

Rother District Council

Report to:	Licensing and General Purposes Committee
Date:	17 April 2023
Title:	Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy and Guidance
Report of:	Head of Service-Environmental Services, Licensing and Community Safety
Ward(s):	All
Purpose of Report:	HM Government expects all Licensing Authorities to have a cohesive document which includes and covers hackney carriage and private hire policies and procedure. This report presents the policy document that has been developed and amended to ensure that it complies with current recommendations and best practice. It makes it clear what standards are expected for licensed operators, drivers and vehicle proprietors.
Recommendation:	It be RESOLVED : That the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy and Guidance 2023 be adopted.

Background

1. HM Government stated in its Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Standards Report 2020 that Licensing Authorities should review their Licensing Policies every five years. It is important that changes in the policy reflect those in the taxi industry both locally and nationally and generally comply with the national Statutory Standards Report 2020.
2. Rother District Council has a group of documents that provide an overview of arrangements for hackney carriage and private hire licensing. Currently, the main document that applies to this area is the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Handbook 2017. There is also further practical guidance and information on our website and a separate Criminal Convictions Policy.
3. The proposed policy sets out what the Council, as the licensing authority, requires regarding applications and what is expected from licensed drivers, vehicle owners and operators.
4. Detailed information in the policy is provided regarding:
 - driver licences, eligibility, expectations and requirements if a person wishes to make an application including medical fitness;
 - the Council's Criminal Convictions policy;
 - fares and taximeters;
 - vehicles and the standards required;
 - operators working outside of the district;
 - investigation of complaints; and
 - hackney carriage ranks.

5. The policy provides information about relevant legislation in this area, what is meant by the term 'fit and proper', suspension, revocation and refusal.
6. The policy does not include a requirement to make CCTV mandatory, which is the subject of a separate report.
7. To make clear where amendments have been made, a document clarifying the changes has also been produced, as set out in Appendix B.
8. Members are requested to consider the amendments made and agree these changes.
9. When considering the Policy, it is important to remember that its primary aim is to protect the public.

Conclusion

10. HM Government have advised that Local Licensing Authorities need to review their Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policies. A review has been undertaken and the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy and Guidance 2023 has been produced in accordance with guidance in the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards 2020.

Risk Assessment

11. The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and Guidance should comply with national standards and be reviewed every five years.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	External Consultation	No
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	No	Exempt from publication	No

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Appendices:	Appendix A- The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and Guidance 2023 Appendix B- Amendments to existing policy
Relevant Previous Minutes:	LG17/08 LG21/20
Background Papers:	None
Reference Documents:	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-standards