



## TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2022

Welcome to our second email newsletter. In this edition, we wish to update you on our first safeguarding session, and the results of the hackney carriage policy consultation. Moreover, we wish to provide a reminder on meter testing and give some important pointers about the DBS Update Service. Unless you maintain your Update Service details correctly your registration will likely expire and you will need to gain a new DBS and sign up again.

### Safeguarding Training for Drivers

The first safeguarding session which ran on the 5 October was a success, feedback was positive and those attending the event engaged well with Karen Anderson the trainer. Karen has a wealth of experience in this field and makes the course very relevant to the taxi trade. We have asked members of the Council's Licensing and Community Safety Committee to attend one of the sessions, so they too can see the benefit in this new requirement for licensed drivers to attend.

Thank you to those who have now booked onto sessions, they are getting booked up.

Please remember that these sessions will be mandatory for drivers to have attended/booked onto prior to the 1 January 2023, so you must take action now. Moreover, these sessions are currently free and after funding has been utilised payment will be required.

In light of drivers citing that they would prefer an even greater selection of times we have added a new session between 11am and 1pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> December. As such dates of availability include the following.

- Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October - 17.00hrs to 19.00hrs
- Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November - 15.00hrs to 17.00hrs
- Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December - 15.00hrs to 17.00hrs
- Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December – 11.00hrs – 13:00hrs NEW DATE!
- Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December - 10.00hrs to 12.00hrs
- Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December - 10.00hrs to 12.00hrs
- Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December - 15.00hrs to 17.00hrs

To book onto the training, use our online booking form at:

[www.northdevon.gov.uk/bookings](http://www.northdevon.gov.uk/bookings)

### Meter Tests

Please be reminded that taxi meters must be sealed by the Council after the new tariff has been inserted. We are concerned that few drivers are coming forward for meter tests. We will take seriously a meter with the new tariff that hasn't been sealed, and question the fitness and

propriety of any driver avoiding this process. Please refer to the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy for information about this if you are in any doubt.

To book a meter test, use our meter test booking form at:

[www.northdevon.gov.uk/bookings](http://www.northdevon.gov.uk/bookings)

## **DBS Update Service – Maintenance of your details**

Once you have signed up to the DBS Update Service, there is a necessity to keep your details up to date. Failure to do so is likely to lead to the expiry of your registration and then there will be a necessity to acquire a new DBS and sign up to the Update Service again.

Registration lasts for one year and there is a requirement for you to re-register so you can remain a licensed driver. The service costs £13 per year and starts from the date your DBS certificate was issued. The fee is payable by debit or credit card only to the DBS.

You will get a reminder from the Update Service to renew your subscription. Remember you might need to check your junk inbox for this email.

You must update the Update Service if any of the following applies:

- change of payment details
- change of correspondence address
- change of phone number
- change of email address

### Changes to personal information or contact details

You can change your email, mobile phone number or correspondence address at any time by logging into your [DBS Update Service account](#)

You can also amend your payment details, however this can only be done within 30 days of the renewal date of your subscription, and if you have selected to automatically renew.

If you change your current address, your DBS certificate will still be valid. Your address is just one piece of information used when searching the Police National Computer (PNC) for conviction information. If you are convicted of an offence when subscribed, the DBS Update Service system will link the offence to you and cause the status of your DBS certificate to change.

You can amend your address details in your account. This does not update your DBS certificate which would still be at your old address.

If you change your name you will need to apply for a new DBS check to replace existing, linked certificates. Once your new applications are linked to your Update Service account you can remove your old certificates.

If the names declared on a certificate attached to a subscription change or are incorrect, the DBS Update Service reserve the right to cancel the incorrect DBS certificates attached to that subscription.

## **Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy**

The Council's Licensing and Community Safety Licensing Committee met on the [22nd September 2022](#) to consider the feedback gained via the policy consultation. 52 responses to

the consultation were gained and as a result there have been a number of proposed changes to the draft policy as set out in the [report](#)

A summary of the changes proposed as a result of the consultation include:

- Amendment to the proposal to update vehicle age criteria (reduce the upper age limit for first plating to 3 years) amended to maintaining the current 5-year upper limit, but with the additional criteria of vehicle being compliant with Euro 6 emission standards.
- Changes to the proposal to introduce an upper age-limit for renewal, from an age-related-criteria (10 years maximum), to an emission related criteria “Vehicles must comply with the Euro 6 emission standard or above (or recognised UK equivalent)”. It is also proposed to delay the implementation of this policy point until 1st January 2026 to take account of the financial impact of Covid-19, and the current volatility in used-car prices.
- Similarly, for wheelchair accessible vehicles the proposal has also been amended to an emission rather than age related criteria “Diesel vehicles must comply with the Euro 5 emission standard or above (or recognised Page 6 Agenda Item 6 UK equivalent). Petrol vehicles must comply with the Euro 4 emission standard or above (or recognised UK equivalent).

In addition to the previously proposed Policy changes and subsequent amendments, a number of other minor policy changes were proposed for approval. These follow:

- Amendment to the Policy wording on vehicle testing at sections 3.11 (Hackney carriage vehicles), and 7.12 (PHV) to give further clarity as to the time period acceptable for these tests.
- Update and amendment to the Vehicle Inspection Report Sheet found within Appendix B.
- Amendment to the proposed wording for Private Hire Vehicles to display “Private Hire Advance Booking Only” signage, to allow for Private Hire Operators to include this wording within their own signage (subject to conformance with the criteria set out in the amended wording at Appendix M section 3.1).
- Amendment to the proposed wording on vehicle write-offs (Appendix A Section 1.5), to include further examples/ guidance on the documentary evidence which can be submitted as evidence of safety/ suitability of the vehicle post repair.
- Additional proposed wording within the Notifications section of the Private Hire Licensing Driver Conditions (Appendix O Section 3.2), to make it an additional requirement for Licenced Drivers to notify the Licensing Authority where they are notified by the Police of an allegation of an offence by them that the Police are investigating

Strategy and Resources Committee will hear the recommendation to approve the above proposed amends on the 7 November, and make a final decision for approval.