
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Age Limits – Consideration of Responses to Consultation

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor M Dormer
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Simon Wilkes – Director of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
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Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	N/A
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Licensing Committee consider the responses received during the consultation exercise and **RESOLVE** to adopt the draft revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy shown at **Appendix 3** with effect from 1st September 2026.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 9th March 2026 the Licensing Committee directed officers to undertake a consultation with all relevant stakeholders on increasing the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles age limits, in regard to renewal applications, by one year.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council's current policy requirements for Hackey Carriage and Private Hire vehicle renewal applications are set out in section 3.4 and 3.5 of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy respectively. Sections 3.4 and 3.5 of the policy is given as **Appendix 1**. The current policy on vehicle age limits for renewal applications is contained within these sections and has been highlighted in yellow within Appendix 1.
- 3.2 A consultation to ascertain views on an increase by one year on all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle age limit requirements in respect of renewal applications was conducted between 20th April 2026 and 15th June 2026.

- 3.3 The consultation was undertaken using an online survey tool so that people completing the survey would be able to use freely available online translation tools to translate the questions being asked into any language of their choosing.
- 3.4 A link to the online survey was sent to all licence holders, Redditch Borough Councillors and other relevant stakeholders including but not limited to:
- Relevant national trade bodies
 - Worcestershire County Council
 - West Mercia Police
 - The Community Safety Team
 - Parish Councillors
- 3.5 The consultation was also displayed on Redditch Borough Council's current consultations webpage, providing a link to the online survey so that any member of the public could also respond.
- 3.6 In total, 130 people responded to the consultation.
- 3.7 The consultation sought views on increasing the vehicle age limits on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles for renewal applications by one year across all vehicle categories as set out in the current licensing policy.
- 3.8 A document showing the questions asked as part of the consultation exercise and a summary of the responses received to those questions can be seen at **Appendix 2**.
- 3.9 The consultation results showed that over 80% of respondents were in favour of the vehicle age limit increase by one year for renewal applications, across all vehicle categories. A summary of the responses is given below –

Vehicle category and proposed vehicle renewal age limit	Yes	No	Don't Know
Category A - vehicles fully powered by electric or hydrogen that are NOT wheelchair accessible vehicles - Under 16 years of age Category AX - vehicles fully powered by electric or hydrogen that ARE wheelchair accessible vehicles - Under 18 years of age	83.08%	13.85%	3.08%

Vehicle category and proposed vehicle renewal age limit	Yes	No	Don't Know
Category B - vehicles that are ultra-low emission vehicles that are NOT wheelchair accessible vehicles - Under 14 years of age Category BX - vehicles that are ultra-low emission vehicles that ARE wheelchair accessible vehicles - Under 16 years of age	85.8%	12.31%	2.31%
Category C - vehicles that meet Euro 6 (diesel) or Euro 4 (petrol) emission standards that are NOT wheelchair accessible vehicles - Under 12 years of age Category CX - vehicles that meet Euro 6 (diesel) or Euro 4 (petrol) emission standards that ARE wheelchair accessible vehicles - Under 14 years of age	82.31%	14.62%	3.08%
Category D - vehicles that DO NOT MEET Euro 6 (diesel) or Euro 4 (petrol) emission standards that are NOT wheelchair accessible vehicles - Under 11 years of age Category DX - vehicles that DO NOT MEET Euro 6 (diesel) or Euro 4 (petrol) emission standards that ARE wheelchair accessible vehicles - Under 14 years of age	80.77%	14.62%	4.62%

- 3.10 Comments provided by respondents give a varied view on the proposal. Some respondents have raised concerns that extending the current vehicle age policy limit by one year will lead to poorly maintained vehicles both in terms of mechanical maintenance and interior and exterior conditions whilst others have said that the proposals should go further suggesting the age limit on renewal vehicles should be extended beyond an additional one year and that there should not be a separate age limit for new vehicles.

3.11 Sections 3.17.2 and 3.17.3 of the current policy states the following –

Programmed Inspections of Licensed Vehicles

3.17.2 *A licence to use a vehicle as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle will not be granted or renewed unless the vehicle has been inspected and found to be safe and fit for use in accordance with the Council's criteria for licensing vehicles for such use.*

3.17.3 *Additionally all vehicles must be presented for further inspection within a four week period beginning on the date six months after the licence issue date.*

3.12 If a vehicle is found to be unsafe and not fit for use at anytime during the lifetime of the licence, either through routine or non-routine inspection, and regardless of the vehicles age, the vehicle licence may be suspended or revoked.

3.13 A number of respondents have mentioned the positive financial implications to the taxi and private hire trade of increasing the vehicle age limit and suggested that an increase in the vehicle age limit policy will make the local trade more competitive with other neighbouring or near-by local authorities.

3.14 The primary purpose of hackney carriage and private hire licensing is to ensure public safety by ensuring that both drivers and vehicles are “fit and proper”, or in modern parlance “safe and suitable”. When considering vehicles as “fit and proper” the financial situation of the vehicle proprietor/licence holder is not a consideration. Any vehicle age limit must be focused on ensuring public safety.

3.15 The respondents were also asked to identify in what capacity they were responding to the consultation. The breakdown of all of the responses received to this question was:

Licensed Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver	105	80.77%
Licensed Private Hire Operator	16	12.31%
Councillor	3	2.31%
Member of the Public	19	14.62%
Other	2	1.54%

- 3.16 Members are now asked to consider the responses received during this consultation exercise and decide whether they wish to adopt the draft revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy in respect of vehicle renewal applications as shown at **Appendix 3** with effect from 1st September 2026. The revised sections have been highlighted in blue within Appendix 3.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The costs associated with carrying out the consultation exercise were met from existing budgets held by Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Proper consultation on any proposals to amend the Council's policies minimises the risk of legal challenge if the proposals are subsequently implemented.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 6.1 Any policy change would consider the Council's key priorities and ensure that changes are aligned with current Council policies to ensure the travelling public are safe.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 None identified.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.3 An initial equalities impact assessment has been carried out by officers which identified no equality or diversity implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Proper consultation on any proposals to amend the Council's policies minimises the risk of legal challenge if the proposals are subsequently implemented.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Current vehicle age policy

Appendix 2 – Consultation responses

Appendix 3 – Proposed vehicle age policy