
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire
Policy Consultation Feedback
2020

Table of Contents

Background	3
Overall Proposed Policy.....	4
Environmental Issues	6
Drivers	9
DBS Update Service.....	10
Safeguarding Course and Test	11
Competency Test.....	12
Operator	13
Vehicles.....	14
Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles	15
Private Hire Vehicle Plate Exemption.....	16
MOT/ Certificate of Compliance (COC)	18
Safety Equipment – Fire Extinguisher	19
Door Signage/ Licence Plate	20
Internal Vehicle notice	23
CCTV.....	20
Hackney Carriage Vehicles.....	27
Transfer of ownership of vehicle	28
Enforcement	28
Complaints.....	29
Relevance of Convictions	29
Summary	30

Background

South Cambridgeshire District Council has reviewed its Taxi Policy and the proposed changes identified will apply to all Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Drivers, Vehicle Proprietors and Operators holding or wishing to obtain a licence from this authority.

Consultation event open days were held on the 29th and 30th July in the Council Chamber where the taxi trade and other interested parties came to discuss the proposed policy and provide their feedback. The event was very well attended and appreciated by trade and the public.

Cambridge City Council has engaged very well with the consultation and there has been a consensus of support for the proposed policy.

It is felt that with the two neighboring authorities working at harmonising their policies, it will provide a more streamlined Hackney Carriage and Private Hire regime across both areas where many of those licensed with South Cambridgeshire District Council frequent.

Following the consultation, the Licensing Committee will be asked to sign off the policy at a Formal Licensing Committee Meeting 10th February 2020 to be adopted at Full Council on 20th November 2020.

The policy update is intended to address the Business Plan objectives for 'Green to the Core' and supporting local businesses. It also helps address residents need for safe, reliable and convenient local transport.

Overall Proposed Policy

Consultation Responses:		
Key Points	Index	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
	Section 1	
Support		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for more frequent vehicle safety checks, safeguarding and lower emission vehicles, public safety 	A,C	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thanks given for recognising of the market for executive private hire services 	C	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support from residents for proposed policy 		L, O
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A driver supports all proposed changes 		K
Concern		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing of the policy review as government are considering introducing national standards is not helpful to the trade. 	Appendix B R	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional costs would prompt applicants to go elsewhere (Inc. cross-border working) 	B,G	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of flexibility detrimental for different business models and didn't support small rural operators and residents 	D H	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A "one size fits all" approach is not appropriate and will discriminate against smaller operators, create a financial burden and disadvantage many of South Cambridgeshire's more rural residents'. 	H	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several drivers were unhappy with the overall proposed policy 		B, H, I, Q, V, W
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operators feel that it is difficult to find new drivers 		D, E,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is felt that the proposed policy will increase business costs and put drivers in financial difficulties 		E, H, T, U
Suggestions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer to consult with the licensing team to establish a clear understanding of the (executive) market and help shape the definition (Driver) 	U	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Cambridge City Council) - would like South Cambridgeshire District Council to consider the following as part of their policy changes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Would like South Cambridgeshire District Council to consider Cambridge City Council garage as the sole tester of vehicles for their COC as they believe it is more effective, more robust and contact with council on issues more efficiently. ii. We request that South Cambridgeshire District Council look into making it mandatory for their drivers to provide customers a means of paying for a booking, with their credit, or debit card, 	V	

whether it be chip and pin, or via an app.		
• Limiting the amount of hours worked.	I	
• Request for a price freeze when new regulations came into force.	O	

Officer Comments

- i. The main aim of the local authority in the licensing of Hackney Carriage and Private drivers, vehicles and operators is the protection of the public.
- ii. We believe that the proposed policy does demonstrate the promotion of the following objectives:
 - i. The safety and protection of the public
 - ii. Vehicle safety, comfort and access
 - iii. The prevention of crime and disorder
 - iv. The promotion of environmental sustainability
 - v. Protection of children and adults at risk from harm
- iii. No date has been given for the setting of National Standards by the Government. The existing Department for Transport (DfT) Best Practice Guidance has been consulted on and we await the outcome.
- iv. With regard to information and data sharing the policy states that the Council may process the information provided to prevent and detect fraud in any of our systems and may supply information to other departments within this Licensing Authority and externally to government agencies, credit reference agencies, audit or other external bodies for such purposes. We may share personal data with Local Partner Authorities, Police, Legal, Courts, Internal/External audit, Disclosure and Barring Service, HM Revenue & Customs, Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency, Customs and Border Agency as required.
- v. All licence fees are cost recovery and do not include enforcement work.
- vi. The priority of this Licensing Authority is on public safety and whilst we recognise that different business models have differing challenges, the aim of the policy is to have consistency and transparency for the objectives to be adhered to.
- vii. South Cambridgeshire District Council's current approach is to have a network of garages across the district to undertake C.O.C's. This is in line with the South Cambs Business Plan objectives of supporting small local businesses. This will also reduce mileage and therefore carbon emissions across the district.

