

## **Licensed Vehicle Age Policy**

### **Introduction**

Hackney carriage and private hire vehicles are often one of the first points of contact for the travelling public and visitors and a smart and modern fleet enhances the character of the Borough and makes hackney carriages and private hire vehicles more attractive and comfortable to the fare paying public.

With this in mind Eastleigh Borough Council will facilitate continuous vehicle improvement and efficiency (whereby new vehicles are generally required to meet extant and increasingly stringent environmental, performance and safety standards) and improve vehicle standards and maintenance (by ensuring that vehicles are not already 'tired' before being licensed and therefore more likely to withstand the rigours of use) by way of this policy.

### **Emissions**

In recognition of the Council's wider role, the licensing authority will normally seek to promote and encourage vehicle proprietors to invest in vehicles and related technologies that offer the best environmental standards in terms of emissions, the use of cleaner fuels, fuel and engine efficiency (ie performance) and end of life recycling etc. By way of encouraging a well maintained more sustainable, environmentally friendly and efficient fleet and subject to all other requirements being met, vehicles will only be licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle on both first application and subsequent renewal, the vehicle meets current emission standards as those required for a MOT.

### **Alternative Fuels**

In recognition of their comparatively clean emissions, any vehicle that runs or has been suitably adapted to run on Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG), compressed Natural Gas (CNG) or Biomethane will normally be exempt from the European emission standard requirements. However for reasons of safety and environmental efficiency, this exemption shall only apply to vehicles converted from diesel to one of the three alternative fuels given above (petrol conversions will not be eligible)

### **Vehicle Age**

It is proposed that when a vehicle is first presented for licensing it shall be under 7 years old – taken from the DVLA first vehicle registration (as shown on the vehicle registration document V5) or in the case of a vehicle used outside the UK when first used on any other roads of any description. The vehicle will be inspected annually and licensed for a period of 12 months. In the case of a vehicle transfer, where the vehicle will be licensed up to the expiry date on the existing licence. When the vehicle reaches 6 years old – taken from the date of the DVLA registration (as shown

on the vehicle registration document V5) – it will be required to be inspected every 6 months at VOSA registered garage in the Eastleigh Borough. Initially the vehicle may be licensed up until the age of 15 years old – taken from the first date of the DVLA registration (registration document V5) and will then be reduced by a sliding scale down to the age of 12 years – taken from the first date of DVLA registration (registration document V5) date over a period of 4 years as follows:

1 October 2014 vehicle over the age of **15** years will no longer be licensed

1 October 2015 vehicle over the age of **14** years will no longer be licensed

1 October 2016 vehicle over the age of **13** years will no longer be licensed

1 October 2017 vehicle over the age of **12** years will no longer be licensed

The two exceptions to the above will be in respect of purpose built (ie not converted) wheelchair accessible vehicles and executive vehicles that have an exemption from the Licensing Department are appropriate to be licensed until they are fifteen years of age. The relaxation also recognises the substantial financial investment made by the owners of such vehicles. Introducing an upper age limit for licensed vehicles will assist in removing from the fleet older vehicles which do not meet more recent vehicle safety standards as set by the European New Car Assessment Programme (EuroNCAP). By way of an example, a 1997 Ford Mondeo has an adult occupancy score of 17 whereas the 2007 version of the same car has a score of 35. Ensuring the licensed vehicle fleet comprises more modern vehicles with higher safety standards and reduces the potential for serious and fatal injuries resulting from vehicle accidents.

## **Summary**

The Borough Council believes that introducing a vehicle age policy will result in a smart modern fleet which enhances the character of the Borough and makes hackney carriages and private hire vehicles more attractive to the fare paying public. Having a fleet of more modern vehicles will reduce the potential for driver and passenger injuries and address environmental concerns by ensuring that stricter emission level standards are achieved. In summary the borough Council is proposing that as from October 2014:

- Newly licensed vehicles must be no more than seven years old.
- Newly licensed vehicles must meet the current European emission standards in force at that time.
- There will an upper age limit for vehicles beyond which they will not be licensed starting with vehicles over 15 years reducing to vehicles aged over 12 years (except purposed built wheelchair accessible vehicles and vehicles which have been granted executive badges which may be licensed up to 15 years old)
- Once a vehicle is more than 6 years old it must be inspected twice a year, not annually (no change from the current policy).