

Outcome of the Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2025 - 2030

Background

West Berkshire Council is responsible for issuing licences in respect of:

- vehicles used as hackney carriages (taxis)
- vehicles used as private hire vehicles
- drivers of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles
- operators of private hire vehicles.

The overarching aim of the Council when carrying out these licensing functions, is to protect the public by ensuring vehicles are safe and fit for use, and that drivers and operators are suitable people to undertake these roles. In July 2020, with a view to better protecting children and vulnerable adults, the Department for Transport (DfT) issued new statutory guidance to taxi and private hire licensing authorities, called the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards, which required local authorities to review, revise and update their relevant policies.

The Statutory Standards document sets out a framework of policies that licensing authorities must 'have regard' to when exercising their functions. These functions include developing, implementing, and reviewing their taxi and private hire vehicle licensing regimes.

How we Developed our Draft Strategy

The policy is based on a number of legislative requirements including the provisions of the [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1976](#) and the [Town and Police Clauses Act 1847](#). In developing the policy the Council will comply with its duties under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles \(Disabled Persons\) Act 2022](#). The Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards (July 2020) provides guidance on how hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licensing authorities must use their licensing powers to protect children and vulnerable adults.

The Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022, makes it mandatory for licensing authorities to access vital background information about drivers seeking a hackney carriage/private hire vehicle licence in their areas. This will support the work of councils to ensure anyone using a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle is kept safe. A previous iteration of the draft policy was consulted on, but not adopted, in 2022 and some of the comments received have been included in this iteration of the document.

Why We Wanted Your Views

It's by hearing from local people that we can make the changes needed to ensure our policy is fit for purpose and reflective of the needs in our local area. We'd therefore sought the views of all relevant stakeholders including: the taxi trade, council colleagues, public sector authorities, residents, councillors, parish and town councils, businesses, groups representing people with protected characteristics, and night-time economy groups as the taxi and private hire trade is an important element of dispersal from the local night-time economy's activities.

We'd sought to understand if the policy provided for suitable standards of protection for children and vulnerable adults, vehicle emission standards, requirements for training, or if there was anything else of relevance to this document that respondents wanted the Council to consider,

Who and How we Consulted

- The consultation was posted on the West Berkshire Council's Consultation Hub on the 18 March 2025.
- The consultation ran from the 18 March to 18 May 2025
- A notification was also sent out to the 2504 people on the Community Panel in the week commencing the 24 March 2025
- A Facebook message was posted on the 19 March 2025 and a reminder that the consultation was closing was posted on the 11 May 2025 and 15th May 2025.
- A press release was issued on the 19 March 2025
- We wrote to the individuals and organisations listed in paragraph 4.7 of the report. Reminder emails were sent to the trade on the 08 May 2025 and the 16 May 2025
- Three meetings took place with the trade on the 07 April, 28 April and 12 May 2025 and the minutes of those meetings are attached as Appendices 1, 2 and 3

What you Told Us

The Council received 80 responses to the consultation. Of those responses one was from a meter agent, two were from parish/town councils or councillors, one was from a resident, two were from a council officer or team, and 74 from members of the local trade. One of the trade members that responded is also a meter agent. National Private Hire and Taxi Association submitted some joint comments with Cabco (see Response 69). A significant number of the trade responses were from CABCO drivers and are variations of a document. Where the responses are identical to that document, we have added the comments and a table at Response 20. Where they have differed, they have been included in the table below.

RESPONSE

1. Meter Agent

One glaring thing missing MID. This is a taximeter standard Measuring Instrument Directive Became law in 2006 came into effect in 2016 to give manufacturers 10 years to bring out compliant meters Main reason to stop fiddling by drivers and meter companies In 2016 it became illegal to sell non MID meters It still is UK required even after leaving EU The government told ALL authorities to have a policy in place regarding MID

I have told you about this before If you want to know how to do it talk to south Oxfordshire council they have had a policy since 2013. The hackney dept have produced info for their testing places so if a non MID meter turns up the vehicle is failed until it comes back with a MID approved meter You must have a policy and you must have it in the document you sent out.