Environmental Issues

Proposed Changes to Policy

- New conditions added to the policy to line up with Cambridge City and to work towards South Cambridgeshire District Council Business Plan for a carbon free future
- Cambridge City intend to restrict City Centre Access to Ultra-Low and Zero Emission Licensed Vehicles only by 2028.
- Ultra low emission vehicle (ULEV) is the term used to describe any vehicle that:
 - Uses low carbon technologies
 - Emits less than 75g of CO₂/km from the tailpipe
 - Is capable of operating in zero tailpipe emission mode for a range of at least ten miles

Policy	Rationale	Implementation
All first-time Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licence applications to be Zero or Ultra-Low Emission	This allows proprietors/ potential proprietors to focus on planning to move to Zero or Ultra Low emission vehicles by a set date.	With effect from 1 October 2021
All Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licence applications to be Zero or Ultra-Low Emission	This allows proprietors/ potential proprietors to focus on planning to move to Zero or Ultra Low emission vehicles by a set date and allows adequate business planning.	With effect from October 2028

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
	Section 2	
Support		
• Health of residents/children adversely affected by pollution, this policy will help tackle it	A	
• Consistency with Cambridge City a good thing	AS	
• Long-term approach with investment in charging points helpful	A	
• Green cars and ultra-low emission vehicles	R	
• Time frame – fair and reasonable	T	
• Council is progressive and ambitious and aligning its licensing conditions with broader sustainability goals - encouraging.	T	
• Concern about the impact of diesel taxis on air pollution		C
• One business supports proposal measures for environment issues		J
Concerns		
• Electric vehicles isn't feasible due to charge time and number of charging points in the area	F	
• Limited vehicles available and unsuitable for taxis	B	
• To reduce pollution, should reduce the number of vehicles licenced	D	
• Cost of vehicles too expensive at present	K,U,V,	
• Blue efficiency diesel cars are less harmful to the environment overall	L	
• Hackney/Private Hire are different to Chauffeurs who do not operate in the city and this will put their businesses in jeopardy	V	
• Mileage range insufficient	U	
• Electric Wheelchair accessible vehicles not widely available and those that are - too expensive and are Hackney Carriage vehicles	U	
• No secondhand markets for vehicle	U	
• At present the market is unpredictable for vehicles	U	
• Proposed changes are unacceptably slow.		C
• Several drivers feel that the environmental policy is a national Issue and the taxi trade is being discriminated against		K
• An operator has asked if an accurate assessment been made of the environmental impact of the manufacture and delivery of new vehicles and the disposal of old ones against the retention of older (but well maintained) ones? Has the impact of the disposal of lithium batteries been considered (currently no known method of disposal)		G
Suggestions		
• 'Make all licensed cars electric and hybrid only from 2021. With help from the councils we could change our cars easily within a year! 'Massive improvement on Cambridge roads!'	F	
• A suggestion was made to support the transaction from petrol/ diesel car by creating a car loan scheme for private hire and hackney drivers.	P	
• Vehicles should comply with Euro 6 emissions standards at first to allow for owners who have entered into financial commitments	L	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several suggestions for vehicle licences for ULEV to be reduced or free of charge 		B, F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One drive feels that the focus should be on big companies and not the self employed 		P
Relevant information		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cambridge City recently consulted on changing the set date for all new licensed saloon vehicles to be zero or ultra low emission from 1 April 2020 to 1 April 2021. Members decided to keep the implementation date of 1 April 2020. 		

Officer Comments:

- i. Overall drivers recognise that low emission vehicles have a positive impact on the environment but are concerned that the infrastructure is not there. Officers agree that there are not enough charging points and ULEV/Electric vehicles still do not have the mileage range to successfully act as taxis and cover all facets of service provision expected by public.
- ii. SCDC to install 3 rapid charge-points for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire use only.
- iii. Public charge points in supermarkets/carparks are often free to use for the duration of your stay.
- iv. The Government has already taken steps to ensure that existing homes are electric vehicle ready by providing up to £500 off the costs of installing a charge-point at home.
- v. Technology allows drivers to be able to plan journeys taking into account distance, time and charging points available.
- vi. There is a Government grant available for up to a maximum of £3,500 off the purchase of approved vehicles. These vehicles have CO2 emissions of less than 50g/km and can travel at least 112km (without) any emissions at all.
- vii. Legally - we cannot limit the number of private hire vehicle

Drivers

Proposed Changes to Policy	
i.	New Private Hire and Hackney Carriage driver licences will be issued for one-year probation period with a renewal check for a further 2 years.
ii.	Thereafter licences will be renewed every 3 years
iii.	To confirm 'fit and proper' before granting full licence
iv.	All Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver applicants are required to provide two referees, at least one from a professional person (e.g. accountant, solicitor, magistrate), who has known the applicant for at least three years.

