

## RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 8

meeting date: 15 SEPTEMBER 2015  
 title: RECOMMENDATION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF COUNCIL'S  
 CONDITIONS OF LICENCE FOR PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES  
 submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
 principal author: MAIR HILL - SOLICITOR

### 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To seek Committee approval of the proposed amendments to the standard conditions of licence for private hire vehicles and consequential amendments to the Council's Infringement Points Scheme.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives - }
- Corporate Priorities - } The Council aims to be a well-managed authority  
these proposals support that objective.
- Other Considerations - }

### 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The proposals for amendment and the reasons for them were reported in detail to Committee on 23 June 2015. Having considered these, Committee resolved to authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consult all licence holders upon the proposed amendments.

2.2 Pursuant to this authorisation the Council's Solicitor wrote to all licence holders to consult them. A copy of the consultation documents are enclosed with this report at **Appendix 1**.

### 3 ISSUES

3.1 The Council received 7 responses to the consultation. Those responses are detailed in tabular form at **Appendix 2**. Three of the responses are in support of the amendment and four are not and set out their reasons for opposing the change. The Council's position on each of those objections (taking each on in the order it appears in **Appendix 2** is as follows:

- The existing condition requires that the signage remain on the vehicle at all times. This is not a new requirement, and as such the Consultee should not be removing the signage when using the vehicle for private use. In doing so they are breaching their existing conditions of licence, and have been written to, to inform them of this.
- The purpose of the revised signage is to make the information upon them clearer and legible to the public. Whilst it is correct that driver's must be aware of the law, it is also important to highlight the fact to the public.

- Hackney Carriages do not require this signage as they are permitted to ply for hire and do not need to be pre booked. The public is not at risk of being driven in an uninsured vehicle by doing so as they would be in a private hire vehicle.
- The Council already has provision for executive hire operators to apply for exemption from the signage requirements. In order for the exemption to be granted an operator must be able to demonstrate that their business is wholly or mainly for a select group of private clients, and for executive type work.

3.2 For the reasons set out in the report of Committee on 23 June 2015 and in the interests of public safety, Committee is asked to approve amendment of condition 20 of the Council's standard condition of private hire vehicle licence and to the consequential amendment of the Council's Infringement Points Scheme.

#### 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources – The conditions would require amendment.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal - No implications identified.
- Political - No implications identified.
- Reputation – No implications identified.
- Equality & Diversity – No implications identified.

#### 5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Approve amendment of condition 20 of the Council's standard condition of private hire vehicle licence and to the Council's Infringement Points Scheme.

  
MAIR HILL  
SOLICITOR

  
MARSHAL SCOTT  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Report of Chief Executive dated 23 June 2015
- Ribble Valley Borough Council Private Hire Vehicle Licence Standard Conditions –

[https://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8672/private\\_hire\\_vehicle\\_licence\\_conditions](https://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8672/private_hire_vehicle_licence_conditions)

- Ribble Valley Borough Council Infringement Points Scheme

[https://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8670/infringement\\_points\\_scheme](https://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8670/infringement_points_scheme)

For further information please ask for Mair Hill, extension 3216.

REF: MJH/LICENSING/15 September 2015

## APPENDIX 1

please ask for: MAIR HILL  
direct line: 01200 413216  
e-mail: Mair.hill@ribblevalley.gov.uk  
my ref: MJH  
your ref:  
date: 2 July 2015

Dear Sirs

**RE: Consultation on changes to requirement for applicants for private hire and hackney driver's licences and to condition 20 of the standard conditions of private hire vehicle.**

I write to inform you that the Council's Licensing Committee has recently been considering potential changes to the requirements for applicants for private hire and hackney carriage driver's licences and to condition 20 of the standard conditions of private hire vehicle.

The Council's Licensing Committee considered reports on these issues on 23 June 2015. If you wish to read this report it is available on the Council's website or you can telephone Lindsay Crawford to request a copy.

The proposed changes are outlined in the attached note.

If you wish to respond with your views on the proposed change, please do so in writing using the enclosed form and submitting it to me at the above address on or before **14 August 2015**.

Please contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

MAIR HILL  
SOLICITOR  
RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

*To all private hire operators and all private hire and hackney carriage drivers and vehicle licence holders*



Ribble Valley  
Borough Council  
www.ribb.ovalley.gov.uk

**Ribble Valley Borough Council**  
**Potential changes to the requirements for an applicant for a private hire/hackney carriage driver's licence and to Condition 20 of the standard condition of licence for a private hire vehicle**

The Council's Licensing Committee discussed these matters on 23 June 2015. Committee was informed that:

**Changes to testing arrangements - applicants for hackney carriage and private hire driver's licences**

The working group established following Licensing Committee on 17 March 2015 considered that the requirements for applicants for either hackney carriage or private hire drivers should be changed as follows:

- Applicants will no longer be required to pass the steering to success course prior to applying for a licence
- Applicants will instead be required to pass the DVSA taxi driving test prior to applying for a licence (with the costs of approximately £64-75 being borne by the Applicant)
- Applicants will also be required to complete and pass the Edexcel, Level 2 NVQ in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) within 12 months of a licence being granted (with the cost of £150 being borne by the Applicant).

