

ADOPTION OF COMMON TAXI AND PRIVATE LICENSING STANDARDS FOR GLOUCESTERSHIRE – 1ST OCTOBER 2021

Comparison Table for Stroud District Council's taxi and private hire policy

	Topic	Before 1 st October 2021	After 1 st October 2021	Comments
	Drivers			
1	DBS - Update Service	A recommendation for driver licence holders to subscribe to DBS Update Service	Requirement for driver licence holders to subscribe to the DBS Update Service. All existing licensees will need to sign up to the Update Service by 31 December 2023.	<p>Drivers benefit from subscribing to the update service. After paying the initial fee of £54.40 for a new enhanced DBS check they only need to pay a £13 annual update subscription fee to the DBS thereafter unless their conviction record changes.</p> <p>Officers will be able to easily check if there has been any change to driver criminal records using the DBS update service on-line facility</p>
2	Frequency of DBS Enhanced Criminal Checks	On new application and then every three years on renewal	Every six months. The six-month checking will initially apply to those already subscribed to the DBS Update Service and the remaining licence holders will be brought into scope by 31 December 2023.	<p>Regular checks will be undertaken to ensure drivers remain suitable.</p> <p>Any drivers that have not signed up to the update service by December 2023, will need to then pay for 6 monthly new DBS checks</p>
3	Mandatory safeguarding and equality awareness training	All existing driver licence holders were required to take safeguarding training in 2017. All new applicants took the training within 12 months of being licensed.	<p>New applicants for driver licences must undertake mandatory safeguarding and equality awareness training prior to the issue of their licence.</p> <p>Existing licensees will be required to undertake refresher training every three years. Existing licence holders must complete the training within 3 years from 1st October 2021</p>	It is important that drivers understand safeguarding and equality implications.

4	Language proficiency	If an applicant's first language was not English, they had to have an adequate spoken and written standard and may have been required to pass an English proficiency test	All new applicants must take an English Proficiency test unless they can provide an appropriate educational certificate for a qualification related to English. Discretion to refer an existing licence holder for an assessment on a case-to-case basis.	It is important for public safety that drivers can communicate with their customers
5	Immediate suspension and revocation of licences	Where there were concerns, that could not wait for a licensing hearing panel, Officers could immediately suspend a licence but could not immediately revoke a licence.	Where there are concerns, that cannot wait for a licensing hearing panel, Officers will be able to decide if immediate action is necessary including to suspend or revoke the licence.	This gives more flexibility for officers to take immediate action if there is a possible public risk
Vehicles				
6	How to complain signage in vehicles	Council contact details for complaint were shown on the rear of the internal vehicle disc displayed in front windscreen	Signage to be displayed, where it can easily be read in vehicles, giving guidance for passengers on how to complain.	It is important that customers know how to make complaints if they have concerns about a driver, vehicle or operator.
7	Criminality checks for vehicle proprietors	There were no requirements for licensed vehicle proprietors to provide a criminal certificate	Licensed vehicle proprietors must provide an annual DBS basic disclosure certificate unless they are also a licensed driver.	All vehicle proprietors currently licensed by Stroud District Council also hold a driver licence so will not need this additional check as the checks will have been made through their driver application.
Operators				
8	Criminality checks for private hire vehicle operators	Licensed private hire operators had to provide a basic disclosure check from the DBS every 5 years on renewal unless they were also a licensed driver	Licensed private hire operators must provide an annual basic disclosure check from the DBS unless they are also a licensed driver	Most licensed operators licensed by Stroud District Council also hold a driver licence. The cost of a basic DBS disclosure is £23

9	Private Hire Operator Booking and dispatch staff	There was no requirement for operators to make criminality checks on booking and dispatch staff	Private hire operators must have written policies and procedures in place to ensure criminality checks are undertaken on all booking and dispatch staff at appropriate intervals and to set out its approach on employing staff that are ex-offenders. Where a booking is outsourced the operator must ensure the third-party have adequate arrangements in place as outlined above.	This is to ensure people involved in taking bookings are suitable. Basic DBS disclosure cost £2.3
Criminal Convictions Policy				
10	Convictions Policy	A criminal convictions policy based on previous national guidance	An enhanced convictions policy based on Statutory Standards that adds further conviction categories and extends some of the time scales applicants are expected to be clear of offences. See separate conviction policy comparison table below	Existing licence holders may have convictions that fall in the timescales within the proposed policy. It is not reasonable that those licences should be automatically be revoked. All existing licences will be considered in line with the new policy and where there is concern, they will be reviewed by a Licensing Hearing Panel
Enforcement				
11	Joint Enforcement	Stroud District Council officers could only enforce breaches by licence holders licensed by Stroud District Council	Joint authorisation of enforcement officers of all the licensing authorities that have adopted the Gloucestershire common standards	Stroud District Council officers are able to enforce breaches by any Gloucestershire licensed taxi or private hire driver coming into Stroud District

Comparison Table for Convictions Policy

Suitability of new applicants is considered in relation to the period of time that has elapsed since the conviction or sentence. Offences are grouped in categories. This table shows a summary of the changes

Offence Category	Before 1 st October 2021	After 1 st October 2021
Exploitation	Not included	Never
Violence	Offences categorised to either 10 years or 5 years	All offences 10 years
Possession of Weapon	5 years	7 years
Sexual Offences	Offences categorised to either never or 10 years	Never
Dishonesty	5 years	7 years
Drugs	Supply 10 years Possession 5 years	No change
Discrimination	Was not specifically included	7 years
Motoring convictions New Applicants	One major - 1 year More than one major - 5 years More than one minor – 6 months	One or more major – 10 years More than one minor - 3 years
Motoring convictions - current licence holders	9 current points – written warning More than 9 points referred to a subcommittee for revocation	6 current points - licence holder to complete driving assessment More than 6 points referred to a Licensing Hearing Panel for revocation
Drink driving or under influence of drugs	If no driving ban, 2 years since conviction. If a driving ban, 5 years from completion of ban	7 years since conviction or completion of any sentence or driving ban
Use of handheld device whilst driving	Not specifically included – was treated as general motoring conviction.	5 years since conviction or completion of any sentence or driving ban
Hackney carriage or private hire offence	2 years or 5 years if more than one conviction	7 years