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
	Section 3	
Support		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probation period for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers is generally accepted. One driver commented 'some bad men want to be taxi drivers'. 	A, J, K	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A driver felt it was a good idea to obtain references. 	F	
Concerns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several drivers thought that restricting the issue of new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers licence to one year as a blanket policy seemed unfair, one driver commented that '<i>we should be encouraging entry to the trade not discouraging</i>'. 	Appendix B I	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One driver felt that there was no need for references. 	G	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One driver commented 'this section does NOT distinguish between taxi/private hire and Chauffeur drivers who do NOT operate in Cambridge'. 	J	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One driver was concerned about the time it took to renew licence 		D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A driver felt the 'fit and proper' check was insulting 		I
Suggestions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several drivers thought there should be a mandatory English test for all drivers. 	E, F	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was felt that drivers needed disability training 		A,C

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A driver has suggested that license should not be issued to people from locations out of the district 		H
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	---

Officer Comments

- i. Question 18 of the Department for Transport Consultation on Statutory Guidance for Licensing Authorities recommends that all licensing should consider whether an applicant for a licence is able to communicate in English orally and in writing with customers.
- ii. The statutory and practical criteria and qualifications for a Hackney Carriage driver are like those of a Private Hire driver. The only difference would be the Competency test – Hackney Carriage driver applicants would have additional questions i.e. shortest routes.
- iii. Drivers are sent renewal reminders up to three months before expiry of licence. From the 1st April this will be done by email rather than paper copies being sent.
- iv. The legislation places a duty on the local authority to only license those who are ‘fit and proper’ or ‘safe and suitable’ to hold a licence. The legislation allows local authorities to set their own conditions, requirements and application processes to ensure that the public are protected

DBS Update Service

- i. Currently all licensed drivers will be required to subscribe to the DBS Update Service and renew on an annual basis to continue to hold a South Cambridgeshire District Council driver’s licence.
- ii. This authority will undertake an annual online check of the DBS Update Service for the applicant’s current status.
- iii. There are **no proposed changes** to the requirement for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers to subscribe to the DBS Update service.

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
	Section 3.1	
Concerns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential loss of licence if card expires or driver forgets to register 	A B	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DBS update does not allow payment to be made by direct debit 		A
Suggestions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘We are proposing to council, if there any driver failed to update his/her DBS on time or laps, notice them to subscribe this service within 	A	

reasonable time period’.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-driver owners to sign up to the DBS update service save having to re-do a basic check every year – would save money for the proprietor in the long run’. 	C	

Officer comments

- i. Subscription renewal to the update service can be made by choosing automatic renewal at the start or by logging on to the account created at the subscription start.
- ii. A reminder is emailed before the end of the subscription allowing renewal 30 days before the current subscription ends.
- iii. We can only ask non-driver proprietors for a basic DBS and this does not allow update service.
- iv. Disclosure Barring Services are working to allow payments to be made by direct debit

Safeguarding Course and Test

- i. Currently all new applicants for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver, proprietors of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles and Operator licences will be required to participate and undertake a safeguarding course and test.
- ii. All existing licensed drivers, proprietors and operators will be required to participate and undertake a safeguarding course and test, as required by this Local Authority, in order to obtain a pass certificate which must be produced within 1 calendar year of adoption of this policy or on renewal whichever is earlier. Failure to do so may result in suspension of the licence until successful completion of the test.
- iii. There are **no proposed changes** to the requirement for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers to undertake the Safeguarding course and test.

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
	Section 3.2	
Support		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most comments were in support of the safeguarding course and test. 		
Concerns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One driver commented that he didn't '<i>know english, so an exam will be very difficult</i>' for him 	D	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drivers of exempt vehicles feel that a safeguarding test has no bearing on the type of work they do 		A
Suggestions		

• Drivers who have poor written English should be able to take the safeguarding course and test verbally.	A,C,F	
• One driver suggests that drivers who have already passed a safeguarding course with Cambridge City should not have to pay again.		C

Officer Comments

- i. This Authority is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. We take our responsibilities seriously and expect all our licensed drivers, proprietors and operators to share this commitment.
- ii. It is therefore essential that drivers have a good understanding and command of the English language. This will be tested by way of communication at the appointment and through the competency and safeguarding tests.

Competency Test

- i. Currently the policy states that in order to be a licensed driver a new applicant must first complete and pass the Private Hire or Hackney Carriage Competency Test which should have been completed no more than 12 months prior to application.
- ii. Existing drivers may be required to undertake the Competency Test as determined by this Local Authority.
- iii. There are **no proposed changes** to the requirement for new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers to undertake the Competency test.
- iv.