2. Town/Parish Councillor

While I note that the primary aim of this survey is to ensure passenger safety and to protect the trade, I feel I must express my huge disappointment that providing affordability for residents is not an aim. With that in mind, I feel a clause about pricing should be added to 1b. 3b is not achieved.

West Berkshire taxi fares are among the highest in the country.

According to a recent article from Newbury Today, West Berkshire ranks sixth most expensive in England and Wales based on a standard two-mile fare. The cost is around £8.80 for that distance, which is quite a bit above the national average.

The council and local taxi operators have said the higher rates reflect rising fuel and insurance costs, as well as efforts to ensure driver sustainability. Whilst I sympathise with this, other areas seem to fare better. Add to this the lack of an evening bus service and I have to say that the public is getting a very raw deal. There must be a better approach. Providing evening buses would be a start and maybe reducing or subsidising the licence fee. I hope you take these comments into consideration.

3. Trade Member

See Response 3 below. This is a compilation of a series of responses from this trade member.

Additional comments received that are not in the attached document.

I have further comments to make about the Council and Policy.

Page 3 1.c.....for those with mobility difficulties.

At the extraordinary meeting of Licensing (April 25), some members revealed themselves as having an interest in passing this document, they declared having relatives/friends who need wheelchair accessible vehicles in the trade. So how can the Council be fair? in adopting this Policy.

Members should attend meetings with an open mind.

Some passengers with mobility difficulties do not want to use wheelchair accessible vehicles, they find them awkward in get in and out of. They wish to sit in an ordinary saloon licensed vehicle from the Ranks. West Berkshire Council should follow Government

instructions in having a mixed fleet.

We are telling passengers to have a mobile phone, where they can make a call to the Trade, requesting transport instructing not a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle. West Berkshire need to be fair with passengers, treating all equally.

I notice PPP are not covering all recommendations from Government, as Council can adopt/or not adopt as they wish.

Will members read this document thoroughly?

4. Resident

Looking at this policy, I see no mention of ride hailing services such as Uber, these service are essential to controlling the price of taxi services in the locality, the cost of which is currently unaffordable to most people.

5. Trade Member

See Response 5 below

6. Trade Member

See Response 6 below. This is a combination of 2 responses.

7. Parish Councillor

Does the taxi policy address the recommendations that came out of the Rotherham investigation?

8. Trade Member

Hi I would like to tell you that, I really disagree with the new policy implementation.

1. 10 hours work is not enough, sometimes in 2 hours you do only 2 jobs, changing to 10 hours is unacceptable, and unnecessary to be honest, as a Cabco driver I can take as many breaks as I want, please don't complicate our lives.

2. Every six years we need to exam, I don't agree with because is not necessary as we passed it at the beginning, is no point to do another exam after 6 years, if you drive a taxi in 6 years this means you have more experience and more knowledge, in no point doing exams. As you the council is very busy even to change a plate or a badge the council is struggling, that why we don't need another headache please.

3. travelling after 3 months away you need a certificate, I disagree with all these new policies.

9. Trade Member

I'm opposing some of the policy which I think it's not right or need readjusted.

See Cabco Response table at 20b below.

10. Trade Member

I'm emailing with my thoughts in regard to the proposals set out by West Berkshire Licensing:

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

Section 56 – Driver Working Hours (Page 93)

- How many other UK authorities enforce similar limits and where?

I support driver welfare, but any policy must be evidence-based, enforceable, and clearly defined.

11. Trade Member

See response 10 above.

12. Trade Member

I have some concerns, regarding your draft policy changes, which may effect most of the taxis firm's in West berkshire. I am based in Newbury, working with Cabco taxis, which been operated in Newbury since decade.

Starting with page 14 (vehicle age)

- as you are aware that new cars under 5years cost more, and why not keep the vehicle age same under current policy, if it does meet the right emissions standards and is well maintained and serviced, with prove of doing so by the driver.

Page 20 (good Conduct certificate)

- it will be difficult for some drivers to do so, because the political situation in their country, or the long waiting process to complete the checks.

Also, i think the DBS checks done before applying for the licence, and the one completed by the driver when renewing the licence will cover the checks needed for each driver.

Page 22-23 (Re testing requirements)

- each driver is required to complete knowledge test and pass it, part of the application process.

