

Appendix D Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Specifications

Requirements for all licensed vehicles

General: The vehicle and its fittings must, when being presented for inspection and at all times during when it is licensed and available for hire:

- (a) Be safe
- (b) Comfortable
- (c) Odour free
- (b) Tidy
- (c) Clean

Age/Emissions: the vehicle meets the Council's Age/Emissions Policy

Original specification: vehicle should be of manufacturers' original specification

Appearance: The vehicle must be maintained throughout the term of the vehicle licence to a high standard of appearance to the complete satisfaction of the Council.

Damage free: All paintwork will be professionally finished and the vehicle free from dents and damage to either bodywork or fittings. Bare metal, primer paint, visible rust and perforations will not be permitted.

Salvaged or Insurance Write-Off Vehicles: 'Salvaged' or 'insurance write-off' vehicles, apart from category N, will not be accepted by the Council for licensing purposes. Category N write offs will require a new M.O.T. Certificate dated after the write-off

Number of passengers: Constructed and designed for the Carriage of not more than 8 passengers. The passenger carrying capacity will be at the discretion of the Council however shall usually be such for the carriage of not less than 4 and not more than 8 passengers. All vehicles must be able to seat all passengers in comfort with sufficient legroom for all passengers.

Communication with the driver: The vehicle has sufficient means by which any person in the vehicle may communicate with the driver

Seats: All seats must be forward or rear facing. The seat covering must be clean and in a good state of repair.

Seat belts: the provision of a seatbelt for each passenger.

Road Tax: The vehicle must hold a valid vehicle excise licence.

Mirrors: The vehicle must have two external driving mirrors.

Roof: The vehicle must have solid roof which must be kept watertight. Convertibles or soft-tops will not be allowed but sunroofs may be permitted if not in excess of 50% of the roof area.

Doors: In the interest of safety each vehicle should have a minimum 4 doors, which are capable of being opened from the inside. If the vehicle is a minibus, transit or people carrier type it has at least three doors, not including any tailgate or rear door

Interior light: Interior light must be in working order.

Right-hand drive: The steering wheel of the vehicle must be on the right-hand or offside of the vehicle, although exceptions will be considered, e.g., stretch limousines.

'No smoking' signage: as prescribed by the Health Act 2006, 'no smoking' signage must be displayed in licensed hackney carriages or private hire vehicles

Fire extinguishers: There shall be provided and maintained in the vehicle when it is in use or available for hire a suitable and efficient extinguisher (approximately 1kg dry powder type, or 2kg foam type larger vehicles e.g., minibuses)

The fire extinguisher must be kept in good working order either mounted in the driver's compartment or mounted in the boot in such a position as to be readily available for use.

The fire extinguisher must display a valid upcoming expiry date or must be fitted with a pressure gauge indicating that the pressure is still within working parameters.

Fire Extinguishers must be replaced when either their manufacture warranty expires or when the pressure gauge indicating that the pressure is no longer within working parameters.

The extinguisher must be indelibly marked with the plate number of the vehicle prefixed by either HC/PH (Hackney Carriage/Private Hire) corresponding to the type of hire vehicle and the registration number of the vehicle.

First Aid Kit: A suitable motorist's first aid kit must be carried within the interior of the vehicle and readily available to passengers on request. The body of the kit must be indelibly marked with the plate number of the vehicle.

The contents of the first aid kit must be suitable for the number of possible passengers.

The first-aid kit must be maintained in full and proper order with items replaced before expiry.

Spare wheels: All vehicles must carry as a minimum a serviceable spare wheel, jacking equipment and wheel brace, securely stored.

Alternatively, evidence must be produced of a contract with a reputable roadside recovery/tyre replacement company to attend and replace the wheel/tyre, or evidence of adequate in-house recovery arrangements must be provided.

Space savers are acceptable, but a conventional wheel and tyre must be fitted at the earliest available opportunity and, in any case, prior to commencing any future journey.

An emergency puncture repair kit will be considered as an acceptable alternative only if supplied as standard by the manufacturer.

Vehicles need not carry a spare wheel if all wheels are fitted with a suitable 'run flat' tyre mechanism on all four wheels. In the case of a 'run flat' tyre getting a puncture, the tyre must be replaced at the earliest opportunity or in any case on or before the maximum number of miles recommended by the manufacturer is travelled.

Requirements for hackney carriages only

Card Payment Terminals: The vehicle meets the Council's Card Payment Terminal Policy

Taximeters in hackney carriages: Hackney carriage vehicles shall be fitted with a meter.

All licensed hackney carriage vehicles shall be fitted and operated with a clock-calendar controlled meter from 6th February 2023.

Display of fare chart: The Council's fare chart must be displayed clearly in the vehicle for passengers to view.

No post manufacture Tinted Windows: No hackney carriage vehicle shall be fitted with dark or tinted windows (other than factory fitted windows when the vehicle was manufactured). Film used to tint windows shall not be permitted.

Requirements for Private hire Vehicles only

Prohibition on taximeters in private hire vehicles: All Private Hire vehicles must not have a taxi meter fitted. Private Hire Vehicles presented for application from this date with a taxi meter fitted will not be licensed.

A digital mobile device which calculates fares using GPS is not considered to be a taxi meter and for clarity these devices are permitted in private hire vehicles.

Must not look like a hackney carriage: private hire vehicles must not be of such design and appearance as to lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a hackney carriage. The Council has therefore specified that a private hire vehicle

shall not be similar to any vehicle specified by the Transport for London (TFL) as a hackney carriage, e.g. TX4, TX2, Fairway or Metrocab.