

**LICENSING COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2018
WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

1. Question from David Stockbridge to the Chair of the Licensing Committee

Does the Chair of the Committee feel it was reasonable to introduce Euro 4 Standards immediately, when in the public consultation it referred to a 2018 onwards implementation?

Reply from Councillor Lanie Shears, Chair of the Licensing Committee

The Council's Policy with regard to this issue is that:

- a. Vehicles brought forward to be licensed for the first time or after a lapse in their license that are not Euro 4 compliant will not be accepted to be licensed as private hire vehicles.*
- b. Vehicles that have been continuously licensed since 22 November 2016 which are not Euro 4 compliant will not be relicensed after 22 November 2019.*

This allowed a long phase-out period for any existing licensed vehicle.

The Euro 4 standard was first a requirement for new vehicles in 2006 and there is now a very wide range of vehicles available on the second-hand market as replacements for non-compliant vehicles.

This appears to be both consistent with the outcome of the consultation carried out by the Council and a reasonable balance between the interests of protecting health-based air quality standards and the interests of vehicle proprietors.

2. Question from Jeremy Williams to the Chair of the Licensing Committee

Can the Chair of the Committee explain why a private hire vehicle compliance certificate and an MOT certificate, issued for 12 months by the Council's nominated contractor is deemed unacceptable 14 days later by Harlow Council licensing officers?

Reply from Councillor Lanie Shears, Chair of the Licensing Committee

The Council has no control over the use of, or changes to, a vehicle between testing and being licensed. Until two years ago, the Council required that a vehicle be tested on the same day that it was licensed. This ensured that vehicles had been tested no more than a year before the expiry of their licence, but did cause logistical problems for proprietors at times.

A change was brought about to allow proprietors some flexibility. The Council will now accept vehicles being tested up to 14 days in advance of the licence being issued. This appears to reflect a reasonable balance between public safety concerns and the interests of proprietors. The fact that a test certificate more than 14 days old is not accepted for licensing purposes is a proper application of formal policy.

3. Question from Robert Mossop to the Chair of the Licensing Committee

At the Licensing Committee meeting in July 2017, in order that Councillors could make an informed decision, why was the Committee not provided with a report which detailed the impact the revised compliance condition regarding the level transmittance to the rear windows of private hire vehicles would have on the private hire trade, the public, consumers and to diversity of vehicles, especially people carrier style vehicles?

Reply from Councillor Lanie Shears, Chair of the Licensing Committee

The Council carried out a consultation on this and a number of other vehicle standards issues before adopting the current policy, providing the opportunity for trade representatives, the public and other affected parties to make representations. The responses received were properly reported to the Licensing Committee.

I note that a report on this subject appears on the agenda for the present meeting and suggests that a wide range of suitable compliant vehicles is in fact available on the used market.