

Appendix 3

LCC would fully back your clause. In recent tenders I have said we will exclude any seats that don't have direct access to a door, where a seat has to be folded or slid forward for other passengers to get out

Senior Transportation Officer SEN Social Care Transport Lancashire County Council

We had a similar situation here in Rossendale where upon we had and still have an influx of the Vauxhall Zafira type models we decided not to licence the x7 seater vehicle applications we put this matter to the licensing committee, they decided that the vehicles could be licensed for x7 passengers we enquired with Vosa had they any concerns their reply did not really support our concerns either way only to say it was at the time the most popular MPV and that they themselves had not had any cause to comment or make any representations upon request from licensing authorities.

Having said that having spoken to colleagues in Rochdale taxi licensing they will not licence them for 6/7 they demand the 3rd row of seats be removed, this i think could and will result in a challenge as Vauxhall were contacted during our intensions they rebuked any suggestion the vehicles were unsafe and indeed asked for proof unable to provide.

Rossendale Borough Council

In our borough all are hackneys are purpose built and provide for secure access and carriage of passengers in wheelchairs For MPVs etc used as PHV's they must have two entrance/egress points in the rear compartment, no tip up seats are permitted and all seats must be rear or front facing ie no cabin type seats are allowed. Passengers must have unobstructed access to these doors. We also check to determine whether handrails etc are needed

St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council

We used to require removal of one of the middle row of seats in certain mpvs where seats had to be tipped forward to gain access to the rearmost seats but after advice we changed to licensing the vehicle according to its designed capacity provided the rearmost seats are of adult size.

Barrow Borough Council

Just been passed your e-mail. Some time ago, Wigan Council introduced a vehicle Policy which although restricts seating numbers in some type(s) of vehicle, does not necessarily target MPV's.

The Local Gov Act 1976 amongst other things states that a vehicle has to be 'suitable, safe and comfortable' etc.

As vehicles are used by fare paying passengers this is only reasonable and as such one condition we have (policy under review however) is that all passengers in a vehicle must have unobstructed access to at least 2 doors. Access can be partially

blocked by a seat that folds up/down out of the way. Furthermore we ask that all passengers have 40 square cms on which to park their bums and 35.5 square cms deep with a further 30 sq cms in which to put their feet. This is reasonable.

I have to say that this creates issues I am finding myself dealing with on a regular basis, not least of all because quite honestly we are asking people to interfere with type approval. We cover our backs by asking that if any work is carried out then it is covered by a type approval certificate or engineers report.

This is simplification (short of time at the moment sorry) but my own view is that we should not be requiring people to interfere with vehicles type approval in any way. We should instead require any vehicle to be suitable, after all that's what the Act says. As to defining suitable.....?

One aspect would include luggage space, as in a lot of vehicles with a third row of seats there is not a lot of space left for the luggage. That's where I would start anyway, suitability and luggage.

Don't forget that when the Equality Act does kick in best guidance at this time in this country and all other EEC countries is that two types of vehicle be considered. Type one for pushing wheelchairs into and type two for the ambulant disabled i.e. wheel up to vehicle and put chair in the boot.

Its a big subject when you get started and we are all waiting for what the government are going to bring in.

Wigan Borough Council

We have toyed with the idea of imposing the same condition over the years but shied away from it because most of the operators soon got sick of the fold down seat and removed it themselves. The best practice guidance didn't help either.

Carlisle City Council

It is in our policy at 8.5 page 36 have a look on the webpage. We have not been challenged on this and the trade were party to the draft policy prior to publication.

Preston City Council

Although it is not a condition of a vehicle licence (as vehicle licence conditions are only applicable to licensed vehicles) Bury Council do have a vehicle licensing policy in relation to the licensing of vehicles and especially MPVs / minibuses, in that the passengers in the rear of such vehicles must have access to at least 2 doors without having to fold down or climb over any seats. The passenger doors can either be at the side of the vehicle or one can be at the side and one at the rear. If one of these two doors is at the rear, it must be accessible without having to climb over any bank of seats blocking it. In addition all the doors must be capable of being opened from inside the vehicle. In the case of adapted minibuses, this often results in one seat having to be removed from the bank of 3 seats preventing access to the passengers behind these seats to the two side doors or from one of 3 seats at the extreme rear of the vehicle should one of the doors be at the rear.

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council