

## Taxi and Private Hire Newsletter January 2017

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### Taxi Fare Increase Refused

At the Committee meeting, on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016, the Councillors decided that Stroud taxi fares should not be increased at the current time but they agreed that they would be happy to consider another request from the Taxi Association to review the taxi fares in September 2017.

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### Changes to Taxi and Private Hire Policy Approved

At the same meeting the Councillors agreed the proposed changes to Stroud District Council's Taxi and Private Hire policies that you were consulted on last year. The new enforcement policy came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017. All the other changes will come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. Our new policy and a summary of the changes are available on our website <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/taxipolicy>. In this newsletter we explain the changes that will affect you.

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### Vehicle Age Policy - from 1 April 2017

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 our new age policy for vehicles will come into effect

- A new application for a taxi licence or an application to change a vehicle will be refused if your vehicle is more than 5 years old from date of first registration
- An application to renew a vehicle licence will be refused if your vehicle is more than 10 years old from date of first registration

If your vehicle is over 10 years old, on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017, you will be able to continue to licence that vehicle until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. If you have not replaced your vehicle (with one that is less than 5 years old) by the time you come up for your next renewal after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, then your renewal will be refused.

There are exemptions from this age policy for:

- Wheelchair accessible vehicles
  - Elite vehicles such as BMW, Mercedes, Rolls Royce or similar provided the vehicle is in excellent condition
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# Other policy changes coming in from April

## Medicals

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 we will only accept medicals that have been completed by your own GP or by a medical practitioner that has access to your medical records.

## Tinted Windows

After 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 you will not be permitted to add any additional tinted film on the windows of your vehicle. You can, however, continue to have factory fitted tinted windows.

## Safeguarding Training

After 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 all drivers must take the mandatory safeguarding course within 12 months. We expect that the course will last up to 2 hours and it will be held at Stroud District Council Offices. We have provisionally set some dates in April, May, June and July and there are some morning and some afternoon sessions. Once the dates are confirmed we will contact you again and ask you to book on one of the dates.

## CCTV

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 you must get written approval from us if you want to have CCTV inside your vehicle. You will need to contact us and make an appointment for us to inspect your system. You will need to have a clear notice in your vehicle that tells customers that 'CCTV is in operation'.

You cannot have a CCTV system that continually makes audio recordings. However you can have a system that has a 'panic button' that allows you to make a short audio recording if there is a threat to your personal safety. If you have this function you should add on your notice in your vehicle 'audio recording may be made if there is a threat to the driver'.

You must also provide us with evidence that you have registered with the ICO (Information Commissioner). You can register on-line through <https://ico.org.uk/registration/new> The cost to register is £35 and is renewable annually.

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## Some reminders

### MOTS

We are still finding that some vehicle owners are forgetting when their MOT is due and are operating vehicles with no current MOT. This is a road traffic offence and you are also putting your licence at risk. You can check on-line to see when both your MOT and car tax are due through <https://www.gov.uk/check-mot-status>

### Right to licence checks

Just a reminder that under the new Immigration Act we must check your 'right to licence' (right to work in the UK) the next time you renew your driver licence. The new Act says that you must provide us with original documentation such as a passport (it can be an expired passport) and that you must bring it in person. You will need to ring us and make an appointment.

### DBS checks

Our policy is that all drivers must provide a criminal record check every 3 years. We started this policy 6 years ago so many of you will be due a DBS check again when you renew this year. If you registered with the DBS update service, and have kept it up to date by making the annual payments to the DBS, then we can check your criminal record status on-line. When your driver renewal comes up please tell us that you are registered and give us your 12 digit DBS certificate number which starts with 00. This number should be on the top of your last DBS certificate (this is not your DBS update ID login number).

If you are not registered, and you are due a DBS this year, you will need to fill out the DBS application form as usual unless you have had a DBS certificate for another organisation which was issued within one month preceding your renewal. When you receive your DBS certificate, please bring it into us immediately. If you want to register with the update service you can do this on-line <https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service>. You will need to enter your DBS Certificate number. You must, however, register within **19 days** of the Certificate being issued. The cost is £13 per year.

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## And finally .....

### Crime stoppers

Did you know that you can anonymously report a crime to Crimestoppers? You can pass on information about a crime through their 24/7 phone number 0800 555 111 or on their website <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information/give-information-online/> .

### Coming in to see us

Don't forget that if you want to see us you should ring and make an appointment first. We are not available for calls or appointments on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons after 12.00. However you can contact us any time by email and you can request that we call you back. We will then ring you or answer your query by email as soon as possible. We also have lots of information and forms on our website [www.stroud.gov.uk/taxis](http://www.stroud.gov.uk/taxis)

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## Contact us at :

The Licensing Section, Environmental Health Service, Stroud District Council, Council Offices, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud, Glos. GL5 4UB

Telephone: 01453 754440 / 754404

Email: [licensing@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@stroud.gov.uk)

Web page [www.stroud.gov.uk/taxis](http://www.stroud.gov.uk/taxis)

We are currently not available on Tuesdays or Thursdays after 12.00