

Chair of Licensing Committee Report to Full Council 17 April 2024

Whilst the full Licensing Committee has not met since our last Council meeting, there have been two driver review hearings at the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee.

New vehicle age limits were approved by Committee in November and rolled out in December. These incorporated an 'exceptional condition' incentive where well maintained vehicles will be retained on the fleet for longer, as well as incentivising a transition to EV vehicles. They have been well received by the trade and monitoring of vehicle safety will continue by regular compliance checks. Officers are now routinely checking vehicles they approach whilst on site to check engine management lights, tyre tread depths etc.

A number of compliance interventions have taken place in the first quarter of 2024 including mystery shopper journeys for wheelchair users, compliance testing with colleagues from Wolverhampton MBC focussing on Wolverhampton licenced vehicles.

The appeal hearing for the revocation of the Mode premises licence is listed in the Magistrates Court for May.

The taxi licensing service has been subject to an Internal Audit in March. Its conclusions are that:

- Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to effectively manage and administer the taxi licensing service.
- Due diligence checks are carried out prior to the issue of a taxi license and supporting evidence is retained on the Idox system. Sample testing found that controls were consistently applied in this area.
- An annual programme of compliance activities ensures that drivers and licences are checked throughout the duration of their licence period.
- Driver and vehicle conditions have been published on the Council's website and are available for prospective licensees.

Cllr Jeff Sumner