

Executive Hire Group - update

Please find below the information requested in the recent executive hire working group meeting. The table below shows the number of private hire operators, currently licensed by Selby District Council and the number of vehicles they have for both with and without an exemption to show their plates on private hire vehicles. The number of discreet Selby currently has is 27.

Company Name	Discreet Plates Issued	Private Hire vehicles with no discreet
EJ Private Hire	2	0
The Yorkshire Driving Company	1	0
Prestige Travel	1	0
Calcaria Executive Travel	3	1
Security Driven Limited	2	
Platinum VIP Chauffeurs Private Hire	4	
Galaxy	2	
Flyer Private Hire	2	4
C.P.W Chauffeur Services	1	
Yorkshire Executive Travel	1	
The Yorkshire Chauffeur Company	1	
Potter Chauffeur	3	
Malc Collins Mini Coaches	1	1
Diamond Travel	2	2
John Stockdale Executing Cars	1	0

How other Authorities are dealing with this issue:

Durham – 304 PH vehicles, 22 exemptions (omitted from email)

In a recent correspondence with Durham they said that if someone has a vehicle which is Private Hire, and they want to use this for executive hire under contract and is not being used for 'normal' private hire work, the proprietor can apply for an exemption. This would generally be in the form of a business case, explaining in detail what the contract involves and a copy of it if they have one and also details of the vehicle. This would then go to their committee to consider.

Durham Taxi Licensing policy states that the Council has decided for the purpose of the policy, they consider the use of a higher standard and more luxurious vehicle used exclusively for the purposes of carrying passengers under a written contract (the duration of which must not be less than 60 days) to be the minimum standard for an application not to display a licence plate and other identification livery considered. It also states that the Council will not exercise its discretion in granting this exemption for any vehicle which is to be used for any other purpose than as previously described.

If the owner of the vehicle wishes to ask the Council to exercise its discretion to exempt the vehicle from displaying a licence plate and other identification livery, they must apply to the Council in writing, providing evidence to support the application.

The policy states that the exemption from displaying plates is a privilege and not a right and the benefit of the exemption will be granted at the Councils discretion and the Council has the power to withdraw the exemption if the related conditions are not complied. Council Officers will periodically check book records to ensure compliance with the policy.

Harrogate Borough Council, currently have 288 Private Hire vehicles, of which 29 have executive status.

Again, I contacted Harrogate who stated that although they do have a policy for discreet plates for executive work, the policy was written some time ago and could do with updating.

They have a rear number plate that goes on the executive vehicles.

The conditions Harrogate use currently for these discreet vehicles are:

- Vehicles must be immaculate with no dents or scratches at all times.
- The driver should be wearing a shirt, tie and suit at all times
- Invoices/proof of work must be available for inspection to verify the executive status of the vehicle and ensure the predominance of work is of an executive nature.
- Advertising is prohibited on the interior/exterior of the vehicle.
- Standard Private Hire vehicle door plate must be displayed on the front door of the vehicle when work that is not of an executive nature is being carried out.
- The rear licence plate must display the passenger capacity and the words executive hire.
- All the criteria relating to standards for Private Hire vehicles apply in addition to the above.

Hambleton District Council

They informed me that they have just lost their last remaining executive hire vehicle so have no more of these licensed. They predominantly have Hackney Carriage vehicles in their area and currently only have 23 Private Hire Vehicles.

They do however have an application form, which is attached to this email.

Executive hire is also dealt with in their policy, where it states that although there is no legal definition of an executive vehicle, it is generally accepted that this type of vehicle would be relatively expensive and includes additional features designed to increase comfort of the driver and passengers, which exhibits the qualities of luxury, prestige, and refinement. Vehicles qualifying for executive status must be of a high-end vehicle specification. These vehicles usually place more emphasis on comfort and amenities such as technological upgrades and higher quality materials than a performance, economy, or utility. They are often built in smaller numbers and luxury vehicles are historically 5 or 6 passenger four door saloons.

