish. • Ensure our Borough and communities remain safe for all.
Enjoying a Clean and Green Borough
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play as full a role as possible to achieve a carbon neutral Borough, sustainable for the future. • Protect our Borough, keep it clean and enhance our green areas for people to enjoy. • Reduce our waste, promote re-use, increase recycling and improve biodiversity. • Connect our parks and open spaces with green cycleways.
Delivering the Right Homes in the Right Places
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer quality, affordable, sustainable homes fit for the future. • Ensure the right infrastructure is in place, early, to support and enable our Borough to grow. • Protect our unique places and preserve our natural environment. • Help with your housing needs and support people, where it is needed most, to live independently in their own homes.
Keeping the Borough Moving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and improve our roads, footpaths and cycleways. • Tackle traffic congestion and minimise delays and disruptions. • Enable safe and sustainable travel around the Borough with good transport infrastructure. • Promote healthy alternative travel options and support our partners in offering affordable, accessible public transport with good transport links.
Changing the Way We Work for You
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be relentlessly customer focussed. • Work with our partners to provide efficient, effective, joined up services which are focussed around our customers. • Communicate better with customers, owning issues, updating on progress and responding appropriately as well as promoting what is happening in our Borough. • Drive innovative, digital ways of working that will connect our communities, businesses and customers to our services in a way that suits their needs.
Be the Best We Can Be
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an organisation that values and invests in all our colleagues and is seen as an employer of choice. • Embed a culture that supports ambition, promotes empowerment and develops new ways of working. • Use our governance and scrutiny structures to support a learning and continuous improvement approach to the way we do business. • Be a commercial council that is innovative, whilst being inclusive, in its approach with a clear focus on being financially resilient. • Maximise opportunities to secure funding and investment for the Borough. • Establish a renewed vision for the Borough with clear aspirations.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE

Councillors

Beth Rowland (Chairman)	Sarah Kerr (Vice-Chairman)	Peter Dennis
Mike Smith	Alistair Neal	Morag Malvern
Rachel Burgess	Bill Soane	Chris Bowring
Michael Firmager	Jackie Rance	Abdul Loyes
Shahid Younis		

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
10.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.	
11.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 June 2022.	5 - 14
12.		DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest.	
13.		PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice. The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this committee. Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions	
14.		MEMBER QUESTION TIME To answer any member questions	
15.	None Specific	FEES AND CHARGES FOR LICENSABLE ACTIVITY 2023/24 To receive and consider the Fees and Charges for Licensable Activity 2023/24 report.	15 - 36
16.	None Specific	TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE DRAFT POLICY REVIEW To receive and consider the Taxi and Private Hire Draft Policy Review report.	37 - 154

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent.

A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading.

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE
HELD ON 23 JUNE 2022 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.44 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Peter Dennis, Beth Rowland (Chairman), Alistair Neal, Morag Malvern, Rachel Burgess, Sarah Kerr (Vice-Chairman), Bill Soane, Chris Bowring, Michael Firmager, Jackie Rance, Abdul Loyes and Shahid Younis

Officers Present

Luciane Bowker, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist
Karen Court, Senior Licensing Officer
Keiran Hinchliffe, Service Manager for Licensing and Enforcement
Rachel Lucas, Legal Advisor
Ed Shaylor, Head of Enforcement and Safety

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Beth Rowland was elected Chairman for the 2022/23 municipal year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Sarah Kerr was appointed Vice-Chairman for the 2022/23 municipal year.

3. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Mike Smith.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

7. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

8. TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE DRAFT POLICY REVIEW

The report was presented by Ed Shaylor, Head of Enforcement and Safety and Keiran Hinchliffe, Service Manger for Licensing and Processing.

Ed Shaylor pointed out that this was the first meeting of the Committee since the licensing functions had returned to Wokingham from the Public Protection Partnership (PPP). He added that the transition had occurred smoothly from an operational point of view.

The report contained a draft of the Taxi and Private Hire Policy, it referred to the new government standards for taxi licensing in 2020. Work had been commissioned from a firm of solicitors called James Button to draft the policy, at the time of commissioning this had been for all the three authorities in the PPP. It was hoped that after the policy had been considered by Members and gone through the consultation process, that the policy

would be the same for all the three authorities; as the taxi service was used and provided across borders.

Having consulted with the Legal department, it was proposed to amend the second recommendation to read:

2) That the Director of Place and Growth in consultation with the Lead Member of the Executive be authorised to release the final revised policy for public consultation.

This proposed change was in line with the Council's Constitution and would facilitate the timescales, in line with the other local authorities.

Councillor Bowring asked for clarification as to which other local authorities we were looking to align Wokingham's policy with. Ed Shaylor confirmed that they were Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire, this was because those two boroughs had jointly commissioned the draft policy and were already working along the same lines. Due to timescales, it would be difficult to work with Reading or Windsor and Maidenhead.

Councillor Soane asked if the Executive Members for the three authorities would be regularly meeting to discuss this. Ed Shaylor stated that this was not currently arranged but agreed that this was a good suggestion.

Keiran Hinchcliffe explained this was a first draft of the policy. The intention was to gather feedback prior to it going out to consultation with the trade and members of the public. He highlighted the following proposed changes to the policy:

- The Department for Transport (DfT) recommended that licensing authorities make publicly available a cohesive policy document that brought 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;
- In July 2020, the DfT issued Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards. Wokingham already adhered to some of those standards in its existing policy. This was an attempt to nationalise vehicle, driver and operator standards;
- The trade was being updated on the likely new standards and procedures. They were being encouraged to sign up to the DBS subscription service. This subscription would allow the local authority to run a report to see if there were any changes to those DBS certificates, effectively making the system more robust;
- In relation to overseas convictions, certificates of good character should be obtained where an applicant had previously lived outside the UK for more than three months;
- In relation to conviction policies, all authorities should have a clear policy that took a particularly cautious view of any offenses against individuals with special needs, children and other vulnerable groups, particularly those involving violence, those of sexual nature and those linked to organised crime;
- All authorities should have a robust complaint recording system and take action if necessary;
- There should be mandatory safeguarding awareness training to all drivers. Training was already offered in Wokingham, the service was looking to bring the training in-house and make it more bespoke;
- All drivers should demonstrate proficiency in English language, be able to provide correct change for a fare paid in cash and produce a legibly written receipt upon request;

- In relation to enforcement, suspension and revocation of driver licences. The guidance clarified situations in which revocations and suspensions may be used. Drivers should be made aware of relevant policies;
- In relation to consultation, it was good practice to consult when proposing significant changes in local licensing rules. Consultation should include passengers and trade groups.

Ed Shaylor informed that the report contained a summary of the revised policy in appendix 2. He apologised that the formatting in the draft policy document itself was not as it should be, this was still being worked on at the time the agenda was published.

During the discussion of the item the following comments were made:

- Councillor Kerr stated that the summary was very helpful. She asked the following questions:
 - How did the local authority propose to help licensees to understand their duties in relation the Equality Act?
 - In relation to the proposal that licensees need to undertake a knowledge test every six years – is there a cost associated with undertaking this test? Why ask that this test is undertaken every six years, given that the knowledge of the area would improve after someone had been working for six years?
 - Page 8 of the policy seemed to be missing the list of providers;
 - Page 18 of the policy – why was advertising being restricted in this way?
 - Why were appeals going directly to court? Why was the internal appeals process not being used?
 - In relation to the consultation – there had been issues with the timing of consultations in the past, she would like to ascertain how the consultation would be undertaken this time;
 - In relation to the wording about Climate Emergency on page 18 of the agenda, could this be explained?
- Kieran Hinchcliffe stated that due consideration would be given to carbon neutral objectives at the time of the consultation;
- Ed Shaylor explained that there was an assumption that having more taxis could reduce the need for personal vehicle transport;
- Councillor Kerr stated that that was a big assumption which needed to be looked at in the context of the area;
- Officers confirmed that the consultation would be undertaken in time for it to be considered prior to the policy being adopted;
- In relation to the question about appeals, Officers agreed to review this in the draft policy;
- Karen Court, Senior Licensing Officer informed that the current proposal extended the right to advertising in vehicles, compared to the current policy;
- Councillor Kerr stated that advertising could be another form of income for drivers, and given the current cost of living crisis, this would be helpful;
- Ed Shaylor stated that consideration should be given to the corporate image of the Council in relation to vehicle advertising;
- Ed Shaylor informed that the list of providers was still to be included in the draft policy;
- Ed Shaylor agreed about the point made in relation to the knowledge test and would change it;
- In relation to the question about the Equality Act duties, Officers explained that hackney carriages were required to be able to accommodate passengers with

disabilities. Also, there were standards in relation to violence to woman and other vulnerable groups of people. Page 32 of the agenda contained a list of training which promoted the equality duties, and which had to be refreshed every three years;

- The Chairman asked if taxis would be able to take mobility scooters;
- Keiran Hinchcliffe stated that there were vehicles that could take wheelchairs and there were larger vehicles that could take non-standard sized wheelchairs. However, there were not many models that could accommodate non-standard sized wheelchairs, this was a complex issue;
- Councillor Burgess emphasised that the consultation was very important and wished to know more about how this was going to be undertaken;
- In relation to inspections, Councillor Burgess stated that the wording in the draft policy was a lot clearer than in the current policy. She wanted to know more about how inspections would be carried out;
- Councillor Burgess asked for more information about the proposed vehicle dimensions;
- Keiran Hinchcliffe stated that it was proposed that the consultation would be undertaken in line with the timing of the other local authorities consultations, he offered to bring back the proposed dates;

Subsequently, Officers have learned that the revised policy has gone as a draft to Bracknell Forest Licensing Committee and has been agreed with a few amendments; it would go to West Berkshire Licensing Committee on 4 July. It was then planned to put the draft out for consultation from 6 July to 28 September.

- Karen Court explained that the RAC inspections were for vehicles of a certain age, so that they could carry on. New vehicles had their documentation checked to make sure they met the requirements for wheelchair accessibility. The proposed dimensions contained in the draft policy had been suggested by James Button and were based on the Transport for London dimensions, they were more generous to the driver than the ones in the current policy;
- Ed Shaylor explained that transition arrangements would have to be in place so that current vehicles did not become non-compliant on the day of implementation of the new policy;
- In response to a question Karen Court informed that for older vehicles, when vehicles were first licensed, they were required to have a MOT test, and then at six months. As vehicles aged the requirement was for a test every 4 months under the new policy, and drivers had to cover the cost to do the test;
- Councillor Firmager commented that it was positive to have a more robust fit and proper test in the policy. He noted that were it said EC passport on page 29 of the agenda, this should be EU passport;
- Councillor Firmager asked for more information in relation to the knowledge test, including what the pass mark was;
- Karen Court informed that there was a list of roads and locations within the borough, and the driver would be asked how they would take a passenger from the pick up point to a certain road or location. There were 10 questions and the pass mark was 9;
- Councillor Firmager agreed that it did not make sense to ask drivers to re-take the test after six years, given that their knowledge of the area was likely to increase;
- Councillor Younis asked how wide the consultation was going to be? Given the fact that journeys were taken across the borough borders;
- Councillor Younis agreed that the taxi trade had faced difficulties in the last couple of years, and that allowing vehicle advertising for additional income would be a helpful to drivers;

- Councillor Younis asked for more information in relation to the English and numeracy test;
- Councillor Younis stated that DBS tests looked at past records, but they were not a predictor of future behaviour. He asked if there was another test to check that a person was fit and proper?
- Keiran Hinchcliffe explained that the change that was proposed in relation to the DBS check was that drivers were going to be encouraged to sign up to the update service. That would enable the local authority to find out quicker if a conviction happened to a licensed person. The fit and proper test also included looking at medical records and testing the English and numeracy of drivers;
- Karen Court recommended to set parameters for vehicle advertising, in order to ensure that they were appropriate;
- Councillor Kerr stated that the wording about advertising was confusing, some work should be done to make it clearer. She was of the opinion that the presumption should be that advertising was allowed, given some parameters;
- Ed Shaylor agreed that it was possible to allow for advertising, provided that it met national guidance and local guidelines;
- Councillor Younis added that discussions about advertising should also be undertaken with the other neighbouring local authorities for a consensus approach;
- Ed Shaylor confirmed that the other local authorities would be consulted, he added that a lot of information spread through social media;
- Councillor Younis was concerned that there was an assumption that social media could reach everyone, and that was not necessarily the case;
- Councillor Kerr was concerned that relying on social media only for consultation was not compliant with the local authority's equality duties;
- Councillor Soane suggested that the taxi trade may have a spokesperson who could help with the consultation;
- Councillor Loyes expressed concern that the draft policy had been drafted exactly the same for all three authorities, as the needs and demographics of each borough were different;
- Councillor Loyes asked who provided the training for drivers;
- Kerian Hinchcliffe explained that there were a number of providers who were used for training, for example the Blue Lamp Service. Thames Valley Police did not provide training. There was an ambition to bring training in-house;
- Councillor Loyes commented that there were immigrants in the borough who may be capable of driving, but would not be able to enter this industry as they could not speak English;
- Councillor Bowring noticed that the onus on applying for a licence renewal fell onto the driver (page 19 of the agenda). He pointed out that this was dependent on the time it took the local authority to process an application. He wondered if there was a reasonable timeline in relation to applying for a renewal and the licence expiring, he also asked if a driver was allowed to carry on driving whilst awaiting for an appeal;
- Councillor Burges pointed out that there was inconsistency within the policy about timelines (in page 35 of the agenda it said 30 days but in other places it said sufficient time);
- Keiran Hinchcliffe explained that if something very serious happened, there was the ability to revoke a licence immediately. He agreed to look and review the timescales with the legal department;
- Rachel Lucas, Legal Advisor stated that once an appeal arrived at the Magistrate's Court, it needed to be listed as a full trial. The courts were very pressed at this time, and did not consider taxi appeals to be a priority. Therefore, it could take a long time

for a taxi appeal to be heard and for that reason she believed that it was not possible to prescribe a reasonable time to re-apply allowing for an appeal to take place. She confirmed that ordinarily, pending an appeal, a driver would be allowed to carry on driving. Only under certain rare circumstances would drivers be asked to stop driving pending an appeal;

- Rachel Lucas pointed out that the draft policy seemed to take away the current provision for an appeal to go to a Sub-Committee before it went to the Magistrate Court, she added that there was no legal reason to take away the provision Sub-Committee hearings;
- It was suggested by the Chairman that the provision of Sub-Committee hearings be added to the draft policy, there was general agreement to this proposal;
- Councillor Bowring pointed out the point 13 (page 21) was similar to point 14, and these could be summarised;
- Councillor Bowring stated that there was no link between the Council and GPs. If a driver was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, for example, how would the Council be notified?
- The Chairman informed that anyone who was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes had their driving licence revoked until their GP confirmed that they were fit to drive and reviewed by a doctor, and if the licence was taken away, the person had a duty to inform the DVLA;
- Officers informed that it was up to the GP's report to inform the local authority about the person's ability to drive;
- Karen Court explained that applicants were asked to obtain their medical clearance from their own GPs who had access to their medical history;
- Councillor Kerr asked how the local authority would be informed of a medical condition which prevented a driver from driving, outside of the time of application when a medical report was submitted;
- Keiran Hinchcliffe believed that it was one of the conditions of the licence, that if there were any medical changes, these had to be reported to the local authority. He added that the Committee could consider how often medicals should be carried out;
- The Chairman asked that this issue be raised with the solicitors who were drafting the policy;
- Councillor Dennis asked if there was any guidance within the policy about the storage of private operators vehicles, as he believed that there was an issue with vehicles being stored in inappropriate places;
- Councillor Dennis asked if there was anything in the draft policy that did not meet the DfT's recommendations or that went beyond the recommendations? He also asked what the cost was of drafting this policy;
- Ed Shaylor stated that this report had been commissioned a long time ago, he would find out how much it had cost and report back;
- Councillor Dennis asked if there should be any mention of Uber in the draft policy;
- Keiran Hinchcliffe explained that Uber was not an operator in Wokingham, however he offered to consult with them;
- Keiran Hinchcliffe confirmed that the draft policy met all the requirements of the 2020 government guidelines, and he believed that there were areas where it went further;
- Councillor Loyes asked Officers to look into ways to help Wokingham drivers in relation to their loss of business to drivers from Uber and other boroughs;
- Keiran Hinchcliffe explained that the Licensing function provided licences to drivers and operators, the issue of where the licences originated from and where their operational model was a strategic decision not within the licencing officers control.

Uber could operate legally in Wokingham, the only limitation was that they were not allowed to ply for hire;

- Councillor Loyes stated that Reading Borough Council had a system that stopped calls from Uber within their borough and wondered if Wokingham was able to do something similar;
- Kieran Hinchcliffe was not certain that such a system existed but agreed to check with Reading Borough Council;
- Keiran Hinchcliffe explained that the parking of vehicles by operators was regulated by planning;
- Councillor Dennis believed that there was a gap in the legislation in relation to parking in private roads. It was agreed that this would be discussed with Officers outside of the meeting and brought back to the Committee.

Members asked that the amended draft of the policy be circulated via email for comments before its submission to consultation. Upon being put the vote Members were in favour of the recommendations.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The proposed changes as discussed during the meeting be incorporated in the draft policy;
- 2) Members will be sent a copy of the revised draft policy via email, prior to its submission to the relevant Executive Member and prior to it being submitted for consultation;
- 3) The final draft policy will be approved for consultation by the Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure; and
- 4) The Director for Place and Growth should work in partnership with neighbouring Licensing Authorities to achieve a similar timeline to any public consultation and policy review in neighbouring boroughs, to achieve consistency of practice between areas.

9. TAXI LICENSING FEES AND CHARGES 2020/21

Ed Shaylor explained that this report was the result of a request by the Committee at its previous meeting, to review and reduce the fees for taxi and school transport operators for the current financial year (2022/23) and arrange refunds for the year 2021/22.

The report contained information about the proposal, which reduced the fee to £248 instead of £290. The background was that two years ago drivers were given a £40 reduction in fees in recognition of the difficulties brought by the coronavirus pandemic. In 2021/22 the reduction disappeared and the fee went back up to £290 plus a £2 inflation increase.

This Committee made a recommendation that the fees this year should be the reduced fee of £248 and this had been incorporated in the fees for 2022/23.

The report outlined the option of applying for a supplementary estimate to refund the drivers to give the reduced fee to those who paid the higher fee in 2021/22, as this had not been budgeted for. This equated to a refund of £42 to 211 drivers (around £8,500). This recommendation was subject to an Executive decision.

The report also outlined the practical difficulties in implementing this proposal.

The Committee was asked to consider if it wished to be consulted on fees and charges each year in respect to the following financial year before it went to Executive and Council.

Councillor Younis strongly believed that the proposal should be submitted to Executive for approval and he added that £8,500 was not a significant amount in the context of the Council. He added that this was a matter of principle.

Councillor Burgess agreed with Councillor Younis. She added that a proposal had been made by this Committee and it had not gone through the proper governance decision making process, which was not acceptable.

Councillor Burgess suggested that, in order to facilitate the administration of this proposal, the drivers that are still active be credited the £40 into their accounts, that would reduce the number of drivers that would have to be manually refunded.

Councillor Kerr agreed that drivers should receive the refund. She wished to emphasise that this situation, where the Committee's recommendations had not been taken to the correct decision-making process was not satisfactory. She added that if Legal advisors had been present at meetings, this situation could potentially have been avoided. She asked that Legal advisors be present at all meetings of this Committee going forward.

Councillor Kerr explained that this issue had only been picked up when the Committee had looked at the minutes of the previous meeting. She suggested that an action tracker of recommendations be produced to ensure that the Committee's recommendations are acted upon.

Councillor Bowring agreed that it was right to give the refund to drivers. He asked if it was possible to recoup the £8,500 from the 2023/24 budget.

Councillor Dennis suggested that if and when the Executive decided not to implement this Committee's recommendations, that an explanation be given for the reasons.

In response to a question, Ed Shaylor explained that this subsidy was for this financial year, and this year's budget did not include this refund. Therefore, a supplementary estimate had to be agreed by the Executive. A further complication was that licensable activities were supposed to be undertaken on a cost recovery basis, one activity could not subsidise another (it was not legal to recoup in the next financial year).

Ed Shaylor reassured Members that Officers would try to expediate this operation and give the refund back to drivers as soon as possible.

The Chairman asked to be kept informed about the process.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The Committee notes that the reduced fees for taxi licences have been applied in 2022/23 as resolved by this Committee;
- 2) This Committee recommends Executive to apply the reduction relating to licence fees charged in 2021/22 and arrange refunds to applicants who paid the higher fees;

- 3) There will be a standing item of approval of fees and charges each year in respect to the following financial year before it goes to Executive and Council;
- 4) There will be Legal representation at all meetings of the Licensing and Appeals Committee; and
- 5) There will be tracker of recommendations as a standing item in the agenda.

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Agenda Item 15.

TITLE	Fees and Charges for Licensable Activity 2023/24
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Licensing and Appeals Committee on 19 October 2022
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Fees and charges relating to licences, permits and registrations are income for the licensing service, and therefore contribute to covering the cost of the council's licensing functions.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the Committee **NOTES** the fees set out at Appendix A and B as part of the Council's annual fee setting process
- 2) That the Committee **RECOMMENDS** to Executive that, in relation to those fees which are within the Council's discretion to set, the fees should

EITHER remain unchanged for 2023/24

OR are increased in line with the Consumer Prices Index so that fee income covers the Council's costs.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report sets out the Fees and Charges which are proposed for licensable activities in this area of the council for 2023/24.

The Consumer Prices **Index (CPI)** rose by 9.9% in the 12 months to August 2022 and it is proposed that an increase in fees and charges be based on this figure.

Income from licensing fees offsets the costs to the Council of administering the licensing service. Shortfalls or excesses should be balanced in following years.

Background

Licensing authorities are required to review their fees and charges on an annual basis. A significant number of fees within the licensing field are set by Government Statute or Regulation and cannot therefore be changed by the Council (“Statutory fees”). These are set out in Appendix A.

Those fees which are within the Council’s discretion to set (“Discretionary fees”) are usually required to be based on an assessment of the costs of the administration and processing of the application and sometimes for the general management and enforcement of the regulatory function. These are set out in Appendix B.

At the meeting of this committee on 26 January 2022, it was resolved that:

4) The fees for taxi and private hire vehicles and private hire operators for the financial year 2023/24 are reviewed during 2022/23 with a view to carrying out statutory consultation regarding any proposed increase to the fees prior to process for budget setting for 2023/24.

Fees for Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles and Private Hire Operators are proposed to be based in 2023/24 on the level set for 2019/20, prior to the discount applied in 2020/21 for business interruption.

Analysis of Issues

Income from licensing fees should be no more than the costs of administering the licensing service. At the most the service should be cost neutral, but the Council has faced considerable cost increases and the hourly rate has only increased by 3.5% since 2017/18 (£57 to £59). It is therefore recommended that a 9.9% increase in fees and the hourly rate is necessary to ensure that the costs of administering and processing licence applications, and the management and enforcement of licensing regimes, are adequately covered by fees and charges. This would mean the hourly rate applied increases by £6 to £65 per hour (rounded to the nearest pound).

