

# **Derby City Council**

## **Taxi & Private Hire Vehicles Strategy 2020**

Draft

## 1. Introduction

Derby's road network is a typical transport network for a small historical city. It is a vital and precious asset on which most activities in and around the city depends. It consists of a number of radial roads from the city centre which are connected by inner and outer ring roads. In many places it is a modern and efficient network, while in others it is in need of investment.

In a typical day, Derby's transport network carries around:

- 660,000 car trips
- 55,000 bus passenger trips
- 110,000 people who travel to work
- 2,548 bus services on a network of 33 routes
- 38,000 children travelling to 103 schools
- 18,000 heavy goods vehicle trips that carry goods to and from Derby
- 10,000 taxi and private hire trips

The Taxi and Private Hire (TPH) fleet are an important part of Derby's integrated transport system. They are a useful, often vital, component to completing journeys and may form part of a more sustainable longer distance multi modal trip or be used where no convenient alternatives are available. They are demand responsive, providing 24 hours a day service over 7 days per week, throughout the year. They can respond to a wide range of needs and are one of the most flexible elements of the transport system, operating on a fully commercial basis. In Derby, like most cities, TPH are integral to supporting businesses to thrive by transporting people and goods.

Whilst the city is well served, taxi and private hire services can be a primary mode of passenger transport for many people for whom mainstream public transport is not an option or suitable, due to lack of availability or type. Fully compliant wheelchair accessible TPH help support many disabled and vulnerable people, ensuring they remain mobile and live more independent lives.

The TPH also provide a key service within the city's night time economy, providing a safe and secure means of travel – particularly after dark. A safe, clean, modern, thriving, efficient and affordable TPH service contributes to the local economy and benefits residents, visitors and businesses in Derby.



Councillor Mick Barker  
Cabinet Member for Governance &  
Licensing

Richard Antcliff  
Director of Public Protection &  
Streetpride

## 2. Strategic Aim

The TPH market locally and nationally is facing tough challenges. Changes to city centres, night time economy and shopping habits have contributed to a decline in passenger numbers coupled with declining standards and outdated business models.

Derby City Council is committed to improving the city's transport offer whilst supporting the trade to meet the demands of cleaner air and smarter, safer and cleaner TPH. We will do this by supporting new business models, independent financial advice and investment in infrastructure.

We want this strategy to help achieve a high quality model that is:

- **Safer** – more modern vehicles, free from defects that provide passengers and regulators with confidence. An enhanced taxi booking application that allows both passengers and drivers the ability to rate one another and geographically track, share and record all journeys. A mandatory cashless option with zero commission to both passengers and drivers.
- **Cleaner** – we will incentivise the uptake of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) through investment of charge infrastructure across the City, new dedicated taxi Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points and subsidised licensing fees. We will provide access to specialist advice on 'total cost of EV ownership' modelling, and seek to offer a taxi ULEV try before you buy scheme.
- **Modern** – newer taxis with the latest technology and smoother journeys. Guaranteed to be accessible for all with front facing wheelchair support and easy access ramps. Vehicles will be equipped to provide Wi-Fi, contactless card payments and climate control. Whether short or longer journeys, an experience that meets traveller's needs.
- **Focussed** – drivers will be expected to provide the highest levels of customer care and service. Assistance getting in and out, help with luggage and shopping or ensuring wheelchair users are anchored appropriately shall be standard practice.

As a Council **we will** ensure:

- Standards are maintained and the TPH fleet is regularly checked and remains cutting edge in line with technological advancements.
- Cleanliness, customer service sampling, fair and honest pricing will be maintained. The service should be affordable, accessible and safe for anyone choosing to use a TPH.

- Good levels of compliance and enforcement where necessary, working in conjunction with Derbyshire Police, other partner agencies and other local authorities.
- Over ranking, traffic and parking violations are tackled, as well as undertaking dedicated illegally plying for hire operations and public awareness safety campaigns.
- we work with trade representatives, private hire operators and other key stakeholders to ensure a higher quality service provision for customers.
- A fair and properly enforced system and consult on a range of policy changes to enable to trade to remain resilient and independent.

### **3. Overview**

Like many cities and towns within the UK, Derby is under a legal obligation to improve its air quality. It is important that proposals and actions contained within this strategy align with the wider vision for Derby, including present and upcoming changes to the Council Plan, Local Transport Plan and various policy changes to improve the Derby experience.

Derby is committed to improving its transport offer and integrating services where possible through the use of trains, buses, park and ride schemes, cycle schemes and TPH. Good quality transport is crucial to delivering economic benefits whilst contributing to a low carbon transport system and improving people's accessibility to services and employment. The measures set out in this strategy will contribute to Derby's Transport Vision 2026.