Some drivers been in the taxis industry, more than 10years, and I don't think their knowledge of the area, or their driving skills is better with the time, and also if the record of each driver is clean from any complaints regarding their driving skills issues or their knowledge, why to imposed the re test ?

Above are my concerns, and I want to share it with you.

I know that the interest of our community, including taxi drivers, customers, and public in general, and their safety is above any policy changes, which may have negative effects for us, and our customers.

13. Trade Member

I am writing to express my feelings on the recent proposed West Berkshire councils draft policy.

Below I have outlined the points and the reasons why I strongly oppose them.

Point 1 - Drivers must retake practical, Knowledge and highway code test every 6 years. I strongly oppose this as I see no reason why this costly process is necessary for drivers who have already undertaken such tests, regarding the fact there is no such requirement by UK law for licensed drivers to undertake such tests again. There are complaint and DVLA penalty procedures for drivers who may be negligent in performing their duties to good standards. Therefore, retaking these tests for drivers who are not negligent seems unnecessary and costly. If needs be the council can explore the idea for refresher courses instead, as this would be a much less disruptive method.

Point 2- Minimum Tyre Tread 2mm. I oppose this point as the UK legal requirement is 1.6mm, unless the council can provide good reasons with data backing their point, I believe this is highly unnecessary and costly yet again as the tyres would require changing much sooner.

Point 3 - Working hours to not exceed 10 hours with a break after 5.5 hours.

I strongly oppose this point as there are many drivers including myself who have expenses to pay, as we are all aware of living costs rising, it will become extremely difficult for individuals like myself to fund our expenses if our working hours are cut down. As far as the UK law states there is no statutory maximum working hours for taxi and private hire drivers. It has also not been made clear whether the 10 hour limit refers to total driving time or hours a driver spends out in his cab sat on the taxi ranks or signed on to their pda waiting for jobs, as both are two separate matters. Drivers can spend lengthy periods of time waiting for jobs which means they are sat inactive and idle performing no driving tasks whatsoever. If a requirement does need to be applied, then a break factor after 5-6 driving hours seems fair.

14. Trade Member

We welcome the opportunity to participate in this consultation and support the Council's commitment to building a safe, efficient, and sustainable transport network in West Berkshire.

Cabco Ltd, of which I am a shareholder, has been serving the local community for over 37 years. As a well-established business operating in West Berkshire since 1988, we remain fully committed to constructive engagement with the Council to ensure policies are fair, effective, and conducive to the continued growth of the local transport sector.

Following a thorough review of the proposed policy, we respectfully offer the following observations and recommendations for your consideration:

Section A – Vehicle Age at First Licensing (Page 14)

Current Proposal: Vehicles over 5 years old at first registration will not be licensed.

Recommendation: Extend the age limit to 6 years, provided vehicles meet Euro 6 emissions standards and pass all required safety

checks. This is in line with practices adopted by several other local authorities and reflects the rising cost of vehicle ownership and ongoing economic pressures faced by drivers.

Section 36 – Certificate of Good Conduct (Page 20)

Current Proposal: Required from any country where the applicant has lived for 3+ continuous months since age 10.
Recommendation: Align with Clause 3.2 of the Convictions Policy, which requires this certificate only for six months' residence within the last three years, consistent with Department for Transport guidance (July 2020). This would ensure a practical, consistent, and fair application of the rule.

Sections 39–41 – Repeat Testing Requirements (Pages 22–23)

Current Proposal: Mandatory retesting every 6 years for all drivers.
Recommendation: Limit retesting to cases where drivers are the subject of complaints or performance concerns. For ongoing assurance of standards, consider implementing optional Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs or refresher courses.

Motoring Convictions (Pages 37–38)

Recommendation:
Drivers with 7–9 points should be offered access to advanced driving courses.
Drivers accumulating 10+ points may warrant formal review or remedial action.
This approach maintains high standards while offering drivers an opportunity to improve.

