

Response from Land & Air Quality Team (Worcestershire Regulatory Services)

The Council is proposing to amend it's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Penalty Points Scheme to enable officers to issue three penalty points to drivers for breaching rule 123 of the Highway Code. Do you agree with this proposal?

Yes

Please provide the reason(s) for your answer:

Thank you for consulting the Land and Air Quality Team, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) on the proposed amendment to taxi penalty points scheme in respect of drivers leaving engines running unnecessarily when vehicles are stationary on public roads.

The Bromsgrove district currently has three air quality management areas (AQMAs) declared because of exceedances of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). These AQMAs are located at Lickey End, Redditch Road and Worcester Road, Bromsgrove. All of the AQMAs are attributable to emissions generated from road traffic. A fourth AQMA at Kidderminster Road, Hagley was recently revoked although the area remains closely monitored. Air quality is a concern throughout the district and any action taken to help reduce emissions is welcomed.

WRS would generally support the proposals especially where it would restrict unnecessary idling over longer periods of time. It is considered that the scheme represents positive intent and sends the right message in terms of air quality and it may be something that can be carried over into other areas where Bromsgrove District Council has influence.

It should be noted however that there are some uncertainties associated with the emissions produced when switching an engine off and back on again in a short period of time, particularly relevant to older vehicles. This process may actually increase the amount of emissions produced. Results would be variable depending on a number of factors including age, make and model of vehicle, fuel type, duration between switching the engine off and on again etc. Conclusive studies in this area appear to be quite limited and impacts would vary from vehicle to vehicle. The Licensing Department may wish to consider the makeup of the taxi fleet in Bromsgrove to consider whether age of the vehicles would be relevant in this respect. If the fleet is predominantly made up of newer vehicles this would be much less of a concern.

Overall the proposal is considered to represent a positive step in a bid to help reduce emissions in the district.

Are there any other amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Penalty Points Scheme you think the Council should consider? If yes, please provide details below

Anything that can help increase uptake of more sustainable, low emission vehicles in the district. The Penalty Points Scheme may not be the correct forum for this but anything that would incentivize uptake of these type of vehicles would be welcomed.