



WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Vehicle Licensing Policy 2019 – 2024

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Terminology

Definitions

Appeal	A review of our decision. Appeal is to the Magistrates' Court or the Crown Court. The Courts may uphold our decision (agree with the Local Authority), or overturn it (agree with you).
Borough	The area covered by Watford Borough Council
DfT	Department for Transport
Driver	A person licensed by a local licensing authority to drive a licensed vehicle.
DVLA	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
EWVTA	European Whole Vehicle Type Approval
Guidance	The guidance issued by the Department for Transport on 2 March 2010: Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance
Hackney Carriage	A vehicle that can carry passengers for hire or reward. The vehicle can be hailed by its passenger from the street; can park on a rank while waiting for its passenger; is available for immediate hire. Also known as a taxi .
Internal Combustion Engine (ICE)	A traditionally powered car engine running on petrol or diesel or another combustible fuel
IVA	Individual Vehicle Approval (may be Statutory or Voluntary)
MOT	Ministry of Transport – annual motor vehicle inspection
NSSTA	National Small Scale Type Approval
Private Hire Operator	Person or entity which makes provision for the offer and acceptance of private hire services. Also known as a minicab office or firm.

Private Hire Vehicle	A vehicle that can carry passengers by prior arrangement only through a licensed private hire operator. This type of vehicle cannot stand on a rank, or give the impression that it is available for immediate hire. Also known as a minicab . Abbreviated to PHV .
Proprietor	The person(s), partnership or company named on, and who are in possession of a licensed vehicle.
Refuse/Refusal	A decision not to grant the licence.
Revoke	To take away a licence permanently.
Suspend	To take away a licence temporarily.
The Council	Watford Borough Council

Where a condition states the licence holder ‘must’ do something then if this condition is not met a licence will not be granted.

Where a condition states the licence holder ‘may’ do something, then it is down to the licence holder to choose whether to comply. If a licence holder chooses to comply then any associated conditions are compulsory and the licence holder must comply with them.

*For example, a licence holder **may** install CCTV. If a licence holder chooses to install CCTV then they **must** comply with the conditions concerning data protection, signage, audio recording etc.*

1 Introduction

1.1 Power to Create Policy

There is no statutory requirement for a local authority to create or adopt a vehicle licensing policy. James Button, in *Button on Taxis*, says,

“As with all other areas of it’s activity, the local authority is entitled to adopt policies in relation to hackney carriage and private hire licensing. Policies are an integral part of the decision making process, informing and guiding the decision makers, and providing a valuable aid to decision making.”

This Vehicle Licensing Policy is written to ensure consistent and proportionate decisions are made in determining the fitness of a vehicle to be licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle.

The information contained within this policy assists in determining conditions to be attached to vehicle licences pursuant to sections 47 and 48 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, as amended, which grants Watford Borough Council (“the Council”) the power to apply conditions to hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences.

1.2 Policy Objectives

This policy provides guidance to businesses operating or looking to operate hackney carriage (taxi) or private hire (minicab) services in Watford.

The policy lists a range of requirements that must be met before a licence will be granted for a taxi or minicab.

The policy provides confirmation for passengers, residents, visitors and other road users of the standards that are expected and can be found by those offering taxi and minicab services in Watford

The policy allows for consistency in decision making by officers of the council.

The policy provides consistency for those operating taxi or minicab businesses.

In creating this policy the council has had regard to a number of reports and publications including, but not limited to:

the guidance issued by the Department for Transport on 2 March 2010: Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance ('The Guidance');

the Department for Transport consultation on statutory guidance which took place in April 2019;

the Department for Transport Inclusive Transport Strategy 2018;

the report of the Taxi Task and Finish Group, published September 2018 - Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing: recommendations for a safer and more robust system and;

the report (2016) of the House of Lords Select Committee on the Equality Act 2010 and Disability. The Equality Act 2010: the impact on disabled people

The report of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2017 - Being Disabled in Britain: A Journey Less Equal

The Air Quality (Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles Database) (England and Wales) Regulations 2019: Statutory guidance

The council has conducted detailed research and consulted with a number of bodies, stakeholders and the public. All views have been considered and a proportionate outcome reached.

The policy is intended to:

- a. improve the safety of taxi and private hire provisions
- b. improve the safety of drivers, proprietors and operators
- c. ensure access to transport provision for all residents, particularly those who cannot access services using new technology
- d. support the council's aims in improving air quality and reducing environmental impact
- e. support the council's aims of becoming carbon neutral by 2030
- f. assist in reducing traffic congestion
- g. support the growth and sustainability of local business
- h. provide and maintain a professional and respected hackney carriage and private hire trade by continued monitoring and improvement of standards of service.

Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles have a specific role to play in an integrated transport system. They are able to provide safe, secure and comfortable transport. They provide a unique on-request door to door service in various circumstances, including where public transport may not be available or for those with mobility difficulties.

The aim of the licensing process, in this context, is to regulate the hackney carriage and private hire trade in order to promote the objectives. It is the Council's wish to facilitate professional and responsible businesses, which display sensitivity to the wishes and needs of the general public, whilst maintaining the current high standard of service provision.

When considering this Policy, the Council have tried to ensure that each requirement is properly justified by the risk it seeks to address, balancing the cost of the requirement against the benefit to the public.

1.3 Policy Duration

This Policy will take effect from **TBC** and will be kept under review and amended as and when necessary to reflect changes in legislation, case law, statutory guidance and best practice.

Administrative amendments to this Policy (required by virtue of legislative changes, revised statutory guidance, a Council restructure or administrative procedural changes) may be made by the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services, the Head of Community Protection or the Business Team Manager. Amendments under this section are restricted to those required to accurately reflect the current legal or administrative position rather than amendments that change the focus of local policy.

The Policy will be reviewed within five years of commencement.

In the event of any significant amendment to the Policy, a full public consultation will be undertaken prior to consideration by the Licensing Committee.

For the purpose of this section, a significant amendment is defined as one that:

- (i) will have significant financial impact on applicants, licence holders or the public,
- (ii) will have a significant procedural impact on applicants, licence holders or the public, or

- (iii) may not be perceived by the trade or the public to be consistent with the policy objectives set out in section 1.2 above.

1.4 Departure from the Policy

In exercising its discretion in carrying out its regulatory functions, the Council will have regard to this policy document and the objectives set out within.

All policies are the starting point for decisions and this policy. The policy should carry significant weight when applied to any decision. However, all decisions are taken on the merit of the individual case and where an applicant wishes to apply for a licence outside of the requirements contained within this policy, full and unfettered consideration will be given to that application. Certain unique situations are referred to within this policy but it is not possible to cover all eventualities. However, applicants should be aware that departures from policy will usually be restricted to exceptional circumstances and not used to circumvent the reasonable requirements of the Policy. Furthermore, any applicant who remains aggrieved at a decision of the licensing authority and who wishes to challenge that decision can do so by application to the Court (see section 9).

Substantial Departure from Policy

Where it is necessary for the Council to depart substantially from this Policy, clear and compelling reasons for doing so must be given. The Group Head of Community and Environmental Services or the Head of Community Protection may authorise a departure from the Policy in accordance with this section if they consider it necessary in the specific circumstances.

Minor departure from Policy

Where an applicant is able to demonstrate that a minor departure from this Policy, based on the individual circumstances of that application, would still ensure that the policy objectives are achieved, the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services, the Head of Community Protection or the Business Team Manager may authorise a licence to be issued.

2 Specifications and Conditions

Licensing authorities have a wide range of discretion over the types of vehicle that they can licence as hackney carriages or private hire vehicles. The Department for

Transport guidance suggests that local licensing authorities should adopt the principle of specifying as many different types of vehicle as possible.

The Council has the power under sections 47 and 48 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to impose such conditions, as it considers reasonably necessary, in relation to the grant of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licence. Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles provide a necessary service to the public and it is appropriate to set standards for the external and internal condition of the vehicle, provided that the standards are reasonable and proportionate.

This Policy sets out the Council's minimum standards of vehicle specification, which apply in respect of all licensed vehicle applications. This specification will need to be met prior to licensing and maintained throughout the duration of the licence. This will be achieved by attaching licence conditions to all hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences at the time of grant.

Except where explicitly highlighted in the sections of the policy, sections apply equally to both hackney carriage and private hire vehicles. Where sections differ this is stated in the policy and will be reflected in the specific conditions attached to each type of licence.

3 Accessibility

In 2014 Watford Borough Council commissioned a report into accessibility in the taxi and private hire trade in Watford. This report led to a series of recommendations and improvements and, following a decision of the licensing committee in 2017, the beginning of the ongoing Accessible Transport Project. This vehicle licensing policy is directly linked to the continuing objectives of the Accessible Transport Project.

Watford Borough Council is committed to championing equality and embracing diversity across the full range of our services, whether we deliver the service ourselves or through partnership, and in our role as an employer.

The following two statements are taken from the Equality and Human Rights Commission report of 2017,

“Access to transport is an important part of independent living and participation in family and community.”

“Poor access to transport, leisure and other services can affect the community and social life of disabled people, creating a barrier to independence and their enjoyment of day-to-day activities.”

Elliot Dunster, Group Head of Policy, Research and Public Affairs at the charity Scope, in submissions to the House of Lords Select Committee, said,

“Taxis and private hire vehicles are not just issues for people with physical disabilities; people with mental health problems or learning disabilities or autism are much more likely to use taxis or private hire vehicles if they cannot use public transport for a variety of reasons.”

In his foreword to the Department for Transport’s Inclusive Transport Strategy, the Chair of the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee, Keith Richards said,

“DPTAC’s vision is that disabled people should have the same access to transport as everybody else, to be able to go where everyone else goes and to do so easily, confidently and without extra cost.”