The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rose by 9.9% in the 12 months to August 2022 and it is proposed that the increase in discretionary fees and charges shown in Appendix B should be based on this figure, rounded to the nearest pound for clarity (some increases are therefore slightly more or less than 9.9% due to this rounding). The Council has no power to increase the fees set by statute or regulation in Appendix A.

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle charges have been lower in the last three years as a result of decisions made to help the sector during Covid. The proposed 9.9% increase has therefore been applied to the 2019/20 fee rate rather than the 2022/23 level as in the case of all other charges.

Alternatively, the committee could recommend that fees remain unchanged for 2023/24 due to the likely impact on licensable businesses (where the fee is at the discretion of the Council, as per Appendix B) of increased fuel and energy costs and economic downturn, so as to provide some incentive for local businesses to flourish, and in recognition that there can be no increase in fees for licensable activity where the fee is fixed by statute (Appendix A). If this is the decision, then it is probable the fee income

would not cover the costs and the general fund would be required to subsidise the licensing regime.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	A 9.9% increase in discretionary fees would yield approximately an extra £15k income. Should the decision be taken not to increase fees then no additional income will be generated.	In 2022/23 the forecast licensing income is £50k less than the budgeted figure. The increase to the fees will generate an additional £15k and reduce the budget shortfall to £35k.	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£15k additional income will be realised if the fee increase is implemented plus any additional increases in fees set for 2024/25.		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£15k additional income will be realised if the fee increase is implemented plus any additional increases in fees set for 2025/26.		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Should the decision be made not to increase the fees, then the council will not receive the £15k of additional income referenced above in 2023/24 and the starting base for any fee increase beyond 2023/24 will be lower, meaning the £15k loss is compounded year on year. Expenditure costs to deliver the service will continue to rise with salary increase and service delivery cost increases which the council will have to find an alternative way to finance if the proposed fees and charges increase is not implemented.

A full list of the proposed fees are set out in detail in the Appendices.

Cross-Council Implications

There are no implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Public Sector Equality Duty
An equalities impact assessment is not required at this stage, as no change is being proposed to the current fee structure.

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
No impact is anticipated to the Council’s carbon neutral objective.

List of Background Papers
N/A

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APPENDIX A

Statutory Fees

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Gambling Act 2005		Statutory maximum set by The Gambling (Premises Licence Fees) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007		
Casinos (regional) New Application			£15,000	£15,000
Provisional Statement			£15,000	£15,000
Application with Provisional Statement			£8,000	£8,000
Variation			£7,500	£7,500
Transfer/Reinstatement			£6,500	£6,500
Annual Fee			£15,000	£15,000
Casinos (large) New Application			£10,000	£10,000
Provisional Statement			£10,000	£10,000
Application with Provisional Statement			£5,000	£5,000
Variation			£5,000	£5,000
Transfer/Reinstatement			£2,150	£2,150
Annual Fee			£10,000	£10,000
Casinos (small) New Application			£8,000	£8,000
Provisional Statement			£8,000	£8,000
Application with Provisional Statement			£3,000	£3,000
Variation			£4,000	£4,000
Transfer/Reinstatement			£1,800	£1,800
Annual Fee			£5,000	£5,000
Bingo Clubs New Application			£3,500	£3,500
Provisional Statement			£3,500	£3,500
Application with Provisional Statement			£1,200	£1,200
Variation			£1,750	£1,750
Transfer/Reinstatement			£1,200	£1,200
Annual Fee			£1,000	£1,000

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Betting Premises New Application			£3,000	£3,000
Provisional Statement			£3,000	£3,000
Application with Provisional Statement			£1,200	£1,200
Variation			£1,500	£1,500
Transfer/Reinstatement			£1,200	£1,200
Annual Fee			£600	£600
Tracks New Application			£2,500	£2,500
Provisional Statement			£2,500	£2,500
Application with Provisional Statement			£950	£950
Variation			£1,250	£1,250
Transfer/Reinstatement			£950	£950
Annual Fee			£1,000	£1,000
Family Entertainment Centres New Application			£2,000	£2,000
Provisional Statement			£2,000	£2,000
Application with Provisional Statement			£950	£950
Variation			£1,000	£1,000
Transfer/Reinstatement			£950	£950
Annual Fee			£750	£750
Adult Gaming Centres New Application			£2,000	£2,000
Provisional Statement			£2,000	£2,000
Application with Provisional Statement			£1,200	£1,200
Variation			£1,000	£1,000
Transfer/Reinstatement			£1,200	£1,200
Annual Fee			£1,000	£1,000
Lotteries & Amusements New Application			£40	£40
Annual Fee			£20	£20
All licences			£50	£50
Copy of licence			£25	£25

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Club gaming or machine permit New Application			£200	£200
Existing holder			£100	£100
Renewal			£200	£200
Annual Fee			£50	£50
Variation			£100	£100
Copy of licence			£15	£15
Club Gaming or Machine Permit (holds a club Premises Certificate under Licensing Act 2003)			£100	£100
Renewal			£100	£100
Notification of intention to make available up to 2 gaming machines on premises which hold on-premises alcohol licence			£50	£50
Application for Gaming Machine Permit (more than 2 machines) on premises which hold on premises alcohol licence (existing holder)			£100	£100
New Application			£150	£150
Annual Fee			£50	£50
First Annual Fee (payable within 30 days of date permit takes effect)			£50	£50
Variation			£100	£100
Transfer			£25	£25
Change of name			£25	£25
Copy of permit			£15	£15

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Licensing Act 2003		Set by The Licensing Act 2003 (Fees) Regulations 2005		
Premises licence new Band A – RV up to 4,300			£100	£100
Premises licence new Band B – RV 4,300 to 33,000			£190	£190
Premises licence new Band C – RV 33,001 to 87,000			£315	£315
Premises licence new Band D – RV 87,001 to 125,000			£450	£450
Premises licence new Band E – RV 125,001 and above			£635	£635
Premises Licence – Annual Fee				
Band A			£70	£70
Band B			£180	£180
Band C			£295	£295
Band D			£320	£320
Band E			£350	£350
Personal Licence			£37	£37
Temporary Event Notices (TENs)			£21	£21
Application for copy licence			£11	£11
Application to vary DPS/transfer licence/interim notice			£23	£23
Application for making a provisional statement			£315	£315
Minor variation			£89	£89
Application to disapply mandatory DPS condition			£23	£23

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016		Set by The Environment Agency (Environmental Permitting) (England) Charging Scheme		
Scheduled Processes				
Standard Process			£1,650	£1,650
Service Stations (PVI & PVII)			£257	£257
Dry Cleaners			£155	£155
Vehicle Refinishers			£362	£362
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant			£1,650	£1,650
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for the 3rd to 7th applications			£985	£985
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for the 8th and subsequent applications			£498	£498
Substantial changes				
Standard Process			£1,050	£1,050
Reduced Activities			£102	£102
Annual Subsistence Charge (Statutory)				
Standard Process - Low			£772	£772
Medium			£1,161	£1,161
High			£1,747	£1,747
Service stations PVR2 - Low			£113	£113
Medium			£226	£226
High			£341	£341
VR and other reduced fees - Low			£228	£228
Medium			£365	£365
High			£548	£548
Dry cleaners/PVR1 - Low			£79	£79
Medium			£158	£158
High			£237	£237

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Medium			£1,034	£1,034
High			£1,506	£1,506
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for 2nd permit - Low			£646	£646
Medium			£1,034	£1,034
High			£1,506	£1,506
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for 3rd to 7th permit - Low			£385	£385
Medium			£617	£617
High			£924	£924
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for the 8th and subsequent permits - Low			£198	£198
Medium			£316	£316
High			£473	£473
Late payment charge	If invoice issued & not paid within 8 weeks		£52	£52
Transfer and Surrender				
Transfer			£169	£169
Partial Transfer			£497	£497
Surrender			£0	£0
Transfer Reduced fees			£0	£0
Partial Transfer Reduced Fees			£47	£47

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Private Water Supplies		Maximums set in Schedule 5 Private Water Supplies Regulations 2016		
Risk assessment - Every 5 years. Charged per hour, simple risk assessment and report typically 5 hours	Every 5 years.	Stat maximum £500	£65/hour	£65/hour
Private water and pool samples - Includes cost of testing	Includes cost of testing	Stat maximum £500	£60	£60
Investigation - Includes cost of testing Carried out in the event of a test failure - this does not include any required analysis costs.	Carried out in the event of a test failure, can be substituted by the	Stat maximum £100	£100	£100
Granting an authorisation	risk assessment - this does not include any required analysis costs.	Stat maximum £100	£100	£100
Analysis – Regulation 10 (1) a. to e. Where a supply provides <10m3/day or serves <50 people and is used for domestic purposes	Where a supply provides <10m3/day or serves <50 people and is used for domestic purposes	Stat maximum £25	£25	£25
Analysis,- Regulation 8 and 9 Taking a sample and delivery to the laboratory.	Charge for a visit, taking a sample and delivery to the laboratory. Typically 2.5 hours	Stat maximum £100	£100	£100
Petroleum Licences (Trading standards)		Petroleum (Consolidation) Regulations 2014 / The Health and Safety and Nuclear (Fees) Regulations 2021		
Not exceeding 2,500 litres			£44	£44
Not exceeding 50,000 litres			£60	£60
Exceeding 50,000 litres			£125	£125

APPENDIX B

DISCRETIONARY FEES

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Animal Licences		The granting fee includes initial inspection and mid-term inspection totalling 4 hours (unless stated differently). Inspections required beyond this due to additional visits, aborted visits will be charged at an additional fee		
Animal Boarding Establishment new - (dogs and cats)			£590	£648
Animal Boarding Establishment renewal - (dogs and cats)			£531	£584
Animal Boarding Establishment new - single species (dogs or cats)			£472	£519
Animal Boarding Establishment Renewal - single species			£413	£454
Home Boarder New			£272	£299
Home Boarder Renewal			£242	£266
Home Boarder - Franchisee New			£207	£227
Home Boarder - Franchisee Renewal			£177	£195
Home Boarder - Assessment of host in franchisee licence New			£118	£130
Home Boarder - Assessment of host in franchisee licence Renewal			£118	£130
Dog Day Care New			£590	£648
Dog Day Care Renewal			£531	£584
Dog Breeding Establishment New			£590	£648
Dog Breeding Establishment Renewal			£531	£584
Dog Breeding Establishment (domestic dwelling) New			£472	£519

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Dog Breeding Establishment (domestic dwelling) Renewal			£413	£454
Sale of pets new			£472	£519
Sale of pets renewal			£413	£454
Animal for Exhibition New			£590	£648
Animal for Exhibition Renewal			£531	£584
Riding Establishment				
Riding establishment inspection (plus fee per horse) New			£472	£519
Riding establishment inspection renewal			£413	£454
Inspection fee per horse, for the first 10 horses			£15	£16
Inspection fee per horse, for next 11-50 horses			£10	£11
Inspection fee per horse, for every horse 51 & over			£8	£9
Other Fees				
Variation to animal licence			£224	£246
Replacement licence fee (lost or stolen paperwork, change of name, etc.)			£56	£62
Re-evaluation of star rating (inclusive of one visit)			£112	£123
Transfer due to death of licensee			£56	£62
				£0
Wild animals and zoos				
				£0
Dangerous Wild Animal Consent	2 years		£460	£506
Zoo Licences (new & renewals)	Up to 6 years		£2,066	£2,271

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Taxi Licences		Cost recovery. Change would require consultation with licensees		
Hackney Carriage Vehicle – New & renewal	Based on 2019/20 fee of £290 prior to Covid discount		£248	£319
Private Hire Vehicle – New and renewal			£248	£319
Private Hire Vehicle with Dispensation			£248	£319
Temporary Vehicle Licence	Up to 3 months		£232	£255
Driver licence - New & Renewal	3 years		£271	£298
Conversion of driver licence to another type			£80	£88
Private Hire Operators (PHO)				
NEW Private Hire Operator				
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 1			£472	£519
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 2			£546	£600
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 3			£620	£681
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 4			£693	£762
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 5			£767	£843
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 6			£841	£924
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 7			£915	£1,005
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 8			£988	£1,086
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 9			£1,062	£1,167

NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 10			£1,136	£1,248
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 11			£1,210	£1,329
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 12			£1,283	£1,410
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 13			£1,357	£1,491
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 14			£1,431	£1,572
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 15			£1,505	£1,653
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 16			£1,578	£1,734
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 17			£1,652	£1,816
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 18			£1,726	£1,897
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 19			£1,800	£1,978
NEW Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 20+			£1,873	£2,059
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator				
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 1			£354	£389
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 2			£428	£470
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 3			£502	£551
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 4			£575	£632
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 5			£649	£713

RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 6			£723	£794
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 7			£797	£875
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 8			£870	£956
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 9			£944	£1,037
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 10			£1,018	£1,119
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 11			£1,092	£1,200
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 12			£1,165	£1,281
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 13			£1,239	£1,362
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 14			£1,313	£1,443
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 15			£1,387	£1,524
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 16			£1,460	£1,605
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 17			£1,534	£1,686
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 18			£1,608	£1,767
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 19			£1,682	£1,848
RENEWAL Private Hire Operator Licence Number of Vehicles: 20+			£1,755	£1,929

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Other Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Charges				
Variation to PHO licence			£59	£65
Transfer of vehicle to new owner			£118	£130
Change of vehicle			£74	£81
Replacement Licence			£41	£45
Replacement Badge			£41	£45
Replacement Vehicle Licence Plate			£59	£65
Knowledge Test			£74	£81
Missed Appointment			£37	£41
Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS)			£90	£98
Advertising on a Hackney carriage - New			£47	£52
Advertising on a Hackney Carriage - Renewal			£32	£35
Change of address (PH & HC)			£14	£15
Backing Plate			£26	£29
Medical Exemption from carrying an assistance dog			£22	£24
Refund Processing Fee			£59	£65
Change of vehicle registration			£57	£63
Age of vehicle Inspection – initial & renewal			£59	£65

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Scrap Metal Dealers		Cost recovery for assessment and administration of the application		
Scrap Metal Site Licence	3 Years		£501	£551
Scrap Metal mobile collector licence	3 years		£267	£293
Scrap Metal - Variation of Licence			£368	£404
Scrap Metal - change of site manager			£68	£75
Scrap Metal - copy of licence			£11	£12
Scrap Metal - Change of Name			£36	£40
Skin Piercing & Treatments				
Skin Piercing & Dermal Treatments Individual	Individual		£180	£198
Skin Piercing & Dermal Treatments Premises	Premises		£282	£310
Skin Piercing & Dermal Treatments Joint Application	Joint application		£451	£496
Pre-application work, hourly rate	Min. 1 hour		£59	£65
Street Trading Consents				
Street Trading Consent Annual Fee	Annual Fee		£1,378	£1,514
Street Trading Consent 6 months	6 months		£805	£885
Street Trading Consent Monthly Rate	Monthly Rate		£228	£251
Variation fee			£91	£100
Refund for Street Traders if application withdrawn	If application withdrawn		£116	£127

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Dog Warden Services				
Stray Dog recovered		Fees based on cost recovery. Vets fees separate.	£73	£82
Stray Dog – kennel charge in addition to recovery charge			£15 per day max £75	£16.50 per day max £82
Dog fouling fixed penalty charge		Fixed penalty	£75	£82
Miscellaneous stray dog activities e.g. taxi, relocating, microchipping			£59	£65
Private Sector Housing				
Inspection of Housing Premises for Immigration purposes			£116	£127
Enforcement Notices served under Housing Act 2004		On a cost recovery basis	£402	£442
HMO Licence NEW		Set on a cost recovery basis for the costs of (a) the administration and processing of the application and (b) for the general management and enforcement of the scheme	£1,204	£1,323
HMO Licence RENEWAL			£805	£885
Copy of HMO Register	Hourly charge	Housing Act 2004	£59	£65

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Caravan Site Licences		Cost recovery for administering and monitoring site licences - a fee fixed by the authority under Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960		
Caravan Site licence new			£440	£484
New Caravan Site pitch licence			£16	£18
Caravan Site Licence Transfer			£186	£204
Alteration of Caravan Site conditions			£341	£375
Caravan Site Annual fee per pitch			£14	£15
Enforcement Notice under Mobile Homes Act 2013			£402	£442
Deposit, vary or deleting Caravan Site rules			£117	£129
Variation of Caravan Site licence			£116	£127
Mobile Homes Regulations 2020		The Mobile Homes (Requirement for Manager of Site to be Fit and Proper Person) (England) Regulations 2020 ("the Regulations") permit the Council to charge a fee		
Application Fee – Fit and Proper Test		Any application taking more than two hours to process will be charged at an additional hourly rate of £59/ph	£118	£130
Annual Fee – Fit and Proper Test			£59.00/hour	£65 per hour

	Note	Regulatory Framework	Charge in 2022/23	Proposed charge from 1/4/2023
Other fees	Hourly rate applies minimum of 2 hours			£0
Environmental Information Request - Individual, Non-Commercial			£118	£130
Environmental Information Request - Commercial and Government			£118	£130
Civil Actions (Class A – Fee Discretionary)			£118	£130
Safety Certification and administration	Hourly rate applies minimum of 2 hours		£118	£130
Pre-Application Advice, hourly charge			£59	£65
				£0
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme rescore	2 hours		£118	£130
General Business Advice (Non Primary Authority)	Hourly rate (first 30 minutes free)		£59	£65
Resident Request for Advice	Hourly rate		£59	£65
Hourly charge			£59	£65

TITLE	Taxi and Private Hire Policy Review
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Licensing and Appeals Committee on 19 October 2022
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (“the policy”) outlines a set of proposed standards and procedures to be used to process and determine applications for driver, vehicle and operator licenses by Wokingham Borough Council (“the Council”).

The proposed policy is based on the principle that anyone using a licensed vehicle must be able to trust the driver; be assured the vehicle is safe; and trust any operator or driver to keep their information safe.

RECOMMENDATION

That Licensing and Appeals Committee:

- 1) **APPROVES** the revised policy; and
- 2) Delegates to the Director of Place and Growth in consultation with the Lead Member of the Executive to release the revised policy for public consultation.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

- a) The Licensing and Appeals Committee recommended several amendments to the draft policy at its last meeting on 23 June 2022, and these amendments have been incorporated into the policy attached to this report
- b) The Department for Transport (DfT) recommends licensing authorities to have a policy 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
- c) In July 2020, DfT issued [Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) which state that licensing authorities must use their licensing powers to protect children and vulnerable adults.
- d) West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest councils have already commenced public consultation, so the Council can set its own timeline for consultation

Background

1. The Council is the Licensing Authority responsible for regulating the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades operating in the Borough.
2. Unlike Hackney Carriages, Private Hire Vehicles are only permitted to pick up pre-arranged bookings and are not permitted to be hailed to stop by a passenger who has not pre-booked. However, in this report “taxi licensing” is intended to mean both Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles.
3. The Department for Transport (DfT) recommends 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.
4. In July 2020, DfT issued [Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) (“the 2020 Standards”) which state that licensing authorities must use their licensing powers to protect children and vulnerable adults. This Council has previously implemented a number of the recommendations in [its existing policy](#) on its own volition but the 2020 standards provide the opportunity to further tighten the current licensing scheme.
5. At [Licensing and Appeals Committee on 6 October 2020](#) members considered a report which set out the need to review the existing policy in line with the 2020 Standards. Members agreed to receive further reports detailing changes to the policy and licence conditions to comply with the 2020 Standards.
6. The policy aims to protect the public and build public confidence in the licensed taxi trade, by promoting safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and the prevention of crime and disorder, vehicle safety, comfort and accessibility, environmental sustainability, Wokingham Borough as a place to live, work and visit

Analysis of Issues

7. At the Licensing and Appeals Committee on 23 June 2022, it was resolved that:
 - The proposed changes as discussed during the meeting be incorporated in the draft policy
 - Members will be sent a copy of the revised draft policy, prior to its submission to the relevant Executive Member and prior to it being submitted for consultation
 - The final draft policy will be approved for consultation by the Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure; and
 - The Director for Place and Growth will work in partnership with neighbouring Licensing Authorities to achieve a similar timeline to any public consultation and policy review in neighbouring boroughs, to achieve consistency of practice between areas.

8. In response to these resolutions, officers have incorporated the changes discussed in the revised policy and have also made improvements to the formatting of the policy.
9. This draft policy was commissioned in 2021 in collaboration with the Public Protection Partnership in West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest Councils but is now a stand alone policy which Wokingham can amend as it sees fit and set its own timeline for consultation as it has left the Public Protection Partnership and West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest councils have already commenced public consultation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil		
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

There are no financial implications other than budgeting for public consultation which will be covered within existing budgets.

Cross-Council Implications

School Transport have an interest in the licensing policy and will be briefed throughout the draft stage, and public consultation.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Self-employed people of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicity are strongly represented among drivers and operators in the taxi and private hire trade. Customers of the trade are strongly represented by young women, people with disabilities and older people, and generally by people who do not own a car. For these reasons, it is important to ensure that this remains a profitable sector. An equalities impact statement is not required at this stage but will be required following public consultation prior to implementation of a new policy.

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*

There is no identifiable impact on the Council's carbon neutral objective.

List of Background Papers

- Department for Transport (DfT) [Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice Guidance \(March 2010\)](#)

- DfT [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards \(July 2020\)](#)
- **Appendix A** Principal changes contained in the 2020 Standards
- **Appendix B** Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (see attached document)

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Appendix A

The principal changes contained in the 2020 Standards

- a) Fit and proper test. There is still no statutory definition of what amounts to a 'fit and proper' person for the purposes of the legislation, but there is now much more robust guidance in the new standards
- b) Administration. There should be sufficient training and adequate resource for all those involved with making licensing decisions. Any functions that are delegated should be set out in a clear scheme of delegation and whilst less contentious matters can be resolved by authorised officers, it is recommended that more serious matters are dealt with by committee
- c) Whistleblowing. It is recommended that authorities have effective internal procedures for staff to raise concerns and procedures in place for any concerns to be dealt with openly and fairly
- d) DBS checks. Subscription to the DBS Update Service by drivers and operators at their own expense and the records reviewed every six months.
- e) Overseas convictions – certificates of good character should be obtained where an applicant has previously lived outside the UK for more than 3 months
- f) Convictions policies. All authorities should have a clear policy that takes a particularly cautious view of any offences against individuals with special needs, children and other vulnerable groups, particularly those involving violence, those of a sexual nature and those linked to organised crime
- g) Complaints against licensees. All authorities should have robust complaint recording systems and take action if necessary
- h) Mandatory safeguarding awareness training for all drivers. Training should include 'County Lines' drug trafficking awareness
- i) Literacy and numeracy. All licence holders to demonstrate proficiency in English language. Drivers should be able to provide correct change and produce a legibly written receipt upon request
- j) Enforcement. Suspension and revocation of driver licences. The guidance clarifies situations in which revocations and suspensions may be used. Drivers should be made aware of relevant policies
- k) Local consultation. It suggests it is good practice to consult when proposing significant changes in local licensing rules. Consultation should include passengers and trade groups.

