

Report

Report to:	Licensing Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 August 2023
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (As Amended) - Licensing of Taxis and Private Hire Cars – Review of Standards for Taxis and Private Hire Cars
----------	---

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ review the Standards for taxis and private hire cars

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that Clause 1 of the Standards for taxis and private hire cars be amended to provide that vehicles first registered as a licensed taxi or private hire car should be under seven years old.

3. Background

- 3.1. Requests have been received from the trade for the age of vehicles first registered as taxis and private hire cars to be increased from five years to seven years.
- 3.2. The trade has advised that this is due to the current cost of living crisis and the lack of availability of suitable second-hand cars.
- 3.3. It is the view of trade representatives as expressed in meetings of the Taxi and Private Hire Focus Groups that this has resulted in a reduction in their ability to provide a sufficient level of service to meet the needs of the travelling public.

4. Present Position

- 4.1. Currently vehicles must be under five years old when they are first registered as a licensed vehicle.
- 4.2. No other amendments to the vehicle standards are proposed at this time. The effect of the proposed amendment will therefore be that the maximum age which a vehicle can be licensed will remain at ten years. All vehicles which are more than five years old will continue to be subject to six-monthly inspections.
- 4.3. The amended standards would be as detailed in Appendix 1.

5. Employee Implications

- 5.1. None.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. None.

7. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 7.1. As there is no proposal to alter the maximum age at which a vehicle is permitted to operate as a taxi or private hire car, which will remain at ten years, it is not considered that the proposal has environmental implications. All vehicles registered after 2015 must comply with EU emission levels. If approved, this proposal will not permit any vehicle to be registered which does not comply with those emission levels.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1. The risk to the Council is that it fails to fulfil its duty to protect the public.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. There is no requirement to carry out an impact assessment in terms of the proposals contained within this report.
- 9.2. Consultation has taken place with Fleet Services in relation to this proposal and they participated in discussions at the Taxi and Private Hire Focus Groups. They have indicated that the proposals do not raise any concerns in relation to vehicle or passenger safety because no changes are proposed to the vehicle testing regime, which will remain at six-monthly intervals for vehicles over five years old.
- 9.3. Consultation with the Taxi and Private Hire Car trade has also taken place with discussions at the Focus Groups, and representatives of both groups are in agreement with the proposal.
- 9.4. The Taxi and Private Hire Focus Groups also include representation from Police Scotland and Licensing Standards Officers. The groups discussed vehicle standards and presentation generally and no concerns were expressed in relation to the proposals on the basis that any issues with individual vehicles would be dealt with at the regular inspections.

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

28 July 2023

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs

Previous References

- ◆ None

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Margaret Mary Wilson, Legal Services Manager

Ext: 4501 (Tel: 01698 454501)

E-mail: margaretmary.wilson@southlanarkshire.gov.uk



**Finance and Corporate Resources
Administration and Legal Services**

Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (as amended)

Standards for taxis and private hire cars

1. Vehicles should be under ~~five~~ **seven** years old when they are first registered as a licensed vehicle.
2. The upper age limit for any licensed saloon-type vehicle (i.e., non purpose built vehicles) is 10 years but purpose-built vehicles licensed as taxis have no upper age limit. Vehicles over five years old will be subject to a six monthly inspection with the exception of purpose built vehicles which will require a six monthly inspection once they reach seven years old.
3. The engine output shall be any number of KW.
4. The vehicle should have four or five doors. If the vehicle is an estate or hatchback, it should have two passenger windows in the back.
5. The vehicle should be designed for carrying at least four (and no more than eight) adult passengers, not including the driver.
6. The back seat of the vehicle must be at least 48 inches wide, as measured by the Licensing Authority, for a vehicle designed as being capable of carrying only four adult passengers, not including the driver. If the vehicle is designed for carrying between four and eight adult passengers, not including the driver, each seat must be at least 16 inches wide.

Taxis only – A purpose built type of vehicle is a vehicle designed and made to be used as a taxi. In this type of vehicle, the main passenger compartment at the back of the driver can seat at least four passengers and is separated from the driver by a partition which would include a sliding panel.

All new taxi operator licences to be reissued by the licensing authority will only be for vehicles accessible for wheelchair users with the exception of the Clydesdale zone as currently there is no limit on the number of taxis in that zone, the vehicles must be capable of carrying at least one 'reference wheelchair' with a passenger seated in the same.

7. The vehicle should not be left-hand drive.
8. A fire extinguisher should be fitted in an appropriate position in the vehicle.
9. The vehicle may be fitted with a specially adapted front seat for disabled passengers. This type of seat must not be fitted unless approved by the Local Authority.
10. Any changes to the colour of the vehicle, including full liveried advertising (for taxis only), should be recorded on the V5 document and a copy provided to the Licensing and Registration Section.
11. The vehicle must keep the original manufacturer's equipment (for example, seats must not be changed).
12. The vehicle should have enough space for luggage for the number of people being carried.