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
	Section 3.3	
Support		
• Drivers need to have a good geographical knowledge and cannot be sat nav dependent. I suggest a robust knowledge test'.	D	
Concerns		
• Existing drivers should not be required to take the Competency test.	A,B	
• A driver of exempt vehicles feels that as they do not work in South Cambs a competency test is unnecessary		A

Suggestions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content of the competency test should be made available to operators and drivers for training purposes. 	C	

Officer Comments

- i. Existing drivers will only be required to take the Competency test if there are concerns.
- ii. The competency test covers general vehicle questions, points of Interest, numeracy, licence conditions, Highway Code and road signs. Hackney Carriage driver applications will be required to answer question on the shortest routes. Revision suggestions are made in the handbook.

Operator

Proposed Changes to Policy
<p>New operator licenses will be issued for probation of one year with a renewal application for up to a further five years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Private Hire Operator applicants are required to provide two referees, at least one from a professional person (e.g. accountant, solicitor, magistrate), who has known the applicant for at least three years To confirm 'fit and proper' before granting full licence.

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
	Section 4.1	
Support		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One driver commented that more should be done to check the fit & proper status of some Operators. 	M	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 		
Concerns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'This section does NOT distinguish between taxi/private hire and exempt Chauffeur Operators'. 	J	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One thing I miss is any understanding of the difference between, say, Panther and my local firms with 1 and 2 persons. I suggest we think about a different regime for companies with fewer 	I	

than 5 employees allowing them to specialise and freeing them from burdensome and useless requirements.		
• A driver feels that the proposed changes are unfair for smaller businesses.		H
General Comments		
• Operators need to play an active role in enforcement	G	
• Operators need to take responsibility by managing their drivers	F	
• Operators need to take responsibility and have relevant complaints policy	AC	
• A resident thinks that operators must only use hybrid and electric vehicles.		A

Officer Comments

- i. The introduction of a probation period falls in line with Cambridge City and most employers. Issues reported quite often emerge during the first year after the initial licence has been issued. The goal of this new probation period is to allow for the Licensing Authority to review and perform any relevant checks i.e. Basic DBS to ensure that the operator is complying with the conditions of his licence.
- ii. The priority of this Licensing Authority is on public safety and whilst we recognise that different business models have differing challenges, the aim of the policy is to have consistency and transparency for the objectives to be adhered to.

Vehicles

Proposed Changes to Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new vehicle licence will not be granted in respect of a vehicle unless it is less than 4 years old. • A vehicle licence will not be renewed for a petrol or diesel vehicle unless the vehicle is less than 9 years old. • A vehicle licence will not be renewed for a Ultra-low emissions vehicle unless the vehicle is less than 12 years old. All petrol and diesel vehicles must comply with at least the “Euro 5” emissions standards

limiting CO, NOX and particulate matter emissions

- A vehicle licence will not be renewed for a zero emissions vehicle unless the vehicle is less than 15 years old.

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
	Section 5.1	
Support		
• <i>'help drivers to better manage the current more limited availability, and higher capital cost, of zero and ultra-low emissions vehicles.'</i>	AV	
• <i>'helps drivers recover the increased cost of these vehicles over a longer period.'</i>	A	
• <i>'fewer moving parts than petrol and diesel vehicles, zero emission vehicles experience less wear and tear and can therefore be expected to have longer operational lives'</i>	A	
• <i>'It is known that many older model vehicles emit higher emission levels as compared to newer vehicles'</i>	E	
• Old vehicles are unsafe and polluting		Q
Concerns		
• may be a be an issue to those many drivers who have loans/ finance/ HP agreements on their vehicles may	I	
• There were many comments asking for the renewal age limit of 7 years to be reconsidered.	CDEFG NOPSU	
• A number of drivers do not believe that excluding vehicles by age is necessary and other things should be considered instead i.e. mileage, emissions	BCH	
		E, F
• Many drivers feel that the age limit of 9 year for renewal is unreasonable		EFGIJLN PSWZ
General Comments		
• <i>One driver asked if there will be a period to allow for those not in a position to immediately replace a vehicle that is too old.</i>	M	
• <i>Specify some emission test results (and not just CO2) instead'.</i>	A	

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

- i. Currently Hackney Carriage vehicles must be Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV's). New vehicles will need to comply with this immediately, and for those vehicles currently licensed as a Hackney Carriage they will have 3 years to comply. Failure to do so will result in the vehicle being de-licensed.
- ii. There are **no proposed changes** to the requirement for Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 5.2	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Concerns		
• One driver thought that all Operators should be able to offer Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles.	A	
• Having all HC vehicles be wheelchair accessible is inappropriate	5.9A	
Suggestions		
• I was suggested that Wav vehicles should be excluded from proposed timeline for UVLA implementation		A, B

Officer Comments

- i. This Local Authority encourages all Private Hire operators to include wheelchair accessible vehicles amongst their fleet
- ii. The Council encourages all Private Hire operators to include WAV's amongst their fleet and to ensure that no additional costs are levied by them or their drivers, for conveying disabled passengers.

Private Hire Vehicle Plate Exemption

- i. The current policy aims to ensure public safety whilst taking a balanced approach to licensing requirements. Its objective is the provision of an exemption to allow "executive vehicles" to operate without displaying external identification plates (private hire vehicle licence plate).
- ii. Current policy allows plate exemptions for vehicles which primary undertake executive chauffeur work.

