

Licensing and Regulatory Committee



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Taxi/Private Hire Handbook Revision	
Report No:	LIC/SE/17/009	
Report to and date:	Licensing and Regulatory Committee	31 October 2017
Portfolio holder:	Councillor Alaric Pugh Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth Tel: 07930 460899 Email: alaric.pugh@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Amanda Garnham Licensing Team Leader Tel: 01284 757132 Email: amanda.garnham@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	To make minor amendments to conditions in to the existing taxi/private hire handbook.	
Recommendation:	It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that the Licensing and Regulatory Committee: Approve and adopt the revised conditions (attached at Appendix 1) to Report No: LIC/SE/17/009.	
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Consultation:	None required.	
Alternative option(s):	Do nothing – keep the existing conditions as they are.	

Implications:			
Are there any financial implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any staffing implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any ICT implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any equality implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
	Low/Medium/ High*		Low/Medium/ High*
Revising our conditions for Drivers and vehicles up to date promotes public safety and ensures drivers meet the fit and proper person test.	Medium	Conditions are adopted under the Home Office Guidance to give control and public reassurance.	Low
Ward(s) affected:		All	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		Current Version of Handbook	
Documents attached:		Appendix 1 – Proposed handbook revisions Appendix 2 – Committee report from 11 April 2017 updating conditions	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation

1.1 The Council licences the following:

- Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Drivers
- Hackney Carriage Vehicles
- Private Hire Vehicles
- Private Hire Operators.

2. Background

2.1 The current Taxi and Private Hire handbook was adopted in its current format on 11 April 2017, it had not had any revisions made to it since 2009. See **Appendix 2** initial Committee report dated 11 April 2017.

2.2 Officers have received further feedback from the trade through forums and inspections and have proposed some further minor amendments.

3. Conditions

3.1 The proposed amendments to the conditions, see **Appendix 1**, are highlighted in red in the handbook and are as follows:

- a) **P9** and **19**, the inclusion of vaping as well as smoking to be banned from the vehicle as a place of work. Although vaping is not smoking, it still poses a distraction to the driver as vapour may obstruct a driver's view.
- b) **P24**, Transfer of vehicles. Initially there has been some confusion on when a vehicle can be transferred to a new owner and when it becomes a vehicle change on an existing licence, causing issues with age restrictions.
- c) **P25**, a reminder to adhere to the age restriction on vehicles when replaced/changed. We have reduced the age restriction from 12 months old to 3 years and 3 months. Newly plated hackneys have to be brand new on first grant, wheelchair accessible hackneys from 2008 are now 3 years and 3 months, saloon hackneys are 7 years or younger.
- d) **P28**, Advertisements on Private Hire Vehicles and the 'pre-booked stickers'. There has been some feedback on the way private hire vehicles advertise their own businesses. To negate the need for a council prescribed pre-booked sticker, we have requested that drivers include 'pre-booked only' writing on their door signs or vehicle writing on their vehicles by their next test.
- e) **P37**, adding vaping into the penalty points system.

3.2 Point c) above was brought about by hackney drivers failing to afford to change their wheelchair accessible vehicles. We reduced the age restriction from brand new replacements to 12 months. Wheelchair accessible vehicles are expensive to replace and have not been since

their first plate. To assist in keeping the fleet more economically friendly and professional, reducing the age further would promote this objective.

- 3.3 The advertising changes were mainly brought in after the trade needed clarification in what they could advertise on their vehicles, size and placement of writing and if they could incorporate 'pre-booked only' into their own signage which looks more presentable than a sticker.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 It is Officer's recommendation to make the proposed changes to the handbook based on trade feedback and enquiries.