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WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL



HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY

2023 - 2028

"The purpose of Wokingham Borough Council's Licensing Authority is to protect the public." – Cllr Ian Shenton

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Foreword by Cllr Ian Shenton Executive Member for Environment, Sport, and Leisure



“The purpose of Wokingham Borough Council’s Licensing Authority is to protect the public. We will do this by administering stringent processes with regards to applications for driver, vehicle, and operator licenses in our borough. This includes the checking of criminal records, DVLA Licence record, Tax Code check, requiring medical reports for drivers, and checking their right to work.

“We manage a Local Area Knowledge Test for new drivers, require certificate of driving proficiency, assess standards of English Speaking and Listening, and require training for all drivers covering topics of disability awareness and safeguarding.”

“As the eyes and ears of the community, Wokingham borough’s licensed drivers have an important role to play in understanding signs of abuse and reporting them to Thames Valley Police and Wokingham Borough Council.”

“As a Licensing Authority, we aim to enforce against non-compliance with the Authority’s licence conditions by way of the Penalty Points System and delegated officer decisions to action licence suspensions, revocations, and refuse licence applications. All of which can be democratically reviewed on application to the Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee. The Authority will also take prosecutions concerning breach of licence conditions or cases of plying for hire without insurance.”

“We will contribute to the protection of the public and clean air by regulating the type of vehicle that can be licensed in the Wokingham borough.”

Cllr Ian Shenton

Exec Member for Environment, Sport, and Leisure

1.0 Introduction

POWERS AND DUTIES

1.1 Wokingham Borough Council is responsible for the regulation of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing within the borough of Wokingham. Private Hire and Hackney Carriage regulation seeks to protect individuals, businesses and the environment and promote public safety.

1.2 This document sets out the policy that the Authority will apply when making decisions about new applications as well as current licenses and details the requirements that will need to be met before any Dual or Private Hire Driver Licence, Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle Licence or Private Hire Operator licence is issued by Wokingham Borough Council.

1.3 The requirements for private hire operators and vehicles that undertake school or community service contracts issued by the Wokingham Borough Council's Corporate Transport Services Department are the same as for all other private hire operators and vehicles. However, drivers who only undertake work as part of such a contract will be excluded from the requirement to undertake a knowledge test. All other requirements remain in place. This alteration from the usual policy recognises that these drivers will be undertaking journeys on fixed routes. A Wokingham Borough Council private hire drivers' licence will only be issued to such people and can only be used when the vehicle is undertaking such a contract.

1.4 This policy applies to the following:

Hackney Carriages

1.5 A vehicle available to transport members of the public that has no more than 8 seats for passengers, which is licensed to stand or ply for hire. A Hackney carriage may stand at designated taxi ranks and on the street and/or be hailed in the street by members of the public within their designated zones. They may also undertake pre booked journeys.

Private Hire Vehicles

1.6 These are licensed to carry no more than 8 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

1.7 Operators are required to take and record the bookings for private hire vehicles. Bookings must be recorded, and records be made available for inspection. The private hire operator is also responsible for the actions of the drivers that they use and the condition of the vehicles that they use.

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers

1.8 Licensed individuals who have undertaken certain tests and checks. Only a licensed driver can drive a licensed vehicle.

LEGISLATION, BYELAWS, GUIDANCE AND POLICY

1.9 Hackney carriage and private hire activity are governed by 2 principal pieces of legislation, the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. These have been interpreted by the senior courts over the years. In addition, the Authority has byelaws relating to Hackney carriage activity. The council will in addition have regard to guidance issued by the Department for Transport, and this policy. Each application will be considered on its own merits, considering all the relevant circumstances, legislation, guidance, and this policy

1.10 Once a licence has been granted, the licensee will be subject to all the above, and the conditions attached to any licence and (in the case of drivers) the code of conduct.

1.11 A licence will not be issued until the appropriate fee is paid and cleared funds have been received by the council. Where fees are paid by a cheque that is subsequently dishonoured, enforcement action may be taken.

OBJECTIVES

1.12 Hackney carriage and private hire vehicles play a vital role in an integrated transport system. They provide services in situations where other forms of transport are either not available (rural areas, late night economy) or for persons with mobility difficulties.

1.13 The Authority will seek to promote the following objectives that impact on these trades:

- The protection of the public, safeguarding children and the vulnerable.
- The prevention of crime and disorder.
- The safety and health of driver and the public.
- Vehicle safety, comfort and access across all equality groups in support of the Authority's commitment to the Equality Act 2010.

- The establishment of professional and respected hackney carriage and private hire trades.
- Access to an efficient and effective public transport service.
- The protection of the environment.

1.14 In promoting these licensing aims and objectives, the Authority will expect to see licence holders and applicants continuously demonstrate that they meet or exceed the standards set by the Authority.

THE FIT AND PROPER TEST

1.15 Throughout this policy reference is made to whether an applicant or existing licence holder is, or remains, a ‘fit and proper’ person to hold a licence.

1.16 There is no legal definition of the term ‘fit and proper.’ However, in determining whether a person is fit and proper to hold a licence, those tasked with determining licenses / applications are effectively asking the following questions:

Drivers

1.17 Would you (as a member of the licensing committee or other person charged with the ability to grant a private hire or hackney carriage driver’s licence) allow your son or daughter, spouse or partner, mother or father, grandson or granddaughter or any other person for whom you care, to get into a vehicle with this person alone?

Private Hire Operators

1.18 Would I be comfortable providing sensitive information such as holiday plans, movements of my family or other information to this person and feel safe in the knowledge that such information will not be used or passed on for criminal or unacceptable purpose?

Vehicle Proprietors

1.19 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 purpose?

1.20 In order to assess the suitability of an applicant (and to inform decision makers when answering the questions above), the Licensing Authority will undertake whatever checks and apply whatever processes it considers necessary to ensure that licenses are not issued to, or used by, unsuitable people. Safeguarding the public is paramount. When applying for a licence, or at any point during the time in which they hold a licence, a person is required to declare all:

- Convictions – including fixed penalties;
- Cautions – all forms of caution;
- Other formal action – any matter of restorative justice;
- Non conviction record;
- Matters currently the subject of criminal investigation or prosecution.

1.21 The applicant must also pass other tests, assessments and a medical as outlined in the Policy. This is so the Council can apply the ‘fit and proper’ test and ensure:

- That a person is a ‘fit and proper’ person;
- The public are not exposed to persons with a history of dishonesty, indecency or violence or any other offence or inappropriate behaviour which may question the person’s ‘fit and proper’ status;
- The safety of all members of the public and in particular children, young persons and vulnerable adults.

1.22 The ‘fit and proper’ test is not solely based on convictions. Officers, Committee, and other relevant decision-making bodies can take into account ‘non convictions’ provided by the Police, other agencies and services, etc. The evidential threshold is based on the balance of probabilities. This means that an applicant or licensee should not be ‘given the benefit of 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 is lower than for a criminal conviction (that being beyond reasonable doubt) and can take into consideration conduct that has not resulted in a criminal conviction.

1.23 The disclosure of convictions, cautions, other formal action or ‘non conviction’, may not automatically bar a person from being granted a licence, renewing a licence, or retaining a licence. This will depend on whether the person can satisfy the Council that they are ‘a fit and proper person’ to hold a licence.

1.24 The Council may be satisfied that a person is not ‘a fit and proper, person to hold a licence for any good reason. If a person fails to provide satisfactory evidence that they are ‘a fit and proper person’, or if there is good reason to question or doubt the evidence provided, then this can amount to good reason to refuse, revoke or suspend a licence.

EQUALITY ACT 2010

1.25 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.

DATA PROTECTION

1.26 All information provided by applicants will be treated in accordance with the council's retention and disclosure policies under the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulations, and any other relevant legislation. The council has a data-sharing protocol with local authorities, the police, immigration and border service, social services, and other bodies. This allows information to be shared where there is a risk to public safety or criminal activity.

GENERAL

1.27 The purpose of licensing Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles, drivers and private hire operators is to protect the public. Public protection will be the overriding consideration whenever the council considers Hackney carriage and private hire licensing matters.

1.28 Licenses are only granted to people who satisfy the council that they are fit and proper people to hold such a licence. It is for the applicant to demonstrate that they are a fit and proper person, and not for the council to prove that they are not.

1.29 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 that acceptable standard, action may be taken against the licence.

1.30 Holding a Hackney carriage or private hire drivers, vehicle or operator licence is a privilege and a responsibility. At all times a licensee's behaviour and conduct must be of the highest standard. The council will consider all aspects of an applicant and licensee's behaviour; not simply when they are using their licence. Unacceptable behaviour whilst using the licence will be seen as an aggravating factor. The fact that the licence was not being used at the time will not be seen as any mitigating factor.

1.31 All licenses can be suspended, revoked, or not renewed.

1.32 There are rights of appeal against officer actions such as that, together with refusals to grant and conditions attached to the licence. Details of any right of appeal will be contained in the written notification of the Authority's decision.

STATUS

1.33 In exercising its regulatory functions, the Authority will have regard to this policy document and the objectives set out above. The Authority will have regard to all other

strategies, policies and guidance in its decision making. Notwithstanding the existence of this policy, each application or enforcement measure will be considered on its own merits. Where it is necessary for the Authority to depart from its policy, clear and compelling reasons will be given for doing so.

IMPLEMENTATION

1.34 Once approved, this policy will become effective on 01 April 2023 unless otherwise stated. The Authority expects licence holders to comply with its terms from that date.

1.35 The Authority will keep this policy and appendices under review and will consult where appropriate on proposed revisions to the policy with appendices amended when required under delegated powers.

1.36 From the effective date this policy will override and supersede all existing policies in relation to hackney carriage and private hire licensing.

1.37 The policy will remain in place for a period of five years, until 31 March 2028.

2.0 Policy in relation to Dual Driver and Private Hire Driver Licenses

GENERAL

2.1 The Council issues dual or combined drivers' licenses. These enable a licensee to drive a Hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licensed by the council.

2.2 Drivers licenses will be granted for a period of 3 years unless an applicant requests a licence for a one-year period.

PRE-REQUISITES TO MAKING AN APPLICATION

2.3 It is the policy of the Council that every application for a licence to drive a hackney carriage and/or private hire vehicle must be accompanied by satisfactory evidence of the following matters and that applications that are incomplete will not be deemed to have been made until such time as they are complete:

- A full UK DVLA, Northern Ireland, European Economic Area ("EEA") or Exchangeable driving licence (held for a period of at least 1 year prior to the date of application)
- Evidence of the right to live and work in the country
- An enhanced criminal record check (DBS) with a check of the child and adult barred list
- A certificate of their current medical fitness to DVLA Group 2 standard
- That the applicant meets the required post-qualification driving experience and demonstrates the required level of competency with a driving proficiency certificate
- That the applicant has sufficient ability to speak English and to understand spoken English to provide the service that they wish to be licensed for.
- That the applicant has completed safeguarding and disability awareness training.
- Proof of address (e.g. bank statement, utility bill less than three months old)
- A photograph

2.4 All applicants, aside from those who are renewing their licence, will have three calendar months from the initial interview 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.

2.5 This time limit can be extended in exceptional circumstances, with the prior approval of an authorised officer of Wokingham Borough Council.

2.6 The applicant will be given three attempts to pass each of the required tests to become a licensed driver. If they have not passed after the third attempt no new

application will be accepted for a period of three calendar months from the date of the last test. If a new application is then made after the three months, the applicant will be required to pass all the tests required by Wokingham Borough Council at the time of the new application.

2.7 An application for the renewal of a licence must be made prior to the expiry of the licence, and in sufficient time to enable it to be processed and renewed before the existing licence expires. If this is not the case, it will be treated as a new application. The licence holder can apply in writing to Wokingham Borough Council to request permission for an application, made after the expiry of the licence, to be treated as a renewal application.

2.8 However permission will only be granted when exceptional circumstances exist, and the application has been made within 5 working days of the expiry. Wokingham Borough Council will determine whether exceptional circumstances exist. Driving as a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage driver without a valid Private Hire or Dual Driver licence is a criminal offence.

2.9 Dual Driver Licence holders will be required to comply with the current Wokingham Borough Council Hackney Carriage Byelaws in addition to the Code of Conduct detailed in this policy. A copy of these byelaws can be obtained from the Licensing Team at Wokingham Borough Council.

2.10 Where a licence is found to have been obtained using false or incomplete information enforcement action may be taken, and the matter may be reported to the police.

FITNESS AND PROPRIETY

2.11 Before Wokingham Borough Council will grant or renew a driver licence, the applicant or licence holder must satisfy the following requirements.

IDENTITY

2.12 To prove their identity, all applicants must provide an authenticated form of photographic identification (for example photographic driving licence or national identification card).

2.13 Applicants from outside the UK must provide:

- a passport with a valid stamp from the Home Office to say that they have

- leave to remain in the Country indefinitely or
- 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.

2.14 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. Wokingham Borough Council reserves the right to verify, at any time, a licence holder's entitlement to remain in the UK. We will not accept letters issued by the Home Office when a visa application is pending.

2.15 To comply with the Immigration Act 2016, the Council is required to check eligibility to live and work in the UK for all applicants for driver and operator licenses. This could include the Licensing Authority checking your immigration status with the Home Office. Applicants will be required to provide evidence of this on request. Examples of acceptable documentation include a British or Irish passport, or visa with the right to stay and work in the UK, Permanent residence permit, work permit with a passport with correct authorisations, a UK birth certificate together with an official document giving the NI number such as a P45 or P60, or a biometric immigration document indicating a right to stay indefinitely in the UK or a right to do the work in question. For EU, EEA, and Swiss Passport Holders, you must now submit both a copy of your passport and proof of pre-settled status.

2.16 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 may be extended should the applicant's right to remain in the UK be made permanent.

2.17 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.

2.18 If a licence holder loses the right to remain in the UK during the currency of a licence, the licence ceases to have effect and the licence (and badge for drivers) must be returned within 7 days.

DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE CHECKS (DBS)

2.19 Applicants must provide an Enhanced DBS Certificate (Disclosure & Barring Service) 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.

2.20 Applicant/licensees will also have to sign up to the DBS update service to enable the council to make periodic checks. Any driver that does not sign up to this service will only be granted a licence for 6 months and a fresh enhanced DBS check will be required on every application for a new licence.

CERTIFICATE OF GOOD CONDUCT

2.21 As DBS checks do not cover convictions in countries outside the United Kingdom, any applicant who has lived abroad for any period of more than 6 months from the age of 18 must also provide a Certificate of Good Conduct from the appropriate Embassy or High Commission and it must be in English. The council may undertake checks to ensure the authenticity of any such documentation. If this cannot be provided, then the application will be refused.

2.22 Nothing in this policy shall preclude a licence holder from being required to undergo a further DBS check at any time as directed by an officer of Wokingham Borough Council.

PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS

2.23 In relation to the consideration of previous convictions and cautions recorded against applicants and licence holders, Wokingham Borough Council has adopted the policy set out in Appendix One. Applicants who would like to discuss what effect a conviction or caution might have on their application, can contact the Taxi Licensing Service at licensing@wokingham.gov.uk

MEDICAL EXAMINATION

2.24 Each applicant, on first application and at the intervals indicated below, must complete a medical examination by the applicant's own GP (or a GP within their own practice) at the applicant's expense. The GP must certify that the applicant meets group 2 medical standards. Once a licence has been granted, medical examinations will be required at the following intervals in the table below.

AGE	FREQUENCY
First Licensing	And thereafter from age 45
45 years to 65 years	Every 5 years
65 years +	Annually

2.25 A medical examination may be required at any other time, as determined by the GP, or as requested by an officer of Wokingham Borough Council. In addition, if an applicant or current driver has been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes requiring insulin a medical compliance form will need to be completed and issued to your doctor on a yearly basis.

DRIVING LICENCE

2.26 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 12 months, after which it must be exchanged for a UK licence) for at least 12 months prior to application (this excludes the holding of a provisional licence). A photocard driving licence meeting these requirements must be submitted with the application form (including renewal applications) and will be checked against the DVLA information issued. Any prospective applicant who does not hold a photocard 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. We may carry out spot checks on a random basis to ascertain any changes to the status of the DVLA licence.

PRACTICAL ASSESSMENTS FOR LICENSED DRIVERS AND APPLICANTS

2.27 All applicants are required to have passed a practical driving and wheelchair assessment before applying for a dual driving Licence.

2.28 Acceptable courses are currently provided by Blue Lamp Trust. Wokingham Borough Council will accept written evidence of passing the providers assessment that is not more than 3 months old at the date of application.

2.29 If an existing driver is subject to enforcement action in relation to their driving, more than once within a period of 12 calendar months, including road traffic convictions, they will be required to undertake the practical driving assessment within three calendar months. The licence may be suspended until such time as this test has been passed.

2.30 Details of our current providers will be issued on application or will be issued to a driver requiring undertaking the practical driving assessment as part of enforcement action.

SPOKEN AND WRITTEN ENGLISH

2.31 It is essential for public safety that all licensed drivers are able to communicate by speaking and reading in English at an appropriate level. This is equivalent to level B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

PROOF OF ABILITY IN ENGLISH (SPEAKING AND LISTENING)

2.32 The Authority does not accept Entry Level 1 or Entry Level 2. Only Entry Level 3 and above. The government has provided a list on [what qualification levels mean](#). This is the equivalent of B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Ecctis (www.ecctis.com) is a UK national agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills. We will accept an English Language Assessment completed by Ecctis showing the applicant has a qualification equivalent to Entry Level 3 English.

The Authority reserve the right to refuse to accept a certificate of qualification as proof of an applicant meeting a requirement if the Licensing Authority is not satisfied as to the authenticity of the certificate, or the quality/reliability of any part of the process that lead to the certificate being issued or the Licensing Officer has concerns of an applicant's ability.

If a Licensing Officer has concerns over the applicant's ability, the Authority may direct an applicant to complete an LanguageCert assessment to assess an applicant's speaking and listening skills.

Alternatively, a speaking and listening assessment which consists of a 11-13 minute conversation can take place at Wokingham Borough Council offices.

2.33 The assessment will be undertaken by a secure video or telephone link to our service provider, LanguageCert, and it will cost £36 when taken for the first time and £16 for a re-sit.

2.34 Please see [LanguageCert's](#) website for more information about the test and what to expect on the day. All applicants are advised to review this information prior to sitting the test.

READING AND WRITING ASSESSMENT

2.35 Wokingham Borough Council do not have a specific reading and writing assessment. This element forms part of the application, and knowledge test.

2.36 If a Licensing Officer has concerns over the applicant's ability, the Authority may direct an applicant to complete an SERU assessment to assess an applicant's reading and writing skills.

KNOWLEDGE OF AREA

2.37 All applicants are expected to have a good knowledge of Wokingham Borough and the surrounding area. They will be required to pass a test on this knowledge prior to a licence being issued.

2.38 This requirement does not apply in relation to applicants for private hire drivers' licenses to undertake school or community contracts.

HIGHWAY CODE AND RELEVANT LEGISLATION

2.39 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. This test must be passed again every 6 years i.e. before a second three-year driving licence will be issued.

TRAINING IN THE ASSISTANCE OF DISABLED PERSONS

2.40 All applicants must be able to show that they have undergone training in the assistance of disabled persons, to a standard acceptable to Wokingham Borough Council. Refresher training will be required every three years.

SAFEGUARDING, CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION (CSAE) AND COUNTY LINES TRAINING

2.41 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. Existing drivers must complete the training prior to the next renewal of their licence. Refresher training will be required every 3 years.

TEST OF FITNESS AND PROPRIETY

2.42 Once a valid application has been made, the Council will decide as to whether or not the applicant/licensee is fit and proper person to hold a dual driver or private hire driver licence. The same test will be used in respect of any existing driver whose criminal convictions or behaviour fall below the council's standards. The test used will be:

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?

2.43 This will be determined on the balance of probabilities, and if the Council is of the view that the applicant or licensee does not satisfy this test, a licence will not be granted, or action will be taken against the licence. The applicant or licensee will not be given the benefit of doubt. It is for the applicant or licensee to prove that they are a fit and proper person: not for the council to prove they are not.

CODE OF CONDUCT

2.44 The council has a Code of Conduct for taxi drivers. All drivers must always adhere to this. Failure to do so may lead to action being taken against the driver's licence.

THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF TAXI LICENCE REVOCATIONS AND REFUSALS

2.45 The council provides information to the National Register of Taxi Licence Refusals and Revocations (NR3), a mechanism for licensing authorities to share details of individuals who have had a hackney carriage or private hire driver licence revoked, or an application for one refused. This is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the council – that is, assessing whether an individual is a fit and proper person to hold a hackney carriage or private hire driver licence.

2.46 Where a hackney carriage or private hire driver licence is revoked, or an application for one refused, the council will automatically record this decision on NR3.

2.47 All applications for a new licence or licence renewal will automatically be checked on NR3. If a search of NR3 indicates a match with an applicant, the council will seek further information about the entry on the register from the authority which recorded it. Any information received because of an NR3 search will only be used in respect of the specific licence application and will not be retained beyond the determination of that application.

2.48 The information recorded on NR3 itself will be limited to:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Address and contact details
- National Insurance number
- Driving licence number
- Decision taken
- Date of decision
- Date decision effective

2.49 Information will be retained on NR3 for a period of 25 years.

2.50 This is a mandatory part of applying for a hackney carriage and private hire driver licence. Further details can be found on the Council's website

2.51 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 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.

LICENSES AND BADGES

2.52 Drivers are issued with 2 badges and an armband. One of the badges must be displayed in the armband which must be worn on the left-hand arm of the driver, so it is visible to passengers in the vehicle. The other badge must be displayed within the vehicle, so it is visible to passengers. Both the badges and the armband remain the property of the council and must be returned immediately on expiry, suspension, or revocation of the licence.

EQUALITY ACT 2010

2.53 Drivers must comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. These are carrying assistance dogs with their passenger and (in the case of a listed wheelchair accessible vehicle) providing mobility assistance to wheelchair bound passengers. This does not apply to drivers who have been granted an exemption from those requirements by the council.

2.54 In addition, all drivers at all times must ensure that they do not discriminate against any person for any reason.

ACTION AGAINST A LICENCE

2.55 Section 61 of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976 allow the 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 immigration offence or had to pay an immigration penalty, or any other reasonable cause.

APPEALS

2.56 There is a right of appeal against a decision by an officer to refuse to grant, impose a licence condition, suspend, or revoke a licence. In the first instance, appeal can be made to the Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee. Notification of appeal is required to be made to Democratic Services at democraticservices@wokingham.gov.uk. This must be within 21 days of the decision.

2.57 Appeal against a decision of a Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee may be made to a Magistrates' Court, and further right of appeal to the Crown Court in relation to any refusal to grant or renew a driver's licence, or suspension or revocation of a driver's licence. An appeal against any such decision can also be made directly to the Magistrates' Court, and the same time limits apply. Full details will be contained in any decision notice.

ALLEGATION OF SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

2.58 Allegations of serious misconduct can be referred to officers for an emergency decision under delegated authority. Officers can take a decision to revoke a licence in the interests of public safety with immediate effect. This can then be appealed to the Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee or directly to the Magistrates' Court (as per 2.56 & 2.57 above) but the driver will not be able to continue working during the appeal period.

2.59 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.

SURRENDERING A LICENCE WHILST UNDER INVESTIGATION

2.60 If any licence holder seeks to surrender their licence whilst they are under investigation for a criminal offence or other conduct that could result in the suspension or revocation of their licence, we will usually refuse to accept the surrender; continue with the investigation and determine the outcome.

