

Officer Executive Decisions

Review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy Delegation from Cabinet on 18 November 2025

On 18 November 2025, the Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Legal and Governance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement, to consider any comments received and determine any changes to the policy (Decision No. 171/2025). The report is available from the [Council's website](#).

Decision

To implement the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy as presented to the Licensing Safety Committee on 25 March 2026, with amendments as follows:

- The removal of the upper age limits of licensed vehicles, being 10 years for a non-wheelchair accessible vehicle and 14 years for a wheelchair accessible vehicle.
- The amendment of the colour standardisation for Private Hire vehicles. Private Hire vehicles can be any colour other than white.
- The removal of the standardisation requirement for Private Hire vehicles to have chequered stripes on their vehicle.
- The removal of the standardisation requirement for Private Hire vehicles to have door signs.

Reasons for Decision

- It is acknowledged that the upper age limit of vehicles has had an impact on the retention of taxi drivers and financial viability for those continuing to work in the trade. The Licensing Authority can ensure that the vehicles of the trade are fit for purpose, through the enforcement of the conditions attached to the licence and the inspections already required by the Policy, which occur three times a year.
- Having acknowledged the difficulties in purchasing a red vehicle it is considered reasonable to remove the restriction on vehicle colour, whilst ensuring it does not mimic a Hackney Carriage Vehicle.
- It is acknowledged that standardisation can be seen to support and promote enhanced safety for the passenger, however, Private Hire Vehicles are pre-booked and the vehicle details are often provided directly to the customer to ensure they get into the correct licensed vehicle. All licensed Private Hire vehicles are required to display the Medway issued interior and exterior plates.

Date of Decision

30 April 2026

Lead Officer

Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance in consultation with Councillor Alex Paterson, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement.

Details of any other options considered and rejected

1. Consideration was given to not making any changes to the draft policy.
2. Consideration was given to only amending the first two matters listed above, the upper age and the private hire colour.
3. Consideration was given to removing the door signage requirement for hackney carriage vehicles.

Conflicts of Interest

None.