Lastly, the recent Task and Finish Group headed by Professor Mohammed Abdul-Haq, published in Sept 2018 said of accessibility and any proposed standards,

“Evidence received by the Group highlighted that consideration of accessibility needs is essential in any reform of the sector. If the Government enacts national standards, accessibility considerations should be an integral part of their development, not a mere add-on. In the short term, it is important that licensing authorities use the powers they already have to improve access and passenger experience.”

The Guidance suggests that different accessibility considerations should apply between hackney carriages and private hire vehicles because hackney carriages can be hired in the street or at a rank, by the customer dealing directly with a driver, whereas private hire vehicles can only be booked through an operator. Given the above statements from leading authorities on accessibility, the Council considers accessibility to be a leading consideration for both vehicle types and it is recognised that there is no one specific type of vehicle which provides full accessibility for all.

The Council considers it particularly important that a disabled person should be able to hire a suitable accessible vehicle with the minimum delay or inconvenience whether on the rank or by pre-booking through an operator. Having an acceptable proportion of accessible hackney carriages and private hire vehicles available helps ensure that this is possible; therefore the Council will actively encourage the licensing of sufficient accessible vehicles and have regard to the requirements of the

Equality Act 2010, particularly the council's duty under section 149, Equality Act 2010, and any subsequent equalities legislation.

Section 167 of the Equality Act 2010 allows the Council to designate accessible vehicles as subject to the requirements of the Act making it a criminal offence to refuse a passenger with a wheelchair or charge an additional fare. In support of the Council's desire to provide accessible transport for those with disabilities, all wheelchair accessible hackney carriages and private hire vehicles will be designated for this purpose. Please find this information online at www.watford.gov.uk/wav

Drivers who, for medical reasons, are unable to accept wheelchair passengers or assistance dogs are able to apply to the Council for an exemption certificate. Such a certificate is only issued on production of appropriate medical evidence. Exemption certificates, which show the photograph of the driver, must be displayed in the vehicle at all times whilst licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle. In the absence of a medical exemption certificate from the Council, it would be a criminal offence for any hackney carriage or private hire driver to refuse to carry an assistance dog or a passenger with a wheelchair, to refuse to allow the assistance dog to remain with the passenger throughout the journey, or to make any additional charge for the carriage of the assistance dog or wheelchair user.

4 Environmental Considerations

On 9 July 2019 at a meeting of the full Council, elected members of Watford Borough Council declared a climate emergency and committed to doing all they could to ensure Watford is carbon neutral by 2030.

Councillor Ian Stotsebury, elected member for Callowland Ward and member of the Hertfordshire Sustainability Forum, commented,

"Climate change is a universal threat, and a threat of our own making. We must continue to be bold and truly lead on this crucial issue. By doing so we can help our residents reduce their bills, help clean our air, and improve access healthier modes of transport."

"We can support local ecology, biodiversity and bring natural beauty to new areas. I'm really proud that we have been able to declare a climate emergency. It's important we act now, before it is too late."

In June 2019 the UK government became the first government of a major nation to pass legislation (by amendment of previous law) committing to a 'net-zero' carbon output by 2050.

A November 2018 report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stated that, in order to keep global warming to 1.5 degrees, emissions of harmful gases would have to be cut by around 45% by 2030, aiming for net-zero by 2050.

Guidance issued in relation to the Air Quality (Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles Database) (England and Wales) Regulations 2019 lists minimum emission levels for petrol and diesel cars accessing designated Clean Air Zones.

The Council have also given careful consideration to the recommendation in the Department for Transport guidance of 2010 that, in the interests of the environment, tougher emissions standards should be introduced for all licensed vehicles and, in-line with council policy, considers its responsibility in protecting the environment to be a predominate factor within licensing policy.

It is clear that emissions from vehicles contribute a significant volume of gases that are harmful to the environment and to health. Air quality complaints in Watford are increasingly linked to locations where taxis and private hire vehicles wait, often with engines running.

The single biggest factor in controlling this is to strictly control factors determining the licencing of vehicles. It is also true that emissions could be further reduced through education and raised awareness of environmental issues. Simple measures such as better and more frequent vehicle maintenance and servicing; or switching off engines when stationary or idling, particularly at hackney carriage ranks, can make a significant environmental impact considering the number of licensed vehicles.

The Council strongly encourages the use of cleaner, low emission vehicles as hackney carriages or private hire vehicles and will continue to offer a reduced licence fee for electric vehicles.

5 Limitation of Numbers

Hackney Carriage Licences

On 19 March 2012 the Council set a maximum limit of 304 hackney carriage vehicle licences. This limit is a descending limit. When a licence is surrendered or revoked,

the limit shall decrease by the number of licences which were surrendered or revoked.

Any exception to this strict policy is considered on a case-by-case basis by the Group Head of Environmental Services in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee.

This decision to limit numbers was taken following an unmet demand survey found that there was no significant unmet demand.

The council are confident there remains no unmet demand. Since 2012 the number of licensed hackney carriage has decreased and now stands at 278.

However, the council are mindful that no further survey has taken place and that to impose a limit is contrary to best practice.

Therefore, in view of the desire:

- not to restrict applications against best practice, but
- not to significantly increase the number of licences where there is no unmet demand,
- to support the council in achieving its goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, and
- to improve the provision of wheelchair accessible vehicles

in addition to an exemption agreed on a case-by-case basis by the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee (current policy), the council will consider applications for new hackney carriage licences where the vehicle is:

- A wheelchair accessible vehicle, and;
- Zero emission capable, and;
- Displays the approved Watford Borough Council livery

Private Hire Vehicles

No powers exist for licensing authorities to limit the number of private hire vehicles that can be licenced.

6 General duties of Proprietors

6.1 Applications

Applications must be made in accordance with the Policy.

Applicants are required to make a booking online and details of this process and the testing procedure can be found online at:

www.watford.gov.uk/vehicle

Applicants for a vehicle licence must be at least 18 years old.

6.2 Renewals

All vehicle licences are granted for a maximum of 1 year or until the expiry of the current MOT if less than 1 year until expiry.

An application for renewal of a vehicle licence must be received before the expiry of the current licence. If a renewal application is received after the expiry of the current licence then that application shall be treated as a new application.

If an application for a hackney carriage licence renewal is received after the expiry of the current licence then that licence will have expired and no new licence can be granted under the limit imposed except under conditions listed in section 5 of this policy.

A delay in renewal following expiry is only acceptable in the following circumstances;

- a. Unavoidable due to accident at the time of renewal leading to a requirement to purchase a new car.
- b. A delay caused by the licence holder not being in the UK at the time of renewal but only where the licence holder has notified the licensing team in writing in advance of the current expiry date.
- c. Any other similar reason for delay where the licensing team has been notified in writing in advance of the current expiry date.

6.3 Fees

The fees for applications are set by the Licensing Committee annually and are published separate to this policy.

Fees will apply in all cases unless otherwise determined.

Refunds will not be given where a plate is surrendered part-way through the licence period.

6.4 Details of driver to be held

Where the proprietor of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle rents, lends, leases or otherwise provides the vehicle to another licensed driver, whether for payment or not, they shall take and keep details of the driver's council licence number.

6.5 Change of Address

Proprietors are required to notify the licensing authority of any change to the registered address where the vehicle is kept as soon as reasonable practical and in any case no later than 28 days from the change.

7 Maintenance of Standards

Vehicle licence conditions are intended to ensure that all vehicles reach a minimum safe standard. All vehicles are presented to the Council for licensing and all vehicles whilst licensed must comply with the Council's current Vehicle Licensing Policy.

Vehicles, once licensed, must be maintained in a mechanically safe and roadworthy condition, compliant with Council requirements, be kept clean and well presented. Failure to maintain a vehicle to an acceptable standard is a relevant matter when considering whether to grant, suspend, refuse or take any other action in respect of a driver, vehicle or operator licence.

When renewing a hackney carriage or private hire driver, operator or vehicle licence, the Council will take in to account a licence holders history of compliance with this policy.

8 Inspections and Enforcement

Under section 50 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 the council has the power to inspect vehicles.

In accordance with the Environmental Health Compliance Policy 2016 – 2021 a proportionate response will be taken in instances of breaches of licence condition.

Where a licence condition is breached this will usually result in suspension of the vehicle licence until such time as the vehicle is inspected by an officer of the council and found to be safe to use.

Where sustained or multiple breaches occur, this may lead to prosecution of the licence holder or revocation of the licence.

9 Appeals

Where an applicant is aggrieved by a decision of the licensing authority to refuse, revoke or suspend a vehicle licence they have the right of appeal to the Court in accordance with sections 300-302 Public Health Act 1936 and section 77 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

Where the decision to refuse, revoke or suspend a licence is made the applicant or licence holder will be sent a notice explaining the reasons for the decision. This notice will include details of the rights of appeal.

10. Hackney Carriage Vehicle Intended Use Policy

Hackney Carriages licences were initially created in order to provide for public transport convenience within local areas.

In keeping with this intended use Watford Borough Council has a policy to determine whether or not the grant of a licence would unfairly impact upon another potential applicant if that vehicle is not actually going to be used predominantly within the borough area.

This is particularly important in Watford where a cap is maintained on the number of licences that can be issued.

Applicants for a new hackney carriage vehicle licence will be expected to demonstrate a bona fide intention to ply for a hire within the administrative area of Watford Borough Council under the terms of the vehicle licence for which the application is being made.

There will be a presumption that applicants who do not intend, to a material extent, to ply for hire within the administrative area of Watford Borough Council will not be granted a hackney carriage licence authorising them to do so.

11. Dual Licensing

Dual licensing or 'plating' of a vehicle presents a number of practical issues.