**Changes to private hire vehicle signage to specify the minimum size and type of font**

The standard conditions of licence for a private hire vehicle licence should be amended to incorporate revised conditions relating to signage so that condition 20 would read as follows:

*"20. A private hire vehicle must:*

- (a) not have any lights, plates, signs, advertisements or other fittings, save for those required under conditions or as approved by the Council;*
- (b) not be equipped with any roof fitting or sign other than a wireless aerial, approved by the Council;*
- (c) not display the words "Taxi", "Taxi Cab" or "Cab";*
- (d) display door signs upon its rear doors stating "Private Hire Vehicle", "Advanced bookings only" and "Not insured unless prebooked" only and the lettering within those signs must be in bold black type and not less than 15mm in height. These signs must be displayed on private hire vehicles AT ALL TIMES (including when the vehicle is not in use);**
- (e) display door signs upon its front doors which shall only include the name of the private hire operator and its telephone number. If the words "Taxi", "Taxi Cab" or "Cab" or "for hire" form part of the Operator's name these must be omitted from the sign; and**
- (f) display a sign stating "no smoking" with a minimum diameter of 70mm inside the vehicle in a position which is clearly visible to the hirer/passengers." [Emphasis added]*

The Council's Licensing Committee resolved to consult upon these issues.

**Timetable**

The next meeting of the Council's Licensing Committee will be held on 15 September 2015. It is proposed that the results of this consultation will be reported to that Committee. The Consultation will therefore run from 3 July 2015 to 14 August 2015.

More details on the above proposals can be found in the Committee report available on request or via the Council's website.

If you wish to respond with your views on the proposed change to the licensing requirements and conditions please do this by completing the enclosed form and submitting it to Mair Hill at the Council Offices on or before **14 August 2015**.



Ribble Valley  
Borough Council  
[www.r.bolevalley.gov.uk](http://www.r.bolevalley.gov.uk)

### CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

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**Licence No:** .....

**Contact details:** .....

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I support/do not support the removal of the requirement to pass the steering to success course prior to the issue of a private hire/hackney carriage driver's licence, to be replaced by a requirement to pass the DVSA taxi driver's test in advance of the issue of a licence and to complete and pass Edexcel, Level 2 NVQ in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) within 12 months of the licence being granted.

**Comments:** .....

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I support/do not support the amendment of condition 20 of the private hire vehicle licence conditions.

**Comments:** .....

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**APPENDIX 2**

**Response to Consultation on the amendment of Condition 20 of the private hire vehicle licence**

I support/do not support the amendment of condition 20 of the private hire vehicle licence	Comments
Do not support	I do not support the section (d) part where you are required to have the signage on your vehicle when not being used for private hire as we only have one vehicle which we also use for private use. We would support the vehicle signage when the vehicle was being used for private hire.
Do not support	I find the public have no comprehension of the difference between a "hackney carriage" & a "private hire" vehicle with all the additional signage it only adds to the confusion. All taxi drivers should be aware of the need to adhere to the rules regarding pick up & collection of passengers/
Support	Totally support the above.
Do not support	As a private hire and the fact that all jobs are pre-booked the customer's in majority of bookings are aware/know who will be picking them up. I personally don't see why we should have to turn our cars into some tacky looking cab with signs all over them. Providing you have plates on display and wearing ID then from a PH point of view this should suffice. 1 sign re: pre bookings/number say to the rear of the vehicle should do. (I comment as a PH operator) Hackney should provide more signage so people know what they are getting into.
Support	
Support	I have no argument against as this is for my safety as well as the passengers.
Do not Support	I feel the door signage needs further consideration for the type of business



being undertaken. The signage on vehicles would be disadvantageous for companies such as mine who cover predominantly long distance work for regular customers & for private hire business clientele. Perhaps introducing a second type of operator's licence would be an idea (as Manchester do – see attached info). The Ribble Valley has a lot of residents & business' that want nice vehicles & more than a taxi style service and I think this needs addressing. Door signs would loose my business work.

# Private hire operator

## See which licence you need

To operate private hire vehicles in Manchester, you need a private hire operator's licence.

There are 2 different types:

- [Standard private hire operator \(/directory\\_record/72597/private\\_hire\\_operator-standard\)](/directory_record/72597/private_hire_operator-standard) - to operate standard private hire vehicles. A private hire vehicle should be less than 7 years old, white or silver in colour and carry a maximum of 8 passengers. The vehicle must also display yellow Council issued stickers; or
- [Non standard private hire operator \(/directory\\_record/72570/private\\_hire\\_operator-non\\_standard\)](/directory_record/72570/private_hire_operator-non_standard) - to operate stretched limousines, chauffeur driven vehicles, park and ride for private car parks, airport travel and 'novelty' vehicles which carry a maximum of 8 passengers. They can apply for exemption from the standard conditions, they must also display approved ID stickers in the front and rear windows.

Vehicles also need to be licensed, check what type of [private hire vehicle licences \(/info/200094/taxis\\_and\\_private\\_hire/6066/private\\_hire\\_vehicle\\_licences\)](/info/200094/taxis_and_private_hire/6066/private_hire_vehicle_licences) are required.

Up to date [private hire driver and vehicle \(http://194.70.181.147/\)](http://194.70.181.147/) details and [private hire operator \(/downloads/download/6186/private\\_hire\\_operators\\_-\\_public\\_register\)](/downloads/download/6186/private_hire_operators_-_public_register) information is available by viewing the public registers.