Section 19 – Penalty Point System (Pages 39–41)

Recommendation: Support is conditional upon the system being:

Clearly defined with transparent breach categories. Backed by a fair and accessible appeals process. Proportional, with thresholds of 16 points for drivers and 36 for operators. Time-bound, with points expiring after 12 months

Section 3.8 – Engine Idling (Pages 52–53)

Recommendation: Include exemptions for cold weather, safety, and passenger comfort. Specifically, allow exemptions during Diesel Particulate Filter (DPF) regeneration, which is a necessary maintenance process. Interrupting this process could lead to vehicle performance issues and increased emissions.

Section 3j – Daily Vehicle Checks (Page 65)

Recommendation: While we support daily checks for safety, the requirement for written records should be removed for sole traders. Emphasis should be placed on actual compliance, with enforcement based on safety outcomes rather than administrative paperwork.

Section 8.18 – Tyre Tread Depth (Page 67)

Current Proposal: Minimum tread depth of 2mm, above the legal minimum of 1.6mm.

Recommendation: Unless there is clear evidence supporting the enhanced safety benefit of this change, we recommend aligning with the national standard of 1.6mm to avoid unnecessary costs for operators.

Sections 33 & 34 – Use of the Term "Cab" (Page 79)

Recommendation: We urge the Council to permit continued use of branding that includes terms such as “Cab,” especially for long-established businesses. Our company name, “Cabco,” has been in lawful use since 1988. We recommend a grandfathering clause for such cases and suggest the policy be harmonised with Section 17.9 of the Transport Act 1980, which only restricts use on roof signage.

Section 26 – Operator Record Submission (Page 88)

Recommendation: Instead of monthly reporting, we propose an annual submission model supported by immediate updates when there are significant operational changes. This will reduce administrative burdens without compromising data integrity.

Section 56 – Driver Working Hours (Page 93)

Current Proposal: Daily limit of 10 driving hours with a break required after 5.5 hours.

Recommendation: Clarify whether the limit refers to time spent actively driving or total logged time. Provide legal justification for introducing these limits, especially as current UK law does not impose statutory restrictions on PHV drivers. If implemented, policies must be clearly defined, evidence-based, and practically enforceable.

Conclusion

We are grateful for the opportunity to engage in this consultation and trust that the above feedback will be helpful in shaping a balanced and forward-looking licensing policy. We remain open to further dialogue with the Council as the policy continues to evolve.

15. Trade Member

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

Section A – Age of Vehicles at First Application (Page 14)

Policy:

Our vehicles are checked regularly ensuring that high standards are met and maintained

16. Trade Member

I strongly object to the draconian new rules and regulation along with the proposed point system that appears unfair and severely damaging to the taxi industry in west Berkshire.

The council wants to impose restrictions on working hours and practices that are not even in any other council or TRL/ current legal guidelines and from what I have read, it is not only in detriment to a normal driver/operator day to day tasks, but this can rectify the mental health of all involved due to working on a knife edge. I agree restrictions and responsibilities are needed but this has been in place and the current relationship between the trade and licensing has been very successful.

And to implement rules that are in practical and increasing red tape for the sake of it. is just ludicrous. below are just some of the main areas that I do not agree with.

Lettering not in the country over 3 months- embassy's will not do this I have enquired at the Thai embassy and the American embassy and they will not issue any documents.

Maximum working hours- not been implemented in the entire U.K. .. as the slow nature of the business.

Points system - minor infringements that could lead to a loss of license with no appeal. completely at the control of licensing.. when we need badges/help/refunds etc nothing happens in the guidelines/timescales set out that licensing documents state, just excuses or backlogs.

New testing requirements- if you have been doing the job for years your knowledge will increase not decrease. another money grabbing exercise.

Among others ...

17. Trade Member

The proposed penalty point scheme which is introduced in draft is extremely harsh and disproportionate. Under this scheme, each minor offence carries a minimum of 4 penalty points, while major offences can result in up to 12 points.

Examples include:

- A Private Hire (PH) driver parking in a location that creates the impression of being available for hire without a pre-booking could receive 6 penalty points. This means drivers cannot wait for jobs in areas like Northbrook Street.
- Smoking or vaping inside the vehicle may lead to 12 penalty points or even prosecution.
- Failing to provide evidence of insurance or an interim MOT/compliance test before the expiry date (on the first occasion) results in 6 penalty points.
- Not offering reasonable assistance with luggage is penalised with 6 points.
- Failing to search the vehicle after a journey carries 4 penalty points.