The first arises in that once licensed as a hackney carriage, a vehicle is always a hackney carriage and therefore cannot also be licensed as a private hire vehicle.

The second concern arises in that licence conditions can differ significantly from one authority area to another. It is therefore very difficult to ensure that all conditions are being met as some may be contradictory, for example a requirement to display a local telephone number.

For these reasons any vehicle already licensed with another Licensing Authority as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle will not be licensed.

Licences granted to vehicles later found to be licensed with another Licensing Authority will be revoked.

12. Hackney Carriage and Private Vehicle Specification

12.1 Vehicle Type Approval

Vehicle Type Approval is the confirmation that all production samples of a particular vehicle design will meet specified performance standards.

The council will only consider licensing vehicles which have type approval in the category M1. This type approval must be shown on the V5 registration document.

It is acceptable for converted, low volume or imported vehicles to be type approved under any of the following schemes:

European Whole Vehicle Type Approval (EWVTA)

National Small Scale Type Approval (NSSTA)

Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA)

Vehicles tested under the IVA 'basic' scheme will not be licensed.

A vehicle tested under the statutory IVA 'Normal' inspection criteria will usually be accepted but the applicant will be required to provide any additional information concerning the testing of the vehicle as reasonably required by the licensing officer.

Applicants seeking to licence a vehicle approved under IVA are advised to contact the licensing authority before purchasing the vehicle.

Applicants submitting a vehicle for licensing that they have imported, including one approved under EWVTA, must have the vehicle tested as 'Normal' under the statutory IVA scheme.

12.2 Vehicle Design and Size

Hackney carriages must be either:

a purpose-built wheelchair accessible hackney carriage, or a professionally converted vehicle which is capable of carrying a passenger whilst sitting in a wheelchair (providing such vehicle has the appropriate approval certificate per section 12.1); or

a saloon, hatchback, estate or multi-purpose people carrier with at least 4 doors and sufficient luggage space to carry a folded wheelchair.

A **Private Hire Vehicle** must be:

a saloon, hatchback, estate or multi-purpose people carrier with at least 4 doors and sufficient luggage space to carry a folded wheelchair,

a purpose built wheelchair accessible vehicle (providing such vehicle has the appropriate approval certificate per section 12.1) but not one that looks like a taxi (i.e. with in-built roof light).

There must be reasonable space between the seat cushions and the lowest part of the roof to safely accommodate the driver and passengers in reasonable comfort.

Knee Space: there must be reasonable space between the front, back (and rear-most) seats to safely accommodate the driver and passengers in reasonable comfort.

12.3 Age Limits for vehicles at first time of licensing

All time periods are given from the date of first registration.

Hackney carriage or a private hire vehicle (of any design) powered only by an internal combustion engine (traditional car engine)	no more than 7 years old at the date of application.
Hackney carriage or a private hire vehicle (other than a wheelchair accessible vehicle) powered by a petrol/electric-hybrid engine	no more than 7 years old at the date of application.
Hackney carriage or a private hire vehicle which is a fully wheelchair accessible vehicle powered by a petrol/electric-hybrid engine	no more than 9 years old at the date of application
Hackney carriage or a private hire vehicle (of any design) powered by an electric motor with or without on-board range extending generator	no more than 9 years old at the date of application

Any vehicle that does not comply with European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA) or equivalent (section 12.1) will not be licensed past 31 March 2020.

12.4 Maximum Age of Vehicle before Replacement/Emission Standards

The Department for Transport Best Practice Guidance 2010 reminds licensing authorities that it is perfectly possible for an older vehicle to be in good condition

and that the setting of an age limit beyond which they will not licence vehicles may be arbitrary and disproportionate.

Keeping a vehicle in good mechanical condition prolongs the life of the vehicle, helps to reduce the overall lifetime carbon footprint of that vehicle, ensures clean combustion of fuel and reduces emissions caused by reduced vehicle efficiency (worn suspension, tyres etc leading to lower miles per gallon (MPG)).

The council also recognises that there is a significant difference between old diesel vehicles and new, euro 6 diesel engines, which have low levels of emissions at a comparable level to their petrol counterparts. However, in spite of new vehicle emission requirements, real world emission testing suggests these levels are still exceeded in day to day driving conditions and regular maintenance and repair remains an integral part of reducing pollution. New MOT emission testing requirements introduced in May 2018 were intended to improve the accuracy of real world emission testing and to ensure that as a vehicle ages, it does not significantly increase the pollution it produces.

The maximum age limits imposed by this policy on existing licensed vehicles are therefore considered necessary and proportionate to protect the environment and, in doing so, public safety by encouraging proprietors to licence newer less polluting models which will have no maximum age limit imposed upon them

At time of licensing, from below date:

01 April 2022	No vehicle first registered with the DVLA before January 2006 will be licensed or re-licensed.
01 April 2025	Any vehicle using diesel or petrol fuel only (or diesel or petrol alternative such as biofuel/LPG) must be rated as at least Euro 6. Any petrol/electric hybrid must be at least Euro 5.

12.5 Zero Emission Capable/Hybrid/Electric

The council recognises that there are currently some limiting factors restricting uptake of fully electric vehicles. These include cost, range on a single charge and charging infrastructure.

The council is also mindful that some hybrid vehicles have very limited range on full electric setting and that when running on petrol the efficiency of these engines is not as good as some pure ICE powered vehicles.

The Council will licence electric, hybrid or similar fuel economy vehicles, providing they are of such design as to be able undertake a full range of journeys within the district, whilst carrying the maximum licensed number of passengers and associated luggage and are not in conflict with the current vehicle emissions policy.

Where an internal combustion engine or generator provides alternative power, the generator must meet the required euro emission standard for the fuel type used, including where alternative fuels are used.

12.6 Alternative Fuels

All fuel types are permitted providing that the fuel type complies with national safety regulations and the relevant required euro emission rating for petrol or diesel is reached as a minimum.

A vehicle which is converted to LPG or any other approved alternative fuel must supply proof that the conversion has been properly carried out by competent person or business carrying out such conversions and certificate of installation must be produced.

A vehicle powered by LPG or other approved alternative fuel, which does not have a provision for a spare tyre, must carry a suitable means to repair punctures (see section 12.9 on tyres).

The V5 document must show the correct fuel type.

Changes to the fuel type used must be notified to the licensing authority within 7 days of conversion and the certification of installation provided. Appropriate time will be allowed for the change to the V5 document.

12.7 Number of Doors

Vehicles must have at least 4 doors with 2 on either side of the vehicle.

All vehicles shall be constructed so that the doors open sufficiently wide as to allow easy access into and egress from the vehicle.

All vehicles, including multi-purpose vehicles, must have sufficient safe and suitable access and egress from the vehicle for the driver and all passengers, excluding the rear exit and the driver's front door.

12.8 Number of Seats

Vehicles must have a minimum of 4 passenger seats and a maximum of 8 passenger seats.

The maximum number of passengers which the vehicle will be licensed to carry will be the number of seats recorded on the V5C registration document (logbook) as being suitable for carrying passengers not including the driver.

Where a logbook shows more seats than the physical number of seats in the vehicle, the driver will be required to address this issue. The logbook must accurately reflect the vehicle. In terms of size, any modifications, seating capacity, colour, and all other details which are recorded within the logbook.

12.9 Tyres/Spare Wheels/Puncture Repair

Proprietors must ensure that the vehicle has, at all times, appropriate equipment and/or tools to repair or replace a punctured or damaged tyre, or a policy or maintenance contract with a supplier who can attend to repair the vehicle or assist in repair of the vehicle (i.e. by towing to a garage).

The vehicle tyres including the spare must be all radial or all cross ply construction.

12.10 Left Hand Drive Vehicles

Left-hand drive vehicles will not be considered as suitable for licensing on safety grounds as they will generally require front-seat passengers to step into the roadway to enter or exit the vehicle. Any vehicle which does not allow for safe near-side access and egress for passengers will also not be considered.

12.11 Engine Size

It is important that vehicles carrying members of the public are not underpowered. Taxis and private hire vehicles often travel fully loaded and sufficient power is required to ensure that possible adverse driving conditions do not significantly increase risk.

Where a vehicle is powered only by an internal combustion engine (ICE) the engine shall produce at least 90hp and 200 NM torque.

12.12 Body work

The vehicle must be maintained in a manner satisfactory for public service at all times, without evidence of corrosion, damage, unsatisfactory repairs and/or unsatisfactory modifications.

Keeping a vehicle in good condition is important to promote service excellence and to demonstrate to customers that passenger safety is the highest concern of the service.

The vehicle must not have:

Dull paintwork/mismatch of paint

A single rust scab or blemish larger than 10mm x 10mm

Dents over 40mm in diameter at its widest point and over 2mm deep

A scratch over 300mm long

Visibly poor or unsatisfactory repairs or modifications

The following standards shall apply for testing and compliance:

Paintwork – all panels on all vehicles shall be painted in the same colour without significant runs or blemishes.

Panels with unmatched colours or primer must be repaired to ensure a match before a licence will be granted.

Scuffed or significantly scratched paintwork, even where a single scratch is not over 300mm, must be repaired before a licence will be granted.

Scuffed or significantly scratched paintwork, even where a single scratch is not over 300mm, will result in suspension of the licence until repaired.

Rust – any vehicle should be free from any significant areas of visible rusting. Minor blemishes should be monitored for progression. Any vehicle with a rust patch of more than 10mm x 10mm must be repaired before a licence will be granted.

A rust patch of 10mm x 10mm on a licensed car will result in suspension of the licence until repaired.

Dents – any vehicle with one or more dents of more than 40mm in diameter and 2mm in depth at the deepest point in any one panel length must be repaired before a licence will be granted.

