

## 6. Emission Restrictions and Age :

- 6.1 The DfT Guidance asks licensing authorities to consider how far their vehicle licensing policies can and should support any local environmental policies that they may have adopted, bearing in mind the need to ensure that benefits outweigh costs. They suggest that authorities may, for example, wish to consider setting vehicle emissions standards, such as by promoting cleaner fuels.
- 6.2 The Council recognises the introduction of Clean Air Zones, (CAZ), around the country and supplies weekly data to the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, (“DEFRA”), as required.
- 6.3 Licensed Vehicles are an essential form of transport in the City of Sunderland. Many people depend on such vehicles for trips that buses and other forms of public transport are unable to fulfil.
- 6.4 Licensed Vehicles often achieve higher occupancy rates than a private car and therefore to some extent already play their part in helping to achieve environmental improvements in the City. It is important that emissions from Licensed Vehicles are reduced as far as possible. It is proposed that efforts are made to improve, as far as possible, the efficiency of Licensed Vehicles by, amongst other things, reducing the levels of CO2 emitted.
- 6.5 The Council aims to improve our environment and air quality by encouraging the use of low and ultra-low emission Licensed Vehicles, such as electric, hybrid, or liquefied petroleum gas vehicles.
- 6.6 In terms of key dates, :-
1. As from and including **1<sup>st</sup> April, 2025** the Council will not issue new Vehicle Licences in respect of vehicles aged over five years of age. This will ensure compliance with Euro 6 Emissions Standards;
  2. By 2030 the Council also aims to only issue new Vehicle Licences to ultra-low, or zero emission vehicles; and
  3. The Council has a Low Carbon Framework Document which sets out the target of Sunderland to become a net neutral carbon city by 2040. This document can be found at :  
[https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/media/22959/Sunderland-Low-Carbon-Framework/pdf/Sunderland\\_Low\\_Carbon\\_Framework1.pdf?m=637461416504170000](https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/media/22959/Sunderland-Low-Carbon-Framework/pdf/Sunderland_Low_Carbon_Framework1.pdf?m=637461416504170000)
- 6.7 Emissions from Licensed Vehicles could be reduced further by encouraging better maintenance and by switching off engines when stationary, or idling, particularly when at Taxi Ranks. It is proposed that these issues be addressed with Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade via education and promotion.

6.8 The Council is committed to improving air quality and to continue to reduce vehicle emissions within the City. This is shown by the commitment to tougher emission standards for all Licensed Vehicles and longer-term plans aimed at promoting “cleaner vehicles”, expanding the electric charging infrastructure to encourage uptake of electric vehicles amongst the taxi trade, as well as educational interventions.

6.9 As to vehicles submitted for licensing as a Hackney Carriage, or Private Hire Vehicle **prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2025**, the below existing age restriction provisions will continue to be applied, :-

- (1) Except for those vehicles that are considered to be "*exceptionally well maintained*", :-
  - (i) No vehicle over five years old, (ie. from the date of first registration), will be accepted for initial licensing;
  - (ii) No existing Licensed Vehicle, except those specified in (iii) below, will be accepted for further licensing once it has reached seven years of age from the date of first registration; and
  - (iii) No existing Licensed Vehicle licensed to carry five, or more passengers will be accepted for further licensing once it has reached ten years of age from the date of first registration;
- (2) Subject to the provisions set out in Section 50(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, all vehicles licensed outside of the provisions as specified in (1)(ii), or (1)(iii) above will be subjected to no more than three separate mechanical inspections during any one period of twelve months;
- (3) In relation to the initial licensing of a vehicle "*exceptionally well maintained*" means that, :-
  - (i) The vehicle is in excellent mechanical condition;
  - (ii) The vehicle is in all respects safe and roadworthy with no signs of corrosion to the mechanical parts, chassis, underside, or body work;
  - (iii) Evidence is produced, (ie. the vehicle service record), to demonstrate that the vehicle has been correctly and regularly serviced by a reputable garage in accordance with the manufacturer's service specification;
  - (iv) The exterior of the vehicle is in near perfect condition with no dents, damage, or signs of corrosion. The paintwork is in excellent condition;
  - (v) The interior of the vehicle is in near perfect condition. The upholstery, linings, seats and floor coverings are perfectly clean with no holes, tears, or signs of wearing; and
  - (vi) The boot, or luggage compartment is in good condition, clean and uncluttered.
- (4) In relation to existing Licensed Vehicles currently under consideration for the renewal of a Licence as either a Hackney Carriage, or Private

Hire Vehicle, (but not those vehicles whose Licences have elapsed), "*exceptionally well maintained*" means that, :-

- (i) The Licensed Vehicle is in excellent mechanical condition;
- (ii) The Licensed Vehicle is in all respects safe and roadworthy with no signs of corrosion to the mechanical parts, chassis, underside, or body work;
- (iii) The Licensed Vehicle must have passed on first examination all of the Council's vehicle inspections since the last grant of a Licence as a Hackney Carriage, or Private Hire Vehicle;
- (iv) The Licensed Vehicle must not have been the subject of any suspension notice issued by the Council in relation to a defective tyre, or any mechanical defect since the last grant of a Licence;
- (v) The exterior of the Licensed Vehicle is in near perfect condition with no dents, damage, or signs of corrosion. The paintwork is in excellent condition;
- (vi) The interior of the Licensed Vehicle is in near perfect condition. The upholstery, linings, seats and floor coverings are perfectly clean with no holes, tears, or signs of wearing; and
- (vii) The boot, or luggage compartment is in good condition, clean and uncluttered.

6.10 As to vehicles submitted for licensing as a Hackney Carriage, or Private Hire Vehicle **on, or after 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2025**, the following age restrictions will apply as from and including the 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2025, :-

- (a) No vehicle will be granted an initial Licence, unless the vehicle is aged under five years of age;
- (b) No vehicle Licence, other than for a Minibus,(8 seat capacity), or a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle, (WAV), will be renewed, unless the vehicle is aged under 10 years of age; and
- (c) No Minibus, (8 seat capacity), or WAV will be renewed, unless the vehicle is under 12 years of age.

6.11 Any vehicle to be licensed must be suitable so as to comply fully with the requirements of the prospective Licence in respect of the fitness, suitability, colour, size and type of vehicle and any obligatory fixtures and fittings. Reference is made to the specifications set out in **Appendix 7**.

6.12 All "full electric" and "zero emission at source" vehicles are exempt from the above age standards.