3.0 Policy in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licenses

SINGLE LICENSES

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

CHARACTER OF THE APPLICANT/PROPRIETOR

3.2 In addition to the vehicle itself, the Council will take the character of the applicant or existing proprietor into account when determining an application for the grant or renewal of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licence. Applicants for the grant or renewal of a vehicle licence must produce a basic DBS certificate which is not more than 1 month old and provide details of all convictions (spent and live), cautions, fixed penalty notices, parking fines, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, Community Protection Notices, injunctions, restraining orders and any other matter affecting their character on the application form and statutory declaration. This requirement does not apply if the applicant already holds a driver's licence issued by Wokingham Borough Council.

3.3 The council will then use the following test to determine whether the applicant/licensee is a suitable person to hold a vehicle licence:

Without any prejudice, and based on the information before you, would you 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 they would not allow it to be used for criminal or other unacceptable purposes, and be confident that they would maintain it to an acceptable standard throughout the period of the licence?

3.4 This will be determined on the balance of probabilities, and if the Council is of the view that the applicant or licensee does not satisfy this test, a licence will not be granted, or action will be taken against the licence. The applicant or licensee will not be given the benefit of doubt. It is for the applicant or licensee to prove that they are a suitable person: not for the council to prove they are not.

GENERAL

3.5 Wokingham Borough Council will not accept applications in relation to vehicles, which are licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle with another local authority or Transport for London.

3.6 A valid application for the renewal of a licence, including all the required original documentation, must be made at least 30 days prior to the expiry of the current licence or it will be treated as a new application. A valid application is one which is complete in

all respects and can be processed immediately. Photocopies of documents will not be accepted. If the application is not made in time to enable the vehicle test to be undertaken and all relevant processes to be completed before the expiry of the current vehicle licence, there will be a period during which the vehicle will be unlicensed and cannot be used as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle. If the application is not made before the expiry of the current licence, but is made within 5 working days after expiry, the licence will only be renewed in exceptional circumstances. Using a vehicle, as a Private Hire vehicle or Hackney Carriage, when it does not have a valid Private Hire vehicle or Hackney Carriage proprietors' licence is a criminal offence.

3.7 Where a licence is found to have been obtained using false or incomplete information enforcement action may be taken.

3.8 It should be noted that once a licence has been granted, that licence relates to that vehicle. The licence and the vehicle must be owned by the same person and cannot be separated. In this context, "ownership" includes leasing a vehicle from a leasing company, but not from an individual or any former or current licensee. Evidence of such ownership will be required to accompany the application and on every renewal.

3.9 If a licensee wishes to change their vehicle during the currency of the licence, the existing licence must be surrendered, and a new application made for the replacement vehicle.

3.10 A licensee can transfer the licence to another person during the currency of the licence, and the council will acknowledge that transfer and register the new licensee. The character of the new licensee will be considered when application is made to renew the licence and may be considered before that time. If the council is not satisfied that the new licensee is a fit and proper person the licence will not be renewed or, in the case of an earlier review, action will be taken against that licence.

3.11 In order for an application to be considered the applicant must submit the following to the licensing authority:

- The completed vehicle licence application form
- Application Fee
- 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 (Log Book/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). Licenses will not be renewed unless the full V5 document is made available to the council at the time of application).

- 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. Any lease must be from a commercial leasing company, and leasing arrangements from individuals will not be accepted.
- The original 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).
- Confirmation from the Council appointed garages that the vehicle has passed the Council test and vehicle examination requirements
- Current MOT Certificate

VEHICLE TYPE AND DESIGN

3.12 All vehicles which are the subject of a licence application must have an appropriate 'type approval' which is one of the following:

- European Whole Vehicle Type Approval;
- British National Type Approval;
- Provisional GB Type Approval;
- GB Type Approval or
- Individual Vehicle Approval.

3.13 All vehicles which are the subject of a licence application must be manufactured or adapted to carry up to 8 passengers not including the driver; this number includes any passengers who may be seated in wheelchairs if the vehicle can transport such passengers. Where a vehicle has been altered, adapted, or modified ONLY Type Approval Certificates granted after alteration, adaptation or modification will be accepted.

3.14 With the exception of vehicles modified to carry wheelchairs, vehicles which have been modified in any way from the manufacturer's standard construction will not be considered suitable for licensing purposes. Exceptions may be made depending upon the nature of the modification.

3.15 Any vehicle which resembles a hackney carriage licensed by the council will not be considered for licensing as a private hire vehicle.

VEHICLE STANDARDS

3.16 No vehicle will be licensed unless it;

- has undertaken and passed the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Test, at a Wokingham Borough Council nominated garage.
- has provision for every passenger to wear a seat belt. A sign must be displayed inside the vehicle requiring seat belts to be worn.

3.17 The council licence 3 different types of vehicles:

- Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV);
- those which are not; and
- stretched limousines

3.18 In respect of all vehicles, there must be a minimum seating capacity for one adult passenger, and vehicles that seek more passengers must provide a width of at least 410 mm per person across any seat which accommodates more than one person.

3.19 There must be adequate legroom in front of any passenger seat and adequate headroom above any passenger seat. Adequate means that a 6-foot-tall person can sit comfortably.

3.20 The council does not maintain a list of acceptable vehicles; the vehicle must comply all of section 3.0.

3.21 All licensed vehicles, except for private hire vehicles which are granted an exemption from displaying signage, must meet the following requirements:

- Light transmitted through the windscreen must be at least 75%
- All other windows (both front and rear) must allow at least 70% of light to be transmitted.

3.22 Where vehicles which are currently licensed have factory tinted/privacy glass fitted and can provide documentary evidence that this was fitted at the time of manufacturing has not been replaced since, they will remain licensed until the vehicle reaches the maximum licensable age in accordance with the existing age of vehicle policy.

3.23 No aftermarket tinted film can be attached to the windows of any licensed vehicle.

3.24 Any vehicles that have been involved in an accident, which have required repair, may have to pass a further inspection at one of our nominated testing stations.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR STRETCH LIMOUSINES

3.25 The term “stretch limousine” in this policy will be taken to mean any vehicle that has been modified after manufacture with an additional body section.

3.26 Where any screen is fitted between the driver and the rear passenger compartment, passengers must be able to always communicate with the driver by means of an intercom system or suitable holes in the screen.

3.27 The seating in the vehicle must all face either forwards or backwards and a vehicle not be licensed if any sideways facing seats remain.

INSURANCE

3.28 Before a vehicle licence will be issued, evidence of adequate insurance for either Hackney carriage or private hire use (as appropriate) must be produced; this must be in the form of original documents, photocopies will not be accepted.

AGE

3.29 Vehicles up to five years old from the first date of registration or which have travelled less than 25,000 miles since that date will be subject to an inspection before grant or renewal, and at 6 months after the date of grant or renewal at one of Wokingham Borough Council’s nominated testing stations.

3.30 Where vehicles are five years or older, from the date of first registration, or which have travelled more than 25,000 miles since that date, they will be subject to an inspection before grant or renewal and then at 4 monthly intervals for the duration of the licence. If an inspection is not carried out in the month that it is due, the licence will be suspended until such a test has been passed.

3.31 All vehicles must meet by the Euro 5 or Euro 6 emissions standards if they are being submitted for grant or renewal of a licence.

3.32 This requirement can be waived in respect of specialist vehicles which have been modified or adapted to undertake local education authority contracts.

3.33 All applications for grant or renewal of vehicle licenses must be accompanied by documentary evidence that the vehicle has been regularly serviced and maintained in line with the manufacturer's servicing schedule.

3.34 In addition, all vehicles must meet the following minimum standards

EXTERIOR OF VEHICLE

3.35 The exterior paintwork on the vehicle must not:

- show signs of rusting
- be faded or show signs of mismatched paint repairs
- have 5 or more stone chips greater than 2mm in length in any direction
- have 8 or more stone chips of any size
- have any scratches, cracks, or abrasions where the top layer of paint has been removed.

3.36 The exterior bodywork of the vehicle must not:

- have 2 or more dents greater than 10mm in length in any direction
- have 4 or more dents less than 10mm in length in any direction
- have fittings that are missing, broken or damaged.

3.37 The vehicle must not have wheels and wheel trims that have significant damage which detracts from the overall excellent condition of the vehicle.

3.38 The vehicle must be submitted for inspection in a clean state such that an effective inspection is possible. Should the vehicle be submitted in a unclean state then the application shall be refused.

3.39 The engine compartment must not be in a dirty condition or have evidence of leaks including water, oil, or hydraulic fluids.

INTERIOR OF VEHICLE

3.40 The seating and carpet areas of the vehicle must not show signs of:

- staining
- damp
- fraying or ripping of the material

- seat covers that are loose or badly fitted.

3.41 The seats must provide sufficient support for comfortable travel and should not demonstrate excessive compression of the seating area or wear within the support mechanism.

3.42 Interior panels and fittings within the vehicle must not be damaged nor show excessive wear, or staining.

3.43 The interior of the vehicle must not have damp or other obnoxious smells.

3.44 The emissions limits detailed in this policy do not apply to stretch limousines, vintage cars, or novelty vehicles (for example a fire engine) which have been adapted to become Private Hire or Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

ADVERTISING

3.45 Advertising on the outside of any licensed vehicle is restricted to the name and telephone number of the owner or operator of the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Vehicle, , such advertisements must not exceed 50 cm x 25 cm and can only be affixed to the front and rear passenger doors, the boot, and the bonnet. Applications for departures from this limitation can be made in writing to Wokingham Borough Council:

3.46 'In addition, wheelchair accessible Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles may carry all over "wrap" type advertising subject to the prior written approval of Wokingham Borough Council and in line with the specified advertising criteria be agreed'.

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

TEMPORARY REPLACEMENT VEHICLES

3.48 If a licensed Hackney carriage or private 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 be suspended, and the replacement vehicle will be granted the same licence number.

3.49 The temporary period will be determined by the council when the application is made and will be based upon the estimated time for the repair of the original vehicle. No temporary licence will be granted for a period exceeding 3 months. Any replacement vehicle must meet the council's specification for Hackney carriage or private hire vehicle, and where the original vehicle was wheelchair accessible, the replacement must meet the same specification.

DISABLED ACCESS VEHICLE STANDARDS

3.50 All Hackney Carriage Vehicles must be wheelchair accessible in accordance with the following specification. Wheelchair accessible Private Hire Vehicles must also comply with the following specification in addition to those detailed above.

3.51 Approved anchorages must be provided for wheelchair tie downs and the wheelchair passenger restraint. These anchorages must be either chassis or floor linked and capable of withstanding approved dynamic or static tests. Restraints for wheelchair and occupant must be independent of each other. Anchorages must also be provided for the safe stowage of a wheelchair when not in use, whether folded or otherwise, if carried within the passenger compartment. All anchorages and restraints must be so designed that they do not cause any danger to other passengers.

3.52 The door and doorway must be so constructed as to permit an unrestricted opening across the doorway of at least 75cm. The minimum angle of a hinged door when opened must be 90 degrees.

3.53 The clear height of the doorway must be not less than 1.2 metres.

3.54 Grab handles must be placed at door entrances to assist the elderly and disabled. All grab handles must be in a contrasting colour.

3.55 The top of the tread for any entrance should normally be at floor level of the passenger compartment and comply with the following requirements:

- be not more than 380 mm from the ground, (measured at the centre of the tread width);
- the surface shall be covered in a slip-resistant material;
- have a band of colour across the entire width of the edge which shall contrast with the remainder of the tread and floor covering.

3.56 Should any entrance be more than 380 mm from the ground, an external interim step must be made available when the associated passenger door is opened and comply with the following requirements-

- not be more than 380 mm in height from the ground, (measured at the centre of the step width);
- not be less than 250 mm deep;
- the surface shall be covered in a slip-resistant material;
- have a band of colour across its leading edge which shall contrast with the remainder of the step and floor covering;
- not be capable of operation whilst the vehicle is in motion;
- if automatic or powered, be fitted with a safety device which stops the motion of the step if the step is subject to a reactive force not exceeding 150N in any direction and if that motion could cause injury to the passenger;
- can fold or retract so that it does not project beyond the side face of the vehicle and the vehicle is not capable of being driven away unless the step is so folded or retracted.

3.57 The vertical distance between the highest part of the floor and the roof in the passenger compartment must not be less than 1.3 metres.

3.58 Where seats are placed facing each other, there must be a minimum space of 42.5cm between any part of the front of a seat and any part of any other seat which faces it, provided adequate foot room is maintained at floor level.

3.59 Where all seats are placed facing to the front of the vehicle, there must be clear space of at least 66cm in front of every part of each seat squab, measured along a horizontal plane at the centre of the cushion.

3.60 A ramp for the loading of a wheelchair and occupant must be always available 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.

VEHICLE TYPE APPROVAL

3.61 All vehicles that are designed to accommodate wheelchair users must have all modifications and adaptations, including all seats, seat belts and anchorages, retested to meet either the European Whole Vehicle Type Approval or the UK Low Volume Type Approval in the M1 category (evidence of this must be produced). Those vehicles which have not been “type approved” to the M1 category (e.g., conversions) must be presented with approved certification that the specific vehicle meets the requirements of that category. Vehicles may be inspected for suitability by an officer. It is recommended that prior to purchasing any new vehicle, advice be sought from the Licensing Officer.

ACCESS FOR WHEELCHAIR USERS TO TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

3.62 See Guidance at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-for-wheelchair-users-to-taxis-and-private-hire-vehicles>

ROOF SIGNS

3.63 No roof sign can be fitted to, attached, displayed, or used on any private hire vehicle.

3.64 A single roof sign must be fitted to each hackney carriage and meet the following conditions and specification. The roof sign must be connected to the taximeter to allow it to be automatically controlled. The roof sign must be lit when the taximeter is not active and not lit when the taximeter is in use.

3.65 Roof signs must be always kept clean and in good repair and be securely mounted on the vehicle roof, with the main face showing the Council logo facing forward. The sign is to be positioned forward of the pillar between the front and rear doors (the B post), wherever possible. Vehicles with glass or fibreglass roofs or similar must attach the sign at the foremost point on the roof, where suitable magnetic adhesion is possible.

3.66 The proprietor must provide a roof sign to the following specification (unless the vehicle is a London Cab or other similar vehicle which was manufactured as a taxi and produced with a built-in sign):

3.67 The roof sign must have dimensions of: 60.5 centimetres long, 17.5 centimetres wide at the middle point, 11 centimetres high at the rear middle point and 3 centimetres high at the front middle point. These dimensions do not include any raised lip or edging. Reference should also be made to any illustrative artwork, or model signs, which can be provided by Wokingham Borough Council if required.

3.68 The roof sign must be white in background colour. When lit, the sign must show red to the rear but not red to the front and sides.

3.69 The front face of the roof sign must show the words "TAXI LICENSED BY" followed by the Wokingham Borough Council Corporate Logo. The licence number must be shown, within a circle, on both sides of this wording. TAXI must be in capitals, in Arial font and approximately 65mm in height. The circles must be approximately 135mm in diameter and have the number cut out, 45mm high in Ariel font. The rear side of the sign must show a wheelchair logo in white on a blue background. The wheelchair logo must be in reflex blue. The logo must be 100mmsquare. The words and the circles must be in the green colour code is 125/173/131.

3.70 Vehicles with raised roofs which are licensed as wheelchair accessible taxis must have a roof sign of the same dimensions and design.

3.71 The rear face of the roof sign on all vehicles must show the licence number (once only) to the same specifications as on the front. The number may be positioned anywhere on the rear face at the discretion of the licensee. The licensee may use the remaining space for a name and/or a telephone number which can include the word "TAXI". This text does not have to be green, (although the number does). All inappropriate or unauthorised signage will be required to be removed.

3.72 It may be necessary for some wheelchair accessible taxis to display the sign on the front bulkhead of the vehicle due to height restrictions. Other than this variation, there can be no other variations from the specification.

3.73 In the event of the Council's Licensing Officers 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 licence holder of the vehicle may then be subject to a penalty within any point's scheme should one be in existence at the time and if not suitably rectified may have the sanction of law imposed.

3.74 Vehicles which are purchased as custom constructed taxis that have a sign provided by the manufacturer, which is not a sign fitted into the fabric of the vehicle, must comply with the above specification.

ROOF RACKS

3.75 If required to carry additional luggage, a roof rack or roof box can be used. It must be securely fitted to the roof in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. All luggage must be properly secured and in the case of a roof rack a waterproof cover must be fitted. Any roof box must be correctly closed before moving off.

3.76 In the case of a Hackney carriage, a second roof sign must be fitted to enable the roof signs to be seen. The additional signs must be correctly fitted to the front and rear of the roof rack (or roof box).

3.77 Trailers cannot be used with any licensed vehicle.

DISPENSATION/EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES

3.78 There are several different circumstances in which the council will consider granting an exemption from the requirement for a private hire vehicle to display the plates and additional signage (which will also remove the need for the driver to be wearing their badge). If an exemption certificate is granted, the vehicle cannot be used for regular private hire work: it can only be used under these specified contracts.

Novelty Vehicles

3.79 The Council will consider applications for private hire vehicle licenses for "novelty vehicles". These are vehicles other than regular saloon, estate, people carrier or SUV (sport utility vehicles) and may include vintage or classic cars, fire engines, military vehicles, but this is not an exhaustive list.

3.80 Any such vehicle must have passenger seats and seat belts for each seat unless these were not fitted at the time of manufacture.

3.81 All other requirements will apply, and the vehicles will be subject to 6 monthly tests.

Local Authority Contract

3.82 Vehicles that are used exclusively to transport passengers under a contract entered into with a local education authority may be granted an exemption. This is in recognition of the fact that so far as is possible, children who are transported by such vehicles should not be identified or stigmatised. An operator will need to demonstrate the existence of one or more contracts with education authorities or other educational establishments, and where the operator does not own the vehicle, will also have to demonstrate a contract with the vehicle owner. All such contracts must specify which vehicles will be used to discharge those contracts.

Executive hire

3.83 This term is used in relation to vehicles that are used exclusively for contracts made between an operator and other businesses (excluding subcontracting private hire bookings). This type of activity includes chauffeur services. An operator will need to demonstrate the existence of one or more contracts with identified businesses. To qualify for the exemption, any such contract must be for a minimum period of 3 months.

3.84 The operator can hold more than one contract, but where that is the case, the operator must explain how those contracts will be serviced with the specified vehicle, and where the operator does not own the vehicle, will also have to demonstrate a contract with the vehicle owner. All such contracts must specify which vehicles will be used to discharge those contracts.

3.85 It is not possible to specify the makes and models of vehicle that will be considered for an executive hire exemption, but in general they must be luxury vehicles that provide significant amounts of space and comfort for passengers. Examples would include vehicles made by Rolls-Royce, Bentley, and vehicles of a similar nature to Mercedes S class, BMW 7 series, Jaguar XF, Range Rover.

3.86 An application for an exemption in any category must be made in writing on the form provided by the council. There is no right of appeal against a refusal to grant an exemption certificate.

3.87 If an exemption certificate is granted, a notice will be issued by the council which must be always carried in the glove compartment of the vehicle. In addition, the vehicle plate must be fixed inside the boot lid/tailgate in such a way that it can be examined by an authorised officer of the council or a police officer.

3.88 The identification cards provided by Wokingham Borough Council, must be displayed in the front and rear windscreen of the vehicle.

3.89 Any exemption certificate that is issued will only last for the duration of the vehicle licence and a further exemption certificate will be required when the licence is renewed. Wokingham Borough Council must be issued with records relating to the contracted work undertaken by that vehicle when a renewal application is submitted.

4.0 Policy in relation to a Private Hire Operator Licence

GENERAL

4.1 A valid application for the renewal of a licence, including all the required original documentation, must be made at least 30 days prior to the expiry of the current licence or it will be treated as a new application. A valid application is one which is complete in all respects and can be processed immediately. Photocopies of documents will not be accepted.

4.2 If the application is not made in time to enable all the relevant processes to be completed before the expiry of the current operator's licence, there will be a period during which the operator will be unlicensed and cannot make a provision for the invitation of bookings for private hire vehicle. If the application is not made before the expiry of the current licence but is made within 5 working days after the expiry, the licence will only be renewed in exceptional circumstances. Operating Private Hire Drivers and Vehicles without a valid licence is a criminal offence.

4.3 Where a licence is found to have been obtained using false or incomplete information enforcement action may be taken.

OPERATOR'S BASE

4.4 An operator's licence relates to one or more addresses (bases) within the Wokingham Borough Council area. Every address that is being used must be detailed on the licence, and if a licence does not relate to the address or addresses being used, that licence is void. Continued use of that licence will be a criminal offence.

4.5 An operator who has more than one operating office or base within Wokingham Borough does not require a separate licence for each premises but must submit a list to Wokingham Borough Council containing all the addresses from which they run their business. An updated list must be sent to the council whenever any of those addresses change.

4.6 Planning permission or a Certificate of Lawful Use for the use or change of use of premises, whether home or commercial is not required before an application can be made for an operator's licence. However, it may be unlawful to use those premises as an operator's base and advice, should be sought from Wokingham Borough Council's Development Control Services if required.

4.7 Anyone who is making a provision for the invitation of bookings (evidenced by a private hire office or base) in more than one local authority area will be required to hold an operator's licence with the local authority in each of those areas.

FITNESS AND PROPRIETY

4.8 Before Wokingham Borough Council will grant or renew an operator licence, the applicant or licence holder must satisfy the following requirements.

IDENTITY

4.9 To prove their identity, all applicants must provide an authenticated form of photographic identification (for example photographic driving licence or national identification card).

4.10 Applicants from outside the UK must provide:

- a passport with a valid stamp from the Home Office to say that they have leave to remain in the Country indefinitely or
- a passport with a valid UK visa, which allows the holder to work as a Private Hire Operator (student visas will not be accepted) and which has at least six calendar months remaining at the time of application.

4.11 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. Wokingham Borough Council reserves the right to verify, at any time, a Licence Holder's entitlement to remain in the UK. We will not accept letters issued by the Home Office when a visa application is pending.

4.12 To comply with the Immigration Act 2016, the Council is required to check eligibility to live and work in the UK for all applicants for driver and operator licenses. Applicants will be required to provide evidence of this on request. Examples of acceptable documentation include a British passport, EU, EEA, or Swiss passport with the right to stay and work in the UK, permanent residence permit, work permit with a passport with correct authorisations, a UK birth certificate together with an official document giving the NI number such as a P45 or P60, or a biometric immigration document indicating a right to stay indefinitely in the UK or a right to do the work in question.

4.13 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 may be extended should the applicant's right to remain in the UK be made permanent.

4.14 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.

4.15 If a licence holder loses the right to remain in the UK during the currency of a licence, the licence ceases to have effect and the licence (and badge for drivers) must be returned within 7 days.

DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE CHECKS

4.16 An applicant must provide a basic DBS check which is no more than 1 calendar month old at the time of application. In addition, the council will require an applicant to complete an application form/statutory declaration listing all criminal convictions (including spent convictions, and other noncriminal matters) to enable the council to consider the applicant's fitness and propriety.

4.17 Licensees must provide a basic DBS which is not more than 30 days old on or before each anniversary of the grant of the licence. Failure to do so will lead to the licence being suspended.

