

South Norfolk Council List of Changes

	Summary of changes	Page Number
	Introduction	
1.	Inclusion of three new paragraphs to explain the purpose of licensing.	4
2.	Inclusion of section "The Council's Role in Taxi Licensing".	5 - 6
3.	Further explanation for the Committee Procedure and Right of appeal.	7 - 8
4.	Amended date for implementation for all new vehicles to be ultra-low or zero emission in line with current Government targets.	10
5.	Moved section "Enforcement" from end of the current policy document.	10
	Part 1 Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver Policy	
6.	Inclusion of section "Character of the Applicant" to provide further explanation of what is to be considered as part of the application process.	11 - 12
7.	Inclusion of section, "Character of Licensed Drivers" to provide further explanation of what is to be considered as part of the application process.	12
8.	Updated age of applicant from 21 to 18 year of age.	13
9.	Explanation that a new Driver application must be processed within six months, otherwise the application will be rejected.	13
10.	Removal of the option for an applicant to provide a Declaration of Convictions where a certificate of good conduct cannot be produced.	10 in current policy document
11.	Section 7 of current policy document has been moved to "Disability Awareness and Safeguarding Training", sections in the draft policy.	17
12.	Requirement for all renewals Drivers to undertake Safeguarding training every three years in line with renewal of the Driver licence.	17
13.	Further explanation regarding demonstration of the applicant's English language standard.	18
14.	Change in number of days taken to process a renewal application for Driver, to ensure appropriate expectations around service delivery.	19
	Part 2 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Policy	
15.	Combined Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Policies for ease of use.	20
16.	Inclusion of section "Character of the Applicant" to provide further explanation of what is to be considered as part of the application process.	20

17.	Inclusion of section, "Character of Vehicle Proprietors" to provide further explanation of what is to be considered as part of the application process.	21
18.	Change of maximum age limit for existing licence vehicles from 10 years (which was to be effective from 1 April 2027) to Euro 5 emission standards. Introducing implementation periods for current licensed Euro 4 vehicles.	22
19.	Inclusion of section "Exemption to Age Limits" for special event vehicles, limousines and historic vehicles.	22
20.	Inclusion for Vehicle Proprietor to provide Basic DBS annually.	23
21.	Inclusion to have faults identified noted on the mechanical test shall be rectified at the same testing station within 2 months	24
22.	Inclusion of IVA requirement for converted Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles.	24 - 25
23.	Updated the requirement for at least three doors to be changed to a minimum of four doors	25
24.	Inclusion of use of Cargo Nets where parcel shelf/grill is not fitted in the vehicle.	25
25.	Inclusion of section, "Vehicle Registration Plates" for all vehicles to comply with DVLA guidance.	26 - 27
26.	Inclusion of section "Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) Conversions".	27
27.	Further clarification regarding "Smoke Free" vehicles.	27
28.	Inclusion of Altered Vehicle section and the types of vehicles that could/could not be licensed for hire and reward	27 - 28
29.	Removal of Transfer of Licence Plate	23 in current BDC policy
30.	Inclusion of section "Transfer of Vehicle Licence" requirements where Drivers sell a licensed vehicle to another licensed Driver.	28
31.	Inclusion of section "Trailers attached to Licensed Vehicles".	28
32.	Inclusion of section "Vehicle Replacement" to explain the procedure where existing licensed vehicles are off the road due to accident damage.	28 - 29
33.	Change in number of days taken to process a renewal application for a Vehicle, to ensure appropriate expectations around service delivery.	31
	Part 3 Private Hire Stretched Limousine Policy and conditions	
34.	Removal of the requirement to carry fire extinguishers in line with guidance.	30 in current BDC policy
	Part 4 Executive Private Hire Policy and conditions	

