



**Department
for Transport**

Baroness Vere of Norbiton
Minister for Roads, Buses and Places

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Mr Tim Johnson
City of Wolverhampton Council
By email: tim.johnson@wolverhampton.gov.uk

27 April 2021

Dear Tim Johnson,

TAXI & PHV LICENSING – STATUTORY TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE STANDARDS

I would like to thank you and your teams for completing the survey issued by my Department in January to assess the progress in considering and implementing measures set out in the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards published in July 2020.

The Government issued the Statutory Standards to licensing authorities to enhance the safeguarding measures the taxi and private hire vehicle licensing regime requires and so protect the most vulnerable in communities. As you will be aware, the regulation of the trade is only as strong as the weakest link and so we must continue to drive up standards where they are deficient, and this must be achieved as a matter of urgency. Authorities have overall made significant progress despite the challenges we have all faced in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and I congratulate you and your team on completing these actions.

Making the necessary changes to your policies to align them with the Statutory Standards is incredibly important to secure the safety of passengers. I am aware from the survey response that some licensing authorities are already applying the Statutory Standards to new licence applications and I welcome this. We expect authorities to explore all options to ensure the Statutory Standards apply to all licence holders at the earliest opportunity and not just at the point of licence renewal. I cannot stress enough the importance of bringing about these changes to protect the public.

As per the Statutory Standards, licensing authorities should publish cohesive policy documents which bring together all procedures on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing. These will enable all to see the rigour with which your authority has considered the Statutory Standards. The annual taxi and statistical survey will ensure my Department can continue to monitor progress

with implementation. This must be seen as an ongoing process; the Statutory Standards state clearly that policies should be kept under review.

Unfortunately, the responses to the survey indicated that a small minority of authorities have not acted as quickly as yours. As this concerns public safety I have written to those authorities to advise of the expectation that all licensing authorities should have completed their review consideration of the Statutory Standards by 31 December 2021 so that changes to policies can be in place as soon as possible.

My officials are always available to provide assistance if required, if needed please contact Taxis@dft.gov.uk.

Yours,
Charlotte

BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON