

Welsh Government look to update 200 year old Taxi licensing

Economy Secretary Ken Skates has urged interested parties to have their say on the proposals, which will seek to address issues raised by drivers, unions, licencing authorities and the Law Commission to better represent modern practices.

Ken Skates said:

“Taxis and private hire vehicles provide a vital public service, connecting people to places when alternative public transport is not always available or viable.

“There are 9200 or so taxi and private hire licenced drivers in Wales, all of which are currently bound by licensing legislation which dates back to the horse drawn hackneys.

“The Law Commission made recommendations in 2014 about how the licensing system can be improved and, as a result of provisions included in the Wales Act 2017, I’m delighted to now be in a position to put to consultation proposals aimed at delivering a simpler, fairer system fit for modern Wales.”

The Law Commission’s review of the law governing taxi and private hire vehicles made 84 recommendations, many of which are reflected in the Welsh Government’s proposals for reform. They include:

- the introduction of national standards for all taxis and private hire vehicles, set by the Welsh Ministers
- Local licensing authorities able to set additional licence conditions where appropriate and remain responsible for issuing licences and enforcement
- Private hire vehicles licencing to include novelty vehicles and stretch limousines, but wedding and funeral cars would continue to be exempt
- providers being able to work across local authority borders more easily with licensing officers provided with new enforcement powers to deal with vehicles and drivers licensed in different areas.
- Tougher penalties on touting are also proposed (actively soliciting customers), including impounding vehicles
- Local licensing authorities retaining the right to limit the number of taxis working in their licensing area
- Improved arrangements for regulating fares

Ken Skates added:

“These progressive proposals will see improvements to the current

complicated, outdated and antiquated legislation, reflecting on the needs of twenty first century drivers, licensing authorities and passengers here in Wales. I'd encourage anyone with an interest in the sector to contribute to this consultation."

View:

<https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-wales>.