35.	Further clarification on the Councils determination of executive hire.	36
36.	Further clarification of the types of vehicles to be considered for use for executive hire.	36
38.	Removal of the requirement to carry fire extinguishers in line with guidance.	31 in current BDC policy
	Part 5 Private Hire Operator Policy	
39.	Inclusion of section "Character of the Applicant" to provide further explanation of what is to be considered as part of the application process.	39
40.	Inclusion of section "Character of Licensed Operator" to provide further explanation of what is to be considered as part of the application process.	40 - 41
41.	Updated age of applicant from 21 to 18 year of age.	41
42.	Explanation that additional fee will be required where the Operator increases the numbers of vehicles to be operated in line with the Council's current fee structure.	42
43.	Any new person appointed to a Company/Partnership to provide a Basic DBS certificate within 7 days of the person being appointed.	42
44.	Inclusion of section "Criminal Record" to provide further explanation of what is to be considered as part of the application process.	43
45.	Inclusion of explanation for alcohol sales, if required.	45
46.	Change in number of days taken to process a renewal application for Driver, to ensure appropriate expectations around service delivery.	45
47.	Removal of section "Licensing Process & Delegation of Functions" as this is included in the section "Introduction".	35 in current BDC policy
48.	Removal of section "Committee Procedure" as this is included in the section "Introduction".	36 in current BDC policy
	Part 7 Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver Conditions	
49.	Inclusion of section "Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Check", to provide further clarification regarding subscribing to the Update Service and the action taken for not doing so.	52
50.	Further explanation regarding the requirements for the carrying of animals in licensed vehicles.	53
51.	Further explanation regarding the requirements for the carrying of assistance dogs.	53 - 54
52.	Inclusion of section "Equality Act 2010" to provide the relevant requirements and what the Driver needs to comply with under the Act.	54 - 55
53.	Further explanation regarding the types of incidents, convictions, cautions and FPNs that need to be reported to the Licensing Team.	55
54.	Further explanation of the appearance of the Driver	55 - 56

	Part 8 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Conditions	
55.	Proof of continuous insurance to be provided 7 days before current insurance expires.	59
56.	Inclusion to repair Minor Defects and advisories on MOT within 2 months of date of MOT certificate	60
57.	Inclusion of condition re "Cargo Nets".	60
58.	Inclusion of a condition that "starlight" headliners will not be permitted in licensed vehicles.	60
59.	Inclusion of conditions for "Vehicle Daily Checks".	61
60.	Inclusion of conditions for Council door signs to be displayed on licensed vehicles to enhance public safety.	62
61.	Further clarification regarding advertising on Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicles	63
62.	Further clarification on reporting convictions, cautions, etc.	64
63.	Further clarification on the requirement to report accident damage	64 - 65
64.	Removal of the conditions for fire extinguishers.	49 & 52 in current BDC policy
65.	Inclusion of conditions for "Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) Conversions".	66
66.	Inclusion of minimum space required for wheelchairs	67
67.	Further clarification and specification for Lifts and Ramps in licensed Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles	67 - 68
68.	Inclusion of intended use for Hackney Carriage Vehicles	69
69.	Further clarification of conditions for taximeters fitted in Hackney Carriage Vehicles.	69 - 70
70.	Inclusion of section for conditions regarding inspection of taximeters.	70
	Part 9 Private Hire Operator Conditions	
71.	New condition requiring the appointment of a Manager and Deputy Manager where the Private Hire Operator is a sole proprietor.	71
72.	Inclusion of section "Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Checks" for Private Hire Operators who do not hold a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver Licence.	71 - 72
73.	Change in the period for reporting incidents from 7 days to 48 hours.	72
74.	Requirement for Private Hire Operators to notify the Licensing Team where any Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers are suffering with medical issues and/or disabilities.	73
75.	New requirement for Private Hire Operator to monitor Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver hours in line with Working Time Directive.	73
76.	Inclusion of section "Standards of Service for Operators".	76

