



## Equality Screening Assessment (ESA)

This form must be completed to evidence what impact the proposal may have on protected groups within our community and/or workforce. Please complete with reference to the [Guidance Notes](#).

### 1: Proposal

Requirement	Details
Title of proposal:	Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and its constituent Appendices
Type of proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• new or change of policy,</li><li>• new or change to service.</li></ul>	This is a review of an existing policy to which material changes are proposed. The review takes account of the Council's decision to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• transition to a single hackney carriage zone from 1 April 2025,</li><li>• to reflect updated impacting law and Government and Institute of Licensing' guidance,</li><li>• respond to feedback from service users and the licensed taxi and private hire trades,</li><li>• make improvements reflecting operational experience since the Policy first came into effect on 1 April 2023.</li></ul>
What is the objective of this proposal?	To provide advice to applicants, licence holders, other licensing authorities, and relevant organisations/agencies (such as the Police), as well as the travelling public about how the Council will administer the following licensing regimes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle</li><li>- Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver</li><li>- Private Hire Operator.</li></ul>

Requirement	Details
	<p>The Policy ensures consistent standards and procedures across NNC and mitigates the risk of legal challenge due to inconsistent decision-making.</p> <p>Key policy aims are to fully harmonise standards and procedures across the 4 legacy councils and to promote the use of wheelchair accessible vehicles and ultra-low and zero emission vehicles.</p>
<p>Who will be consulted on this proposal? And when? (List all the groups / communities, including dates)</p>	<p>The main Policy and Appendices was subject to public consultation between 28.10.24 - 09.12.24, details below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertised on the Council's website (an online survey was provided to aid respondents)</li> <li>• Circulated to all town and parish councils</li> <li>• Circulated to current licence holders</li> <li>• Advertised via a Council Press Release</li> <li>• Notified to the NNC' Staff Disability Network and Day Services Lead and Supported Employment Manager</li> <li>• Notified to the following organisations/agencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ North Northamptonshire Police</li> <li>○ Age UK Northants</li> <li>○ Support Northamptonshire</li> <li>○ Northamptonshire Carers Association.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Did the consultation highlight any impact on protected groups? (If yes, give details)</p>	<p>The consultation did not identify any impact on protected groups.</p>
<p>What processes are in place to monitor and review the equality impact of this proposal?</p>	<p>We have committed to reviewing the Policy and appendices at least every 5 years but will review in the interim where a defect is identified, to reflect updated government guidance, updated legislation, or new case law. Any review will also consider the equality impact of amendments or new requirements. Any issue of equality impact raised outside of this will also require the assessment to be reviewed.</p>
<p>Who will approve this proposal? (Committee, PGG, CLT)</p>	<p>Licensing and Appeals Committee, Executive and Council.</p>

## 2: Equality Consideration

In turn, consider each protected group and question whether the proposal seeks to:

- Eliminate discrimination,
- Foster good relations,
- Remove barriers,

<b>Protected Groups</b> Look at each group in turn. Will that group be impacted differently by the proposal to other protected groups? How? Why?	<b>General Equality Duty Considerations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use data to show who is in this group.</li> <li>• Consider how they are impacted by the outcomes and during the process.</li> <li>• Whose perspective does this need looking at from?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Employees</b></li> <li>• <b>Customers</b></li> <li>• <b>Contractors</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there levelling up opportunities for a particular group?</li> <li>• Can you...               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>remove disadvantage?</b></li> <li>• <b>improve access/support?</b></li> <li>• <b>collect more data to be more informed?</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Impact</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Positive</b></li> <li>• <b>Neutral</b></li> <li>• <b>Negative</b></li> </ul>
<b>Age</b> Are different age ranges impacted differently?	<p>Licensed taxi and private hire drivers aged over 65 years are required to undertake an annual medical assessment (every 3 years for those aged under 65 years). This requirement is in place to safeguard the travelling public and is in accordance with DVLA Group 2 medical standards.</p> <p>When considering the Policy from the perspective of the travelling public (who are customers of the licensed trade), specific consideration has been given to the safeguarding of children and young people. This is because of their inherent vulnerability and because some of whom may travel unaccompanied in a licensed vehicle.</p>	<p>To help safeguard children travelling in licensed taxi and private hire vehicles, drivers are subject to criminal and medical checks and must undertake and pass child sexual exploitation (CSE), child sexual abuse (CSA) and county lines awareness training. This training and these checks are repeated at regular intervals.</p> <p>Where concerns are brought to light about the conduct or behaviour of a driver or operator in relation to a person aged under 18 years, this will be treated as a matter of priority. The continuance of the licence or the ability of an applicant to obtain a licence in the first place will be considered and the Policy applied stringently. Where licences are refused, revoked, or suspended, the Council will update the National Register (NR3S) – a legal requirement on the Council by</p>	Positive