Proposed Changes to Policy

- Vehicles which have been issued with an exemption certificate to solely undertake executive chauffeur work with no exceptions

This Licensing Authority recognises that there is a specialist market for the use of unmarked hire and reward vehicles in the following circumstances:

- Chauffeur / prestige-type services
- Fulfilling a pre-existing, written contract (pre-existing meaning signed at least 10 working days in advance of the hire)
- Providing a regular service (whether to an individual or to a business)

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 5.3	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Support		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In favour if <i>'determined beyond doubt that the work is 'specialty or executive' and that this can be verified.'</i> 	A	
Concerns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discriminating against customers and dictating who is worthy to travel in a particular style. 	D	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'REFUSING people my type of service will be restricting my trade and this will eventually CEASE my employment.'</i> 	D	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'need the flexibility... of our vehicles being... interchangeable in case of breakdown, servicing etc'.</i> 	G	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr - <i>'discriminatory to use terms such as 'senior personnel', and 'stars', and to allow any organization to determine that junior staff must travel in inferior vehicles.'</i> 	F	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr – <i>'all PHVs should be regarded as exempt vehicles, and their drivers instructed accordingly'</i> 	F	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is felt that the policy does not make it clear what the requirements are for exemption work 		B C E G H

Officer Comments

i. Licensing Officers recommend the following:

- Pre-booked, pre-existing contract signed in advance and operator cannot dispatch a plate exempt vehicle to undertake non-plate exempt work of bookings.
- The type of work which would be considered for the grant of an exemption could be termed 'executive style' using high-end, prestige vehicles.
- Such work includes, but is not limited to: –
 - contracts with senior personnel of large companies to carry managing directors or their clients
 - contracts with national or local government, or similar agencies, to carry senior personnel and guests on official business;
 - the carriage of the bride and/or groom to a wedding (but not guests)
 - All other categories require Licensing Authority approval
- High-end, prestige vehicles which have been issued with an exemption certificate to solely undertake executive chauffeur work with no exceptions

MOT/ Certificate of Compliance (COC)

Current policy requires all new and renewal Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles to have a yearly MOT and yearly COC

Proposed Changes
The vehicle must have a yearly MOT certificate and a Certificate of Compliance issued for every six months.

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 5.4	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Support		
• <i>Two COC's a year will enable mine and public safety'.</i>	C	
• <i>OK with the notion of 6 monthly testing</i>	H	
• <i>We are in agreement with the requirement that all licensed vehicles requiring two yearly Certificates of Compliances. Hackney Carriage and Private hire vehicles are used regularly and are likely to experience</i>	B	

<i>greater levels of wear and tear, as compared to family or company vehicles.</i>		
• <i>This promotes public safety, as vehicles are ensured to be maintained to high levels.</i>	B	
• <i>'Cambridge City Council employ a two-yearly Certificate of Compliance and have found this beneficial in ensuring our licensed vehicles are fit for purpose'.</i>	B	
Concerns		
• Completely unnecessary and an additional expense that will impact most on smaller businesses.	G	
• Several drivers feel that a 6 monthly compliance test is unnecessary, and some feel that council are trying to make money from drivers		AG HK O PUV
General Comments		
• Accredited garages need more training/ regulating for testing to be consistent.	F	

Officer Comments

Vehicle testing once a year has shown that vehicles are not maintained to a high degree. More MOT certificates are showing advisories, for example 'nail in tyre' or brake pads close to limit'.

Safety Equipment – Fire Extinguisher

Proposed Change
All vehicles must have an efficient fire extinguisher which shall be carried in such a position as to be readily available for use.

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 5.5	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Concerns		
• <i>'Need to specify what counts as 'efficient' otherwise there will be confusion among drivers and testers.</i>	A	
General Comments		

• Follow city council with minimum 1KG ?'.	A	
--------------------------------------------	---	--

Dashcam

Proposed Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any dashcams installed in the licensed vehicle must be outward facing only. Internal facing dashcams will not be permitted in the licensed vehicles. It is the sole responsibility of the proprietor of the licensed vehicle, with dashcams installed, to be registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO). Further information can be found on the following link; https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/register/

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 5.5	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Concerns		
<i>'I don't support that dash camera should be control by council but I'm not against the dash camera, you can say every driver must have it in their car by law but strictly private control not third party'</i>		C
General Comments		
• Drivers feel that dashcams should be a choice		A B

Door Signage/ Licence Plate

Current policy states that the vehicle shall display on both rear external passenger doors in a prominent location affixed door signage, "Private Hire Vehicle – Must be Pre-booked with Operator". The vehicle shall display on the driver and front passenger door in a prominent position the name and telephone number of the Operator fulfilling the booking.

