

PE1856/V: Support the taxi trade

Glasgow City Council written submission, 20 August 2024

The Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee considered a petition [PE1856: Support the taxi trade](#) at its meeting on 20 September 2023 and agreed to write to Glasgow City Council.

Committee requested information from GCC in relation to the process by which exemptions to the Glasgow Low Emission Zone are applied to the taxi trade and numbers of applications.

The Committee has requested the following information:

- how many applications it has received from taxi operators for a temporary exemption to the LEZ;
- of those applications, how many exemptions have been granted;
- what the criteria are for receiving a temporary exemption to the LEZ;
- how long the application process is, as concerns were raised that a lengthy process could result in drivers being unable to work while awaiting an outcome; and
- how long such exemptions will last.

GCC Response

One-year Exemptions

As detailed in Section 2.5 of the [LEZ Scheme Design](#), GCC committed to “develop a discretionary mechanism to ensure that (taxi) operators who can evidence a retrofit funding application or registration of interest (or alternative appropriate evidence of arrangements in place to achieve LEZ compliance) within the timescales of the funding round for 2022/2023, will not face penalty charges for a time limited period to allow the necessary upgrades to be undertaken.”

All Glasgow taxi operators were advised by letter in August 2022 of the exemption scheme and criteria for acceptance. This letter also advised on the availability of funding, the detail of the retrofit scheme and encouraged early uptake to guarantee exemption in the event of an issue arising relating to grant funding availability and/or retrofitting capacity which means that this work cannot be carried out prior to LEZ enforcement beginning.

The criteria for exemption was agreed at a meeting of the City Administration Committee on [8th October 2022](#) and a further letter was sent to all taxi operators in December 2022 advising of the specific criteria required for an exemption.

Exemptions would be considered for taxi operators who could evidence the following:

- The registered taxi does not have an accredited retrofit option available from the [CVRAS scheme](#).

- The taxi operator does not meet the [eligibility requirements](#) for the LEZ Support Fund.
- An application to the LEZ Support Fund has been rejected.
- A grant award has been received but retrofit has not yet been completed.
- A grant award has been received but rescinded following vehicle inspection.
- An application or registration of interest to the LEZ Support Fund has been made but not yet awarded.
- The maximum number of taxis have already been retrofitted under the terms of the scheme.

In advance of LEZ enforcement beginning on 1st June 2023, GCC received and granted 776 exemptions for Glasgow registered taxis. Each exemption was for a period of one year and successful operators were advised:

“This exemption expires on 31 May 2024. To continue operating beyond this date, the above vehicle must either meet the LEZ emission standards through an accredited retrofit process or be replaced with a vehicle which meets the LEZ emission standards.”

All taxi operators who applied received the requested exemption. Exemptions were administered typically within 10 working days of application and on most occasions within a considerably shorter timescale. All applications submitted prior to the beginning of LEZ enforcement were processed and the operator informed before 1st June 2023. Operators who submitted applications on or after the 1st June 2023 were prioritised and typically received their exemptions on the day of application.

Exemption Extensions

Following the granting of extra time to become LEZ compliant via the above extensions, there remained a number of vehicles in the taxi fleet that were non-compliant and in January 2024 all operators in receipt of the time-limited exemption were contacted to make clear the Council’s position with regards to these vehicles and the support on offer. Glasgow City Council remained determined to help operators in this transition period and therefore, at the meeting of the Net Zero and Climate Progress City Policy Committee on [27th February 2024](#) agreed the conditions under which any extensions would be considered.

Extensions would be considered for taxi operators who could evidence the following:

- An operator is in receipt of a grant from the Energy Saving Trust for the purposes of retrofitting their vehicle to LEZ emission standards, and this work has not been completed by 31 May 2024.
- An operator is already on the official waiting list for a grant from the Energy Saving Trust for the purposes of retrofitting their vehicle to LEZ emission standards, and funding has not yet been awarded.
- An operator has an active Expression of Interest for a grant from the Energy Saving Trust for the purposes of retrofitting their vehicle to LEZ emission standards. This Expression of Interest must have been registered prior to 31

December 2023. Previous Expressions of Interest which did not translate into funding applications during the last round of retrofit funding will not qualify.

- An operator has purchased an LEZ compliant vehicle with a delivery date later than 31 May 2024.

GCC received and granted 225 extensions for Glasgow registered taxis. The period of each extensions was determined by the reason for the extension. Those who evidenced that they had a valid expression of interest in a grant or were on the waiting list were given an extension until 31st August 2024. Those who had ordered a replacement vehicle were given an extension until 30th September 2024 and those in receipt of a grant award were granted extension until 31st October 2024 to allow the retrofit work to be completed. GCC will continue to show flexibility to those operators making efforts towards compliance should this be required.

All taxi operators who applied with the required evidence received the requested extension. Extensions were administered typically within 10 working days of application and on most occasions within a considerably shorter timescale. All eligible applications submitted prior to the expiry of the original exemption were processed and the operator informed before 1st June 2024. Operators who submitted applications on or after the 1st June 2024 were prioritised and typically received their exemptions on the day of application.