Derby City Council is proposing a package of measures to help address roadside Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) air quality issues in the city. The Council is required by government to develop a local air quality plan to deliver compliance with the legal limits for NO<sub>2</sub> emissions. In 2015 Derby City Council was identified by DEFRA, along with four other cities (outside London), to take early action to improve roadside NO<sub>2</sub>. There is a requirement to reduce the level of NO<sub>2</sub> in the air to below 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> as soon as possible in line with EU and UK statutory regulations. Once the legal limit is reached, Derby City Council wants to continue to lower the amount of NO<sub>2</sub> in the air, as far as possible.

Derby City Council is proposing to introduce traffic management measures to manage the flow of traffic in and around Stafford Street including the roads closest to the exceedance location. These will be supported by wider network management measures and schemes to ensure we get the best possible benefits for the package of measures and to limit any negative impacts.

We are also continuing to identify mitigation measures to be implemented to help address the impact of the delivery of the package of measures and to help support the early uptake of TPH low emission vehicles.

#### **Role of the local authority in regulating the TPH system**

As a Unitary Authority, the City Council is the Taxi Licensing Authority within its administrative boundary. It is the duty of the Council to regulate the quality of service and safety standards of the TPH fleet. Drivers of both must be licensed. Taxis ply for work from either a rank or they can be hailed in the street. They can also undertake pre-booked work. Private hire services can only be pre-booked. The Council seeks to promote and maintain an adequate supply and coverage of operators and vehicles across the city.

**Current TPH Fleet**

There are currently around 270 Taxis licensed within Derby, all of which are diesel vehicles. These comprise of two main manufacturers; the London Taxi Company (formerly London Taxi International) and Metrocab. Both of their parent companies are investing heavily in electric vehicle technology as well as several other manufacturers that will be available in future years.

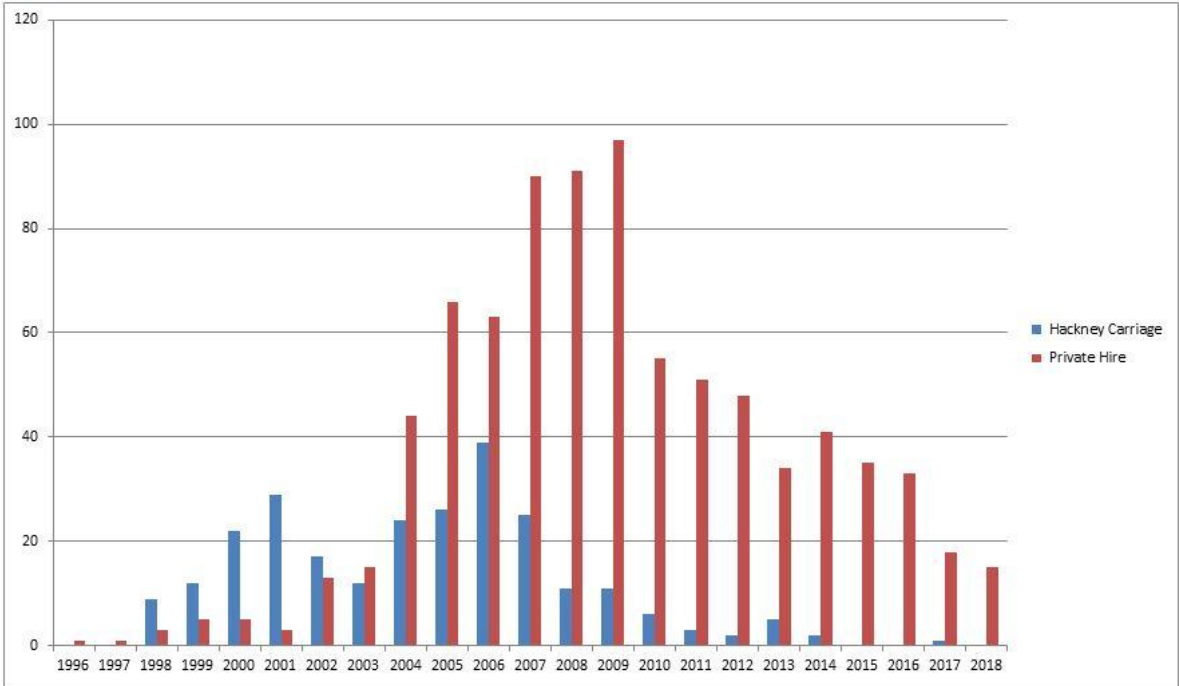
There are currently around 1,000 private hire vehicles within Derby, although many more are licensed elsewhere and take pre-booked sub-contracted work in the city.