Proposed Change

- Wording amended in policy to 'Council issued' signage
- Hackney vehicles must affix permanently on the front and rear external passenger and driver doors in a prominent location, South Cambridgeshire District Council issued door signage.
- Private Hire vehicles must affix on the rear external passenger doors in a prominent location, Council issued door signage.

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 5.6	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Support		
• A driver thinks door stickers are important for safety.	A	
• <i>'in favour of rule that states signage should be in place at all times'</i> .	M	
• <i>vehemently in favour of signs being on display permanently and - crucially - with the operator's phone number clearly displayed.</i>	R	
Concerns		
• doesn't agree with the amount of signs that are on vehicles	I	
• door signage should be removed altogether and that South Cambridgeshire District should adopt the London round small style sign.	C	
• customers find door signage intrusive and unnecessary for the private trips they want to make	D	
• <i>'I do not like the idea of signage. I do a variety of contract work plus some executive work for SCDC Licenced chauffeur companies who hold plate exemption'</i> .	L	
• 'The easiest way to ensure that 'the public are able to easily identify between a Hackney Carriage and a Private Hire vehicle' is to remove all livery from the latter category'.	J	
• One driver feels that the signage is confusing for customers		A
• Several drivers feel that the signage is unsafe		C D K
General Comments		
• <i>Operators should have office and phone number available 24/7 for</i>	N	

<i>customers to utilize to take complaints’.</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>If is felt the telephone number on external door signage is a safety & safeguarding necessity. South Cambridgeshire District Council crests should be allowed to be removable for Private Hire drivers who wish to do occasional executive work through their operator where the customer requires the vehicle to look less like a taxi’.</i> 	M	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>‘As Uber’s bookings are taken via the app it is felt to be reasonable to allow the URL (website address) in lieu of a telephone number.</i> 	B	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>complaints made by members of the public to be put on door signs, it could be the council telephone number and incorporated into the South Cambridgeshire door signs, not that of an operator.</i> 	B	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Uber strongly recommend that it should be rephrased to require ‘contact information’ on operator door signs, such as a telephone number or website URL or email address’.</i> 	B	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>‘Panther would like to see different size plates and brackets routinely/properly offered to South Cambridgeshire District Council drivers at the point of application if possible in order that they can make informed decisions about how best to fix the plate to their vehicle’.</i> 	R	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>‘It is a fact that the more signage you put on a PHV, the more it looks like a taxi and the more the public are confused. Regulatory signage on PHVs should be discreet, and the number plate should be the primary thing that a passenger looks for, not a licensing plate, door stickers, branding or other identifiers’.</i> 	A	

Relevant Information

- Mr Tariq Ahmed submitted a petition of 149 signatures.
- Taxi Drivers Reject Company Door Sign mandatory by South Cambridge District Council
- Appendix A – Covering letter from Mr Ahmed
- Appendix B – Submitted Petition
- Why the petition?
 - Panther do not want their drivers to work for other companies, for example, Uber. This is because Uber price surge at busy times of the day. This means that Panther cannot get enough drivers to work for them at busy times as they are paid more by Uber. Having the Operator details on the vehicles means that Panther can easily be seen if one of their drivers is working elsewhere.

Officer Comments

- i. The display of the Operator name and telephone has been set in place to ensure that members of the public (not just the passenger) are able to make complaints and report safety issues directly to an operator. An example of this could be if a vehicle is parked across someone's drive or if a member of the public had concerns about a customer travelling in a vehicle
- ii. Certain app-based companies do not allow the general public to make a complaint via the app. A telephone is on the website which allows the public to make complaints.
- iii. We feel that it a telephone on door signage is important for the protection of public safety
- iv. In setting out this policy, South Cambridgeshire District Council seeks to carry out its licensing functions with a view to promoting the following objectives:
 - The safety and protection of the public
 - Vehicle safety, comfort and access
 - The prevention of crime and disorder
 - The promotion of environmental sustainability
 - Protection of children and adults at risk from harm

Internal Vehicle notice

- i. Currently the policy states that there must be a clear mechanism in place that informs passenger of :-
 - The business name of the operator, or proprietor if it is a hackney carriage,
 - The telephone number where a customer can make a complaint or report a concern,
 - The vehicle registration number, and
 - The vehicle licence plate number.
- ii. This can be by way of use of digital technology sent to the customer prior to the booking or an Internal Vehicle Notice contain the information and displayed in a conspicuous place which can be easily read by a passenger travelling in the rear and front of the vehicle

Proposed Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to protect the public and to allow customers to correctly identify and report either a driver or a vehicle which caused concern, the Council has determined that certain information must be displayed inside all licensed vehicles, in the form of a Council issued Internal Vehicle Notice

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 5.7	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020