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		virtue of the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022, to ensure these decisions are recorded nationally and searchable by other councils.	
<b>Sex</b> Is one sex impacted more than another?	<p>There are no specific impacts, but the Council is aware that according to Government surveying that nationally, in 2024, most taxi and private hire drivers are male (93.6%).</p> <p>When considering the Policy from the perspective of the travelling public (who are customers of the licensed trade), the Council is aware that nationally, there is little overall difference in the number of trips taken in licensed vehicles by male and females. The Policy recognises however, that drivers can be afforded a great deal of opportunity to access people who are situationally vulnerable, particularly those in the nighttime economy, and seeks to safeguard the travelling public via criminality checks and requiring CSA and CSE training.</p> <p>The Policy makes clear that drivers and operators must not discriminate by refusing service or providing poor service based on a passenger's sex.</p>	We recognise that there is an opportunity to collect equalities monitoring data in respect of sex. We propose to collect and use this data in the future to better understand the proportion of female to male licensed drivers and to ensure the relevance of our advice and guidance, and third-party training.	Neutral
<b>Disability</b> Is one type of disability impacted more than others?	The Policy stipulates that Group 2 medical standards will be applied to all licensed drivers and applicants for taxi and private hire licences. Certain health conditions and	No levelling up opportunities in respect of licensing drivers whose medical fitness does not meet Group 2 standards,	Positive.

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	<p>disabilities will automatically preclude some people from holding a licence, for example those who are blind or who have mobility challenges which may then impact on their ability to assist passengers with their luggage or to provide mobility assistance to disabled passengers.</p> <p>When considering the Policy from the perspective of the travelling public (who are customers of the licensed trade), specific consideration has been given to passengers who require mobility assistance when accessing this mode of transport or who wish to travel with an assistance dog. This is in recognition of government research in 2022 which found that average taxi or private hire usage accounted for 3% of all trips for those with mobility difficulties, compared to 1% for those without mobility difficulties.</p>	<p>because of the Council's statutory obligation to ensure the safety of the travelling public when accessing licensed taxis and private hire vehicles.</p> <p>The Policy has been updated to make clear the legal obligations on drivers to provide reasonable mobility assistance to their passengers (at no extra charge). The Policy also sets out clearly the obligation on drivers to transport passengers with assistance dogs (at no extra charge).</p> <p>The Policy requires that all drivers undertake and pass disability awareness training – the national average is 67% (taxi drivers) 65% (private hire drivers). Those driving wheelchair accessible vehicles must undertake specific wheelchair handling training.</p> <p>The Policy has been updated to provide that all hackney carriage vehicles presented for licensing must be wheelchair accessible (nationally, as of 1 April 2023, 67% of councils require all or part of their taxi fleets to be wheelchair accessible). Previously, only Kettering</p>	

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		<p>and Wellingborough stipulated this requirement. To help incentivise the trade to license this vehicle type, such vehicles may remain licensed for a longer duration and may be presented for first licensing at an older age.</p> <p>The removal of taxi zones and restrictions on hackney carriage numbers will hopefully result in a wider distribution of wheelchair accessible vehicles across the whole of the Council area. This will provide a greater choice of wheelchair accessible vehicles for wheelchair users, particularly for people in areas where provision is more limited at present.</p> <p>The Council will continue to maintain a list of wheelchair accessible taxis and private hire vehicles on its website – passengers wishing to travel by a taxi or private hire vehicle can view the list to identify the proprietor of these vehicles.</p> <p>The Policy, its Appendices and supporting online documentation and advice (e.g. external guidance to applicants and to the public) will be written in plain English, where this is possible, to help ensure everyone can</p>	

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		understand its contents. This also will help ensure licensed drivers and operators can comply with the requirements of the Policy. The documents will be made available on the Council's website and published in HTML format.	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> Will there be an impact on people who are trans?	There are no specific impacts.  When considering the Policy from the perspective of the travelling public (who are customers of the licensed trade), the Policy makes clear that drivers and operators must not discriminate by refusing service or providing poor service based on a passenger's gender reassignment.	No.	Neutral
<b>Race</b> Are people from one ethnic group affected more than people from another?	There are no specific impacts, but the Council is aware that according to Government surveying that nationally, in 2024, the two main ethnic groups of drivers were Asian or Asian British, and White.  The Policy makes clear that an applicant's knowledge and ability to communicate in both spoken and written English will be taken into consideration when assessing their suitability to hold a taxi or private hire driver licence. Clearly, passengers must be able to communicate with drivers to confirm the journey they wish to take, to check the fare, to ask for and receive a legible receipt and to	The Policy and supporting Appendices is written in plain English for those whose first language is not English. We are aware this also makes the documents easier to translate.  The Policy will be made available on the Council's website and published in HTML format and accessibility requirements will be considered.	Neutral