77.	Inclusion of section "Ride Sharing and Car-Pooling" to provide clarification on ride sharing and car-pooling arrangements.	76
78	Inclusion of section "Public Service Vehicles (PSVs)" to provide clarification on when a PSV can be used to undertake pre-booked work.	76
79.	Not permitting the word "Taxi" to be displayed on a licensed Private Hire Vehicle, including within their email address.	78
80.	Making Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers aware and requiring them to sign a declaration to confirm they understand the contents of the Private Hire Operators fleet insurance policy.	79
81.	Inclusion of section "Staff" to provide Private Hire Operators the requirements regarding employing ex-offenders, keeping a register of staff.	79
82.	Further explanation regarding how Private Hire Operators should deal with lost property.	79
	Part 10 Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Policy and Specifications	
83.	Updated CCTV policy and specifications reflecting current guidance and best practice.	81 - 83
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85.	Appendix 1 Updated Convictions Policy reflecting current guidance and best practice for all new applicants and existing licensed Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers, Vehicle Proprietors and Private Hire Operators	92 - 101
86.	Appendix 3 Updated penalty points system reflecting best practice.	104 - 112

Summary of Key Changes and Likely Impact on Licence Holders

The proposed changes are intended to improve clarity, align the policy with current guidance and best practice, strengthen public safety, and provide clearer expectations around compliance and service standards.

Overall policy structure and clearer expectations

The revised policy includes additional introductory information on the purpose of licensing, the Council's role, committee procedures, rights of appeal, enforcement, and delegated decision-making. Several sections have also been moved or consolidated to make the policy easier to navigate.

Driver eligibility, character and application requirements

The policy adds further explanation of the character considerations for new applicants and licensed Drivers, updates the minimum age for applicants from 21 to 18, clarifies English language requirements, and confirms that new Driver applications must be completed within six months. It also removes the option to

provide a Declaration of Convictions where a certificate of good conduct cannot be produced.

Likely impact: Applicants may be able to enter the licensing process earlier by applying from age 18. However, clearer requirements on character, criminal records, English language standards and supporting documentation ensure the process is more robust. Applicants will need to provide complete information promptly to avoid delay or a rejected application.

Vehicle standards, emissions and maintenance

The policy combines Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle requirements and introduces or clarifies standards relating to emissions, vehicle age, Euro 5 emissions requirements, implementation periods for current licensed Euro 4 vehicles, provision of CCTV, cargo nets, registration plates, altered vehicles, trailers, temporary replacement vehicles, accident damage, MOT advisories and minor defects, daily checks, door signs and advertising.

Likely impact: The current policy includes a 10-year maximum age limit for all licensed vehicles from 1 April 2027. It is proposed to replace this with an emissions-based standard, in line with Department for Transport guidance. Vehicle Proprietors may still need to plan for future vehicle replacement, emissions compliance and any remedial work identified during testing. However, this approach is likely to be less onerous and potentially less costly than the current requirement based on a specified age limit. Clearer standards should reduce uncertainty and support consistent decision-making.

Accessibility, safeguarding and public safety

The policy provides further clarification on disability awareness, safeguarding training, the Equality Act 2010, assistance dogs, wheelchair accessible vehicle requirements, wheelchair space, lifts and ramps.

Likely impact: Drivers, Proprietors and Operators will need to ensure they understand and comply with accessibility and safeguarding duties. The overall impact should be improved passenger safety, accessibility and confidence in licensed services.

Disclosure, reporting and compliance duties

The revised policy adds clarification on DBS checks, including subscription to the Update Service, Basic DBS requirements for Operators and the action that may be taken where requirements are not met. It also clarifies the reporting of incidents, convictions, cautions, fixed penalty notices, medical issues, disabilities and accident damage.

Likely impact: Licence holders will need to be proactive in reporting relevant matters and maintaining required checks. Failure to comply may increase the risk of enforcement action or delay in processing applications.

Private Hire Operator responsibilities

The policy introduces or clarifies requirements for Operator character, criminal records, increases in vehicle numbers, monitoring driver hours, standards of service, staff records, lost property, ride sharing, car-pooling, use of PSVs, insurance declarations and restrictions on use of the word "Taxi" by private hire vehicles.

Likely impact: This may require updates to internal procedures, staff training and driver communications. The changes should support clearer accountability and reduce the risk of public confusion between Hackney Carriage and Private Hire services.