



^ND,CPOCCUP.LICASE;  
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Our Ref: ^ND,PLATEREF.LICASE;

5 February 2016

Dear ^RS,LIXTRA;^CS,FNAME.LIXTRA,E,SALUTE;^ND,FVALUE.LIXTRA;^ES;^ES;

**RE: REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S SEATING POLICY FOR MULTI- PURPOSE VEHICLES (MPV'S) WHICH CARRY UP TO 8 PASSENGERS**

At its meeting of the 20 January 2016 the Council's Licensing and Registration Committee agreed to review and publicly re-consult on the Council's current seating capacity policy for Multi- Purpose Vehicles carrying up to 8 passengers which has been in place since the 1 August 2003 and was introduced following consultation with the taxi trade at that time. The review and public consultation will of course include the taxi and private hire trades and their representatives in the Tendring Drivers Taxi Association.

As you will be aware, primarily Tendring District Council's current seating capacity policy for MPV's is focused around the following two items taken from the policy and which are as follows:

(e) The arrangements of the seats shall be such that no person has to remove, push forward or dismantle any seat or other obstacle; nor should it be necessary to climb over any person being carried in the vehicle or require any person to leave their seat to allow anyone to enter or leave the vehicle.

(f) If the seating arrangement does not allow free access to and from the vehicle as set out in condition (e) above then, in order that the vehicle may be licensed as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle and in the interests of public safety and comfort, the Council will require as many seats as may be deemed necessary to be removed.

**The consultation welcomes your views on whether the current policy should remain in place, be withdrawn, or whether it should be amended in any way and if so how.**

**The Licensing and Registration Committee also determined on the 20 January 2016 that the Council's current seating policy for MPV's will remain in place at least until the consultation on the policy has been completed and the policy has been reviewed and re-considered by the Committee. The current policy can be viewed in full at [www.tendringdc.gov.uk](http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk).**

**The review and consultation also welcomes views on a possible alternative to Tendring's current MPV seating policy which was introduced for Basildon's taxi and private hire vehicles in January 2015 in consultation with the Basildon taxi and private hire trades. Prior to this policy being introduced in January 2015, Basildon had a very similar policy to Tendring in respect to MPV's. Basildon's current policy in respect of MPV's is as follows:**

- 1) In respect of minibus and other MPV style vehicles a minimum of three doors to the passenger accommodation shall be provided.
- 2) Have proper signs on how to lift the second row of seats. The sign should be clearly visible to any persons seated in the rearmost seats providing customers with instructions on the operating mechanisms for the seat that may be required to be tipped/moved forward in order to gain access/egress from the vehicle.
- 3) The operating levers to be coloured yellow/orange so that they are easily identifiable. They can be coloured by using the appropriate colour tape. Tape should remain damage free at all times and replaced when worn.
- 4) Have windows on the near and offside in respect of the rear row of seats and that they be free from obstruction at all times to allow access in the event of an emergency.
- 5) Have well positioned exit window signs (where appropriate).
- 6) Have an internal device for the rear hatch door to be opened from the inside. This can be by way of an emergency 'quick release' button which can be fitted to the rear hatch door which can be operated by passengers in order to allow access/egress in the event of an accident and one of the side passenger doors being inaccessible.

Those criteria did not apply to purpose built wheelchair accessible vehicles however which were still required to ensure that the passenger compartment provides unobstructed entry and exit from the back row of seating of the compartment and which included the requirement that no persons entering or exiting the vehicle should have to remove or dismantle a seat or obstacle to climb over a person. In terms of colouring the operating levers which lift and tip seats yellow/orange, those conformed to national safety health and safety standards.

**The twelve week consultation period will run from the 5 February to the 2 May 2016 and responses can be made either by letter to the address shown on this letterhead or by e-mail to [licensingsection@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:licensingsection@tendringdc.gov.uk). All written responses or comments received will be made available to the Licensing and Registration Committee to consider at their next appropriate meeting to be scheduled after the end of the consultation period when the Committee will review the policy in light of the outcome and results of the consultation.**

If you have any questions about the review and consultation that have not been explained by this covering letter then please do not hesitate to contact us accordingly by e-mailing [licensingsection@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:licensingsection@tendringdc.gov.uk) or by phoning. **The full details of the report that went to the Licensing and Registration Committee on the 20 January 2016 and their decision can also be publicly viewed or downloaded from the Council's website [www.tendringdc.gov.uk](http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk).**

In the meantime, **I look forward to receiving any written views or comments that you might have on the review and consultation of the Council's current MPV seating policy by the 2 May 2016.** Thank you in advance for your participation in this review.

Yours sincerely

*SHarvey*

**Simon Harvey  
Licensing Manager**

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