4.18 Where an application is made by a partnership, limited liability partnership or limited company, the same requirements apply to all partners, directors, and secretary (if any).

4.19 This requirement will not apply to any applicant who already holds a driver's licence with this council.

4.20 Where a licence is held by a partnership, limited liability partnership or limited company, the council must be notified within one week of any change of partners, directors, or secretary. In those circumstances a basic DBS not more than one calendar month old must be provided with that notification.

4.21 Operators must maintain and apply a previous convictions policy in the same terms as the one contained within this policy for all staff that they use. This includes employees, workers, and independent contractors. The operator must not engage the services of any person whose previous convictions or other matters lie outside that policy without the written authorisation of the council.

CERTIFICATE OF GOOD CONDUCT

4.22 As DBS checks do not cover convictions in countries outside the United Kingdom, any applicant who has lived abroad for any period of more than 6 months from the age of 18 must also provide a Certificate of Good Conduct from the appropriate Embassy or High Commission and it must be in English. The council may undertake checks to ensure the authenticity of any such documentation. If this cannot be provided, then the application will be refused.

4.23 Nothing in this policy shall preclude a licence holder from being required to undergo a further DBS check at any time as directed by an authorised officer of Wokingham Borough Council.

PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS

4.24 In relation to the consideration of previous convictions and cautions recorded against applicants and licence holders, Wokingham Borough Council has adopted the policy set out in Appendix One. Applicants who would like to discuss what effect a conviction or caution might have on their application, can contact the Licensing Officer.

TEST OF FITNESS AND PROPRIETY

4.25 Once a valid application has been made, the Council will decide as to whether or not the applicant/licensee is fit and proper person to hold a private hire operator's licence. The same test will be used in respect of any existing driver whose criminal convictions or behaviour fall below the council's standards. The test used will be:

Without any prejudice, and based on the information before you, would you be comfortable providing sensitive information such as holiday plans, movements of your family or other information to this person, and feel safe in the knowledge that such information will not be used or passed on for criminal or unacceptable purposes?"

4.26 This will be determined on the balance of probabilities, and if the Council is of the view that the applicant or licensee does not satisfy this test, a licence will not be granted, or action will be taken against the licence. The applicant or licensee will not be given the benefit of doubt. It is for the applicant or licensee to prove that they are a fit and proper person: not for the council to prove they are not.

DRIVERS AND VEHICLES

4.27 The operator must ensure that any private hire driver or private hire vehicle operated, employed, or used by them holds a current private hire driver or vehicle licence issued by Wokingham Borough Council. The operator must hold the licence for the duration of the time that the driver or vehicle is being operated by that operator.

5.0 Enforcement and Appeals

GENERAL

5.1 This policy will be considered in conjunction with Wokingham Borough Council's Enforcement Policy.

5.2 The council will ensure that all licence holders comply with the law and conditions attached to their licenses.

ENFORCEMENT OPTIONS

5.3 Wokingham Borough Council aims to maintain a consistent approach when making all decisions in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing. To maintain a consistent approach, this policy is always considered, in addition to the Council's Enforcement Policy, and followed where appropriate. In reaching any decision Wokingham Borough Council will also have regard to the following:

- the seriousness of any offences
- the licence holder's history
- the consequences of non-compliance
- likely effectiveness of the various enforcement options
- danger to the public

5.4 Once Wokingham Borough Council has considered all the evidence and relevant information, the following options will be considered:

- Take no action
- Impose penalty points on the licence (see Appendix Two)
- Suspend the licence
- Revoke the licence
- Prosecute

APPEALS

5.5 If a licence application or renewal is refused or enforcement action is taken, the applicant or licence holder will be informed in writing. That notification will detail the rights of appeal and the appropriate court or Licensing and Appeals Sub-Committee in which an appeal should be brought.

Appendix One: Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Criminal Convictions Policy

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the criteria considered by the Council when determining whether an applicant or an existing licence holder 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.

GENERAL POLICY

1.2 Where an applicant has been convicted of a criminal offence, the Council cannot review the merits of the conviction [Nottingham City Council v. Mohammed Farooq (1998)].

POWERS

1.3 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.

1.4 In this policy the term "disqualification" refers to the period served, in order 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.

CONSIDERATION OF DISCLOSED CRIMINAL HISTORY

1.5 Applicants can discuss what effect their offending history may have on any application by contacting the licensing team in confidence for advice.

1.6 Applicants for the grant 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. If a driver refuses to sign up to the update service, a driver's licence will only be granted for 6 months, and a fresh application (together with fees etc) will have to be made. All applicants for a renewal of a driver's licence must provide an enhanced DBS with a check of the adult and child barred lists Council

1.7 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.

1.8 Applicants for the grant of an operator licence, where that person is not the holder of a current driver licence issued by the Council, must provide a basic DBS certificate annually throughout the currency of the licence.

1.9 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.

1.10 It is an offence for any person knowingly or recklessly to make a false declaration or to omit any material particular in 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 normally be refused, and if the licence has been granted it will normally be revoked.

1.11 The sole purpose of Hackney carriage and private hire licensing is to protect the public. That is the only consideration the council can consider when determining application for a licence, whether to take action against an existing licence (suspend, revoke or refuse to renew).

1.12 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 hard-working individuals. Unfortunately, as in any occupation or trade, there are those who fail to conform to those standards.

1.13 The purpose of this this policy is to lay down guidelines as to what Wokingham Borough Council regard as unacceptable previous conduct on the part of an applicant or licensee. This will then assist the council in determining whether a particular person is safe and suitable either to be granted a licence in the first place or to retain such a licence.

1.14 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 ss 51 and 59 in respect of drivers; s55 in respect of operators).

1.15 There are no statutory criteria for vehicle licenses, therefore the authority has an absolute discretion over whether to grant either a hackney carriage or private hire proprietor’s licence.

1.16 “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 partnership¹) is “safe and suitable” to hold the licence.

1.17 In determining safety and suitability the Council is entitled to consider all matters concerning that applicant or licensee. They are 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.

1.18 Convictions for attempt or conspiracy will be regarded as convictions for the substantive crime. A caution is regarded in exactly the same way as a conviction². Fixed penalties and community resolutions will also be considered in the same way as a conviction³.

1.19 It is important to recognise that 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

¹ 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.

² This is because a caution can only be imposed following an admission of guilt, which is equivalent to a guilty plea on prosecution.

³ This is because payment of a fixed penalty indicates acceptance of guilt, and a community resolution can only be imposed following an admission of guilt.

to “conviction” will also include matters that amount to criminal behaviour, but which have not resulted in a conviction.

1.20 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 these guidelines.

1.21 In all cases, the Council will consider the conviction or behaviour in question and what weight should be attached to it, and each and every case will be determined on its own merits, and in the light of these guidelines.

1.22 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.

1.23 As the council will be looking at the entirety of the individual, in many cases safety and suitability will not be determined by a specified period 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.

1.24 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.

1.25 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.

1.26 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 act 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.

1.27 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.

1.28 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 offences on those licenses separately. However, there are some overriding considerations which will apply in all circumstances.

1.29 Generally, where a person has more than one conviction, this will raise serious questions about their safety and suitability. The 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.

1.30 Where an applicant/licensee is convicted of an offence which is not detailed in this policy, the Council will take that conviction into account and use this policy as an indication of the approach that should be taken.

1.31 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 this policy, the council will consider the matter from first principles and determine the fitness and propriety of the individual.

DRIVERS

1.32 As the Council issues dual licenses (permitting the licensee to drive either a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle, referred to as a taxi driver's licence) and 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.

1.33 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.

1.34 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 safe and suitable person.

1.35 In relation to single convictions, the following time periods should elapse following completion of the sentence (or the date of conviction if a fine was imposed) before a licence will be granted.

CRIMES RESULTING IN DEATH

1.36 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.

EXPLOITATION

1.37 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.

OFFENCES INVOLVING VIOLENCE

1.38 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.

POSSESSION OF A WEAPON

1.39 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.

SEX AND INDECENCY OFFENCES

1.40 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.

DISHONESTY

1.41 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.

DRUGS

1.42 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.

1.43 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 their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.

DISCRIMINATION

1.44 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.

MOTORING CONVICTIONS

1.45 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.

1.46 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.

DRINK DRIVING/DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS/USING A HAND-HELD TELEPHONE OR HANDHELD DEVICE WHILST DRIVING

1.47 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.

1.48 Where an applicant has a DVLA points for using a held-hand mobile telephone or a hand-held 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.

OTHER MOTORING OFFENCES

1.49 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.

1.50 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.

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE OFFENCES

1.51 Where an applicant has a conviction for an offence concerned with or connected to hackney carriage or private hire activity (excluding vehicle use), a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

VEHICLE USE OFFENCES

1.52 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.

PRIVATE HIRE OPERATORS

1.53 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.

1.54 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.

1.55 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 affected 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 Council's overall criteria, that will lead to the operator's licence being revoked.

1.56 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.

VEHICLE PROPRIETORS

1.57 Vehicle proprietors (both hackney carriage and private hire) have two principal responsibilities.

1.58 Firstly, they must ensure that the vehicle is always maintained to an acceptable standard.

1.59 Secondly, they must ensure that the vehicle is not used for illegal or illicit purposes.

1.60 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.

1.61 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.

LICENSES ISSUED BY OTHER LICENSING AUTHORITIES

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

1.63 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.

SUMMARY

1.64 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 council will give careful and serious consideration to any such application.

1.65 In truly exceptional circumstances there may be occasions when an application can be allowed before the stated period free from conviction has elapsed. It is the view of the council that any person who has criminal convictions and therefore has to wait before an application is successful is more likely to value their licence and act accordingly.

Appendix Two: Penalty Points Scheme

INDEX

1. Penalty Points Scheme
2. List of Offences/Breach of Vehicle Licence Conditions/Byelaws
3. List of Offences/Breach of Driver Licence Code of Conduct
4. List of Offences/Breach of Operator Licence Conditions
5. Council Byelaws relating to Hackney Carriages

1.0 PENALTY POINTS SCHEME

1.1 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Operators, Drivers and Vehicles are principally governed by the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, Council Byelaws (in respect of Hackney carriages) and the Policy and Conditions set by the Council.

1.2 The primary objective of the Penalty points scheme is improving the levels of compliance and help improve the standards, safety and protection of the travelling public.

1.3 The penalty points scheme works in conjunction with other enforcement options. It provides a formalised stepped enforcement plan. The purpose of the scheme is to record misdemeanours and to act as a record of licensee's behaviour and conduct so as to ascertain whether they remain a safe and suitable person to be a vehicle driver or operator and/or suitable to hold a vehicle licence. It does not prejudice the Council's ability to take other actions.

1.4 The Scheme will be used where Operators, Drivers or Proprietors of Vehicles fail to comply with any legislative requirement, commit a criminal offence (under legislation or byelaws) or breach those conditions of licence, and following complaints from the public.

1.5 Licensees involved will be asked to attend the offices for an interview. Once investigations are completed, letters will be sent out detailing the outcome and a permanent record will be kept on the person's file. The outcome of investigations may result in officers determining that: no further action be taken; penalty points be imposed;

a formal warning be issued; the licensee be referred to the Regulatory Committee/Officers and/or prosecution.

1.6 If a licensee wishes to challenge the imposition of penalty points, an appeal will be referred to the Service Manager. At that hearing the points (and this includes imposing more points than displayed on the tariff), suspend, or revoke the licence, or recommend prosecution. Drivers must appeal any points issued by Officers to the senior officer within 21 days. Details of the appeal mechanism will be contained in the letter confirming the imposition of points.

1.7 Penalty points remain live or current for twelve months from the date the penalty points were imposed. If the decision was appealed to the regulatory committee/senior officer, and the committee/senior officer uphold an imposition of points, those points will remain live for 12 months from the date of the committee/senior officer decision. The 12-month period is on a roll forward basis, so as to allow any older points to be considered as spent and therefore excluded from the running total recorded against any individual licensee.

1.8 Where a licensee accumulates more than 12 penalty points in any 12-month period, the matter will be referred to the Service Manager to decide whether the driver remains a fit and proper person. The Service Manager may then suspend or revoke a licence, or issue a warning to the Licensee, depending upon the circumstances. Periods of suspension of a licence by an officer will be dependent on the nature of the breaches of the legislation/conditions/behaviour and the compliance history of the individual. Suspension periods will normally vary between 7 to 31 days. There is a right of appeal to the Licensing and Appeals Sub-committee.

1.9 The system will operate without prejudice to the Council's ability to take other action that it is entitled to take under legislation, byelaws, and conditions.

1.10 If points are issued to a proprietor/driver for a matter which is also a criminal offence which the council could prosecute for, e.g., not wearing a driver's badge, failure to maintain operators records, those person(s) will not then be the subject of a prosecution by the Council.

2.0 LIST OF OFFENCES/BREACH OF VEHICLE LICENCE CONDITIONS/BYELAWS

<u>Offence</u>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Points</i>
Failure to supply interim MOT test when vehicle is over six/twelve years of age	V1	4
Failure to have or maintain illuminated markings at entrances and exits	V2	2
Failure to have/maintain grab handles	V3	2

Failure to have a means of loading wheelchairs into the vehicle, available at all times.	V4	2
Failure to supply a current mechanical tail lift safety certificate to the Licensing Authority	V5	4
Failure to keep a wheelchair access vehicle available without modification at all times	V6	2
Failure to provide an annual LPG safety compliance Certificate	V7	4
Failure to maintain seat belts in a safe condition	V8	4
Undertaking alterations to equipment, dimensions or other specification to a licensed vehicle without consent	V9	4
Failure to display approved roof sign	V10	2
Failure to maintain roof sign in working order	V11	2
Failure to display roof sign on the front part of the roof, unless the vehicle type does not facilitate this, in which case it must be as near to the front as possible.	V12	2
Failure to display front door signs.	V13	4
Displaying incorrect signs i.e., wrong wording or magnetic	V14	4
Displaying other sign on front door	V15	4
Private hire vehicles advertising incorrectly	V16	4
Display sign that does not comply	V17	4
Display web site address large lettering than permitted	V18	4
Failure to display three or more “no smoking” signs in the vehicle	V19	4
Private hire displaying the word taxi	V20	4

Incorrectly displaying licence plate	V21	4
Failure to return plate on expiry of licence if requested to do so by Licensing Staff	V22	4
Failure to report loss or damage of a vehicle plate, following discovery of loss or damage.	V23	2
Failure to surrender vehicle licence and plate if proprietor does not wish to retain vehicle licence	V24	2
Advertising on vehicle without written authorisation from the Licensing Authority	V25	4
Failure to submit taximeter for testing when requested to do so by Licensing Authority	V26	2

Tampering or allowing an unauthorised person to tamper with taximeter	V27	4
Failure to display a statement of fares inside the HC	V28	2
Wilfully or neglectfully causing letters or figures in the statement to be obscured	V29	2
Failure to deposit copy of statement of fares which differ from the approved fares	V30	2
Failure to notify Licensing of accidents or damage affecting the safety, performance , or appearance of the vehicle	V31	2
Failure to supply steering geometry and alignment reports following an accident if required	V32	2
Failure to get authorisation for a temporary transfer vehicle or leaving the vehicle on for more than two weeks	V33	2
Failure to have insurance for the licensed vehicle	V34	12
Failure to provide evidence of insurance prior to expiry	V35	6
Failure to keep copy of insurance/cover note in the vehicle	V36	2
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of change of insurer or particulars within 2 working days.	V37	2
Failure to produce details to the Licensing Authority of drivers permitted to drive	V38	2
Failure to notify change of drivers	V39	2

Failure to notify Licensing Authority of change of address or other contact details	V40	2
Failure to carry a suitably marked approved fire extinguisher within the vehicle	V41	2
Failure to carry marked first aid equipment as specified in conditions	V42	2
Failure to obtain written permission to use trailers on Licensed vehicles	V43	12
Failure to present vehicle and trailer for inspection	V44	4
Using a dual driver without the appropriate DVLA category code to tow a trailer	V45	6
Failure to maintain radio equipment in safe condition which poses a risk of injury to passengers	V46	2
Proprietor/Operator allowing a greater number of persons to be conveyed than is specified on the licence	V47	2
Failure to maintain a reasonable standard of behaviour	V48	2
Failure to provide information requested by an authorised officer	V49	4
Failure to provide assistance to an authorised officer	V50	4
Failure to provide evidence of insurance or interim MOT/compliance test prior to expiry (1 st instance)	V51	6
Failure to provide evidence of insurance or interim MOT/compliance test prior to expiry (2 nd instance)	V52	12
Failure to show evidence of continuous MOT, interim MOT or insurance.	V53	12
Using CCTV equipment not in accordance with the provisions of the conditions and the data protection act	V54	4
Fail to have 3 CCTV signs	V55	2
Fail to check CCTV weekly	V56	2
Disconnecting CCTV system	V57	4
Obstructing CCTV Camera	V58	2
Providing alcoholic drinks not in accordance with the sale or supply of alcohol legislation	V59	12

3.0 BREACHES OF DUAL DRIVER LICENCE CODE OF CONDUCT

<u>Offence</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Points</u>
Driver not clean and respectable in their dress	D1	2
Driver not complying with the Dual Drivers Dress Code	D2	2
Driver not behaving in a civil and orderly manner	D3	3
Driver allowing noise from radio or other similar equipment to be a source of nuisance or annoyance to any person inside or outside the vehicle	D4	2
Driver smoking/vaping/similar whilst in the vehicle	D5	4
PH drivers parking in a position or location which gives the appearance of being for hire, whilst not on a prebooking	D6	3
Driver of P/H vehicle plying for hire	D7	4
Driver calling out or influencing person to travel in the vehicle for gain without a prior appointment	D8	3

Fail to have in possession drivers badge whilst driving a licensed vehicle	D9	2
Not displaying second badge in the vehicle which is visible to passengers being conveyed in the vehicle	D10	2
Failure to surrender drivers badge to the Licensing Authority upon expiry, revocation or suspension of their licence when requested by Licensing Staff	D11	2
Failure to supply annual self-declaration and fee (1 st Occasion)	D12	6
Failure to supply annual self-declaration and fee (2 nd occasion)	D13	12
Failure to carry evidence of insurance cover, this can be a cover note, in the vehicle whilst on duty	D14	2
Failure of driver to check vehicle proprietor has insurance on the vehicle	D15	2
Driver carrying greater number of persons than the number specified on the licence	D16	12

Carrying other persons in the vehicle without the consent of the hirer	D17	2
Carry a member of family/friend in a licensed vehicle when it is for hire/hired	D18	2
Failing to carry or ensure safety of passenger luggage	D19	4
Failing to offer reasonable assistance with luggage	D20	2
Failing to take steps to ensure passenger safety	D21	6
Failing to ensure passengers are dropped off safely, at the correct destination	D22	2
Fail to search vehicle after journey	D23	2
Fail to hand found property to the police	D24	2
Fail to operate taxi meter correctly	D25	4
Fail to use taximeter on pre booked journey or fail to charge fee less than meter fee	D26	2
Charging more than the metered fare	D27	4
Tampering or allowing tampering of a taximeter	D28	4
Cancelling the fare or concealing the fare on meter before the hirer has agreed the fare	D29	2

Demanding more than the previously agreed fare	D30	4
Demanding more than the fare shown on the taxi meter or scale of charges on the tariff sheet	D31	4
Starting the fare before the hirer enters the vehicle unless specified in the tariff sheet	D32	4
Failure to notify proprietor of complaints made by the passengers	D33	2
Failure to notify passengers of their right to refer their complaint to the Licensing Authority	D34	2
Failure to attend at appointed time or place without sufficient cause	D35	2
Unnecessarily prolonging journey in distance or time	D36	4
Failure to provide copy of dual drivers licence to operator	D37	2

Failure to ensure insurance cover for them to drive vehicle	D38	4
Failure to ensure vehicle is licensed by Licensing Authority for the purpose used	D39	2
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of change of address/telephone number within 7 days	D40	4
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of motoring offences over 3 penalty points or criminal convictions during the period of licence	D41	12
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of motoring convictions up to 3 penalty points during the period of licence	D42	6
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of involvement in incidents which the Police are involved and may lead to a caution/conviction	D43	12
Failure to notify Licensing Authority in writing within 7 days of serious injury or illness	D44	12
Failure to notify the Licensing Authority of a DVLA notifiable condition	D45	12
Failure to carry assistance dog without exemption	D46	4
Making additional charge for carrying assistance dog	D47	4
Failure to apply for or provide an exemption certificate on medical grounds for not being medically fit to carry an	D48	4
assistance dog		
Not using mobile phone in accordance with The Road Vehicle (construction and use) (Amendment) (No.4) Regulation 2003	D49	2
Failure to keep vehicle reasonably clean	D50	2
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of vehicle damage within 72 hours or present vehicle if requested to do so	D51	4
Failure to provide a written receipt for the fare paid if requested to do so by the passenger	D52	2
Failure to co-operate with any authorised officer of the Licensing Authority, Constable or any other clearly	D53	4

identifiable person nominated by the Licensing Authority		
Failure to keep a record of bookings in the Private Hire Vehicle. This can be computerised/electronic or written	D54	2
Failure to comply the regulations governing the wearing of seat belts	D55	4

4.0 BREACHES OF OPERATOR LICENCE CONDITIONS - PRIVATE HIRE

<u>Offence</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Points</u>
Operating more vehicles than stated on licence	01	2
Failure to obtain and maintain insurance on vehicle	02	12
Failure to produce evidence of insurance cover to the Licensing Authority	03	6
Fail to provide valid insurance on expiry for any premises where the public have access	04	6
Failure to notify the Licensing Authority of change of insurer within 2 days	05	2
Fail to provide evidence of public liability insurance for premises	06	2
Failure to operate the business in a manner which does not cause nuisance to the public or to persons in nearby premises	07	2
Failure to provide a prompt, efficient or reliable service	08	2

Failure to attend a booking at appointed time or place without sufficient cause	09	2
Knowingly allowing a greater number of persons in the licensed vehicle than is prescribed on the licence	010	12
Fail to have necessary documents and equipment	011	2

Operating the business from a premises outside the District	012	12
Failure to keep booking or waiting areas which the public have access, clean, adequately heated, ventilated and lit	013	2
Failure to provide seating facilities in waiting areas	014	2
Failure to have in place planning permission if required at operators address	015	2
Failure to comply with planning permission or licence conditions for number of vehicles permitted	015	2
Failure to supply written confirmation within seven days of changes to the particulars shown on the application form relating to the licence	016	4
Fail to notify Licensing Authority of change of address	017	2
Failure to notify the Licensing Authority within seven days of any convictions imposed on them, during the period of the licence	018	6
Failure to keep proper records for a period of not less than six months	019	3
Failure to keep proper records	020	2
Fail to keep entries correctly	021	2
Fail to notify details of security arrangements	022	2
Fail to keep records of private hire vehicles operated	023	2
Displaying the word Taxi or Cab on a private hire vehicle	024	2
Failure to keep records of all drivers employed or failure to produce details of the drivers	025	2
Failure to notify Licensing Authority within seven days of the particulars of any driver who is no longer employed by the operator	026	2
Failure to maintain telephone or radio equipment in sound condition or failure to repair defects promptly	027	2

Failure to have or produce evidence of a Licence issued by the Department of Trade and Industry licence for all radio equipment	028	2
Using unlicensed drivers to drive a Licensing Authority licensed vehicle	029	12
Failure to keep a written record of all complaints or failure to make available to the Licensing Authority	030	2
Late to provide evidence of insurance or interim MOT (1 st Occasion)	031	6
Late to provide evidence of insurance or interim MOT (2 nd Occasion)	032	12
Failure to carry out or provide the required DBS checks on dispatch staff	033	12
Failure to record, maintain or provide details of checks on dispatch staff in a register	034	12
Failure to make appropriate checks of any operator for which work is outsourced	035	12
Failure to establish, maintain or provide a policy on employing ex-offenders to the licensing authority	036	12
Failure to require notification of convictions as part of the contract of employment	037	12
Failure to notify licensing authority of any conviction information relating to booking and dispatch staff in accordance with condition	038	12

5.0 BREACHES OF COUNCIL BYELAWS RELATING TO HACKNEY CARRIAGES

<u>Offence</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Points</u>
Wilfully or negligently causing licence number to be concealed from public view while the carriage is standing or plying for hire	B1	2
Causing or permitting the carriage to stand or ply for hire with an illegible plate	B2	2
Failure to furnish the hackney carriage in accordance with requirements of the Byelaw	B3	2

Failure to provide a taximeter in accordance with the requirements of the Byelaw	B4	2
Failure to operate taximeter in accordance with requirements of the Byelaw.	B5	2
Driver or proprietor tampering with meter or permitting any unauthorised person to tamper with meter	B6	4
Failure to proceed to another rank when at the time of arrival rank is full	B7	2
Failure to station or move the carriage immediately behind the carriage or carriages in front on the rank	B8	2
A proprietor or driver using the services of a person to importune a person to hire the vehicle	B9	2
Failure by driver to take reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of passengers	B10	4
Driver or proprietor allowing more persons to be conveyed than the licence allows	B11	12
Failure by driver to carry the badge provided by the Licensing Authority when plying for hire	B12	2
Failure to provide when requested reasonable assistance with luggage	B13	2
Failure to display statement of fares inside the carriage in a legible state	B14	2
Failure to notify lost property to the Police within 48 hours of discovery	B15	2

Appendix Three: Taxi Drivers Code of Conduct

1.1 This code of conduct relates to you as a licensed taxi driver. It outlines the standards of behaviour which are expected of you whilst you hold a taxi driver's licence. Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to enforcement action being taken. This could be by way of penalty points attached to your taxi drivers' licence, suspension, revocation, or refusal to renew your licence.

