

Purpose and Scope

Appendix A

At our Licensing Committee on 4th September 2012, members agreed to: -

1. commence consultation and fully explore the implications of an annual, bi-annual and 3 year driver licence,
2. a review of the administrative processes associated with any changes to the driver licence arrangements

Introduction

The consultation period is between 26th November 2012 and 22nd February 2013.

Background

The Council is required to make a cut of £1.3m from its revenue budget as part of its medium term financial strategy.

It seems prudent therefore to review the Council's procedures and fees, whilst at the same time balancing the need for effective regulation of the taxi trade.

Proposals

The Council are therefore commencing consultation in relation to the following proposals:

- An increase in the duration of hackney carriage and private hire driver licence to from 1 to 3 years
- A removal of the annual statutory declaration, replacing this with an annual direct check of the DVLC licence, which would be a more administratively efficient and robust
- The CRB check would remain every 3 years, which would be consistent and in line with the increase in the duration of the hackney carriage and private hire driver licence to 3 years
- A phased approach into this to ensure an even distribution of licences expiring within each of the 3 years

Fees

Council is allowed to recover from the grant of a driver's licence, such fees as they consider reasonable to recover the cost of issue and administration. Consideration of the cost of a driver badge, has not been reviewed since 2007, a review of the fees for driver badges will be undertaken separately.

Provisional Proposals for Consultation Hackney carriage and private hire drivers

Driver badge duration

The council is proposing to extend the duration of a hackney carriage and private hire driver badge to a period of 3 years from 1 year. Please indicate your preferred duration of a hackney carriage and private hire driver badge. Please circle to indicate your preference below

I prefer a 1 year licence

I prefer a 2 year licence

I prefer a 3 year licence

Comments:

Direct DVLC Licence check

It is proposed to adopt a procedure for a direct check on a hackney carriage and private hire drivers DVLC licence. It should be noted that should this procedure be adopted, this will NOT replace the hackney carriage and private hire drivers requirement to, within 14 days of conviction, disclose to the Council in writing details of any conviction, police caution or fixed penalty ticket other than a parking fine, imposed on him during the period of the licence.

In order to do this, hackney carriage and private hire drivers will be required to sign a mandate form that permits the Council to carry out DVLC checks in relation to the hackney carriage and private hire drivers driving history. If approved, the Council intends to utilize the services of a private company to carry out these searches.

Comments:

Statutory declaration

We are proposing to remove the requirement that hackney carriage and private hire driver's must obtain an annual statutory declaration, which currently costs drivers £5 each year, if the direct check on a hackney carriage and private hire drivers DVLC licence is introduced.

Comments:

Phased adoption

It is proposed to phase in any new procedure regarding the length of a hackney carriage and private hire driver's licence. For example, should the Council adopt a hackney carriage and private hire driver's licence that would run for a 3 year duration, hackney carriage and private hire drivers would remain on an annual licence until such time as they are required to obtain their enhanced disclosure from the CRB. This is to ensure that renewal application requirements are as evenly spread as is practicably possible over the 3 year period.

Comments:

Please return your completed comments to: Licensing and Enforcement Unit, Rossendale Borough Council, Town Centre Offices, Lord Street, Rawtenstall. BB4 7LZ.