One or more dents of the specified size will result in suspension of the licence until repaired.

Scratches – any vehicle with one or more unrepaired scratches of more than 300mm must be repaired before a licence will be granted.

One or more scratches of the specified size will result in suspension of the licence until repaired.

12.13 Cleanliness

The exterior of the vehicle must be kept in a suitable and clean condition at all times such that road dirt, mud or other detritus does not excessively obscure any paintwork, lights, windows, licence plates or number plates.

When vehicles are presented for inspection, the exterior of the vehicle (including the underside of the vehicle) and interior must be in a suitable clean condition to allow for proper inspection of these areas.

The interior of the vehicle must be kept in a suitable and clean condition at all times without accumulations of dust, dirt, litter, general debris, staining, excessive unpleasant odours or excessive wear.

Seat cushions and back rests must be adequately maintained in good condition and offer proper support to passengers.

12.14 MOT/Insurance/V5

Vehicles will not be licensed unless:

- (1) there is in force a current private hire or hackney carriage insurance policy compliant with the Road Traffic Act 1988;
- (2) a valid MOT certificate is in force (issued within the previous 30 days), for vehicles registered with the DVLA for 12 months or more at the time the vehicle is presented for licensing;
- (3) it is registered with the DVLA;
- (4) the vehicle is taxed (where applicable); and
- (5) that an appropriate type approval certificate has been issued where necessary.

Any vehicle which is less than 1 year old when presented for licensing is not required to have passed an MOT. Any vehicle that is more than 1 year old when presented for licensing (including renewals) must have passed an MOT before inspection, and this MOT must have been issued within the previous 30 days.

Where vehicles have recently been purchased, the new keeper's supplement of the logbook will suffice to show that the vehicle is registered with the DVLA or confirmation from www.gov.uk, in the form of an email, that the purchase or sale of the vehicle has been registered online.

12.15 Accident/crash repaired vehicles

Repair of accident damaged cars is not illegal. However, the Association of British Insurers: Code of Practice for the Categorisation of Motor Vehicle Salvage, updated October 2017, states the following:

This code gives advice on the steps to be taken in the categorisation of vehicle salvage and recovered stolen vehicles. The purpose of the Code is to protect the public, detect and deter insurance fraud and other criminal activities and to make vehicle histories more transparent. This is increasingly important as vehicle design and technology becomes more complex.

In line with recommendations in this guidance, it is expected that vehicles categorised as A or B write offs will have been disposed of. Only vehicles categorised as N or S insurance write offs may be presented for licensing.

Applicants must produce an engineer's report detailing the repairs made to the vehicle.

Where a V5C has comments in the special information section concerning previous accidents or repairs or any comment that gives rise to concerns over the safety of the vehicle it shall be the duty of the applicant to provide additional information to satisfy the authority that the vehicle is safe to be licensed

12.16 Autonomous Vehicles/Assistive Technology

The five levels of autonomous vehicle are categorised by level by the Society of Automobile Engineers.

Application for licenses for vehicles capable of and intended to be, for any period of time, operated autonomously at levels three, four or five (as defined) will be considered on a case by case basis.

In general a vehicle that cannot be driven by a human being (i.e. level five autonomous -without a steering wheel) **shall not** be considered for use as a licensed vehicle on public roads.

In general any vehicle capable of operating autonomously will only be licensed where it can be shown that the driver will remain in control of the vehicle and that there are systems in the vehicle that monitor the driver's performance.

Vehicles with driver assistive features such as radar controlled assistive braking, cruise control and parking will be permitted.

Assistive Technology must not be used to allow the driver to relinquish control of the vehicle at any time when carrying passengers.

12.17 Tinted Windows

Window tints are only permitted as long as they are allowed within normal MOT tolerances.

These tolerances are found in Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986 and are, for vehicles first used after 1985:

Front windscreen – must allow 75% light through

All other windows – must allow 70% light through

If the vehicle already has a licence and is to be modified to include a window tint, permission must be obtained from the licensing authority first.

12.18 Luggage

For the purposes of bylaw 23(iii) of the Council's Byelaws relating to hackney carriages, 'luggage compartment' means the space behind the rear seats, or when the furthest rear seats are folded down, the space to the rear of the next complete row of seats.

In purpose-built hackney carriages or mini-buses, the luggage compartment may be the front foot-well on the passenger side provided that any seat in this location is not occupied by a passenger.

Proprietors must ensure the luggage compartment is kept free from corrosion, dirt, dust, grease, litter or water penetration etc that may stain or damage any luggage which may come into contact.

Proprietors must not carry any tools or other equipment in the luggage compartment unless related to maintenance of the vehicle and securely stowed.

Proprietors must not allow any packages or other luggage etc to protrude from the luggage compartment over any of the seats which may be occupied, or outside the vehicle.

All doors which allow access to the luggage compartment (e.g. a tailgate, boot, or rear doors) must be locked shut when the vehicle is in motion.

12.19 Vehicle Modifications

Proprietors must request in writing the Council's consent, and obtain such consent, before making any modification to the vehicle, including its seating capacity.

13 Equipment

13.1 Hackney Carriage Meter

Under byelaws set by the Council, and in keeping with almost every licensed authority area in England and Wales, Hackney Carriages are required to use a meter

to charge customers. The meter rate is set by the Council in consultation with the public and stakeholders.

The byelaws list a number of requirements for the use of the meter and how the meter should function. In addition to the byelaws the following conditions apply to the vehicle licence:

A meter must be fitted to all hackney carriages and must be fitted securely

Proprietors must only use a taximeter of a type, and secured in a position, approved by the Council's officers.

The meter must be visible from the rear passenger seats, and must not interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle.

The meter must be sealed, without showing signs of tampering or misuse.

The taximeter must be calibrated to the tariff set by the licensing authority, and must not show any other tariffs.

A calibration certificate must be provided for all vehicles which are to be licensed for the first time.

13.2 Private Hire Meter

Private hire vehicles are not required to use a meter but in Watford almost all do.

If a vehicle does not have a meter fitted then it will be for the operator and proprietor to determine the manner in which a charge will be calculated. Under separate regulations this charge or manner of charging must be discussed and agreed with the customer at the time of booking.

Proprietors may use a meter in a private hire vehicle providing it is secured in a safe and clearly visible position.

13.3 Credit/Debit Card Machines

The council recognises that there is significant increase in the number of customers wishing to pay for journeys by card. Card machines have many advantages. They reduce the amount of cash carried by drivers and they prevent customers having to

visit cash machines or to leave valuable items as deposits with drivers if the money to pay for the journey is at home.

There are a number of passengers who may not wish to pay by card for various reasons including reasons of accessibility.

A debit or credit card machine of the proprietor's choice may be installed.

If a card machine is advertised as in use it must be available for every passenger unless a fault prevents its use.

13.4 Non-Factory Fitted Equipment

Proprietors may not use non-factory fitted equipment (for example, radios, PDAs, sat-nav systems) unless they are installed in positions approved by the Council's officers

No equipment can obstruct driver or passenger movement in or out of the vehicle, affect passenger comfort, obstruct the driver's vision, or impede the driver's ability to control the vehicle.

Proprietors must notify the Council before installing any non-factory fitted equipment so that the equipment and proposed position may be tested in relation to safety and comfort.

The vehicle must not be used before approval has been given.

If the vehicle already has a licence and is to be modified to allow the use of a PDA, radio, or other such equipment, permission must be obtained from the licensing authority first.

Proprietors must ensure that equipment installed does not interfere with the electronic systems of their vehicle or other vehicles on the road.

13.5 First Aid Kit

Proprietors may carry a first aid kit for their use if they choose to do so. Where a proprietor carries a first aid kit they must:

Ensure it meets the requirements of the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981

Keep an accident reporting log in the vehicle

13.6 High Visibility Safety Vests

Breakdown by the side of a major road or motorway carries with it a significant risk to passenger and driver safety.

A number of fluorescent/high visibility safety vests equal to the carrying capacity of the vehicle must be carried for use by passengers and driver in an emergency situation.

13.7 Fire Extinguishers

The byelaws for hackney carriages require that a fire extinguisher be carried. However, it is recognised that advice from the fire brigade in most cases of vehicle fire are that passengers and drivers should evacuate the vehicle and move away to a safe distance. Furthermore, the size of the fire extinguisher currently carried by most licensed vehicles is insufficient to put out a serious vehicle fire. The value of carrying a fire extinguisher is therefore questionable. Nevertheless, on balance it is reasoned that carrying a fire extinguisher is generally worthwhile given the small size and low cost of an extinguisher that may prove useful.

Vehicles must carry a well maintained fire extinguisher of a size deemed appropriate by the proprietor.

Extinguishers must be securely stored in the vehicle in a fixed and easily accessible location.

13.8 Defibrillators

Vehicle proprietors may carry a defibrillator if they choose to do so.

Where a proprietor carries a defibrillator they must:

Receive satisfactory training in the use of the machine and provide certificated evidence to prove training.

Obtain the defibrillator from a recognised supplier of genuine quality machines and proof of purchase will be required.

Mount the defibrillator securely in a location where it cannot be accessed by passengers unless directed.

13.9 CCTV

The purpose of the CCTV system shall be to provide a safer environment for the benefit of the driver and passengers by:

- Deterring and preventing the occurrence of crime
- Reducing the fear of crime
- Assisting the Police in investigating incidents of crime
- Assisting insurance companies in investigating motor vehicle accidents

The Guidance recommends that licensing authorities look sympathetically at the installation of security measures in licensed vehicles, including CCTV systems, as a means of providing some protection for vehicle drivers.