Public safety is a key driver for the implementation of this strategy. Vehicle defects can largely be attributed to the age of vehicles, so part of the strategy focusses on implementing an age limit on vehicles. Derbyshire Constabulary has raised real concerns about the overall condition of Derby’s licensed vehicles. The Council, in conjunction with Derbyshire Constabulary regularly work to safety check vehicles, which has ultimately led to many vehicles being taken off the road immediately.

There are currently no age restrictions TPH vehicles licensed in Derby. This has led to an aging fleet, high emission levels and poor overall condition.

The profile of the current licensed vehicles is as follows:

Age of Licensed Vehicles by Year of Manufacture



The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Age and Specification Policy is set out at Appendix 1.

**Taxi Ranks**

Taxi ranks are an important element in helping to manage the supply of taxis at busy locations. They help to reduce congestion and vehicle emissions by limiting the time drivers spend on the road while waiting to be hired. Ranks are important especially for disabled passengers as they allow enough time and space for wheelchairs to be loaded safely. The key issue the City Council faces with ranks is competition for kerb side space e.g. bus stops, loading and general parking and the management of them, particularly with incidents of over ranking or idling vehicles. Although there is no statutory duty to provide taxi rank spaces, the council chooses to implement taxi ranks on the public highway, reasonably close to where people want to travel from, including key interchange points with bus and rail networks. The Council will consider making phased changes to the existing ranks to prioritise Ultra Low Emission Vehicles ranks.

### **Assisting the Uptake of Low Emission Vehicles**

The Council has been successful in a joint bid for funding with Nottingham City Council from the Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV). Currently, this money is funding the installation of 37 electric vehicle charge points in a number of our city centre car parks.

There is also funding available for promotion and business engagement activities, with events already held in relation to low emission vehicle promotion and awareness in conjunction with LEVEL (the Low Emission Vehicle Enterprise and Learning network) and CleanTech Business Ltd.

Events have included the Air Quality, ULEV Innovations conference and the Derby Ride & Drive Electric Vehicle Showcase.

Specifically related to the TPH fleet, funding has been received from the Government's Early Measures Funding aimed at delivering:

- The implementation of various electric vehicle charging hubs in the city for hackney carriages
- Phased introduction of electric hackney carriages
- Changes to the taxis licensing policies to further support the air quality agenda

### **Working in Partnership**

We will work with local councillors, trade representatives, user groups including local disability forums, public transport operators, business representatives, Derby Live and Derbyshire Police, amongst others on the contents of this strategy.

#### 4. Action Plan

The table below sets out the measures and actions necessary to achieve the aims set out in this strategy.

<b>1. Creation of measures to facilitate the uptake of low emission vehicles:</b>
Undertake a review of existing City Centre ranks to prioritise low emission vehicles. Consideration will be given to the introduction of permitted access arrangements to key locations across the city.
Introduction of other measures to support the air quality agenda including working with the trade to facilitate the early uptake of low emission vehicles, including consideration of options for vehicle lease hire, try before you buy, considering demand for charging facilities and making key stakeholders aware of other grant opportunities.
Introduction of designated taxi charge points and the consideration of designating taxi ranks within the city as ULEV only.
For newly licenced low emission taxi vehicle licences, the introduction of a 'Back to Black' colour policy and 'Derby Yellow' wrapped branding.
Review of the existing advertising policy for Taxi vehicles.

<b>2. Clean Fleet:</b>
A policy will be introduced to require that all licensed vehicles are Zero Emission by 2030.
Target of 25% of TPH fleet to be ULEV by the end of January 2021 and 50% by 2025.



Licences will not be issued to vehicles over a certain age or which do not meet vehicle emission standards.

Access to information and advice on eco-driving will be provided, while the introduction of a mandatory requirement on TPH driver licence holders to undertake an eco-driving course will be considered in the future.

The City Council will actively seek funding to incentivise the trade to renew and upgrade the fleet.

For a limited period of time, consideration will be given to offering vehicle licences at a reduced rate for those who take up ULEV.

The Council will consider undertaking an unmet demand survey.

The Council will investigate opportunities to develop a Taxi ULEV leasing scheme following a 'Try before you buy' scheme.

The Council will reduce the maximum age of licensed vehicles to 10 years for petrol/diesel and 12 years for ULEV (10 years for ULEV from 2025) unless in exceptional condition.

### **3. Work with neighbouring districts to develop a coherent TPH licensing and enforcement policy:**

The Council will work with other neighbouring local authorities to develop a licensing framework to which all licensed vehicles will adhere to.