Support		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Panther are in favour of the internal signage which should include plate exempt vehicles too. 	G	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal signage MUST in our opinion, include information on the operating company under which the vehicle is conducting the job/its services'. 	G	
Concerns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What you MUST remember is clients are sent emails AND texts of all drivers details should they require them, unlike a normal taxi'.</i> 	B	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most drivers are self-employed and often work for several operators, the internal notice contains the information of the operator as well as the vehicle so it can be misleading to passengers'. 	C	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A couple of drivers felt that by pre booking the passenger is already aware of the Private Hire Operator company details and wonder why it is mandatory to have internal sign. 	D	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the most evident ways we have improved safety is via the information we provide passengers in their app. Before their vehicle arrives, the passenger has access to the make, model, colour and vehicle registration mark of the car; the driver's name, picture and the parties' anonymised contact details are exchanged. Furthermore, the passenger has the ability to see where their vehicle is in real time via the map on their phone'. 	A	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Internal signage in Private Hire vehicles is a bad idea, as it can be fraudulently copied and used to entice a passenger into a vehicle and a potentially dangerous situation'. 	H	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of drivers feel that operators should pay for the internal vehicle signage rather than the drivers 		B

Officer Comments

We feel that the Internal Vehicle Notice this is vital for public safety as the person travelling in the vehicle is not always the person who makes the booking.

CCTV

Current Policy – All vehicles except plate exempt vehicles must have CCT installed before 1 April 2020

Proposed Change

- All (including exemptions) Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles must be fitted with an approved CCTV system no later than 30th November 2020.

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 5.8	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Support		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belief that CCTV will be enforced by central government and every taxi or private hire vehicle need to have one by law regardless local council policy 	K	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In favour - no reason why plate exempt should mean CCTV exempt too!</i> 	Q	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'cost to driver of £300 - £400 is agreeable/sensible – anything above £500 is definitely cost prohibitive'.</i> 	Q	
Concerns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Large majority of executive operators and drivers feel that CCTV is inappropriate for their type of business as they provide a different type of service and doesn't cater to the needs of their clients which will detrimental to their business</i> 	BHMR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To have it by 2020 is a very short notice. Authorities need to understand that we are already struggling to meet our needs'.</i> 	KL	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of drivers are concerned about the cost of installation, the aftercare, who will be the data controller, who will be covering the loss of earning if council need to extract the footage and driver privacy. 	ER	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are concerned using the car for personal use and wonder what the requirement will be for video recording 24/7. 	KL	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No consideration made passengers' right to privacy in their privately hired vehicle 	AHMP	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers are concerned that contract with leasing companies state that that no modifications must be made to the vehicle as this will invalidate the warranty. 	C	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers are concerned about what allowances would be made for temporary vehicles in the case of breakdowns and accidents? 	M	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'I do not see that CCTV meets the objectives [of 3.9.ii. GDPR further restricts its usefulness, as attempts by cyclists to use CCTV footage from Stagecoach demonstrate. It would be worth consulting the Cycling Campaign here. Internal CCTV will be extremely unpopular'.</i> 	O	
Suggestions		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘drivers will will not understand ICO It must be cost effective for driver - £400 max’. 	J	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports ICO guidelines and takes the view that this is a matter with which only vehicle proprietors must be compliant (and therefore it is the responsibility of the proprietor to notify the council that the equipment has been installed)’. 	D	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No need for operator to play a role in this, other than to ensure drivers are aware of requirements for their vehicle reducing additional administrative steps for both the council and operators’. 	D	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision needs to be carefully thought out with regard to the law and driver protection and not cost prohibitive or burdensome for the driver. 	Q	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost to driver of £300 - £400 is agreeable/sensible – anything above £500 is definitely cost prohibitive’. 	Q	

Officer Comments

- i. The Department for Transport Consultation on Statutory Guidance for Licensing Authorities recommends that licensing authorities should carefully consider potential public safety benefits and potential privacy issues when considering a policy mandating that taxis and PHVs have CCTV installed.
- ii. The policy states the installation of CCTV in licensed vehicles can be both a deterrent to would-be trouble makers and a source of evidence in the case of disputes between drivers and passengers, other incidents and accidents.
- iii. CCTV codes of practice, including clear signage that the vehicle uses CCTV.
- iv. South Cambridgeshire District Council will be the data controller and will be responsible for complying with all relevant data protection legislation.
- v. South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City are doing a joint procurement to find a reasonably priced system which confirms to our specifications. This will also include looking at the cost of aftercare.
- vi. The ‘panic’ button will allow the driver and/ or the customer to start audio recording.
- vii. There will be a flashing light to show that the CCTV is working – in case of a breakdown drivers must contact the manufacture. Equipment will have a warranty.
- viii. The owner/ driver of the vehicle will be responsible to the maintenance.
- ix. The owner/ driver will have bring the vehicle (unless vehicle is not drivable) to SCDC offices. Data will be downloaded onto a designated computer.
- x. There will be off button within the boot. This will have a delay of 30 minutes.
- xi. Temporary vehicles in the case of breakdowns and accidents would be exempt from CCTV.