CCTV in a licensed vehicle can benefit the trade by deterring and preventing criminal activity within a licensed vehicle, reducing the number of customers who fail to pay or abuse drivers and, where incidents have occurred, by providing information to assist the police in taking action. Insurance companies investigating insurance claims are also assisted by CCTV and this may have the added benefit to drivers by reducing their insurance premiums.

Whether CCTV (or other enhanced security measures) are installed or not, the hackney carriage and private hire vehicle trades are encouraged to build good links with the local police force, including participation in any Community Safety Partnerships or equivalent.

In April 2019 the DfT consultation on proposed statutory guidance sought views on a condition to make CCTV mandatory within licensed vehicles. In their response to this consultation, the Surveillance Camera Commissioner commented,

“Blanket licensing may be disproportionate and should only be used where there is a strong justification”

The Council recognises that there are benefits to the trade (as well as passengers) where CCTV is installed in licensed vehicles. However, in line with the comments of the Surveillance Camera Commissioner and the Code of Practice concerning the use of CCTV, the Council does not feel that it should be a requirement of the licence at this time.

It is considered that the undertaking of such measures should be left to the judgment of individual operators, owners and drivers who are best placed to make the necessary decisions on safety, privacy and customer service.

There are data protection concerns arising from the use of such surveillance and proprietors of licensed vehicles are responsible for ensuring that installed CCTV conforms not only to the Council's requirements but also any relevant applicable legislation, such as the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Proprietors may install CCTV, both internal facing and external facing.

Where CCTV is installed, the following conditions must be met:

1. That the appropriate person responsible for the camera is registered as the Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018 and is responsible for ensuring compliance with that Act and associated legislation;
2. The use of the camera and the footage complies with the relevant guidance of the Information Commissioners Office (ICO);
3. The footage must remain "tamperproof" and be accessible only to the proprietor or a responsible third party;
4. Vehicles must display adequate signage notifying customers of the use of cameras, how long data is stored for and how customers can access the data;
5. Drivers must provide example documentation of a CCTV usage policy, Privacy Impact Assessment and Subject Access Request application.
6. Drivers must provide an in date copy of ICO registration certificate

13.9 Safety Screens

Proprietors may install a safety screen. Where a safety screen is installed, proprietors must:

Provide evidence of professional, certificated installation

Provide evidence of notification to, and approval by, the company insuring the vehicle

13.10 Vehicle Tracker

Theft of new vehicles is rising, particularly those operated by keyless technology. Many are stolen for parts. Vehicle trackers can provide peace of mind for owners.

Proprietors may install a vehicle tracker.

Where a tracker is fitted it must be installed by a competent professional and proof of installation will be required.

13.11 Receipts

Offering a receipt to a customer rather than waiting to be asked is an important element of customer service. Customers with disabilities or vulnerable passengers may not want to ask the driver for a receipt but may find the information helpful, particularly in keeping track of payments and in booking future journeys. Blind or visually impaired passengers may want to know the driver details.

The driver of the vehicle must offer to each passenger (or, if there is more than one passenger, at least one of those passengers) at the end of their journey a receipt containing the following information:

- (a) the date
- (b) the fare for that journey
- (c) the number of the badge issued by the Council to that driver
- (d) other information that may be specified in writing to you by Council officers.

14 Signage and Roof Lights

14.1 Vehicle Plates

The plates (provided by the Council and which remain the property of the Council) identifying the vehicle as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle in respect of which this licence has been granted must be affixed to the vehicle in such manner and position as shall be prescribed by this policy.

The exterior licence plate and interior licence plate (also referred to as the detachable slip) issued by the Council must be clearly visible and the details legible at all times that the vehicle is being used for work.

Vehicle plates can only be displayed on a bracket attached to the rear of the vehicle. It is not acceptable to display a plate in the rear windscreen.

Plates may be attached permanently by way of fixing to the vehicle or by way of magnet. No other form of fixing is permitted.

The detachable plate slip must be displayed on the inside of the windscreen and be visible to all passengers.

14.2 Door signs

Door signs are often vital tools for passengers to recognise legitimate taxi and private hire vehicles. The council understands that many operators now use text messaging systems to alert customers to the correct vehicle but this method does not assist all passengers, particularly those who cannot or do not use such technology. The council therefore considers door signs an important accessibility feature.

Hackney Carriages

Hackney carriages that do not display a livery (see section 14.5) must display door signs of a type and style approved by the Council's officers.

Signs must be attached to the front doors only.

Drivers must not, without reasonable excuse, fail to display such signs at all times that the vehicle is hired, plying for hire (including waiting on a rank), on the way to collect a passenger or otherwise used as a hackney carriage.

Private Hire Vehicle

Private Hire Vehicle door signs must be pre-approved by the Council's officers.

At all times when the vehicle is in use for work door signs **MUST** be applied to the driver's and front passenger door of such dimensions and colours as may from time to time be approved by the Council.

Signs must bear:

the words “Private Hire - Advance Bookings Only”;

the operator’s name and/or telephone number,

but may not contain the words “Taxi” or “Cab”.

Door signs must be maintained in a clean, readable and undamaged state.

14.3 Roof lights

Hackney Carriages

All taxis must display a roof light showing the word ‘taxi’ on the front.

In the case of magnetic lights used on vehicles other than purpose built taxis, the words ‘taxi’ or ‘for hire’ must appear on the rear of the sign.

The roof sign must be maintained in good working order.

The magnetic light must be securely attached

The roof-sign must be capable of being lit, and must cease to be lit when the taximeter is brought into operation.

Hackney Carriages capable of carrying passengers in a wheelchair and/or of having accommodation for wheelchairs must incorporate a sign into the roof sign indicating their purpose

Private Hire Vehicles

Private hire vehicles must not have roof signs. This is to avoid confusion with hackney carriage vehicles.

14.4 Tariff Chart

Hackney carriages

The regulations concerning the display of fares are contained within the byelaws.

Byelaw regulations shall not be duplicated but for purposes of inspection and grant of licence, a licence will not be granted where the tariff sheet is not on display at the time of inspection in accordance with the specification laid down in the byelaws.

Private Hire Vehicles

Private Hire Vehicles do not have to display a tariff chart but it is advisable that any additional charges, such as soiling fees or charges for luggage are made clear at the time the booking is made.

14.5 Large Driver Badge

You must make sure that there shall be displayed so that it is visible from all parts of the vehicle, whilst it is available and used for hire, an identity style badge as provided by, and which shall remain the property of, the Council, which shall have incorporated within it a photograph of your face and your badge number.

14.6 Advertisements

No advertisement or sign of any nature can be displayed on the vehicle other than an advertisement or a sign of a type authorised by the Council.

Applications for provisional approval of advertisements must be made in writing in the approved form to the Licensing Authority enclosing two copies of all the proposed advertisements in full colour.

An application for full advertising must be accompanied by full colour three view art work and the licensing authority shall be entitled to retain all material submitted with the application.

All applications for provisional approval of advertisements will be considered by the Council's licensing officer, who if satisfied as to the non-contentious nature of any application shall grant the application; if the Council's officer is not so satisfied then any such application will be submitted to the Head of Community Protection for consideration it being understood that in no case will the Council's nominated officer refuse any application.

The Proprietor remains responsible for the content of any advertisement displayed on their vehicle, whether internal or external. It remains the license holder's responsibility to comply with The British Code of Advertising Practice issued by the

Advertising Standards Authority irrespective of any consent to display the advertisement which may have been given by the licensing authority.

Each application will be considered on its merits, but advertisements will not be approved if they contain political, ethnic, religious, sexual or controversial texts; display nude or semi-nude figures; advertise tobacco products; are likely to offend public taste; depict men women or children as sex objects; depict direct and immediate violence to anyone shown in the advertisement or looking at it; advertise any racist group or organisation which intends to promote the group/organisation and/or any of its activities.

Prior to displaying any advertisements the holder of the taxi licence shall present the taxi, fitted with the advertisement or livery, for final approval. Until final approval is given an advertisement cannot be displayed or in the case of full livery the taxi cannot ply for hire.

Advertisements will be checked at the annual and random inspections of the vehicle but if a licensee wishes to materially change or amend an advertisement during the course of the year, the licensee of the vehicle must notify the council.

The following conditions apply with regard to advertisements.

1. All liveries must be approved by the Council and proposal must be accompanied by full colour, three view artwork. The first cab contract must be presented at the Council offices for inspection of the finished livery.
2. No secondary advertising permitted, whether in the form of the company logo preparing the vehicle or the name of the advertising agency.
3. Damaged or unmatched panels are unacceptable and will not be acceptable for re-licensing/renewing in this condition.
4. No part of the advertisement shall appear on any windows so as to obstruct or interfere with, or of the vision of the driver and/or passengers.
5. Window graphing, scrolling advert or hubcaps advertising not permitted.

14.7 Livery

Until 2010 Hackney Carriages in Watford were required to display a livery. This requirement was removed but it is the opinion of the council that for reasons of safety, accessibility and recognition, a livery would be advantageous.

However, it is also recognised that the services offered by hackney carriages in Watford are many and varied and a livery may not suit every proprietor. Hackney Carriages now perform many functions traditionally undertaken by private hire vehicles, such as executive hire and corporate account work and in these cases, a livery may hinder the business.

In seeking to strike a balance, the council have introduced a voluntary livery. The livery shall standardise design to ensure that drivers who wish to take advantage of clearly advertising the high standards of Watford hackney carriages can now do so.

Hackney carriages may display a livery.

Where the livery is displayed it must be in accordance with the approved livery of black vehicle with yellow bonnet stripes, yellow boot stripes and yellow roof stripes to a standard colour code approved by the council.

There are no livery requirements for private hire vehicles. A private hire vehicle must not be modified to represent a hackney carriage through use of the livery.