The framework could give the Council and other partner local authorities the right to enforce against each others' licensed vehicles operating within partner administrative districts, which are not adhering to the framework licensing requirements.

### **4. Improving customer experience and the services offered by the trade:**

Develop a code of conduct setting out expected standards of driver and customer behaviour.

The Council will encourage the trade to consider implementing a Driver Dress Code, ensuring all licensed drivers adopt a minimum standard of dress to help promote smart and professional TPH services for citizens and visitors to Derby.

There will be a requirement for a large photographic badge to be present in the

vehicle to make driver identification easier.
Undertake a review of signage in the vehicle to provide better information to passengers and aid drivers.
A contact telephone number and email address will be displayed clearly in all vehicles for customer feedback.
Develop a driver excellence award to recognise outstanding customer service to passengers.
Working with partners, develop a series of TPH related campaigns around disability awareness.
The Council will explore introducing a requirement that all new drivers pass an English test before being granted a licence.

<b>5. Safeguarding:</b>
Review the existing mandatory safeguarding training requirement and introduce a requirement to undertake refresher training every three years.
Driver and vehicle identification will be improved through new signage.
Work will be undertaken with licensed businesses to improve operational safeguarding practices.
Launch a TPH Safety Awareness Campaign in partnership with Derbyshire Police, University of Derby, Derby Live and the BIDS to understand the potential dangers of using unlicensed vehicles.

<b>6. Technology:</b>
The Council will encourage the use of taxi booking apps to ensure greater passenger safety, cashless payment and operator quality rating systems to drive up standards.
Seek to prioritise incentives for drivers regularly receiving high quality ratings from customers.
Introduction of a TPH E-Newsletter to improve communication between the City Council and the trade and its patrons.
Card (contactless) payment will be made available in every Taxi as an alternative to

cash.

Appendix 1

## **Derby City Council**

# **Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Age and Specification Policy**

# Insert Date

## **GENERAL**

1. This policy will have effect from **DATE OF POLICY APPROVAL**.
2. No Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle shall be granted a licence unless it meets the Council's approved vehicle specification. In addition to this, no application will be granted for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence unless it is wheelchair accessible.
3. Derby City Council will refuse to renew a licence for a vehicle for use as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle once the respective upper age limit set out in this policy (see below as applicable) has been reached.
4. All licensed vehicles will be subject to SIX (6) monthly inspections carried out by an approved Derby City Council testing station.
5. **From 01/01/2025**, any vehicle being licensed for the first time as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle will be required to be a Zero Emission Capable Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ZEC ULEV).
6. **From 01/01/2030**, no vehicle shall be licensed as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle unless it is a ZEC ULEV.

## **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES**

**From 01/01/21**

1. Only Private Hire vehicles under FIVE (5) years of age from the date of first DVLA registration will be considered for first licensing.
2. Private Hire vehicles over the age of TEN (10) years from the date of first DVLA registration will ordinarily be REFUSED a licence UNLESS the vehicle is in exceptional condition and has been approved for use following an Exceptional Condition Vehicle Check.

## **HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES**

### **From DATE OF POLICY APPROVAL**

1. All newly licensed approved Euro 6\* Diesel or ZEC ULEV\*\* Hackney Carriages must have all its exterior bodywork finished in the respective manufacturer's standard black paintwork colour and the **INSERT APPROVED BRANDING LOCATON(S)** body-wrapped in **INSERT APPROVED YELLOW PAINT CODE DETAILS**.

### **From 01/01/21**

1. All Hackney Carriage vehicles will be required to be a minimum of Euro 6\* Diesel or ZEC ULEV\*\*.
2. No Euro 6 Diesel vehicle will ordinarily be licensed as a hackney carriage if it is over the age of TEN (10) years UNLESS the vehicle is in exceptional condition and has been approved for use following an Exceptional Condition Vehicle Check.
3. No ZEC ULEV vehicle will ordinarily be licensed as a hackney carriage if it is over the age of TWELVE (12) years UNLESS the vehicle is in exceptional condition and has been approved for use following an Exceptional Condition Vehicle Check.

### **From 01/01/25**

1. No ZEC ULEV vehicle will ordinarily be licensed as a hackney carriage if it is over the age of TEN (10) years UNLESS the vehicle is in exceptional condition and has been approved for use following an Exceptional Condition Vehicle Check.

\* Euro 6 diesel relates to the engine AND vehicle both being manufactured after September 2015.

\*\* ZEC ULEV definition – emit up to 50g/km CO<sub>2</sub> with a minimum of 30 mile emission range. A ZEC Hackney Carriage MUST be petrol if an internal combustion engine is used.