Enforcement Officer Comments

- i. CCTV - As an officer for the authority I'm aware of the increasing number of driver's who have fitted or intend to fit, dashcams to their vehicles.
- ii. Due to the number of hours licensed drivers spend on the road it is quite understandable that they wish to protect themselves against false allegations if their vehicle is involved in an accident.

- iii. Some of the cameras fitted view from the front outward, another may be fitted at the rear of the vehicle viewing outward. However, some of the cameras are also viewing inwards from the front and recording passengers during the journey and as they enter and exit the vehicle.
- iv. This recorded footage may be of children, or vulnerable persons which may include inebriated female passengers who may be economically dressed. The cameras may be situated in such a position that captured footage would reveal more of the passengers than they would feel comfortable with.
- v. I believe that some drivers are fitting these systems to be used as internal vehicle CCTV, and that having their system of choice fitted will preclude them from having the council approved system fitted later. What the drivers are not aware of is that these systems are also recording audio which is specifically not allowed by ICO (Information Commissioners Office) unless it is attached to some form of "Panic button", which of course these systems do not support.
- vi. Although a driver can go into the settings manual and turn off the audio, in some systems it is reactivated when the camera is turned off and then back on again. Drivers also seem unaware that they should register the use of any such system with ICO to ensure compliance.
- vii. There is also a question on the security of any captured footage, which are generally held on removable and rewritable media such as a USB flashcard. This means that there are no control measures in place to stop footage being viewed by the driver and distributed on social media.
- viii. I would therefore suggest that the council make it as part of the policy that we do not allow dashcams to be fitted to any of our licensed vehicles. If drivers/proprietors wish to have a system that records the external journey, either front and/or rear, it should be incorporated into the council approved CCTV system as and when a system or systems have been approved as meeting the requirements.

Hackney Carriage Vehicles

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 5.9	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Concerns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A driver wondered why there the necessity to have all Hackney carriages white and why do all Hackney Carriage vehicles have to be accessible when there is need to accommodate a very tiny fraction of the travelling public. 	A	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Hackney Carriages need to be wheelchair accessible is inappropriate when just a percentage would be more fitting. 	A	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr - 'In my village there are wheelchair users who much prefer travelling in the who much prefer travelling in the comfort of a saloon than stuck in the chair, and a Hackney carriage which never 	C	

plies for hire but uses its status only to be able to use London bus lanes. Why should these be penalised?'		
Suggestions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr - It is appropriate that a PHV should be identifiable as such both by passengers and the public 	B	

Transfer of ownership of vehicle

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 5.9	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Suggestions		
Expect there to be reasonable charge for a transfer and re-issue of a license	A	

Enforcement

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 6	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Support		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Penalty point system is good 	K	

Concerns		
• Several drivers thought that the Penalty Point system was unfair and the driver should have the opportunity to appeal them.	JKLM	
• One driver felt that there was no need for enforcement.	A	
• <i>Cllr - In general too diffuse and terribly repetitive</i> '.		
• There are a few drivers and residents asking for more enforcement work		ABFH
Suggestions		
• <i>Many comments asking for more enforcement</i>	BCDE FHI	
• We are proposing to Authority allow drivers fair chance of explanation if points are given maybe he has genuine reason that he may not need to be issued with points'.	J	
• A driver suggests that more enforcement work should be done at the train station and other hot spots		J
• <i>'Subside the cost of CCTV, less work for the enforcement team.'</i>		L

Complaints

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section 6	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Suggestions		
• 'It is Uber's view that one core aspect of the Council's role in promoting public safety is to provide a service to process complaints about licensed vehicles from members of the public, while operators process the vast majority of feedback from both drivers and customers'.	Appendix B	

Relevance of Convictions

Consultation Responses:		
Key points	Index	
	Section	

	7	
	Consultation Response 2019	Consultation Response 2020
Support		
• Agreement that current proposals produce a 'firm stance'	AB	
Concerns		
• Scrap the points system		D

Summary

- i. It was felt by the majority of respondents that South Cambridgeshire District Council had produced a decent consultation and endeavored to engage with the trade in an open and transparent manner.
- ii. Overall residents were happy with policy and pleased to see that public safety is top priority and that *'SCDC taking these necessary steps to ensure driver and public safety is up to speed locally and nationally.'*
- iii. Several respondents from all sections responded extremely positive to the environmental considerations proposed by this Council, but there were many concerns in relation to the timing of the introduction of ultra-low emission vehicles as it is felt that the infrastructure for this particular demographic will not be sustainable in the near future.
- iv. The consultation event days were extremely well received, and the trade expressed their appreciation at the opportunity to liaise with officers and members in such an open manner.
- v. Feedback from James Button, Solicitor, Founder Member of the Local Government Licensing Forum and President of the Institute of Licensing found the policy to be an 'impressive and well-considered piece of work' in general. The feedback and advice provided has been considered by officers and minor changes have been included in the policy as deemed necessary. Matters where a fundamental change is required will be discussed at the Licensing Committee Workshop event.