1.2 You are a licensed taxi driver for the duration of the licence, and always you should ensure that your conduct and behaviour is that of a fit and proper person. You must ensure that you do not act in any way, at any time, that might affect that. The council will consider all your behaviour, and that is not limited to the times when you are driving a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle.

1.3 When you are driving a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle, that remains a Wokingham Borough Council licensed vehicle and you remain a Wokingham Borough Council licensed taxi driver wherever you may be located, and for whatever purpose you are using the vehicle (this includes social and domestic use) . This Code of Conduct applies across the whole of the United Kingdom.

YOUR DRIVERS LICENCE AND BADGE

1.4 You have been issued with 2 copies of your drivers badge and a coloured armband. You must always wear one driver badge in the armband on your left upper arm 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 1976 Act when using a private hire vehicle and byelaw when using a hackney carriage]. You must display the second copy of your badge in a position which is always plainly and clearly visible to your passengers whilst you are working as a taxi Driver.

1.5 You must return your licence, badge, and armband to the Licensing Section of the Council within 72 hours if:

- You change your home or business address
- the licence expires, is suspended, revoked
- you lose the right to work in the UK, or the right to remain in the UK
- You wish to surrender your Taxi Driver Licence
- required to do so by an "Authorised Officer of the Council".

1.5 You must inform the Licensing Section of the Council in writing, within **seven days** if you change your address.

1.6 In the event of the loss of your licence, badge, or armband you must report the loss to Regulatory Services immediately.

DEPOSIT OF DRIVER LICENCE WHEN WORKING FOR OTHERS

1.7 You must give your Driver Licence to the private hire operator when driving private hire vehicles, or proprietor of any Hackney carriage which you will be using. They will keep your licence while you are driving for them.

PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS

1.8 If an Authorised Officer of the Council, an Authorised Officer of another Council with which Wokingham Borough Council has a reciprocal arrangement or a police constable asks you, within five days of the request being made at the location that they specify, you must produce:

- Your DVLA driving licence
- Your Taxi Driver Licence
- The vehicle registration document
- A valid certificate of insurance

MEDICAL CONDITION

1.9 You must notify the Council, in writing within 14 days of any change in your medical condition that may adversely affect your ability to drive private hire or hackney carriage vehicles.

1.10 You must ensure that when you are working you are sober and not under the influence of any illegal drugs. If you are taking any prescription medication, you must ensure that it does not impair your driving ability.

1.11 If at any time you feel unwell you must discontinue work until such time as you feel better and able to return to work.

DECLARATION OF CONVICTION / CAUTION / PENALTY

1.12 You must declare all convictions, cautions, fixed penalty notices, CBO's (Criminal Behaviour Orders) CPNs (Community Protection Notices), requirements to attend a speed

awareness course, injunctions, restraining orders to Wokingham Borough Council on your initial application form.

1.13 If you are convicted of any offence, or accept a formal caution for an offence, or receive a fixed penalty notice for any offence or receive and accept an endorsable fixed penalty notice, or are made the subject of an CBO or CPN, are required to attend a speed awareness course, are made the subject on any injunction or restraining order, or you are arrested for any matter, you must give the Council details, in writing and within **72 hours** of the event.

DRIVING

1.14 You must always comply with all road traffic regulations.

1.15 You must comply with all legislation and conditions relating to the hackney carriage or private hire vehicle that you are driving at all times. Those conditions are available on the council website

1.16 You must not sound your vehicle horn –

- unnecessarily, i.e., unless in an emergency or to let other road users or pedestrians know you are there
- when your vehicle is stationary on a road, at any time, other than at times of danger due to another moving vehicle on or near the road
- on any road in a built-up area between 11.30 p.m. and 7.00 am.

1.17 Your vehicle horn must not be used to signal your arrival to collect any pre-booked passenger.

1.18 You must not drive any hackney carriage or private hire vehicle in a dangerous or inconsiderate manner and in addition to complying with all road traffic regulations you must ensure that you're driving and behaviour on the road is of the highest standard.

1.19 When parking, or otherwise waiting for either a hiring (hackney carriage), a booking to be communicated to you (private hire and hackney carriage) or attending for a pre-booked hiring (private hire and hackney carriage) you must ensure that you do not obstruct other road users including pedestrians on pavements and in pedestrianised

streets. You must also ensure that you do not block vehicle entrances, or any emergency exits for buildings. You must also comply with parking and waiting restrictions (if any).

1.20 When stopping to set passengers down you must do so in a manner which minimises the risk to those passengers as they alight from the vehicle. You must warn passengers clearly of any unusual or unexpected dangers within the vicinity.

1.21 When driving a hackney carriage, you must not demand a fare greater than that shown on the meter for a journey within the council's area. Where a journey ends outside the council's area, you must not demand a fare greater than that shown on the meter unless an agreement was made between yourself and the hirer before the hiring commenced.

1.22 When driving a private hire vehicle, you must not demand a fare greater than that shown on the meter (if that is how your operator calculates fares) or as agreed between the hirer and the operator.

1.23 You must always stop the engine of the vehicle when the vehicle is stationary otherwise than through the necessities of traffic.

1.24 It is a criminal offence to hold and use a mobile phone or other handheld device whilst driving. In addition, this will be regarded as a serious breach of the Code of Conduct.

DATA PROTECTION

1.25 You must ensure that you have the correct safeguards for storing personal data that comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). This will include details of hirers (pre-booked hackney carriages) and any dash cam footage (the use of dash cams is considered in relation to vehicle licenses).

CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR

1.26 You must be always honest and trustworthy.

1.27 You must be polite and courteous to your passengers, other road users and the public generally.

1.28 You must not use abusive or foul language, spit, or smoke in or near the vicinity of your vehicle.

1.29 You must not use aggressive language or behaviour or engage in any violent conduct.

1.30 You must not carry any form of weapon on your person or in your vehicle at any time and under no circumstances must you ever take the law into your own hands.

1.31 If the hirer requests, you must provide a written receipt for the fare paid for the hiring, including the amount of VAT (if applicable) shown separately if so requested. That receipt must also contain details of the journey including the date, pick up point and destination, vehicle licence number, operators name and driver name or licence number. You must then sign the receipt.

1.32 You must not cause or allow noise emitted by any radio or sound equipment in the vehicle which you are driving to be a source of nuisance or annoyance to any person or persons, whether inside or outside the vehicle.

1.33 If a passenger objects, you must not play any radio or sound reproducing instrument or equipment in the vehicle.

1.34 You must treat everybody decently, equally, and fairly.

1.35 You must always treat passengers, any potential passenger, members of the public, Police Officers and PCSOs, Council officers and all other public servants (NHS staff, fire fighters, HMRC staff etc) with courtesy and respect.

1.36 You must not discriminate against any person because of their race, colour, creed, age, gender, sexuality, or disability.

1.37 You must not use abusive, racist, sexist, or any other offensive language or terms with passengers or other members of the public (remember that not everybody shares your sense of humour, or views).

1.38 You must protect passengers and yourself. Be wary about entering any premises, especially domestic premises unless you know the person as an established customer. Even then make sure that you take all steps to minimise any risk to yourself or your reputation.

1.39 You must not obtain the telephone numbers of or engage on any form of social media with anybody under the age of 18.

1.40 You must not engage in any kind of sexual activity within or in the vicinity of your licensed vehicle.

1.41 You must always behave in a civil and reasonable manner and must comply with any reasonable request made by the hirer.

1.42 You must always pick up your passengers on time unless unavoidably delayed. If the hiring has been arranged via a private hire operator or other 3rd party, you must immediately contact that operator or 3rd party to inform them of the delay and your estimated time of arrival.

1.43 You must always assist your passengers with their luggage. If they do not request this, you must ask whether they need help. This includes picking it up from the point of booking, removing it from your vehicle at the end of the journey and setting it down.

1.44 You must maintain a logbook in which to record any incidents that you feel are of concern (including but not limited to concerns about child abuse, abuse of any other person, people trafficking, drug carrying, violence or criminal behaviour) or which may result in a complaint being made about you. Such incidents must be recorded promptly with as much detail as possible (date, time, location, nature of the incident, names of the parties (if known) and identifying features).

1.45 This logbook must be kept securely in the vehicle and the details must be transferred to a storage medium which is not contained within the vehicle (i.e., a copy of the pages stored on a computer) as soon as possible. When you are driving a private hire vehicle all such incidents must be reported to your operator as soon as possible. If you are driving a

hackney carriage that has been booked via a booking agent, all such incidents must be reported to that agent as soon as possible. Where you suspect that the incident involves criminal behaviour you must report this to the police and council immediately.

1.46 You must maintain a logbook of any complaints that are made to you as a driver. All complaints must be recorded promptly with as much detail as possible (date, time, location, nature of the complaint, names of the parties (if known) and identifying features). This logbook must be kept securely in the vehicle and the details must be transferred to a storage medium which is not contained within the vehicle (i.e. a copy of the pages stored on a computer) as soon as possible. When you are driving a private hire vehicle all such complaints must be reported to your operator as soon as possible. If you are driving a hackney carriage that has been booked via a booking agent, all such complaints must be reported to that agent as soon as possible.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS CODE

1.47 You must always maintain good standards of personal hygiene.

1.48 You must always be clean and respectable in your dress and present a professional image. To achieve this, you must comply with the following dress code which will also ensure that public and driver safety is not compromised

ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS OF DRESS

1.49 Collared shirts, blouses, polo shirts, or sweatshirts must cover the shoulders and be capable of being worn tucked inside trousers, shorts or skirts.

1.50 Shirts or blouses may be worn with a tie or open necked.

1.51 All clothing must be clean, of smart appearance and in good condition.

TROUSERS, SHORTS AND SKIRTS

1.52 Trousers can be either full length or shorts.

1.53 Skirts must be no shorter than 5 cm above the knee (when standing) and can be of any longer length, but must not impede the safe operation of the pedals

1.54 Trousers, shorts or skirts must be tailored and made of one colour of material.

FOOTWEAR

1.55 Footwear for all drivers must fit around the heel of the foot. Wooden soled footwear is not permitted.

UNACCEPTABLE STANDARDS OF DRESS

1.56 Anything not conforming to the above, including:

- Clothing not being kept in a clean and fresh condition or any items which have holes or rips.
- Words or graphics on any clothing that is of an offensive or suggestive nature.
- Sportswear e.g., football or rugby kits, track suits, beach wear, etc.
- Sandals with no heel straps, flip flops or any other form of footwear not secured around the heel.
- Not having either the top or bottom half of their bodies suitably clothed.
- No baseball caps or hoods worn up whilst in the vehicle.

USE OF THE VEHICLE

1.57 Private hire vehicles and hackney carriages are always smoke free vehicles under the Health Act 2006. It is a criminal offence to smoke in a private hire vehicle at any time (section 7) or to allow a person to smoke in a private hire vehicle (section 8) and you can be prosecuted for either or both offences. In addition, this will be regarded as a serious breach of the Code of Conduct

1.58 You must not eat in the vehicle at any time or allow passengers to eat in the vehicle at any time.

1.59 Animals must not be carried in private hire vehicles or hackney carriages other than those belonging to or in the care of passengers. You may refuse to carry a hirer's animal at your discretion. However, you must not refuse to carry an assistance dog, unless you have a valid Exemption Certificate issued by the Council. Any animal must be kept under the hirer's control and must be carried in the rear of the vehicle (except assistance dogs). No animals can be carried in the luggage compartment of a vehicle unless the vehicle is an estate car or hatchback, and the animal can be seen from outside the vehicle through a window.

1.60 You must not carry more passengers than the maximum number prescribed by the conditions attached to the hackney carriage your private hire vehicle licence and displayed on the vehicle plate.

1.61 You must carry a reasonable amount of luggage and assist them in loading it and unloading it from the vehicle.

1.62 You must not carry any additional passengers not already accompanying the hirer in the vehicle without the hirer's permission.

1.63 You must not carry more than one person in the front seat unless the vehicle is furnished with manufacturer fitted seats for more than one passenger in the front of the vehicle and provided with seat belts for all front seat passengers. In this case no more than 2 passengers may be carried.

1.64 You must not carry any child below the age of ten years in the front of the vehicle.

1.65 Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles are not expected to carry a range of child seats. If you are carrying children under the age of 14 you must make any adult with responsibility for the child aware that the correct restraints may not be available and the carriage of the child in those circumstances is at the adult's own risk. Children under 3 years of age can travel unrestrained in a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle if the appropriate restraint is not available. Children over 3 years of age and below 11 years of age or shorter than 135cms (approx. 4ft 6in) can use adult seat belts if the appropriate restraint is not available. Children over 11 years of age or taller than 135cm (approx. 4ft 6in) must use adult seat belts.

VEHICLE CHECKS

1.66 It is your responsibility to ensure that the correct policy of insurance is in force for any hackney carriage or private hire vehicle that you are driving.

1.67 Before using a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle for the first time each day, you must undertake a "walk around check". This requires that you ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and fit for use as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle. The check must include the tyres (pressure and tread depth), checking the lights are functioning (so far as is possible with one person – all lights except brake lights), checking all glass (lights and windows) is intact and ensuring there is no obvious damage to the vehicle. Any defects that are detected must be rectified before the vehicle is used to carry passengers.

1.68 Every time you commence driving the vehicle you must ensure that the rear identification plate, supplied by the Council, is securely fixed to the outermost rear of the vehicle, so that it can be clearly read by pedestrians and other road users. You must also ensure that any other identifying information (whether supplied by the Council or not) is correctly and securely attached to the vehicle.

1.69 If you have been issued a certificate of exemption from carrying assistance dogs or providing wheelchair assistance you must ensure that that notice is correctly placed on the nearside of the front windscreen.

1.70 You must not offer or accept any hire of the vehicle except where the hiring has been pre-booked via your Private Hire Operator [does not apply to Hackney carriages].

LOST PROPERTY

1.71 After every hiring, you must search the vehicle for any misplaced or lost property.

1.72 If any property is found or handed to you, you must, unless it is claimed, take it to a Police Station within 48 hours. Following agreement with the owner of any lost property (and you must take reasonable steps to ensure the person concerned is the rightful owner) you may agree to return the property personally to the owner and charge the metered fare to an agreed meeting point, or £10.00, whichever shall be greater.

TAXIMETERS IN PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES [TAXIMETER USE IN HACKNEY CARRIAGES IS GOVERNED BY THE BYELAWS]

1.73 You may use a meter in the private hire vehicle only if it is constructed, attached, and maintained in compliance with the Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions.

1.74 Unless the fare is agreed in advance, you must switch the meter on at the point the hirer's journey commences and keep the meter working until the termination of the hiring.

1.75 You must not cancel or conceal the fare recorded until the hirer has had a reasonable opportunity of examining it and has paid the fare (unless a lesser fare has been agreed).

1.76 You must ensure that the fare charged does not exceed the fare displayed on the meter at the end of the journey.

1.77 You must ensure that when the vehicle is not hired the key is to be locked and the machinery kept inactive, and the meter must show no fare at any time.

1.78 You must ensure that the meter is sufficiently illuminated when in use and is visible to passengers.

1.79 You must not (nor may you allow anyone else) to tamper with the meter or any seal on the meter without lawful excuse or alter any meter with the intent to mislead.

PLYING FOR HIRE WHEN DRIVING A PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE [DOES NOT APPLY WHEN DRIVING A HACKNEY CARRIAGE]

1.80 You must not pick up passengers who have not pre-booked with your operator.

1.81 You must not offer or accept an offer for the immediate hire of a vehicle while it is being used in a public place.

1.82 You must not park or wait on or near any Hackney Carriage Rank or drop passengers off on a hackney carriage rank.

FARES WHEN A HACKNEY CARRIAGE IS USED FOR PRE-BOOKED WORK

1.83 A hackney carriage can be used for pre-booked work both within Wokingham Borough Council and elsewhere. When the journey is wholly within the zone/county, or commences or ends in Wokingham Borough Council, the fare charged cannot be greater than that displayed on the meter or in accordance with the table of fares. Where a pre-booked journey commences and ends outside Wokingham Borough Council the table of fares and the meter do not control the maximum fare that can be charged. In these circumstances the fare to be charged must be negotiated between the hirer and the driver or booking agent.

Appendix Four: Legal Requirements (contained in national legislation) when driving a Hackney carriage

YOUR TAXI DRIVER LICENCE AND BADGE

1.1 When driving a hackney carriage you must wear one copy of your badge in the issued armband, on your left upper arm always whilst you are working as a Hackney Carriage Driver. and you commit a criminal offence if you do not do so, for which you might be prosecuted.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

1.2 When driving a hackney carriage, you must carry an assistance dog and allow it to remain with their owner unless you have a certificate of exemption issued by the Council. You must not make any additional charge for doing so. When you are carrying an assistance dog you must allow it to be carried wherever the owner requires i.e., you cannot insist on the dog being separated from the owner or the owner and dog sitting in a particular seat (Section 168 Equality Act 2010).

1.3 When you are driving a hackney carriage that has been designated as a wheelchair accessible vehicle in a list maintained by the Council under section 167 of the Equality Act 2010, you must comply with the duties and provide mobility assistance to any passenger in a wheelchair as detailed in section 165 of the Equality Act 2010.

1.4 The duties are:

- To carry the passenger while in the wheelchair;
- Not to make any additional charge for doing so;
- If the passenger chooses to sit in a passenger seat, to carry the wheelchair;
- To take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort;
- To give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required.

1.5 And mobility assistance is:

- To enable the passenger to get into or out of the vehicle;
- 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;
- To load the passenger's luggage into or out of the vehicle;
- If the passenger does not wish to remain in the wheelchair, to load the wheelchair into or out of the vehicle.

1.6 In vehicles equipped with a taxi meter, the meter must not be activated until the wheelchair bound passenger has been properly loaded and secured for the journey, all loading ramps or other equipment have been properly stowed and the vehicle is ready to commence the journey. At the end of the journey the meter must be stopped before any unloading activity commences.

CONDUCT

1.7 You must not drive a hackney carriage at any time if you do not hold a taxi drivers' licence, or if your licence has been suspended (section 47 Town Police Clauses Act 1847).

1.8 You must not lend your taxi drivers licence to anybody else (section 47 Town Police Clauses Act 1847)

1.9 When driving a hackney carriage, you must accept a hiring for from a hackney carriage stand (taxi rank) or when you are stationary on the highway for a journey within the council's area unless you have a "reasonable excuse" to refuse (section 53 Town Police Clauses Act 1847)

1.10 When driving a hackney carriage if you agree to charge a fare lower than that shown on the meter for a journey in a hackney carriage then you cannot charge more than that agreed fare (section 54 Town Police Clauses Act 1847)

1.11 When driving a hackney carriage, you must not charge more than the fare shown on the meter of a hackney carriage for a journey wholly within the council's area, irrespective of how the journey was arranged (s55 1847 Act)

1.12 When driving a hackney carriage if you have agreed to accept a fixed amount of money for a journey, you must ensure that the journey lasts until that amount is shown on the meter (section 56 Town Police Clauses Act 1847).

1.13 When driving a hackney carriage if you have been hired and are asked to wait, and either a deposit has been paid or the meter is running, you must wait until that hirer returns to your hackney carriage (section 57 Town Police Clauses Act 1847).

1.14 When driving a hackney carriage you must not charge more than the fare shown on the meter for a journey within the district (section 58 Town Police Clauses Act 1847).

1.15 When driving a hackney carriage, you must not carry anyone apart from the hirer and their companions without the express consent of that hirer (section 59 Town Police Clauses Act 1847).

1.15 You must not drive any hackney carriage without the consent of the Hackney carriage proprietor (if that is not yourself) (section 60 Town Police Clauses Act 1847)

1.16 You must not leave a hackney carriage unattended at a Hackney carriage stand (section 62 Town Police Clauses Act 1847)

1.17 You must not prevent any other driver of a hackney carriage from taking a fare, or obstruct them in picking up or sitting down passengers (section 62 Town Police Clauses Act 1847)

1.18 When driving a hackney carriage, you must produce your taxi drivers' licence if requested to do so by an authorised officer of the Council (another Council with whom a reciprocal arrangement exists) or any police constable (s53(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.19 You must return your driver's licence to the Council within 7 days if you lose the right to remain or work in the UK (s53A(9) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.20 You must not make any false statement or withhold any information when applying to renew your taxi drivers' licence (s57(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.21 You must return your licence, drivers' badge(s) and armband to the Council within 14 days of any suspension, revocation or refusal to renew your licence (s61(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.22 When driving a hackney carriage, you must not charge more than the fare shown on the meter of a Hackney carriage for a journey that ends outside the council's area unless a

different fare was agreed in advance (s66 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976)

1.23 When driving a hackney carriage, you must not charge more than the metered fare for a pre-booked journey which is wholly within or starts or finishes within the council's area. (s66 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976)

1.24 You must use the shortest available reasonable route for all journeys by hackney carriage, subject to any directions given by the hirer. (Section 69 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.25 You must not tamper with any seal on a taximeter or alter the taximeter with any intent to mislead (s71 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and Hackney Carriage Bylaw).

