

POLICY IN RESPECT OF CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO THE GRANT OF A PRIVATE HIRE STRETCHED LIMOUSINE VEHICLE LICENCE

Background Note

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1976 (LGMP), was created to enable Conditions of safety to be placed upon drivers, vehicles and Operators making private contracts for vehicle with driver hire services. Private Hire at that time was concentrated on saloon vehicles offering, in the main, local journeys.

The Private Hire Section has grown and extended significantly and there are now a much wider range of vehicles and services.

The Road Safety Act, 2006, along with best practice guidance issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) has caused Leeds City Council to consider licensing a wide range of vehicles and services.

Policy Statement

Leeds City Council has standard Conditions attached to the grant of a Private Hire vehicle licence. In order to accommodate the wider range of vehicles which may need to be licensed. The Council may make exceptions in some respects to parts of that policy but not to the extent that the existing policy is compromised or the exceptions to those Conditions for this class of vehicle creates unacceptable safety risks.

The purpose of the licensed vehicle is to transport fare paying passengers safely. Any licence issued will not extend to accommodate any form of entertainment other than appropriate recorded music or imagery. Under no circumstances will it permit any form of dancing in the vehicle. The Operator and Proprietor of the vehicle must obtain all necessary licences in respect of any alcohol use, showing of films and any other licences required for any other form of entertainment of activity.

Set out below are the pre-conditions to the consideration of the grant of a Private Hire Stretched Limousine vehicle licence.

Additionally, once licensed, the Private Hire vehicle must continue to meet these standard pre-conditions.

Conditions Attached to the Grant of a Private Hire Stretched Limousine Vehicle Licence

Approved Conversion (American Imports and British / European Conversions)

American Imports

Any proprietor who wishes to license an American Stretched Limousine as a Private Hire Stretched Limousine in Leeds will need to prove the vehicle has been converted by an approved converter under the Ford, Quality Vehicle Modifier (QVM) programme or on the Cadillac, Cadillac Master Coachbuilders (CMC) programme.

It is the responsibility of the proprietor to prove the stretch conversion has been carried out by an approved converter.

The vehicle must display a QVM or CMC plate which specifies the plated weights of the vehicle, if no plated weight is visible then a weight certificate from a registered Vehicle & Operator services Agency (VOSA) weigh bridge must be produced.

British / European Conversions

Where any vehicle is 'stretched' within the European Union the Proprietor must produce the appropriate 'Low Volume' or 'European Whole Vehicle Type Approval' certification identifying the converting company.

The maximum permissible stretch conversion of any conversion must not exceed 130 inches (3300mm)

V5 & Single Vehicle Approval Requirements (SVA)

At the point of application a V5 registration document (Log Book) must be produced which details the registered keeper who will also be the proprietor.

For licensing purposes, the age of a vehicle shall be determined by the date of first registration in the country of origin, if this is not recorded on the on the V5 document (Log Book), it will be the responsibility of the proprietor to supply suitable documentary evidence to prove the date of first registration.

A vehicle will only be accepted for licensing if the date of first registration is less than 6 years from the date of application. The vehicles must be licensed for use within one month from the date of application

The V5 must list the vehicle body type as 'Limousine' and a seating capacity of no more that 9 seats (Driver included)

If this information is not recorded on the V5 registration document the proprietor will be required to apply for a voluntary Single Vehicle Approval (SVA) inspection at a suitable Vehicle & Operator Services Agency (VOSA) testing station, the vehicle should be entered as a left hand drive limousine to carry eight passengers. The certificate must then be produced to the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for registration. A copy of the SVA certificate must be retained and produced with all other documents at the point of application for a private hire stretched limousine licence.

Testing

Before a private hire stretched limousine vehicle licence can be issued any vehicle will be required to undergo an inspection by Authorised Officers of the Council to ensure compliance with the requirements listed above and conditions attached to the grant of the private vehicle licence.

Because of the added weight and length of such vehicles, critical components wear at a greater rate than that of conventional vehicles. The proprietor of a vehicle licensed as private hire stretched limousine will be required to maintain a detailed maintenance plan and produce a new MOT certificate every 6 months. These safety requirements are outlined in the conditions attached to the grant of a private hire stretched limousine vehicle licence.

Seating Requirements and Passenger Restraints

The vehicle will be licensed to carry no more than 8 passengers with a minimum space of 400mm seating available for each passenger. All forward facing seats must be fitted with three point all age inertia reel, lap and diagonal seat belts. All other seatbelts fitted to any other seat by the converting company must be present and working correctly.

Appropriate conformity certification for a seatbelt may be required at the discretion of an Authorised Officer of the Council.

Tyres

All vehicles must have tyres fitted with the correct tyre load rating for the weight of the vehicle. This rating mark can be located on the sidewall of the tyre.

Doors

Every stretched limousine to be licensed as a private hire vehicle will have a minimum of four doors fitted as standard, two available for the drivers compartment and a minimum of two available to the rear passenger compartment. All doors must be working correctly.

Partitions

Vehicles with a partition between the driver and passenger compartment must only be fitted with a clear glass partition to enable full visibility into the rear of the vehicle. The glass should meet the relevant British/ European Standard or its American equivalent. Solid partitions will not be permitted.