

Consultation responses

Response
<p>Back in September 2020, I had attended a teams meeting online with Councillors including the then licensing manager 'John Ruder' after applying on the 'Have your say' portal.</p> <p>During the discussion I'd brought up three points that I'd felt valid and in need of attention and the age restriction on Licensed Taxi/PHV at date of first registration being one of them.</p> <p>At the time of the meeting, I was told that the Licensing manager would be looking into my queries put to the Licensing team, and that I should expect a reply no later than December 2020 or at the latest by January 2021....I'm still waiting!</p> <p>I note that an email has come by in the last few weeks with regards to a possible revue of the terms of the minimum and maximum age a Licensed vehicle can be registered.</p> <p>Can you please let me know if there has been any discussion as to when this may arise?</p>
<p>Morning I would be grateful if council remove the car age restriction from 5 years.</p>
<p>I just want to express my opinion about age restrictions from the vehicle. It is needed to be done long time ago, not the age or mileage most important and how the car was looked after. None of the taxi drivers wants to drive old vehicles anyway, we need to be able to afford to replace it. I needed to get the new car and I have to spend all my savings plus bank loan. The question is now when I am going to get my money back?</p> <p>You also need to look at the prices of car license renewal because as far as I am aware of people going to get the licence elsewhere and working in Colchester after because it is a lot cheaper.</p> <p>Another big problem we have the traffic wardens chasing us up.</p> <p>About two weeks ago I had to leave the lady with baby and all her shopping in the african shop on the Queen street. He was screaming like mad instead of helping me to get this lady with her shopping in to the car. I rang the Panther office I work for and the lady had to come to the town train station, fortunately someone helped her with a shopping trolley to to this location. I just wanted to know where do we pick customers on the Queen street, do we need to tell all of them to get to the train station? If so no one going to use us any more.</p>
<p>I have one thing to put forward to support the proposal of the removal of the age restriction on licensed vehicles</p>

- first of all I am not convinced the age of the car is limited to 5 years for taxi registration while a taxi registered vehicle is allowed to renew the registration up to 12 or 15 yrs. If an approved good car can get continued taxi approval up to its 12 or 15 years why then a car in good condition up to 12 or 15 years of age can not be applied for taxi plate? I propose the condition for a car to approve as a taxi should not be solely based on the year of registration on it.

It is obvious that the rule 'your 1st time plated car must be not older than 5 years BUT you can then renew it up to 12 years' makes no sense, at all.

The council have forced people like myself into a huge dept (12.000 pounds as of today) even before starting with this business, and for what? Just so you can say 'Our vehicles look brand new and spotless'!?!? But then you have other vehicles that are much much older than a 5 years old car (10, 12 years) which you still allow to be plated until the age of 12!?!?

I mean, look at it!
Makes No Sense!

If you would remove such rule you could allow drives to breathe a bit rather than having to get at the end of the month with no money because half grant goes into paying their well expensive car.

When I started 2 years ago I had to sell my 2012 Ford Cmax because of your 'can't be black' rule and your 'must be less than 5 years rule', and where am I now? I am still paying my car in full (haven't paid nothing back yet, as I keep moving my debt from credit card to credit card paying transfer fees and interests).

Be reasonable, remove this stupid rule.

My opinion on removing the age restriction for first registration of a private hire / Hackney vehicle is that it's a good idea as many drivers are now being forced out of the trade due to newer vehicle prices and worse still having to rent vehicles from companies at an extortionate rate exceeding the price of purchasing a more affordable vehicle as your suggesting also it will give a wider selection of vehicles with lower mileage and better maintained as most affordable vehicles as it currently stands under 5 yrs old are high mileage ex fleet rental vehicles which in my opinion have had harder treatment than an older well maintained vehicle. As other licensing areas find it acceptable that if a vehicle passes 1 or 2 m.o.t's a year it's good enough to be used as it's a government standard test.

Changing the age restriction of vehicle eligibility is in my opinion a good idea, it opens up a greater selection of vehicles available for first time purchase, it will also allow current vehicle to be used for longer. Also the current price of vehicles is making it difficult for most people to be able to afford a replacement forcing them to either quit the job or be forced into company vehicles

Having just spent £14,000 to replace a perfectly good 12 year old Skoda Superb Estate, on which everything still worked perfectly well and was in excellent

condition, it peeves me to agree that the current age restrictions are completely ridiculous.

My new car (another skoda, just three years old) is really not in substantially better condition or any more comfortable.

I believe CBC cost me an unnecessary £14,000, so I wish this consultation had happened a year or two ago. It may have saved me a lot of money just before my retirement.

In short: Scrap the out-dated restrictions.

Thanks for letting me know about the proposed age restriction removal. It's about time you get rid of this or at least make it 7 or 8 years because its getting sort of completely unaffordable to buy a used car of that age at decent price. We have to go for car financing because of that which costing us even more money plus lots of interest.

Will highly appreciate if you can do something about it.

I believe allowing drivers to keep their vehicle for longer providing they pass the council yearly test would help us to rebuild our numbers that has been reduced due to covid. maybe allowing vehicles to be registered with you to increase to 7 years for first time plates, rather than the 5 years you currently have .

I believed car age limit should be removed because car prices so high its almost unaffordable. I think it should go to 8 years .

Hi, I think this is a great idea . I myself am struggling to get a new car as so expensive , I am having to run my car that has done a lot of mileage that costs even more more long term. If the car is safe and suitable then she shouldn't be a problem .