Executive cars could be luxury versions of family saloons; at the higher end, they are often larger models by mainstream manufacturers or the entry level models by companies specialising in larger luxury vehicles.

Proprietors of companies wishing to licence such vehicles would not normally be mainstream Private Hire companies but would be offering chauffeur driven contracts, airport runs and other similar services where the driver would be expected to observe a strict dress code. Chauffeur driven contracts for the undertaking of a journey in an executive vehicle would generally be made by way of a written contract.

York City Council

Currently have 8 vehicles with the exemption to display a licence plates and signage.

Their policy states that they recognise the distinct role of the executive vehicles in the arena of public transport. The distinction between the operator of the standard Private Hire vehicles and the operator of executive vehicles is significant in the terms of the type of client catered for and the type of service offered.

Operators who wish to use their vehicles for executive contract work only, can apply to licence their vehicle as Private Hire and write to the Licensing Manager requesting an exemption from the requirements for displaying a plate. Again they state that this is a privilege rather than a right and

the benefit of the exemption will be granted at the Councils discretion. The Council has the power to remove the exemption if the related conditions are not adhered to at all times.

The Licensing Manager will consider each application on its own merit.

The following type of vehicles will be considered:

- Rolls Royce
- Mercedes S class and E class
- Jaguar XJ SWB and LWB
- BMW 5 series upwards
- Audi A5 or above
- Lexus GS and LS
- Ford Galaxy or similar

The vehicle will need to be in immaculate condition with no visible defects, dents or blemishes to the external bodywork or trim. The vehicle must only be for executives or other VIP's , weddings, tours etc. An executive is a senior manager in an organisation travelling as his/her employment.

The following conditions will form part of the exemption and must be adhered to at all times;

- The vehicle will not be engaged in any specific passenger services contracts for the carriage of school children, young persons or vulnerable adults.
- The vehicle will only operator in accordance with contracts entered into for a chauffeur type executive level of service. This does not include normal airport journeys and private hire work.
- The driver must follow a formal dress code, i.e. suit and collared shirt. The suit jacket maybe removed in warmer weather.
- The driver will be exempt from the requirement to wear the Private Hire drivers badge issued by York City Council whilst acting as driver of the vehicle. The private hire drivers badge shall be carried on the driver's person at all times and be produced for inspection at the request of an authorised person.
- It is recommended that all bookings undertaken by the vehicle shall be by means of a written contract between the Private Hire operator and the business user.
- No advertising, including company logos can be displayed on the vehicle at any time.
- The Councils exemption certificate shall be on display on the inside lower nearside of the front windscreen.
- The Councils exemption certificate will be carried in the vehicle at all times and will be produced on request to an authorised officer.
- The front and rear vehicle licence plates will be carried in the boot at all times and must be produced on request to an authorised officer.
- The Private Hire operator door signage (side plates) will be carried in the boot at all times and be produced on request to an authorised officer.
- The internal plate shall be displayed within the glove box lid.
- No taxi meter or PDU will be on display in the vehicle.
- A notice of fares shall be carried within the vehicle at all times and will be produced upon request by the hirer or by an authorised officer.

Birmingham City Council

Anyone wanting exemption has to persuade a Licensing Sub-Committee an exemption for signage is both reasonable and appropriate. There are really only two circumstances where that applies, with the majority being chauffeur/executive vehicles, where the proprietor has to demonstrate the vehicle will be used exclusively for such work and will not be used for conventional private hire at all. In most cases the small front windscreen sign must still be displayed. We usually have fewer than 100 such exemptions at any given time, from a fleet approaching 4500 vehicles. If we do find such a vehicle being used on the Uber fleet, or working for another conventional operator, any such exemption will become void.

The other class of vehicles is those used exclusively on NHS passenger contracts, where various exemptions have been agreed removing the from the requirement to show door signs, to allowing them to display details of an NHS Trust, but again the numbers concerned are very small.