14.8 Other Signage

Vehicles must display at least one "No Smoking" sign on at least one near-side and one off-side window to be clearly visible to passengers before entering the vehicle. Vehicles may only display the following window stickers or signs providing that they do not obscure vision:

- (a) the Council's official plate (the detachable slip)
- (b) the name and telephone number of a Watford hackney carriage or private hire firm, recognised by the Council
- (c) an authorised parking permit
- (d) membership of a recognised motoring organization or a hackney carriage or private hire association

(e) disability awareness signs.

(f) If CCTV is in use, signs notifying customers of the use, storage and access must be displayed.

(g) A sign advertising the availability of debit or credit card facilities

No other signage is permitted unless permission is expressly granted by the licensing authority on application

14.9 Exemptions from display of signage etc.

Hackney Carriage

Exemption from displaying the council approved door sign is only available where an alternative door sign of an approved design is displayed in the same place on the front doors. Applications for alternative door signs must be made in accordance with the requirements of section 14.6 (Advertisements). Applications will only be considered where the alternative sign is a form of advertising for a taxi firm or operator.

There is no exemption from displaying a roof sign.

There is no exemption from displaying a vehicle plate.

Private Hire Vehicles

Door Signs

An exemption for the display of door signs is available.

An exemption for the display of door signs will only be granted where the proprietor can provide written evidence in support of the application from a company requesting to use their services without door signs. This evidence must be corroborated by the private hire operator.

Where an Exemption Certificate has been issued for the vehicle by the Council, a magnetic sign may be applied instead to the driver's and front passenger door providing that it meets the requirements stated in section 14.2 and in addition contains in prominent figures the number of the vehicle plate issued to that vehicle.

The magnetic signs must be displayed on the vehicle whilst it is being used for Non-Contract Work and may be removed whilst being used for Contract Work.

Within this condition:

Contract Work means journeys undertaken for hire or reward as part of a regular course of business with a particular client or customer as determined to the satisfaction of the Council's officers;

Non-Contract Work means all other journeys for hire or reward including those conducted for the purposes of conveying children to or from any school or educational establishment.

Vehicle Plate

An exemption for display of vehicle plate is available.

An exemption for display of vehicle plate will only be granted where the vehicle is to be used exclusively for work under contract (as defined above) where bookings are:

- made at least 24 hours in advance;
- references from clients supports the use of the vehicle where no plate should be displayed, and;
- payments for such bookings are made by invoice or account.
- evidence is provided by the private hire operator to support the application

In such cases where an exemption to displaying a plate is granted, the vehicle shall instead display a disc issued in its place. The disc shall be displayed in the front windscreen of the vehicle.

15 Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

In additions to policy sections 1-14, the following applies to wheelchair accessible vehicles:

15.1 Type Approval and design

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles must be professionally constructed or converted and tested conforming to M1 type approval under EWVTA, NSSTA or statutory 'normal' IVA.

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles can be side or rear loading.

15.2 Restraints

A three-point seatbelt assembly together with suitable wheelchair restraints must be provided for the use of wheelchair occupants in vehicles capable of carrying passengers in their wheelchairs.

Anchorage must be provided for the both the wheelchair and wheelchair user to the latest industry standard. Restraints for wheelchair and occupant must be independent of each other.

15.3 Ramps

A ramp(s) for the (un)loading of wheelchair passengers must be available at all times for the safe access and egress of passengers. Adequate locating device(s) must be fitted to ensure that the ramp(s) do not slip or tilt when in use. The ramp(s) must be of sufficient strength and stability such that they will not bend and will remain stable during use and must be of a safe working limit of at least 300 kg over its entire length. The ramp(s) must be capable of being stowed away securely and safely when not in use.

Ramps which are removable must be permanently legibly marked with the registration mark of the vehicle for which they are provided.

15.4 Lifting Mechanism

Lifting mechanisms fitted to any licensed vehicle must conform and be tested in accordance with the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulation 1998 (LOLER). Any costs associated with this requirement are the responsibility of the vehicle proprietor.

A valid compliance report conform to LOLER must be kept in the vehicle and be available for inspection.

15.5 Training

Where a vehicle is capable of carrying a passenger sitting in a wheelchair in the vehicle, the driver of the hackney carriage or private hire vehicle must demonstrate

at time of vehicle inspection on application an ability to use the equipment provided for the carriage of passengers. All drivers must attend a disability awareness course approved by the Council.

16 Stretched Limousines

In additions to policy sections 1-14, the following applies to stretched limousine vehicles. Section 12.10 (left hand drive vehicles) shall not apply.

Stretched Limousines are elongated saloon cars that have been increasingly used for mainstream private hire work plus special occasions such as days at the races, stag/hen parties and birthday parties.

Licensing authorities have generally considered there to be some problems which prevents stretched limousines from being licensed including:

- many of the vehicles are capable of carrying more than 8 passengers;
- many of them are left hand drive;
- many are fitted with all round darkened glass;
- most are imported from the United States;
- many have been converted or modified after manufacture;
- due to their origin many parts may not be available making adequate maintenance difficult.

Most limousines are imported for commercial purposes and are therefore required to pass a statutory Individual Vehicle Type Approval (IVA) test.

Most, if not all, cannot be approved as Passenger Carrying Vehicles (PCV) because they cannot meet the required standards for the door arrangements and means of escape in an emergency.

Stretched limousines can be licensed for private hire work providing they carry no more than 8 passengers and meet the requirements of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) 1976.

Possible exemptions under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) 1976 provide that nothing should:

- (i) apply to a vehicle used for bringing passengers or goods within a controlled district in pursuance of a contract for the hire of the vehicle made outside the district if the vehicle is not made available for hire within the district;

- (ii) apply to a vehicle while it is being used in connection with a funeral or a vehicle used wholly or mainly, by a person carrying on the business of a funeral director, for the purpose of funerals;
- (iii) apply to a vehicle being used in connection with a wedding.

Any stretched limousines, which are offered for private hire or which are not used for funeral and weddings will require a private hire vehicle licence.

In accordance with the Guidance, all applications for the licensing of stretched limousines as private hire vehicles will be treated on their own merits. It is, however, proposed that imported stretched limousine type vehicles:

be granted an exemption from the requirement under this policy at 12.10 for vehicles to be right hand drive where passengers have no access to the driver and forward compartment; and

be approved for licensing as private hire vehicles subject the general conditions of sections 1-14 of this policy and the additional conditions as follows:

- a. That no vehicle over 10 years old shall be licensed as a stretched limousine
- b. That applications are accompanied by the relevant IVA inspection certificate
- c. That vehicles are required to pass an MOT test every 6 months
- d. That the result of this MOT test be submitted to the licensing team at the time of the test

It would be an offence under the Licensing Act 2003 to provide facilities for the sale of alcohol within a limousine. If a limousine is to be provided whereby part of the booking includes "free alcohol", the premises which accepts the booking and supplies the alcohol within the vehicle would need an appropriate licence under the Licensing Act 2003, otherwise a criminal offence would be committed.

17 Tuk Tuks, Rickshaws, Velotaxis and Pedicabs

Over recent years a number of licensing authorities across the country have received enquiries concerning the licensing of numerous types of small vehicle such as tuk tuks, rickshaws, velotaxis and pedicabs as private hire vehicles or hackney carriages.

Non-motorised vehicles cannot be licensed as private hire vehicles.

In order for applications for motorised vehicles to be determined applicants will be required to demonstrate how they propose to comply with this policy.

In respect of hackney carriages, which can be motorised or non-motorised, there are a number of issues that need to be considered including the current numerical limit on licences and wheelchair accessibility.

The driver of any hackney carriages and private hire vehicle needs to hold an appropriate drivers licence issued by the council and the same would be required were any other type of vehicle to be licensed.

Applicants wishing to licence any type of vehicle similar to a tuk tuk, rickshaw, velotaxi or pedicab should consider this policy and aim to demonstrate how they propose to comply with the relevant requirements.

Any decision on the grant of such a licence will only be taken by the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services or the Head of Community Protection in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee.

If the Council were minded to grant licences for tuk tuks, rickshaws or pedicabs appropriate conditions would need to be attached and these may be in addition to conditions imposed under this policy.

18 Other Novelty or Specialist Vehicle Types falling outside of this policy

The Council understands that there may be occasions where a unique vehicle is suitable for use as a licensed vehicle. This policy aims to give comprehensive advice but it is always possible that particular needs may not be met. Any vehicle not conforming to the regular standards required may be considered as a novelty or specialist vehicle on application.

Any person wishing to licence any vehicle that falls outside of this policy should apply in writing to licensing team giving reasons for the application.

An application must be accompanied by a full explanation of a business proposal and reasons as to why the grant of a licence should be considered.

Any decision on the grant of a licence to a specialist, classic or novelty vehicle will only be taken by the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services or the Head of Community Protection in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee.

19 Any other reasonable matter

Where an inspecting officer has serious safety concerns caused by any aspect of a licensed vehicle or a vehicle presented or intended to be presented for inspection for the grant of a licence, be it material or mechanical in nature, they may refer the application to a senior officer for further advice and/or a decision. Until such time as a decision is reached, the application will not proceed.

Appendix A

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976 STANDARD CONDITIONS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENCES

Within these conditions:

“Council” means Watford Borough Council and its officers

“Proprietor” means the person to whom the licence is granted

Maintenance of Standards

At all times that the vehicle is licensed it shall be required to comply with all parts of the Vehicle Licensing Policy 2019-2024.

Dual Plating

Licences granted to vehicles later found to be licensed with another Licensing Authority will be revoked.

Alternative Fuels

Changes to the fuel type used must be notified to the licensing authority within 7 days of conversion and the certification of installation provided. Appropriate time will be allowed for the change to the V5 document.