1.26 You must not obstruct, fail to comply with any requirement made by, or fail to give any information to, an authorised officer of the Council, an authorised officer of another Council with which there is a reciprocal enforcement arrangement, or a police constable (s73 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.27 When driving a hackney carriage, you must not conceal obscure the number of the hackney carriage whilst standing or plying for hire (Hackney Carriage Bylaw)

1.28 When driving a hackney carriage, you must not activate the taximeter when standing or plying for hire, but you must activate the meter before the journey commences but not until passengers are properly seated and secured. At the end of the journey, you must stop the meter. This should be before passengers alight from the vehicle. (Hackney Carriage Bylaw).

1.29 When driving a hackney carriage and you are plying for hire you must proceed to a hackney carriage stand (rank) and if that rank is full, proceed to another stand. When you arrive at a stand that is not full you must position the vehicle behind the rearmost vehicle on the stand and move forward as space becomes available (Hackney Carriage Bylaw).

1.30 You must not use the services of any other person to importune (encourage forcefully) anyone to hire your hackney carriage (Hackney Carriage Bylaw).

1.31 When driving a hackney carriage, you must behave in a civil and orderly manner and take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of persons entering, carried in or alighting from the Hackney carriage (Hackney Carriage Bylaw).

1.32 When driving a hackney carriage if you have been pre-booked you must attend at the appointed time and place (Hackney Carriage Bylaw).

1.33 When driving a hackney carriage, you must not carry more passengers in the hackney carriage than the conditions attached to the vehicle licence permit (Hackney Carriage Bylaw).

1.34 When driving a hackney carriage, you must carry a reasonable quantity of luggage for the hirer and assist them in loading and unloading, including taking it from or to any building (Hackney Carriage Bylaw).

1.35 When driving a hackney carriage, you must search the vehicle for lost property after every hiring (Hackney Carriage Bylaw).

1.36 When driving a hackney carriage, you must take any lost property which is not claimed within 48 hours to any staffed police station within the district of Wokingham Borough (Hackney Carriage Bylaw).

Appendix Five: Legal Requirements (contained in national legislation) when driving a private hire vehicle

YOUR TAXI DRIVER LICENCE AND BADGE

1.1 When driving a private hire vehicle you must wear one copy of your badge in the issued armband, on your left upper arm always whilst you are working as Private Hire Driver. and you commit a criminal offence if you do not do so, for which you might be prosecuted (s54 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976)

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

1.2 When your operator has accepted a booking for a passenger with an assistance dog (whether the existence of the dog has been communicated to you), you must carry that assistance dog and allow it to remain with their owner unless you have a certificate of exemption issued by the Council. When you are carrying an assistance dog you must allow it to be carried wherever the owner requires i.e., you cannot insist on the dog being separated from the owner or the owner and dog sitting in a particular seat (Section 170 Equality Act 2010).

1.3 When you are driving a private hire vehicle that has been designated as a wheelchair accessible vehicle in a list maintained by the Council under section 167 of the Equality Act 2010, you must comply with the duties and provide mobility assistance to any passenger in a wheelchair as detailed in section 165 of the Equality Act 2010.

1.4 The duties are:

- To carry the passenger while in the wheelchair;
- Not to make any additional charge for doing so;
- If the passenger chooses to sit in a passenger seat, to carry the wheelchair;
- To take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort;
- To give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required.

1.5 And mobility assistance is:

- To enable the passenger to get into or out of the vehicle;
- 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;
- To load the passenger's luggage into or out of the vehicle;

- If the passenger does not wish to remain in the wheelchair, to load the wheelchair into or out of the vehicle.

1.6 In vehicles equipped with a taxi meter, the meter must not be activated until the wheelchair bound passenger has been properly loaded and secured for the journey, all loading ramps or other equipment have been properly stowed and the vehicle is ready to commence the journey. At the end of the journey the meter must be stopped before any unloading activity commences.

1.7 You must not drive a private hire vehicle at any time when your taxi drivers' licence has been suspended (s46(1)(b) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.8 When driving a private hire vehicle, you must produce your taxi drivers' licence if requested to do so by an authorised officer of the Council (another Council with whom a reciprocal arrangement exists) or any police constable (s53(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.9 You must return your driver's licence to the Council within 7 days if you lose the right to remain or work in the UK (s53A (9) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.10 You must not make any false statement or withhold any information when applying to renew your taxi drivers' licence (s57(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.11 You must return your licence and drivers badge to the Council within 14 days of any suspension, revocation, or refusal to renew your licence (s61(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.12 When driving a private hire vehicle you must use the shortest available reasonable route for all journeys by private hire vehicle, subject to any directions given by the hirer. (Section 69 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).

1.13 You must not tamper with any seal on a taximeter also the taximeter with any intent to mislead (s71 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976)

1.14 You must not obstruct, fail to comply with any requirement made by, or fail to give any information to, an authorised officer of the Council, an authorised officer of another Council with which there is a reciprocal enforcement arrangement, or a police constable (s73 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976)

1.15 You must not drive any private hire vehicle with any roof sign which includes the words “taxi”, “cab” or “hire”, any similar words or anything which would indicate the vehicle is a hackney carriage (section 64 Transport Act 1980).

Appendix Six: Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions

1.1 In these conditions which are imposed under the provisions of section 47 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 , unless otherwise indicated;

“the Council” will mean Wokingham Borough Council

“the Proprietor” means the person who has been granted the licence by Wokingham Borough Council under section 37 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847

“the Vehicle” means the vehicle that is specified on the licence granted under section 37 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847.

1.2 The following conditions will be attached to every hackney carriage (proprietors) vehicle licence unless specifically altered by the council. Additional conditions that are reasonably necessary will be attached to vehicle licenses on a case-by-case basis.

GENERAL

1.3 The licensee must notify the Council of the location where the vehicle is kept regularly when not in use (excluding occasional locations that may be used e.g., for servicing and holidays) and any authorised officer must be afforded such facilities as may be reasonably necessary to inspect and test the vehicle there.

1.4 If the vehicle is licensed by any other Council, the Proprietor must immediately stop carrying out any work under their Wokingham Borough Council licence. They must, return the licence issued by Wokingham Borough Council to the licensing department of Wokingham Borough Council within five working days.

IDENTIFICATION PLATES AND CARDS

1.5 The identification plate, additional signage and all fare cards and licence cards always remain the property of the Council, and must be returned on surrender, suspension, revocation, or expiry of the licence or if the vehicle is sold, or disposed of, out of the licensed trade. If a plate is lost or stolen it must be reported to the police. A crime or lost property number must be obtained, and the Council informed within 24 hours.

1.6 The plate must be securely fixed to the rear exterior of the Vehicle using the Council’s approved backing plate and permanent fixings. Velcro, adhesive, magnets, and brackets are not acceptable. The security of the plate will be checked as part of the scheduled vehicle test and at any spot checks. The licence plate will be fixed with security toggles

under the supervision of an authorised officer of the Council. The Council reserves the right to inspect the plate at any time.

1.7 All vehicles must always display the roof sign correctly. Such signs must be securely affixed by means of magnets unless they are an integral part of the vehicle.

1.8 All vehicles must always display the additional signage correctly.

1.9 All Vehicles must display the licence cards, provided by the Council, in the front and rear windscreen always.

MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLE

1.10 The Vehicle, along with all its fittings and equipment must always be kept in an efficient, safe, tidy and clean condition and all relevant statutory requirements must be fully complied with. This includes (but is not limited to) the following:

1.11 The interior and exterior of the vehicle must be maintained in a clean, safe, and proper manner, to the reasonable satisfaction of the council.

1.12 Bodywork must be maintained to a good condition, paintwork must be sound, uniform across the vehicle, well maintained and free of corrosion, dents, scratches, chips and other signs of wear or deterioration, inferior re-spray work and 'cover up' temporary repairs.

1.13 The roof sign must be kept clean, free from obstruction and the illumination must operate correctly when linked to the taximeter.

1.14 The roof (including any sunroof or removable covering) must be watertight.

1.15 Fittings, furniture and additional equipment fitted in the vehicle must be kept in an acceptably clean condition, well maintained and in every way fit for public service. Items such as taximeters, radios, Sat-Nav's, PDA's, mobile phone holders and other ancillary items must be securely mounted in the vehicle in such a position as to not hinder or

obstruct the driver's operation of, or view out of, the vehicle, or impede the seating of any passenger.

1.16 The seats must be properly cushioned, covered, and free from cigarette burns, rips, splits, tears, stains or any other signs of excessive deterioration or wear.

1.17 The floor must be covered with carpet, mat, or other suitable material, properly secured and be free from cigarette burns, rips, splits, tears, stains, excessive deterioration and wear.

1.18 The vehicle must be equipped with a suitable bulb-kit indelibly marked with the registration number or licence number of the vehicle to provide for the replacement of defective bulbs

1.19 The doors, windows and seats must function in accordance with the original manufacturer's specification.

1.20 The proprietor/driver employed to drive the vehicle must undertake a daily safety check of the vehicle. As a minimum this must be a visual check on all lights, oil, water, tyres, mirrors, seat belts and cleanliness. A written record must be made of each safety check, details of faults recorded, and remedial action taken. The record must be signed by the person undertaking the safety checks and kept in the vehicle for a minimum of 30 days and then for a further 6 months by the proprietor.

1.21 If required by a Police Officer or Authorised Officer the driver must produce, to that officer, the recorded daily checks kept in the vehicle and the proprietor, on request by that officer, must produce those recorded checks in his possession and/or those kept in the vehicle.

1.22 If the Vehicle fails a Hackney Carriage Test the Proprietor or driver of the Vehicle must present the Vehicle for a Hackney Carriage Test again within 14 days or return the licence plate

to the Council. Until a pass certificate is issued the Vehicle cannot be used as a Hackney Carriage.

1.23 Alternative If a vehicle fails a Hackney carriage test, an authorised officer of the council at the test station will issue a suspension notice under section 68 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. That will immediately suspend the vehicle licence, from which point it cannot be used as a Hackney carriage. That suspension notice will be lifted when the vehicle is presented for a retest and that test is passed. If the suspension notice is not lifted within a period of 2 calendar months from the date on which it was issued, the vehicle licence will be deemed to be revoked. In that circumstance, any acquired rights will be lost.

1.24 The Proprietor of the Vehicle must provide a copy of all HackneyCarriage Test certificates to the Council within 7 days of receiving them.

1.25 If the Vehicle has been involved in an accident, then the Proprietor must notify the Council within 2 days and at the discretion of the Council, the Vehicle may have to undergo a further inspection at one of the councils nominated testing stations.

DOORS

1.26 All doors designed by the manufacturer to allow the access or egress of passengers must function correctly and be capable of being opened from the inside and the outside.

1.27 Tailgates and rear doors must only to be used for loading/unloading luggage or as an emergency exit, unless the vehicle has been designed, modified, or adapted to carry wheelchair bound passengers, and has the relevant M1 or M2 Type Approval Certificate, in which case the rear doors may be used for loading those passengers only.

VENTILATION

1.28 The driver's window and all passenger windows must function correctly and be capable of being opened and closed by the driver or passengers.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES (WAV'S)

1.29 The following conditions apply to all Hackney carriage vehicles which are built or adapted for the carriage of wheelchair bound passengers.

1.30 All equipment and devices used for or involved in the loading, unloading and secure transportation of wheelchair bound passengers must always function correctly and must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

1.31 Access to and egress from the wheelchair carrying position must not be obstructed in any manner, at any time, except by wheelchair loading apparatus.

1.32 All wheelchair internal anchorage points and equipment must be of the manufacturer's design and construction and not altered or modified in any way. All such equipment must be secured in such a position as to not obstruct any emergency exit when the equipment is not in use.

1.33 The manufacturer's seat belt for the wheelchair bound passenger must always be used when a wheelchair is being carried.

1.34 Access ramps or lifts must be securely fixed to the vehicle prior to and must always display information prescribed by other legislation and manufacturer's markings.

1.35 Ramps, steps and lifts must be securely stored in the vehicle before driving off

1.36 The licensee must ensure that all drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles have received sufficient training to be able to load/unload and convey wheelchair bound passengers in safety and comfort.

SEATBELTS

1.37 Seat belts must be used in accordance with the requirements of the legislation that is applicable at the relevant time.

TYRES

1.38 All tyres on the licensed vehicle and any trailer used on the licensed vehicle must be in good condition and conform with the minimum legal requirements subject to an additional requirement that there must be at least 2 mm tread depth at all times.

1.39 Tyres must be correctly inflated to the vehicle / tyre manufacturer's recommended pressure.

1.40 The vehicle must be always equipped with, a spare wheel or other manufacturers standard equipment for the vehicle to deal with a punctured or damaged wheel or tyre (such as a gel or foam repair kit).

1.41 All replacement tyres fitted to licensed vehicles must be new (i.e., not have been used previously on any other vehicle), meet the vehicle manufacturers minimum specification for tyres and must 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.

1.42 'Space saving' spare wheels must only be used in an emergency, and then only in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Should the use of a 'space saving' spare wheel become necessary during a period of hire then the journey may continue, but the wheel must be replaced before another journey carrying passengers commences.

ALTERATION OF VEHICLE

1.43 No material alteration or change in the specification, design, condition, or appearance of the Vehicle can be made without the written approval of the Council at any time while this licence is in force.

1.44 No fixtures or fittings, except those approved in writing by the Council can be attached to the outside of the Vehicle.

1.45 All glazing must always comply with The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 regulation thirty-two with regards to the level of tint. The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and the front side windows must let at least 70% of light through. No darker tint is permitted for any glass. The application of aftermarket tinted film to any window is not permitted.

SEATS AND PASSENGERS

1.46 In all licensed vehicles provided with a passenger side air bag, no child can be carried in a rear-facing carrier in the front passenger seat.

1.47 A notice must be displayed in the vehicle reminding passengers that it is a statutory requirement to wear the seat belts provided.

1.48 Any excess seating fixings which were removed or permanently capped before the vehicles licensed must not be replaced or exposed during the currency of the licence.

ADVERTISING

1.49 Advertising on the outside of the Vehicle is restricted to the name and telephone number of the Proprietor or operator of the Vehicle. Sponsored advertising of other businesses or products or services is not permitted on the outside of the Vehicle, unless written permission is obtained from the Council.

LUGGAGE

1.50 Luggage and storage areas must be kept as free space for passenger's luggage.

1.51 Luggage must be suitably secured in place and must not obstruct any exit, or emergency exit.

1.52 Vehicles with open luggage space such as estate cars must be fitted with a suitable guard between the luggage space and the passenger compartment which must be in use whenever passengers are carried.

1.53 Vehicles with no clear demarcation between the passenger and luggage areas must be fitted with suitable restraining straps or other approved devices to secure the luggage and prevent it coming into contact with any passenger at any time (including in the case of an accident). These restraining straps or devices must be used whenever passengers' luggage is being carried.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER

1.54 A fire extinguisher must be provided to meet BS EN 31996 1Kg and always maintained and be readily available for use. The fire extinguisher must be clearly and permanently marked with the Vehicle registration and Vehicle licence number. This must be securely fixed in the Vehicle and must **not** be located in the passenger compartment, unless the vehicle is a purpose-built Taxi, which has a purpose-built fire extinguisher compartment already in the Vehicle. Clear signage must be displayed to alert passengers to the location of the fire extinguisher.

FIRST AID KIT

1.55 A first aid kit must be always readily available. The first aid kit must stock to the same level and quantity as originally supplied and be must of a suitable and comprehensive type that meets the requirements of British Standard BS8599-2 (medium sized kit) and be permanently and legibly marked with the registration number or licence number of the vehicle.

RADIO EQUIPMENT

1.56 The Proprietor must ensure that any radio equipment fitted to the Vehicle is at all times kept in a safe and sound condition and maintained in proper working order.

TAXIMETER

1.57 The Proprietor must ensure the Vehicle is fitted with a taximeter approved by the Council, and that meter must be always kept in good repair and proper working order.

1.58 The taximeter must be set for the current tariff set by the Council or a continually lower rate and must be sealed to prevent unauthorised adjustment of that meter.

1.59 All taxi meters must be so constructed, or programmed, that it is not possible for any person to manually alter the tariff rate, or otherwise alter or tamper with the meter, without breaking the affixed seals. Each meter must be set, calibrated, and sealed with a tamper-proof seal by a competent meter installer.

1.60 The vehicle licence holder must obtain and retain written certification of such calibration and sealing. This certification must be provided to an authorised office of the Council upon request.

1.61 The taximeter must be fitted with a mechanism which will start the taximeter and make the word "HIRED" to appear on the display, and a means of stopping the taximeter from recording time and distance so that for that period no fare is recorded.

1.62 When the taximeter is recording a fare, that must be displayed clearly, legibly and unambiguously on the meter display which must be sufficiently illuminated to enable it to be easily read in all conditions;

1.63 The word “FARE” must be printed alongside the display.

1.64 The taximeter must be located so that the entire display is plainly visible to any person travelling in the vehicle. The mechanism for activating the meter must be linked to the roof sign to ensure that when the meter is activated the roof sign light is switched off. It must not be possible to illuminate the roof sign by any other means.

1.65 If a fare has not been agreed between the driver (or booking agent) and the customer then the fare charged must be that which is shown on the meter.

1.66 The Proprietor must ensure that a copy of the current fare table supplied by the Council is always displayed inside the Vehicle and that table is not concealed from view or rendered illegible. If the meter is set to a lower rate, an additional fare table detailing the lower rate must also be displayed.

1.67 At all times, vehicles must be fitted with a roof sign that complies with the dimensions and specification detailed in the Hackney Carriage policy, together with any other additional signage that is so specified.

INSURANCE

1.68 At all times during the currency of this licence the Proprietor must maintain a policy of insurance complying with the requirements of Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1988 which covers Hackney carriage use.

1.69 The Proprietor must produce to the Council a new Certificate of Insurance or cover note within 2 working days of the expiry of every Certificate of Insurance or cover note prior to renewal date. These must be original documents; photocopies will not be accepted.

VEHICLE DAMAGE

1.70 The proprietor must, as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any case, within 72 hours, notify the council, in writing on the Councils prescribed form, details of any accident involving the vehicle or, of any damage to the vehicle however caused, which affects the safety, performance or appearance of the vehicle or the comfort or convenience of persons carried therein. The vehicle must not be used until the council have inspected the vehicle.

1.71 A council test may be necessary to demonstrate that the vehicle is roadworthy. The cost of such a test is to be paid by the proprietor. If the council determined that the vehicle is unfit for use as a private hire vehicle, a suspension notice under section 68 will be issued.

ROOF RACKS AND ROOF BOXES

1.72 Where a roof rack is used it must be properly secured to the roof in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements, must not carry a weight of luggage greater than that specified by the roof rack manufacturer and/or vehicle manufacturer, and all luggage must be covered with a waterproof cover.

1.73 Where a roof box is used, it must be properly secured to the roof in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements, must not carry a weight of luggage greater than that specified by the roof rack manufacturer and/or vehicle manufacturer, and must be properly closed and secured.

1.74 When either a roof rack or roof box is fitted, a second roof light must be fitted to the roof of the vehicle to enable the front and rear of the lights to be clearly seen ahead of and behind the roof rack or roof box. (This does not apply to purpose-built vehicles with an integral front facing roof sign). The 2nd sign must be removed when the roof rack or roof box is removed.

DEPOSIT OF LICENCE

1.75 The Proprietor must not allow the Vehicle to be driven by any person who does not hold a current Dual Driver Licence issued by the Council.

1.76 If the Proprietor permits or employs any person to drive the Vehicle, that person must deposit their Dual Driver Licence with the proprietor who must, retain and safely store it until such time as the driver ceases to be permitted to drive the Vehicle, at which point it must be returned to the driver.

DISPLAY OF CONDITIONS

1.77 The Proprietor of this Vehicle must always have a copy of these conditions within the Vehicle for inspection by passengers.

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO ANY OF THE CONDITIONS OF THIS LICENCE MAY RESULT IN ENFORCEMENT ACTION. ANY ENFORCEMENT ACTION TAKEN WILL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S ENFORCEMENT POLICIES.

Appendix Seven: Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions

1.1 In these conditions which are imposed under the provisions of section 48(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, unless otherwise indicated.

“the Council” will mean Wokingham Borough Council

“the Proprietor” means a person who has been granted a licence by Wokingham Borough Council under section 48 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

“the Vehicle” means the vehicle that is specified on the licence granted under section 48 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

1.2 The following conditions will be attached to every private hire vehicle unless specifically altered by the council. Additional conditions that are reasonably necessary will be attached to the vehicle licenses on a case-by-case basis.

GENERAL

1.3 The licensee must notify the Council of the location where the vehicle is kept regularly when not in use (excluding occasional locations that may be used e.g., for servicing and holidays) and any authorised officer must be afforded such facilities as may be reasonably necessary to inspect and test the vehicle there.

1.4 If the vehicle is licensed by any other Council, the Proprietor must, immediately stop carrying out any work under their Wokingham Borough Council licence. They must then, return the licence issued by Wokingham Borough Council to the licensing department of Wokingham Borough Council within five working days.

IDENTIFICATION PLATES AND CARDS

1.5 The identification plate, additional signage and licence cards always remain the property of the Council and must be returned on surrender, suspension, revocation, or expiry of the licence or if the vehicle is sold, or disposed of, out of the licensed trade. If a plate is lost or stolen it must be reported to the police. A crime or lost property number must be obtained, and the Council informed within 24 hours.

1.6 The plate must be securely fixed to the rear exterior of the Vehicle using the Council’s approved backing plate and permanent fixings. Velcro, adhesive, magnets, and brackets are not acceptable. The security of the plate will be checked as part of the scheduled

vehicle test and at any spot checks. The licence plate will be fixed with security toggles under the supervision of an authorised officer of the Council. The Council reserves the right to inspect the plate at any time.

1.7 All Vehicles must display the licence cards, provided by the Council, in the front and rear windscreen always.

1.8 If the Proprietor has a dispensation/exemption certificate in relation to contract work, the Vehicle will still need to display the licence cards on the front and rear windscreens of Vehicle. The licence plate must be always carried in the boot of the vehicle, and the dispensation certificate granted by the Council must be carried in the glove compartment.

MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLE

1.9 The Vehicle along with all its fittings and equipment must always be kept in an efficient, safe, tidy and clean condition and all relevant statutory requirements must be fully complied with. This includes (but is not limited to) the following:

1.10 The interior and exterior of the vehicle must be maintained in a clean, safe, and proper manner, to the reasonable satisfaction of the council.

1.11 Bodywork must be maintained to a good condition, paintwork must be sound, uniform across the vehicle, well maintained and free of corrosion, dents, scratches, chips and other signs of wear or deterioration, inferior re-spray work and 'cover up' temporary repairs.