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	explain if they need mobility assistance or require to travel with an assistance dog.  When considering the Policy from the perspective of the travelling public (who are customers of the licensed trade), the Policy makes clear that drivers and operators must not discriminate by refusing service or providing poor service based on a passenger's race.	Where a licensed driver or operator, whose first language is not English, is required to attend a formal interview or appear before the Council's Licensing Panel, the Council will afford that person the opportunity to be assisted by an interpreter, so that the Council can be confident that the individual concerned can understand the matter at hand.	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> Are people of one sexual orientation affected differently to people of another sexual orientation?	There are no specific impacts.  When considering the Policy from the perspective of the travelling public (who are customers of the licensed trade), the Policy makes clear that drivers and operators must not discriminate by refusing service or providing poor service based on a passenger's protected characteristics.	No	Neutral
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b> Note: Applies to employment proposals only.	Not applicable.	No.	Neutral
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b> Are people who are pregnant, or have a baby of 6 months old or younger, impacted by this proposal?	No specific impact.	No.	Neutral
<b>Religion or Belief</b> Does the proposal impact people differently depending on their religion or belief?	There are no specific impacts. The proposed Policy makes clear that drivers and operators must not	No.	Neutral



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	discriminate by refusing service or providing poor service based on a passenger's religion or belief.		
<b>Care Experience</b> Does the proposal impact someone who has been in care differently to someone who has not. Please also refer to the <a href="#">care experience guidance notes</a> .	No.  When considering the Policy from the perspective of the travelling public (who are customers of the licensed trade), the Policy is informed by the findings and recommendations contained in the Jay report of 2014 and the Casey report of 2015, in particular the prominent role of taxi drivers being directly linked to children who were abused in Rotherham	To help safeguard children travelling in licensed taxi and private hire vehicles, some of whom may travel unaccompanied, drivers are subject to criminal and medical checks and must undertake and pass CSE and CSA and county lines awareness training. This training and these checks are repeated at regular intervals. Where concerns are brought to light about the conduct or behaviour of a driver or operator in relation to a child, the continuance of the licence or the ability of an applicant to obtain a licence in the first place will be considered as a matter of priority and the Policy applied stringently.  Where licences are refused, revoked, or suspended, the Council will update the National Register (NR3S) – a legal requirement on the Council by virtue of the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022, to ensure these decisions are recorded nationally and searchable by other councils.	Neutral
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	The relaxation of the age at which certain vehicles can be presented for licensing and remain licensed presents	The removal of hackney carriage (taxi) zones means that more vehicles are	Positive


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1. Health behaviours (E.g. diet, exercise, alcohol, smoking) 2. Support (E.g. community cohesion, rural isolation) 3. Socio economic (E.g. income, education). 4. Environment (E.g. green spaces, fuel poverty, housing standards).	<p>potential economic benefits for the licensed trade and to prospective applicants.</p> <p>The relaxation of the age policy applicable to low and zero emission vehicles presents potential environmental benefit.</p> <p>From the perspective of the travelling public (customers of the licensed trade), several of the Policy amendments and inclusions are of benefit.</p>	<p>available for bookings in more rural areas.</p> <p>The provision of a wider fleet of vehicles will mean more choice for all customers.</p> <p>The relaxation of the age at which certain vehicles can be presented for licensing and remain licensed will hopefully mean more wheelchair accessible vehicles and environmentally cleaner vehicles are available to the travelling public which has a positive impact upon air quality which can negatively affect health.</p>	

### 3: Equality Impact

<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
What impact does the proposal have on the protected groups?  No Impact, Positive Impact, Negative Impact or a combination?  Any negative impact will result in an overall negative impact.	Positive – the Policy puts in place control measures where there may be negative impacts on any protected group and seeks to bring above positive impacts to some protected groups where it is possible within the regulatory framework.
Does an Equality Impact Assessment need to be completed?  (Yes, if any negative impact is found.)	No  (If yes, this Equality Screening Assessment must be adjoined to the Equality Impact Assessment).

Question	Response
Is this document going to be published with the relevant report? If yes, include link to location.	Yes / <del>No</del>  Link will be provided to the Licensing & Appeals Committee Agenda of 9 January 2025
Does the associated proposal meet our accessibility requirements? <a href="#">Writing for Inclusion Guidance</a>	Yes/ <del>No</del>

#### 4: Ownership

Question	Response
Directorate	Place and Economy
Service area	Environmental Health
Lead officer's name	Russ Howell
Lead officer's job title	Licensing and Service Support Manager
Lead officer's email address	Russell.howell@northnorthants.gov.uk
Lead officer's signature	
Date completed	19 December 2024
Confirm Lead Officer has completed <a href="#">Equality Impact Assessments iLearn Module</a> .	Yes

Completed forms must be sent to [NNC Equalities](#)