Tyres

Proprietors must ensure that the vehicle has, at all times, appropriate equipment and/or tools to repair or replace a punctured or damaged tyre, or a policy or maintenance contract with a supplier who can attend to repair the vehicle or assist in repair of the vehicle (i.e. by towing to a garage).

The vehicle tyres including the spare must be all radial or all cross ply construction.

Body Work

The vehicle must be maintained in a manner satisfactory for public service at all times, without evidence of corrosion, damage, unsatisfactory repairs and/or unsatisfactory modifications.

The vehicle must not have:

Dull paintwork/mismatch of paint

A single rust scab or blemish larger than 10mm x 10mm

Dents over 40mm in diameter at its widest point and over 2mm deep

A scratch over 300mm long

Visibly poor or unsatisfactory repairs or modifications

Cleanliness

The exterior of the vehicle must be kept in a suitable and clean condition at all times such that road dirt, mud or other detritus does not excessively obscure any paintwork, lights, windows, licence plates or number plates.

The interior of the vehicle must be kept in a suitable and clean condition at all times without accumulations of dust, dirt, litter, general debris, staining, excessive unpleasant odours or excessive wear.

Seat cushions and back rests must be adequately maintained in good condition and offer proper support to passengers.

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology must not be used to allow the driver to relinquish control of the vehicle at any time when carrying passengers.

Luggage

For the purposes of bylaw 23(iii) of the Council's Byelaws relating to hackney carriages, 'luggage compartment' means the space behind the rear seats, or when the furthest rear seats are folded down, the space to the rear of the next complete row of seats. In purpose-built hackney carriages or mini-buses, the luggage compartment may be the front footwell on the passenger side provided that any seat in this location is not occupied by a passenger.

Proprietors must ensure the luggage compartment is kept free from corrosion, dirt, dust, grease, litter or water penetration etc that may stain or damage any luggage which may come into contact.

Proprietors must not carry any tools or other equipment in the luggage compartment unless related to maintenance of the vehicle and securely stowed.

Proprietors must not allow any packages or other luggage etc to protrude from the luggage compartment over any of the seats which may be occupied, or outside the vehicle.

All doors which allow access to the luggage compartment (e.g. a tailgate, boot, or rear doors) must be locked shut when the vehicle is in motion.

Vehicle Modifications

Proprietors must request in writing the Council's consent, and obtain such consent, before making any modification to the vehicle, including its seating capacity.

Hackney Carriage Meter

A meter must be fitted to all hackney carriages and must be fitted securely

Proprietors must only use a taximeter of a type, and secured in a position, approved by the Council's officers.

The meter must be visible from the rear passenger seats, and must not interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle.

The meter must be sealed, without showing signs of tampering or misuse.

The taximeter must be calibrated to the tariff set by the licensing authority, and must not show any other tariffs.

A calibration certificate must be provided for all vehicles which are to be licensed for the first time.

Credit Cards Machines

If a card machine is advertised as in use it shall be available for every passenger unless a fault prevents its use.

Non-Factory Fitted Equipment

Proprietors may not use non-factory fitted equipment (for example, radios, PDAs, sat-nav systems) unless they are installed in positions approved by the Council's officers

No equipment can obstruct driver or passenger movement in or out of the vehicle, affect passenger comfort, obstruct the driver's vision, or impede the driver's ability to control the vehicle.

Proprietors must notify the Council before installing any non-factory fitted equipment so that the equipment and proposed position may be tested in relation to safety and comfort.

The vehicle must not be used before approval has been given.

If the vehicle already has a licence and is to be modified to allow the use of a PDA, radio, or other such equipment, permission must be obtained from the licensing authority first.

Proprietors must ensure that equipment installed does not interfere with the electronic systems of their vehicle or other vehicles on the road.

First Aid Kit

Where a proprietor carries a first aid kit they must:

Ensure it meets the requirements of the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981

Keep an accident reporting log in the vehicle

High Visibility Safety Vests

A number of fluorescent/high visibility safety vests equal to the carrying capacity of the vehicle must be carried for use by passengers and driver in an emergency situation.

Fire Extinguisher

Vehicles must carry a well maintained fire extinguisher of a size deemed appropriate by the proprietor.

Extinguishers must be securely stored in the vehicle in a fixed and easily accessible location.

Defibrillators

Where a proprietor carries a defibrillator they must:

Receive satisfactory training in the use of the machine and provide certificated evidence to prove training.

Obtain the defibrillator from a recognised supplier of genuine quality machines and proof of purchase will be required.

Mount the defibrillator securely in a location where it cannot be accessed by passengers unless directed.

CCTV

Where CCTV is installed, the following conditions shall apply:

1. That the appropriate person responsible for the camera is registered as the Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018 and is responsible for ensuring compliance with that Act and associated legislation;
2. The use of the camera and the footage complies with the relevant guidance of the Information Commissioners Office (ICO);

3. The footage must remain “tamperproof” and be accessible only to the proprietor or a responsible third party;
4. Vehicles must display adequate signage notifying customers of the use of cameras, how long data is stored for and how customers can access the data;
5. Drivers must provide example documentation of a CCTV usage policy, Privacy Impact Assessment and Subject Access Request application.
6. Drivers must provide an in date copy of ICO registration certificate

Safety Screens

Where a safety screen is installed, proprietors must:

Provide evidence of professional, certificated installation

Provide evidence of notification to, and approval by, the company insuring the vehicle

Vehicle Tracker

Where a tracker is fitted it must be installed by a competent professional and proof of installation will be required.

Receipts

The driver of the vehicle must offer to each passenger (or, if there is more than one passenger, at least one of those passengers) at the end of their journey a receipt containing the following information:

- (a) the date
- (b) the fare for that journey
- (c) the number of the badge issued by the Council to that driver
- (d) other information that may be specified in writing to you by Council officers.

Vehicle Plates

The plates (provided by the Council and which remain the property of the Council) identifying the vehicle as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle in respect of which this licence has been granted must be affixed to the vehicle in such manner and position as shall be prescribed by the Vehicle Licensing Policy.

The exterior licence plate and interior licence plate (also referred to as the detachable slip) issued by the Council must be clearly visible and the details legible at all times that the vehicle is being used for work.

Door Signs

Hackney carriages that do not display a livery (see section 14.5 of the Policy) must display door signs of a type and style approved by the Council's officers.

Signs must be attached to the front doors only.

Drivers must not, without reasonable excuse, fail to display such signs at all times that the vehicle is hired, plying for hire (including waiting on a rank), on the way to collect a passenger or otherwise used as a hackney carriage.

Roof Lights

All taxis must display a roof light showing the word 'taxi' on the front.

In the case of magnetic lights used on vehicles other than purpose built taxis, the words 'taxi' or 'for hire' must appear on the rear of the sign.

The roof sign must be maintained in good working order.

The magnetic light must be securely attached

The roof-sign must be capable of being lit, and must cease to be lit when the taximeter is brought into operation.

Hackney Carriages capable of carrying passengers in a wheelchair and/or of having accommodation for wheelchairs must incorporate a sign into the roof sign indicating their purpose

Large Drivers Badge

You must make sure that there shall be displayed so that it is visible from all parts of the vehicle, whilst it is available and used for hire, an identity style badge as provided by, and which shall remain the property of, the Council, which shall have incorporated within it a photograph of your face and your badge number.

Advertisements

No advertisement or sign of any nature can be displayed on the vehicle other than an advertisement or a sign of a type authorised by the Council.

Livery

Hackney carriages may display a livery.

Where the livery is displayed it must be in accordance with the approved livery of black vehicle with yellow bonnet stripes, yellow boot stripes and yellow roof stripes to a standard colour code approved by the council

Other Signage

Vehicles must display at least one “No Smoking” sign on at least one near-side and one off-side window to be clearly visible to passengers before entering the vehicle.

Vehicles may only display the following window stickers or signs providing that they do not obscure vision:

- (a) the Council’s official plate (the detachable slip)
- (b) the name and telephone number of a Watford hackney carriage or private hire firm, recognised by the Council
- (c) an authorised parking permit
- (d) membership of a recognised motoring organization or a hackney carriage or private hire association
- (e) disability awareness signs.
- (f) If CCTV is in use, signs notifying customers of the use, storage and access must be displayed.
- (g) A sign advertising the availability of debit or credit card facilities

No other signage is permitted unless permission is expressly granted by the licensing authority on application

Appendix B

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976 POLICY REQUIREMENTS FOR PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCES

Maintenance of Standards

At all times that the vehicle is licensed it shall be required to comply with all parts of the Vehicle Licensing Policy 2019-2024.

Dual Plating

Licences granted to vehicles later found to be licensed with another Licensing Authority will be revoked.

Alternative Fuels

Changes to the fuel type used must be notified to the licensing authority within 7 days of conversion and the certification of installation provided. Appropriate time will be allowed for the change to the V5 document.

Tyres

Proprietors must ensure that the vehicle has, at all times, appropriate equipment and/or tools to repair or replace a punctured or damaged tyre, or a policy or maintenance contract with a supplier who can attend to repair the vehicle or assist in repair of the vehicle (i.e. by towing to a garage).

The vehicle tyres including the spare must be all radial or all cross ply construction.

Body Work

The vehicle must be maintained in a manner satisfactory for public service at all times, without evidence of corrosion, damage, unsatisfactory repairs and/or unsatisfactory modifications.

The vehicle must not have:

Dull paintwork/mismatch of paint

A single rust scab or blemish larger than 10mm x 10mm

Dents over 40mm in diameter at its widest point and over 2mm deep

A scratch over 300mm long

Visibly poor or unsatisfactory repairs or modifications

Cleanliness

The exterior of the vehicle must be kept in a suitable and clean condition at all times such that road dirt, mud or other detritus does not excessively obscure any paintwork, lights, windows, licence plates or number plates.