It would be great for the drivers who are involved in trade, i believe age restrictions on vehicles should be removed.

Hi yes I am for that motion and agree as a operator it's is much harder to buy and get a vehicle of newer age that can be affordable a older one would be much more cost affordable. So I am for this totally

I think it is a very good idea removing the age limit for licensing vehicles.

Yes I have long felt the rules are crazy in that it's OK to license a 4 1/2 year old diesel vehicle with 200k on the clock but not a 5 year old hybrid/EV vehicle with only 30k on the clock! That became even more relevant to me personally when my 8 year old Skoda Rapid was written off last April by an elderly lady going the wrong way around the Greenstead roundabout and I had to replace it. I wanted a hybrid vehicle and decided on a 4 year old Hyundai Ionic, but this cost me £18,000. I got just £5,000 back for my Skoda so overall it cost me £13,000 for an accident that wasn't my fault. I saw several cars that would have been ideal replacements, had a lower mileage than the one I eventually bought and would have cost £4,000 less. But due to the age limit I couldn't use them as a taxi. The rule needs to be relaxed or at least to take into account mileage as well as age.

Nonsense, the very reason this was first implemented, because cab drivers drive junk if they can get away with it. Even recently I got in Private hire vehicle that was junk. You must keep the present restrictions.

I say YES to more affordable cars for taxis

I personally agree to the removal of all age restrictions on vehicles since these vehicles undergo Strict check during MOT as well as the Council garage inspections.

Other issues that drivers face is the Pay In to operators.
Paying 135 per 600 pound earning is too high a.d will kindly as that it should be looked up into.

Yes we should be looking at extending the age of cars i would also like to see more done with the problem of unlicensed cars working as taxis s which is happening all over social media picking passengers up from the pubs and clubs especially at weekends taking fares off licensed drivers and people wonder why cars don't come out it's becoming ridiculous

May I propose that in the Colchester Taxi licence policy page 19 air pollution 6.3 It states: From 2025 all new registrations to meet an LPG, low emission or electric hybrid standard. Can this rule be put back due to the government has revised its plan to move back the sale of petrol and diesel cars from 2030 to 2035. I feel we should do the same

May I also suggest that we stick to licensing diesel and petrol cars as long as they meet the current Euro 6 regulation. Having to buy electric or hybrid standard vehicles is costing the individual driver more money! Eg auto trader a great car buying platform online is showing that electric and hybrid cars are 40-50% more than a diesel or petrol, and also you need to consider the availability as Colchester taxis have a livery of the colour black. Eg you search for a car in the search engine of auto trader you put in: under 5 years old, you put in black car only, you put in electric or hybrid, you also put in estate or saloon depending on what work you do, whether it's rank work, long distance or school runs, you'll find that the choice is limited.

May I also suggest that removing age limit is not bad idea as well, as long as it meets the the current Euro 6 regulation so a typical vehicle from 2015 when the regulation started is 25-30% cheaper than a vehicle under 5 years old, this will help drivers financially also the availability will be there for vehicles to obtain.

May I also say that my opinion on fully electric vehicles are not the way forward at the moment, I feel that the infrastructure is not there just yet.

1 Lack of charging points due to infrastructure

2 Range of miles isn't long enough 200-300 eg no good for long distance or airport run

3 expensive batteries replaced after a short lifespan

4 horror stories of them catching
5 expensive to buy and insure

Hope you consider my views

Thank you for your email and consulting with licensed drivers. The required age limits, both on first registration and a 12 year limit has always been a problem for me over my 45 year 'career' as a taxi driver in Colchester. As you can appreciate I have had many vehicles during that time. I have always looked after and maintained my vehicles throughout to a very high standard. In more recent years I have had to stop using at least 3 perfectly good vehicles, which had done well over 300,000 taxi miles, when they reached their 12 year limit. Two of these I still have and are still going strong, one being a diesel VW Passat estate car (24 years old) and one being a Mercedes Sprinter multi wheelchair bound passenger vehicle (20 years old). Many care homes were very upset when I stopped using this vehicle, as their residents could no longer have their trips out together and I could not invest the approx £40,000 to replace it at the time. Another vehicle was a Mitsubishi Lancer, which I had to replace last April due only to its age. It had been totally reliable and customers often commented on how comfortable, etc. it was. I had great difficulty in finding a suitable replacement in black before the deadline and in the end had to spend far more than I wanted to in the latter stages of my working life. I eventually replaced it with a Vauxhall just under 5 years old and it has been the worst vehicle I have ever had. It has constantly been off the road due to breakdowns, due to electrical faults - a real problem in this cost of living crisis. I wish you had done this consultation 1 year earlier and then I would not have had to replace my Mitsubishi, which had done under 100,000 miles

A vehicle's age has nothing to do with its suitability for the job. Provided they are inspected properly every 6 months, the standards should be kept high and it would certainly help drivers earn a reasonable living. As you say in your email, emissions are much improved on more modern vehicles. Most hackney drivers do look after their vehicles, although some of the rented ones leave a lot to be desired. A bit like a rented property not being looked after as well as someone who owns their own property and takes a pride in it. However, I cannot see the use of electric vehicles as ever becoming viable for taxi drivers. I looked into this back in April and they are double the price of a secondhand diesel vehicle. Their battery range would not last for 1 shift of work (especially at night, when lights, windscreen wipers, radio, heater, etc. are all being used) and there are very few places for recharging out of town. I certainly would not buy one.