1.12 The roof (including any sunroof or removable covering) must be watertight.

1.13 Fittings, furniture and additional equipment fitted in the vehicle must be kept in an acceptably clean condition, well maintained and in every way fit for public service. Items such as taximeters, radios, Sat-Nav's, PDA's, mobile phone holders and other ancillary items must be securely mounted in the vehicle in such a position as to not hinder or obstruct the driver's operation of, or view out of, the vehicle, or impede the seating of any passenger.

1.14 The seats must be properly cushioned, covered, and free from cigarette burns, rips, splits, tears, stains or any other signs of excessive deterioration or wear.

1.15 The floor must be covered with carpet, mat, or other suitable material, properly secured and be free from cigarette burns, rips, splits, tears, stains, excessive deterioration and wear.

1.16 The vehicle must be equipped with a suitable bulb-kit indelibly marked with the registration number or licence number of the vehicle to provide for the replacement of defective bulbs.

1.17 The doors, windows and seats must function in accordance with the original manufacturer's specification.

1.18 The proprietor/driver employed to drive the vehicle must undertake a daily safety check of the vehicle. As a minimum this must be a visual check on all lights, oil, water, tyres, mirrors, seat belts and cleanliness. A written record must be made of each safety check, details of faults recorded, and remedial action taken. The record must be signed by the person undertaking the safety checks and kept in the vehicle for a minimum of 30 days and then for a further 6 months by the proprietor.

1.19 If required by a Police Officer or Authorised Officer the driver must produce, to that officer, the recorded daily checks kept in the vehicle and the proprietor, on request by that officer, must produce those recorded checks in his possession and/or those kept in the vehicle.

1.20 If a Vehicle fails a Private Hire Test the Proprietor or driver of that Vehicle must present the Vehicle for another Private Hire Test within 14 days or return the licence plate to the Council. Until a pass certificate is issued the Vehicle cannot be used as a Private Hire Vehicle.

1.21 The Proprietor of the Vehicle must provide a copy of all Private Hire Test certificates to the Council within 7 days of receiving them.

1.22 If the Vehicle has been involved in an accident, then the Proprietor must notify the Council within 2 days and at the discretion of the Council, the Vehicle may have to undergo a further inspection at one of the councils nominated testing stations.

DOORS

1.23 All doors designed by the manufacturer to allow the access or egress of passengers must function correctly and be capable of being opened from the inside and the outside.

1.24 Tailgates and rear doors must only to be used for loading/unloading luggage or as an emergency exit, unless the vehicle has been designed, modified, or adapted to carry wheelchair bound passengers, and has the relevant M1 or M2 Type Approval Certificate, in which case the rear doors may be used for loading those passengers only.

VENTILATION

1.25 The driver's window and all passenger windows must function correctly and be capable of being opened and closed by the driver or passengers.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES (WAV'S)

1.26 The following conditions apply to all private hire vehicles which are built or adapted for the carriage of wheelchair bound passengers.

1.27 All equipment and devices used for or involved in the loading, unloading and secure transportation of wheelchair bound passengers must at all times function correctly and must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

1.28 Access to and egress from the wheelchair carrying position must not be obstructed in any manner, at any time, except by wheelchair loading apparatus.

1.29 All wheelchair internal anchorage points and equipment must be of the manufacturers design and construction and not altered or modified in any way. All such equipment must be secured in such a position as to not obstruct any emergency exit when the equipment is not in use.

1.30 The manufacturers seat belt for the wheelchair bound passenger must always be used when a wheelchair is being carried.

1.31 Access ramps or lifts must be securely fixed to the vehicle prior to and must always display information prescribed by other legislation and manufacturers markings.

1.32 Ramps, steps and lifts must be securely stored in the vehicle before driving off.

1.33 The licensee must ensure that all drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles have received sufficient training to be able to load/unload and convey wheelchair bound passengers in safety and comfort.

SEATBELTS

1.34 Seat belts must be used in accordance with the requirements of the legislation that is applicable at the relevant time.

TYRES

1.35 All tyres on the licensed vehicle and any trailer used on the licensed vehicle must be in good condition and conform with the minimum legal requirements subject to an additional requirement that there must be always at least 2 mm tread depth.

1.36 Tyres must be correctly inflated to the vehicle / tyre manufacturer's recommended pressure.

1.37 The vehicle must be always equipped with, a spare wheel or other manufacturers standard equipment for the vehicle to deal with a punctured or damaged wheel or tyre (such as a gel or foam repair kit).

1.38 All replacement tyres fitted to licensed vehicles must be new (i.e., not have been used previously on any other vehicle), meet the vehicle manufacturers minimum specification for tyres and must 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.

1.39 'Space saving' spare wheels must only be used in an emergency, and then only in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Should the use of a 'space saving' spare wheel become necessary during a period of hire then the journey may continue, but the wheel must be replaced before another journey carrying passengers commences.

ALTERATION OF VEHICLE

1.40 No material alteration or change in the specification, design, condition, or appearance of the Vehicle can be made without the written approval of the Council at any time while the licence is in force.

1.41 No fixtures or fittings, except those approved in writing by the Council, can be attached to the outside of the Vehicle.

1.42 All glazing must always comply with The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 regulation thirty-two with regards to the level of tint. The front windscreen must let at least 75% of light through and the front side windows must let at least 70% of light through. No darker tint is permitted for any glass. The application of aftermarket tinted film to any window is not permitted.

SEATS AND PASSENGERS

1.43 In all licensed vehicles provided with a passenger side air bag, no child can be carried in a rear-facing carrier in the front passenger seat.

1.44 A notice must be displayed in the vehicle reminding passengers that it is a statutory requirement to wear the seat belts provided.

1.45 Any excess seating fixings which were removed or permanently capped before the vehicles licensed must not be replaced or exposed during the currency of the licence.

1.46 Any drinking vessels provided by the Proprietor or driver of the Vehicle must be made of either toughened glass or plastic.

1.47 If any passenger is under the age of 18 years no alcohol in open vessels can be carried in the Vehicle.

1.48 The Proprietor must ensure that there is sufficient means by which any person in the Vehicle may communicate with the driver.

ADVERTISING

1.49 The Proprietor must **not** display or permit to be displayed on or from the Vehicle any sign or notice which consists of or includes the word “Taxi” or “Cab” whether in the singular or plural or “Hire” or any word of similar meaning or appearance to any of those words whether alone or as part of another word.

1.50 Advertising on the outside of the Vehicle is restricted to the name and telephone number of the Proprietor or operator of the Vehicle. Sponsored advertising of other businesses or products or services is not permitted on the outside of the Vehicle, unless written permission is obtained from the Council.

1.51 Luggage and storage areas must be kept as free space for passenger’s luggage.

1.52 Luggage must be suitably secured in place and must not obstruct any exit, or emergency exit.

1.53 Vehicles with open luggage space such as estate cars must be fitted with a suitable guard between the luggage space and the passenger compartment which must be in use whenever passengers are carried.

1.54 Vehicles with no clear demarcation between the passenger and luggage areas must be fitted with suitable restraining straps or other approved devices to secure the luggage and prevent it coming into contact with any passenger at any time (including in the case of an accident). These restraining straps or devices must be used whenever passengers’ luggage is being carried.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER

1.55 A fire extinguisher must be provided to meet BS EN 31996 1Kg and always maintained and be readily available for use. The fire extinguisher must be clearly and permanently marked with the Vehicle registration and Vehicle licence number. This must be securely fixed in the Vehicle and must **not** be in the passenger compartment. Clear signage must be displayed to alert passengers to the location of the fire extinguisher

FIRST AID KIT

1.56 A first aid kit must be always readily available. The first aid kit must stock to the same level and quantity as originally supplied and be must of a suitable and

comprehensive type that meets the requirements of British Standard BS8599-2 (medium sized kit) and be permanently and legibly marked with the registration number or licence number of the vehicle.

RADIO EQUIPMENT

1.57 The Proprietor must ensure that any radio equipment fitted to the Vehicle is at all times kept in a safe and sound condition and maintained in proper working order.

TAXIMETER (IF FITTED)

1.58 If the private hire vehicle is fitted with a taximeter, it must be of a type approved by the Council, and that meter must be kept in good repair and proper working order at all times.

1.59 All taxi meters must be so constructed, or programmed, that it is not possible for any person to manually alter the tariff rate, or otherwise alter or tamper with the meter, without breaking the affixed seals. Each meter must be set, calibrated, and sealed with a tamper-proof seal by a competent meter installer. The vehicle licence holder must obtain and retain written certification of such calibration and sealing. This certification must be provided to an authorised office of the Council upon request.

1.60 The taximeter must be fitted with a mechanism which will start the taximeter and make the word "HIRED" to appear on the display, and a means of stopping the taximeter from recording time and distance so that for that period no fare is recorded.

1.61 When the taximeter is recording a fare, that must be displayed clearly, legibly and unambiguously on the meter display which must be sufficiently illuminated to enable it to be easily read in all conditions;

1.62 The word "FARE" must be printed alongside the display.

1.63 The taximeter must be located so that the entire display is plainly visible to any person travelling in the vehicle.

1.64 If a fare has not been agreed between the operator and the customer, then the fare charged must be that which is shown on the meter.

1.65 The Proprietor must ensure that a notice detailing the fares charged by the operator is always displayed inside the Vehicle and that table is not concealed from view or rendered illegible. It must also contain a statement that the council has no control over private hire fares.

VEHICLE INSURANCE

1.66 At all times during the currency of the licence, the Proprietor must maintain a Policy of Insurance complying with the requirements of Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1988 which covers private hire use.

1.67 The Proprietor must produce to the Council a new Certificate of Insurance or cover note within 2 working days of the expiry of every Certificate of Insurance or cover note prior to renewal date. These must be original documents photocopies will not be accepted.

VEHICLE DAMAGE

1.68 The proprietor must, as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any case, within 72 hours, notify the council, in writing on the Councils prescribed form, details of any accident involving the vehicle or, of any damage to the vehicle however caused, which affects the safety, performance or appearance of the vehicle or the comfort or convenience of persons carried therein. The vehicle must not be used until the council have inspected the vehicle.

1.69 A council test may be necessary to demonstrate that the vehicle is roadworthy. The cost of such a test is to be paid by the proprietor. If the council determined that the vehicle is unfit for use as a private hire vehicle, a suspension notice under section 68 will be issued.

ROOF RACKS AND ROOF BOXES

1.70 Where a roof rack is used it must be properly secured to the roof in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements, must not carry a weight of luggage greater than that specified by the roof rack manufacturer and/or vehicle manufacturer, and all luggage must be covered with a waterproof cover.

1.71 Where a roof box is used, it must be properly secured to the roof in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements, must not carry a weight of luggage greater than that specified by the roof rack manufacturer and/or vehicle manufacturer, and must be properly closed and secured.

DEPOSIT OF LICENCE

1.72 The Proprietor must not allow the Vehicle to be driven by any person who does not hold a current Private Hire/Dual Driver Licence issued by the Council.

1.73 If the Proprietor permits or employs any person to drive the Vehicle, he must inspect and make a copy of that person's Dual Driver Licence or Private Hire Licence and retain and safely store that copy, until such time as the driver ceases to be permitted to drive the Vehicle, at which point it must be returned to the driver.

DISPLAY OF CONDITIONS

1.74 The Proprietor must, have a copy of these conditions within the Vehicle, for inspection by passengers, at all times.

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO ANY OF THE CONDITIONS OF THIS LICENCE MAY RESULT IN ENFORCEMENT ACTION. ANY ENFORCEMENT ACTION TAKEN WILL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S ENFORCEMENT POLICIES.

Appendix Eight: Private Hire Operator Licence Conditions

1.0 In these conditions which are imposed under the provisions of section 55(3) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, unless otherwise indicated.

“the Council” will mean Wokingham Borough Council

“the Operator” shall mean the holder of a licence issued by Wokingham Borough Council under section 55 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

GENERAL

1.1 The operator (unless a single person operator/driver/proprietor) must identify a person as the individual with day-to-day managerial responsibility (referred to in these conditions as “the manager”) and notify the council of their identity and contact details, including a mobile telephone number. That person will be the first point of contact between the council and the operator. The operator must identify another person as a deputy for holiday and sickness cover and the identity of the deputy, together with their contact details including a mobile telephone number must also be provided to the council. All references to the manager include references to the deputy when they are acting in that capacity.

DBS CHECKS

1.2 The Operator (where the operator is a partnership or limited company, all partners or directors and secretary of the company) must submit a Disclosure & Barring Service basic disclosure (dated within one month of the application) on or before the anniversary of the granting of the operator’s licence. Failure to do so will result in the licence being suspended until such time as the DBS certificate is provided.

1.3 The cost of these checks will be covered by the applicant/licence holder.

1.4 Where the operator holds a dual driver licence or private hire driver licence, they are not required to submit a yearly basic disclosure, but the requirement will continue to apply to any partners or directors of a company who do not hold a drivers licence.

1.5 The operator must view a basic DBS certificate (dated within one month of the check) of any staff that have access to booking records or dispatch vehicles.

1.6 The operator must maintain a register of all such staff which shall include a record of when each DBS check has been undertaken. This register must be available for inspection by an authorised officer of the Licensing Authority upon request. The register should include the following:

- the date that person's employment in that role commenced
- the date the operator checked the DBS certificate
- the name of the person that checked the DBS certificate
- the date the person ceased to perform that role

1.7 The register must be retained for 6 months in line with the booking records.

1.8 Should an employee cease to be on the register and later re-enter the register a new basic DBS certificate (or use of the Update Service) should be viewed by the operator.

1.9 Where the applicant/operator employs or intends to employ persons involved in taking bookings or the dispatch of vehicles, the operator must produce and apply a policy on the employment of ex-offenders in those roles. This policy should be based on the council's previous convictions policy. The policy must be available for inspection on request of an authorised officer of the Licensing Authority. Failure to act in accordance with this requirement, and any subsequent engagement of a person who falls outside the

council's previous convictions policy standards will lead to consideration by the council as to whether the operator remains a fit and proper person.

1.10 The Operator must require that all staff employed in taking bookings or dispatching vehicles to report to them within 48 hours of any conviction, binding over, caution, warning, reprimand, fixed penalty notice, civil injunction, or arrest for any criminal matter whilst they are employed in this role.

1.11 The operator must make certain that any outsourced booking and dispatch functions have adequate safeguarding measures in place for the protection of children and vulnerable adults. The operator must have required evidence of this from the company before outsourcing these functions.

VEHICLE AND DRIVER LICENSES

1.12 The operator must inspect and retain all the private hire vehicle licenses and Dual Driver Licence or Private Hire Licenses of vehicles and drivers operated, engaged or otherwise utilised by the operator. Those licenses must be stored securely and retained for as long as the vehicle or driver is operated by that operator. At the end of that. They must be returned to the vehicle proprietor or driver as appropriate.

RECORDS

1.13 The records required to be kept by the Operator under Section 56(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 must be recorded in English and kept in a suitable book or in any other manner as approved by the Council.

1.14 The Operator must ensure that, the following details of every private hire booking invited or accepted by him are recorded before the commencement of each journey:

- the name of the passenger or other identifying features e.g., hotel room number.
- the time of the request;
- the time the vehicle is required

- the pick-up point;
- the destination (if known at that time);
- the name of the driver;
- the driver's licence number;
- the vehicle registration number of the vehicle;
- the vehicle licence number
- the name of any individual that responded to the booking request;
- the name of any individual that dispatched the vehicle.
- if the vehicle being used is covered by a dispensation, the details of, or a reference to, the contract under which the work is undertaken.

1.15 The Operator must keep these records for a period of not less than sixcalendar months from the date of the entry.

1.16 The Operator must also keep records of all vehicles operated by him. These details shall include:

- details of the proprietor(s)/licensee
- registration number
- any radio call sign used.
- maintenance history of the vehicle.

1.17 The Operator must keep these records for a period of not less than sixcalendar months from the date the vehicle ceases to be operated by that operator.

1.18 The Operator must keep up to date records of the names and addresses of all licensed drivers who are used by the Operator. The Operator must provide the Council with a list of the following at the end of each calendar month, to arrive within 7 working days the date any driver began working for, or being available to be operated by the operator:

- when any driver's activity above detailed ceased

- any change of address of any driver in service
- when they became aware that any driver was suffering from any illness, disability or condition which may have affected the driver's ability to safely carry out their duties.

1.19 If at any time the operator does become aware of any reason which would or may prevent a driver from safely carrying out their duties (including but not limited to illness or disability) they must immediately cease using that driver until such time as the driver can demonstrate that they can drive a private hire vehicle without risk to the public.

1.20 The Operator must keep these records for a period of not less than six calendar months from the date the driver ceases to be engaged or otherwise used to drive private hire vehicles by that operator.

1.21 All records and retained licenses must be available for inspection at any reasonable time by an authorised officer of the council or a police constable.

STANDARDS OF SERVICE

1.22 The Operator must provide a prompt, efficient and reliable service to members of the public at all reasonable times.

1.23 The operator must (but this is not an exhaustive list):

1.24 Ensure that all Private Hire vehicles that have been booked, attend at the appointed time and place unless delayed or prevented by reasonable cause.

1.25 Ensure the vehicle dispatched is a Wokingham Borough Council licensed private hire vehicle and the driver of the vehicle is a Wokingham Borough Council licensed private hire driver.

1.26 Keep any premises which are under the control of the Operator, and which are open to the public clean, adequately heated, ventilated and lit,

1.27 Ensure that the hirer is advised that if any passenger is under the age of 18 years, no alcohol in open vessels will be allowed in the vehicle.

1.28 Ensure that any telephone facilities and radio equipment provided are maintained in a sound condition and that any defects are repaired promptly.

1.29 Ensure that the correct licenses are in place for any radio equipment.

1.30 Ensure that it is established at the time of booking how many passengers are to be carried and that the vehicle dispatched to fulfil the booking has an adequate number of passenger seats.

RIDE SHARING/CAR-POOLING

1.31 At the time of booking, individual hirers must be made aware of and explicitly consent to bookings that are part of a ride sharing/carpooling journey.

1.32 As part of ride sharing/car-pooling schemes, operators must offer the option to hirers to only share with other passengers of the same sex. If hirers select this option passengers of the opposite sex may not be added to the same booking.

PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES

1.33 Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) may not be used to undertake a private hire vehicle booking, unless with the informed consent of the hirer.

COMPLAINTS

1.34 The Operator or manager must initiate an investigation into any complaint received from the public within 48 hours from receipt of the complaint.

1.35 The operator must maintain a register of complaints (digital or hard copy), which must include the following information:

- Complainant's name, address/email address
- Details of the complaint
- Time and date of the alleged incident
- Time and date the complaint was received by the operator
- How the complaint was received e.g., phone, email etc.
- Name of person that received the complaint.
- Name of the alleged perpetrator
- If the complaint was referred to the Licensing Authority – time and date of when it was referred and by whom.
- Details of the action taken to resolve the complaint and by whom
- Date the complaint was resolved

1.36 A copy of the complaints register must be available for inspection upon request of an authorised officer of the Licensing Authority. The records must be retained for a period of 6 months.

1.37 The operator must on receipt of a complaint concerning a licensed driver, immediately notify the complainant of their right to direct their complaint to the Licensing Authority.

1.38 The Operator must ensure that details of how a customer may contact the operator in the event of any complaint relating to a booking or other contract are displayed on the operator's website, booking app or in the absence of online booking platform, at the booking office.

1.39 Where a complaint is received by the Licensing Authority, the operator must comply with any reasonable request for information and/or follow any reasonable directions/instructions made by an authorised officer or police officer in respect of the complaint

1.40 The Operator must notify the Licensing Authority within 48 hours if the operator receives a complaint about a driver operated by them when it has been identified that the complaint relates to any of the following:

- allegations of sexual misconduct (including the use of sexualised language)
- racist behaviour
- violence (including verbal aggression)
- dishonesty including theft
- Equality breaches
- any other serious misconduct (including motoring related for example dangerous driving or drink driving).

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

1.41 The Operator must notify the Council in writing of any change of his address (including any address or addresses from which he operates or otherwise conducts his business as an Operator) within 7 days of such change taking place.

CONVICTIONS

1.42 The Operator must notify the Council in writing of any conviction, caution, fixed penalty notice, injunction, restraining order or other matter which might affect his continuing fitness and propriety imposed on him, or any criminal charge against him within 7 days. The same requirement applies to any partners in the case of a partnership holding an operator's licence and to any directors and secretary of any limited company in the case of a limited company holding an operator's licence.

ADVERTISING

1.43 The Operator must not display or permit to be displayed on or from his premises or from any other place, any sign or notice which consists of or includes the word “Taxi” or “CAB” whether in the singular or plural or any word of a similar meaning except where the Operator also takes bookings for Hackney Carriages.

INSURANCE

1.44 Any premises that are under the control of the operator and are open to the public must be covered by Public Liability Insurance,

1.45 This insurance policy (or a summary) must be clearly displayed at the premises where it can be seen by the public.

1.46 Operators must ensure that at all times there is in force, for all private hire vehicles operated, a policy of insurance covering private hire use or such security as complies with the requirements of Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

1.47 Operators must ensure that where a vehicle is covered under a fleet insurance policy, drivers are aware of the content of the policy, including its limitations and exclusions. The operator must keep a record, signed by the driver, within each individual’s record file when this has been completed. A copy of any individual’s records must be produced, on request, to any authorised officer of the Licensing Authority.

PERSONAL DATA

1.48 The loss of personal data by theft or otherwise (including any hacking of the operators’ computer systems) must be reported to the council in writing within 24 hours, and also immediately to the police in the event of theft being suspected. The operator must also check whether any a data loss needs to be reported to the Information Commissioner’s Office, for more information see: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/report-a-breach/>

WORKING HOURS

1.49 The operator must take steps to ensure that drivers do not work excessively long hours. Drivers should not be permitted to drive for more than 10 hours per day and must have a break lasting at least 30 minutes after driving for 5½ hours. The driver must also have a break at the end of this period, unless it is the end of the working day.

DISPLAY OF CONDITIONS

1.50 The Operator must display a copy of these conditions in any premises which are under his control and open to the public. A copy of the conditions attached to vehicle and driver licenses must be available for inspection on request by a member of the public.

SUBCONTRACTING

1.51 If the operator subcontracts any booking to another operator licensed in England (including Greater London) Wales or Scotland, the operator who initially accepted the booking remains liable under the contract.

1.52 If any booking is subcontracted to another operator, then the operator who initially accepted the booking must inform the hirer of the subcontract before the hiring commences .

INFORMATIVE

1.53 The Operator must understand that a booking that has been accepted by whatever means, is a contract and failure to uphold that (whether by non-attendance by the vehicle, late attendance, or any other shortfall in performance) may lead to a claim for breach of contract. The accurate recording of booking details is a means of protecting the operator if such circumstances arise.

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO ANY OF THE CONDITIONS OF THIS LICENCE MAY RESULT IN ENFORCEMENT ACTION. ANY ENFORCEMENT ACTION TAKEN WILL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S ENFORCEMENT POLICIES.

Contact Information

All officers can be contacted through Licensing@wokingham.gov.uk or 0118 974 6000

ADDRESS

Enforcement & Safety Service

Wokingham Borough Council

Shute End

Wokingham

RG40 1BN

Web: Wokingham.gov.uk

26 September 2022



Mr Keiran C. P. Hincliffe

APCIP DipHE MIoL MCIEH

Service Manager – Licensing and Processing



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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