

Appendix 2

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy Implementation Scheme (agreed March 2020)

All requirements of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy will come into effect on or after 1st May 2020 in relation to new applications, and renewals of applications, for driver, vehicle and operator licences, that are submitted on or after this date, unless stated otherwise below.

Whilst it is important that the requirements contained within the policy are introduced without unnecessary delay, the Council recognises that this must be done fairly, and reasonably to mitigate any potential negative impacts of the changes on the licensed trade.

Specific requirements will be implemented according to the scheme outlined below:

Ancillary Operator Staff

The Council requires that all staff that work in operator bases and have access to a telephony or booking records have a basic DBS check completed by the operator before their employment commences. A record must be kept of all employees who have access to these systems which should detail when a DBS check has been completed, and when this needs to be renewed.

Any operator that applies for a licence for the first time on or after 1st May 2020 must comply with this requirement.

Any operator renewing their licence on or after 1st May 2020 must comply with this requirement within three months of the licence being issued. This gives operator firms enough time to assess which members of staff must be required to have a DBS check, and process these checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service for all individuals that meet the requirements set by the Council.

Therefore, all operator firms will be compliant with the policy no later than 31st July 2021.

Refresher Training

Refresher training will be implemented from 1st May 2020. The Council will be required to design a refresher course, and this is expected to take two months to complete.

Therefore, the first training session will take place in June 2020.

Any driver who has their licence renewed in May, June or July 2020 must attend and complete a refresher session within three months of the renewal of their licence. Any driver who has not satisfactorily completed a refresher course but has had their licence renewed on the condition of attendance will have their licence suspended until they have satisfactorily completed the course.

All drivers whose current licence expires between May 2020 and August 2020 will be contacted to ensure that they are aware of these requirements and attend these sessions.

This refresher session will be free of charge for drivers, with the required funding being made available through the existing licence fees.

Driver Identification

The changes to the way that the Council allow drivers to wear their identification badge will come into effect on 1st May with the implementation of the policy. This will allow a driver to wear their badge on a lanyard, clip or in an armband.

However, the Council recognise that a redesign process needs to take place to decrease the size of the driver's badge, making it easier for drivers to wear their badge. The Council expect that the redesign process will take approximately six months. New badges will be issued to drivers at licence renewal, or on request from a driver if they would prefer the newer style of badge before the renewal of their licence. This would be at the driver's expense. It is expected that there would be a high demand for new badges upon request. The Council will process each of these requests as soon as is reasonably practicable and requests will be processed in order of date received.

Although this will create a mixed economy of badges for a period of time, it is expected that, as a minimum, all drivers would have new badges within three years of the policy being introduced. However, this date could be far sooner if the uptake of new badges on request is as expected.

Vehicle Signage

The conditions for both hackney carriage and private hire vehicles in relation to vehicle signage will come into effect on 1st May with the implementation of the policy.

However, the Council will also be undertaking a redesign process to improve the existing signage. The Council expect that the redesign process will take approximately six months.

Further to this, new signage will also be required for audio activation switches and driver identification on the dashboard. This will also be part of the redesign process and will follow the same timescales.

Once the redesign process has taken place, a date will be fixed in relation to when vehicle signage requirements will take effect. The Council expect that this date will be on or before 1st January 2021.

Camera Storage

The Council require all camera systems to hold a minimum of twenty-one days of twenty-four hour periods of footage, including audio where this has been activated. Any new applicant must comply with this requirement from 1st May 2020.

However, the Council recognise the potential financial burden on some members of the trade, and therefore require that all existing vehicles comply with the condition by 1st January 2021.

This gives the owners of licensed vehicles ample opportunity to make an appointment with their camera supplier and will not create unmanageable demand on the providers of camera systems.

The Council would request a new certificate of installation from the installer to prove that the system is compliant with the Council's policy.

Public Awareness Campaign

Once the policy has been implemented, the Council believe it may be the correct time to increase public awareness about the strength of the licensing regime in Rotherham, the safety of Rotherham licensed vehicles and what the public should expect from all licensed drivers. Officers will work alongside colleagues in the Council's communications team to create a communications plan including social media, flyers and information available on the Council's website.