The interior of the vehicle must be kept in a suitable and clean condition at all times without accumulations of dust, dirt, litter, general debris, staining, excessive unpleasant odours or excessive wear.

Seat cushions and back rests must be adequately maintained in good condition and offer proper support to passengers.

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology must not be used to allow the driver to relinquish control of the vehicle at any time when carrying passengers.

Luggage

For the purposes of bylaw 23(iii) of the Council's Byelaws relating to hackney carriages, 'luggage compartment' means the space behind the rear seats, or when the furthestmost rear seats are folded down, the space to the rear of the next complete row of seats. In purpose-built hackney carriages or mini-buses, the luggage compartment may be the front footwell on the passenger side provided that any seat in this location is not occupied by a passenger.

Proprietors must ensure the luggage compartment is kept free from corrosion, dirt, dust, grease, litter or water penetration etc that may stain or damage any luggage which may come into contact.

Proprietors must not carry any tools or other equipment in the luggage compartment unless related to maintenance of the vehicle and securely stowed.

Proprietors must not allow any packages or other luggage etc to protrude from the luggage compartment over any of the seats which may be occupied, or outside the vehicle.

All doors which allow access to the luggage compartment (e.g. a tailgate, boot, or rear doors) must be locked shut when the vehicle is in motion.

Vehicle Modifications

Proprietors must request in writing the Council's consent, and obtain such consent, before making any modification to the vehicle, including its seating capacity.

Private Hire Meter

Proprietors may use a meter in a private hire vehicle providing it is secured in a safe and clearly visible position.

Credit Cards Machines

If a card machine is advertised as in use it shall be available for every passenger unless a fault prevents its use.

Non-Factory Fitted Equipment

Proprietors may not use non-factory fitted equipment (for example, radios, PDAs, sat-nav systems) unless they are installed in positions approved by the Council's officers

No equipment can obstruct driver or passenger movement in or out of the vehicle, affect passenger comfort, obstruct the driver's vision, or impede the driver's ability to control the vehicle.

Proprietors must notify the Council before installing any non-factory fitted equipment so that the equipment and proposed position may be tested in relation to safety and comfort.

The vehicle must not be used before approval has been given.

If the vehicle already has a licence and is to be modified to allow the use of a PDA, radio, or other such equipment, permission must be obtained from the licensing authority first.

Proprietors must ensure that equipment installed does not interfere with the electronic systems of their vehicle or other vehicles on the road.

First Aid Kit

Where a proprietor carries a first aid kit they must:

Ensure it meets the requirements of the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981

Keep an accident reporting log in the vehicle

High Visibility Safety Vests

A number of fluorescent/high visibility safety vests equal to the carrying capacity of the vehicle must be carried for use by passengers and driver in an emergency situation.

Fire Extinguisher

Vehicles must carry a well maintained fire extinguisher of a size deemed appropriate by the proprietor.

Extinguishers must be securely stored in the vehicle in a fixed and easily accessible location.

Defibrillators

Where a proprietor carries a defibrillator they must:

Receive satisfactory training in the use of the machine and provide certificated evidence to prove training.

Obtain the defibrillator from a recognised supplier of genuine quality machines and proof of purchase will be required.

Mount the defibrillator securely in a location where it cannot be accessed by passengers unless directed.

CCTV

Where CCTV is installed, the following conditions shall apply:

1. That the appropriate person responsible for the camera is registered as the Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018 and is responsible for ensuring compliance with that Act and associated legislation;
2. The use of the camera and the footage complies with the relevant guidance of the Information Commissioners Office (ICO);
3. The footage must remain “tamperproof” and be accessible only to the proprietor or a responsible third party;
4. Vehicles must display adequate signage notifying customers of the use of cameras, how long data is stored for and how customers can access the data;
5. Drivers must provide example documentation of a CCTV usage policy, Privacy Impact Assessment and Subject Access Request application.
6. Drivers must provide an in date copy of ICO registration certificate

Safety Screens

Where a safety screen is installed, proprietors must:

Provide evidence of professional, certificated installation

Provide evidence of notification to, and approval by, the company insuring the vehicle

Vehicle Tracker

Where a tracker is fitted it must be installed by a competent professional and proof of installation will be required.

Receipts

The driver of the vehicle must offer to each passenger (or, if there is more than one passenger, at least one of those passengers) at the end of their journey a receipt containing the following information:

- (a) the date
- (b) the fare for that journey
- (c) the number of the badge issued by the Council to that driver
- (d) other information that may be specified in writing to you by Council officers.

Vehicle Plates

The plates (provided by the Council and which remain the property of the Council) identifying the vehicle as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle in respect of which this licence has been granted must be affixed to the vehicle in such manner and position as shall be prescribed by the Vehicle Licensing Policy.

The exterior licence plate and interior licence plate (also referred to as the detachable slip) issued by the Council must be clearly visible and the details legible at all times that the vehicle is being used for work.

Door Signs

Private Hire Vehicle door signs must be pre-approved by the Council's officers.

At all times when the vehicle is in use for work door signs MUST be applied to the driver's and front passenger door of such dimensions and colours as may from time to time be approved by the Council.

Signs must bear:

- the words "Private Hire - Advance Bookings Only";
- the operator's name and/or telephone number,
- but may not contain the words "Taxi" or "Cab".

Door signs must be maintained in a clean, readable and undamaged state.

Roof Lights

Private hire vehicles must not have roof signs.

Large Drivers Badge

You must make sure that there shall be displayed so that it is visible from all parts of the vehicle, whilst it is available and used for hire, an identity style badge as provided by, and which shall remain the property of, the Council, which shall have incorporated within it a photograph of your face and your badge number.

Advertisements

No advertisement or sign of any nature can be displayed on the vehicle other than an advertisement or a sign of a type authorised by the Council.

Livery

There is no livery requirements for private hire vehicles

Other Signage

Vehicles must display at least one “No Smoking” sign on at least one near-side and one off-side window to be clearly visible to passengers before entering the vehicle.

Vehicles may only display the following window stickers or signs providing that they do not obscure vision:

- (a) the Council’s official plate (the detachable slip)
- (b) the name and telephone number of a Watford hackney carriage or private hire firm, recognised by the Council
- (c) an authorised parking permit
- (d) membership of a recognised motoring organization or a hackney carriage or private hire association
- (e) disability awareness signs.
- (f) If CCTV is in use, signs notifying customers of the use, storage and access must be displayed.
- (g) A sign advertising the availability of debit or credit card facilities

Appendix 15

No other signage is permitted unless permission is expressly granted by the licensing authority on application

Appendix C

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976 ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS FOR WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

Within these conditions:

“Council” means Watford Borough Council and its officers

“Proprietor” means the person to whom the licence is granted.

Restraints

A three-point seatbelt assembly together with suitable wheelchair restraints must be provided for the use of wheelchair occupants in vehicles capable of carrying passengers in their wheelchairs.

Anchorage must be provided for the both the wheelchair and wheelchair user to the latest industry standard. Restraints for wheelchair and occupant must be independent of each other.

Ramps

A ramp(s) for the (un)loading of wheelchair passengers must be available at all times for the safe access and egress of passengers. Adequate locating device(s) must be fitted to ensure that the ramp(s) do not slip or tilt when in use. The ramp(s) must be of sufficient strength and stability such that they will not bend and will remain stable during use and must be of a safe working limit of at least 300 kg over its entire length. The ramp(s) must be capable of being stowed away securely and safely when not in use.

Ramps which are removable must be permanently legibly marked with the registration mark of the vehicle for which they are provided.

Lifting Mechanism

Lifting mechanisms fitted to any licensed vehicle must conform and be tested in accordance with the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulation 1998 (LOLER). Any costs associated with this requirement are the responsibility of the vehicle proprietor.

A valid compliance report conform to LOLER must be kept in the vehicle and be available for inspection.

Training

Where a vehicle is capable of carrying a passenger sitting in a wheelchair in the vehicle, the driver of the hackney carriage or private hire vehicle must demonstrate at time of vehicle inspection on application an ability to use the equipment provided for the carriage of passengers. All drivers must attend a disability awareness course approved by the Council.

Appendix D

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS FOR STRETCH LIMOUSINE PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCES

Within these conditions:

“Council” means Watford Borough Council and its officers

“Proprietor” means the person to whom the licence is granted.

No vehicle over 10 years old shall be licensed as a stretched limousine

Applications are accompanied by the relevant IVA inspection certificate

Vehicles are required to pass an MOT test every 6 months

That the result of this MOT test be submitted to the licensing team at the time of the test

Appendix E

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976

CONDITIONS TO BE ATTACHED IN THE CASE OF PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE SIGNAGE EXEMPTIONS

Within these conditions:

“Council” means Watford Borough Council and its officers

“Proprietor” means the person to whom the licence is granted

Door Signs

Where an Exemption Certificate has been issued for the vehicle by the Council, a magnetic sign may be applied instead to the driver’s and front passenger door providing that it meets the requirements stated in section 14.2 of the Policy and in addition contains in prominent figures the number of the vehicle plate issued to that vehicle.

The magnetic signs must be displayed on the vehicle whilst it is being used for Non-Contract Work and may be removed whilst being used for Contract Work.

Within this condition:

Contract Work means journeys undertaken for hire or reward as part of a regular course of business with a particular client or customer as determined to the satisfaction of the Council’s officers;

Non-Contract Work means all other journeys for hire or reward including those conducted for the purposes of conveying children to or from any school or educational establishment.

Vehicle Plate

The vehicle shall display a licence disc issued in place of the vehicle plate.

The disc shall be displayed in the front windscreen of the vehicle to be clearly visible at all times.