

REPORT FROM: REGENERATION SERVICES
ENGINEERING & SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER
TO: TAXI LICENSING COMMITTEE
DATE: 8th March 2012

Report Author: Jackie Allen
Tel. No: 01282 661638
E-mail: jackie.allen@pendle.gov.uk

VEHICLE CONVERSIONS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the pre-licensing conditions for vehicles that have been adapted or modified since manufacture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive be recommended to approve the attached pre-licensing condition for applications for all hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure all vehicles and vehicles with adaptations or modifications meet the required standards for the safe carriage of passengers.

BACKGROUND

1. The Council is responsible for the licensing of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles for vehicles capable of seating no less than 4 and no more than 8 passengers.
2. Some applications being submitted for the licensing of minibuses and wheelchair accessible vehicles are for vehicles that have been converted from vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of goods only (N1 category) and have only been constructed and tested for this use.

ISSUE

3. Vehicles for the carriage of goods are not designed to carry passengers and when seat belts are fitted the anchorages may not be strong enough, the extra weight of the seats may not be suitable or fitted correctly and the braking system may not be adequate for the extra weight in the vehicle.

4. All vehicles designed for passenger use are vehicle type approved as either M1 which is vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers and comprising of no more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat or M2 which is for vehicles with more than 8 seats and having a maximum mass exceeding 5 tonnes.
5. An M1 or M2 may have been converted to carry wheelchairs; therefore, extra checks should be in place to ensure this has been carried out safely and to the required standards.

CONCLUSION

6. To ensure all applications for vehicles that have been converted from a goods vehicle or converted into a wheelchair accessible vehicle, the attached pre-licensing conditions have been submitted for approval.
7. These conditions are the same that Burnley Borough Council introduced approximately twelve months ago, and for consistency, it is proposed that Pendle adopt the same standards.

IMPLICATIONS

- Policy:** There is no policy in force for vehicle conversions.
- Financial:** None arising directly from the report.
- Legal:** None arising directly from the report.
- Risk Management:** None arising directly from the report.
- Health and Safety:** None arising directly from the report.
- Sustainability:** None arising directly from the report.
- Community Safety:** The pre-licensing conditions would ensure all vehicles conversions have been correctly adapted or modified for their intended use.
- Equality and Diversity:** None arising directly from the report.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Pre-licensing conditions for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976
REQUIREMENT FOR THE ISSUE OF A PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE**

Pendle Borough Council will only accept an application to licence a private hire vehicle if the vehicle complies with the following specifications:

Private Hire

Satisfy the Council that the vehicle is in a suitable condition, is both safe and comfortable for passengers, and suitable in type, size and design for use as a private hire vehicle and that there is in force a policy of insurance covering it for private hire use.

Shall not be a London style hackney carriage or similar vehicle.

The vehicle will be suitable in type, size and design for use as a private hire vehicle if it meets the following specification:

Be a saloon, estate or minibus capable of seating not less than four nor more than eight passengers in reasonable comfort and have not less than three doors through which passengers may enter and leave the vehicle conveniently, safely and comfortably, and have reasonable accommodation for luggage;

Not be a stretch limousine unless it can be shown to the satisfaction of the Committee by evidence from the manufacturer that the method of construction has not affected the safety of the vehicle;

Not be more than seven years old when first licensed and no more than nine years old on renewal **or** if manufactured or adapted to allow for wheelchair accessibility no more than seven years old when first licensed and no more than twelve years on renewal.

Be a right hand drive vehicle;

Not be of a red or multi coloured;

Have adequate lighting for the interior of the vehicle and an adequate heating system for the driver and passengers, with means of control by the driver;

Carry a spare wheel and tool kit to change a wheel;

Carry a suitable fire extinguisher and first aid kit;

Not convey luggage by means of the roof; and

Have a clear emergency exit.

Hackney Carriage

Satisfy the Council that the vehicle is in a suitable condition, is both safe and comfortable for passengers, and suitable in type, size and design for use as a hackney carriage and that there is in force a policy of insurance covering it for public hire.

The vehicle will be suitable in type, size and design for use as a hackney carriage if it is either a London style hackney carriage, or a saloon or estate car with at least four doors and reasonable accommodation for luggage and capable of seating not less than four nor more than eight passengers. The vehicle must meet the following specifications

Not be more than seven years old when first licensed and no more than nine years old on renewal **or** if manufactured or adapted to allow for wheelchair accessibility no more than seven years old when first licensed and no more than twelve years on renewal.

A London style hackney carriage vehicle not more than ten years old when first licensed and no more than fifteen years old on renewal.

Not be a stretch limousine unless it can be shown to the satisfaction of the Committee by evidence from the manufacturer that the method of construction has not affected the safety of the vehicle.

Be a right hand drive vehicle;

A saloon or estate car of red colour approved by the Council;

Have adequate lighting for the interior of the vehicle and an adequate heating system for the driver and passengers, with means of control by the driver;

Carry a spare wheel and tool kit to change a wheel;

Carry a suitable fire extinguisher and first aid kit;

Have a clear emergency exit; and

There shall be fixed to the roof of the vehicle a sign to the satisfaction of the Council being the words "FOR HIRE". The sign shall be connected to the taximeter in such a way as to ensure that when the vehicle is standing or plying for hire the sign is illuminated and when the vehicle is hired and the taximeter is in operation the sign is not illuminated and not legible.

Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles

The vehicle must be type approved. You will be required to provide the necessary confirmation that the vehicle is approved – a V5 registration document (log book) indicating that the vehicle is M1 type approved (shown in the vehicle category at line J), or in the case of minibuses, that the vehicle was manufactured as an M2 vehicle, which is a minibus with more than 8 passenger seats, and the only modification is the removal of the rearmost seats to reduce the seating capacity. The V5 will show M2 in the Vehicle Category at line J.

Vehicles converted from vans or imported from outside the EU will be required to have passed a VOSA Voluntary Individual Vehicle Approval inspection. The relevant certificate will be required before such a vehicle can be licensed.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

Any vehicle that has been adapted or modified to accommodate disabled passengers shall be re-certified, after adaptation or modification, to meet the European Whole Vehicle (M1 or M2) Type Approval standard, the British National Low Volume Type (M1 or M2) Approval standard or the Voluntary Individual Single Vehicle Approval in respect of all such adaptations or modifications. The relevant certificate will be required before such a vehicle can be licensed.

Access to and egress from the wheelchair must not be obstructed in any manner, at any time, except by wheelchair loading apparatus.

Wheelchair internal anchorage points and equipment must be of the manufacturers design and construction and comply with the M1 or M2 standards as specified in European Directive 76/115 EEC (as amended by 90/629 EEC) and should be secured in such a position as to not obstruct any emergency exit when the equipment is not in use.

A suitable, separate restraint (seat belt) must be available for the occupant of the wheelchair.

Access ramps or lifts must be securely fixed to the vehicle prior to use and be able to support the weight of any wheelchair, occupant and helper.

Ramps and lifts must be securely stored in the vehicle before driving off; such devices shall have a minimum load rating of 300kg.

The vehicle shall be fitted with a locking mechanism, or other device, that holds the wheelchair access door in the open position whilst a wheelchair is being loaded or unloaded.

Any equipment fitted to the vehicle for the purpose of lifting a wheelchair into the vehicle must have been tested in accordance with the requirements of the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (S/I 1998/2307). Any such equipment must be maintained in efficient working order so as to be available for use at all times.

A sign may be affixed to the outside of the vehicle indicating that it is able to convey passengers in wheelchairs, provided that the vehicle has been manufactured or properly adapted for that purpose.