<p>Accumulating 12 points within a 12-month period could lead to severe consequences, potentially threatening a driver's livelihood.</p> <p>In addition to introduce unnecessary requirements, such as retaking the practical driving test, local knowledge test, and Highway Code test every six years. These measures would place an undue burden on hardworking drivers.</p>
<p>18. Trade Member</p> <p>Please accept this letter as the formal response from myself regarding the proposed amendments to the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy.</p> <p>I am aligned with Cabco Ltd, who have been central to Newbury and surrounding areas for over 37 years. As a well-established business operating in West Berkshire since 1988, we remain fully committed to constructive engagement with the Council to ensure policies are fair, effective, and conducive to the continued growth of the local transport sector.</p> <p>Following a thorough review of the proposed policy, i respectfully offer the following observations and recommendations for your consideration:</p> <p>See response 14.</p>
<p>19. Trade Member</p> <p>I have been giving the opportunity to express my concerns regarding the new draft policy</p> <p>#1. I do feel the good conduct certificate/DBS should be 6 months outside the country as is not easy to obtain in lot countries.</p> <p>#2. The number of hours work should be 11 to 12 hours a day. as you can go 1 hour doing one job most time.</p> <p>#3. The penalty system should be reconsidered as few points seems too hash</p> <p>#4. I really don't see it as necessary retaking knowledge test every 6 years.</p>
<p>20. Trade Member</p> <p>See Cabco Response table at 20b below</p>
<p>21. Trade Member</p> <p>policy need to be amend, I have my objection for this policy.</p> <p>I just want to give my opinion regarding new draft policy and I believe few of the things should be reviewed</p> <p>See Cabco Response table at 20b below</p>

22. Trade Member

Please may I use this email, to object firmly to possible changes for Cab drivers.

I have been a Private Hire, for over six years. It is not an easy position to hold down. There are more strains on the Cabbie, such as, drunk or drugged passengers. We are expected to carry out duties, with distractions.

Implementation of further penalties, are outrageous. Lots of drivers would consider leaving.

Ive been a Postman and worked as one of the first Franchisees of DPD. These establishments, worked alongside their work force.

Finding fair grounds to operate in. There are no fair grounds, offered.

With regards to Geography, we at Cabco, would certainly be willing to raise the bar, for passing a test.

Consultation is very much needed, to come to a resolution.

Please help us continue serving West Berks with professional drivers and operators.

23. Trade Member

just want to give my opinion regarding new draft policy and I believe few of the things should be reviewed

See Cabco Response table at 20b below.

24. Trade Member

I am emailing regarding the west Berkshire Taxi Draft Policy. Here are following section I would like to have objection.

Page 14 – Section A – Age of Vehicles at First Application

Policy:

A vehicle licence will not be granted for any vehicle first registered (or manufactured, if imported) more than five years before the application date.

Comment:

We recommend amending the initial vehicle age limit from five to six years. This modest adjustment reflects the rising costs of newer vehicles and the broader economic challenges currently faced by drivers and operators. A six-year threshold is now common across many local authorities in the UK, especially where vehicles are well-maintained and meet Euro 6 emissions standards. This change would maintain both safety and environmental standards while supporting greater accessibility for new applicants.

Page 20 – Section 36 – DBS / Good Conduct Certificate

Policy:

Applicants who have lived outside the UK for one or more continuous periods of three months (since the age of 10) must provide a

Certificate of Good Conduct from each country.

Comment:

We have concerns regarding the feasibility and fairness of this requirement. Obtaining a Certificate of Good Conduct from certain countries can be extremely difficult or impossible due to bureaucratic, political, or logistical barriers. In response to such challenges, West Berkshire's own Convictions Policy (Clause 3.2) was recently amended to a six-month threshold within the last three years, aligning with the Department for Transport's statutory standards. We recommend updating this section to mirror Clause 3.2, ensuring consistency, practicality, and legal defensibility.

Pages 22–23 – Sections 39–41 – Repeat Testing Requirements

Policy:

Drivers must retake the practical, local knowledge, and Highway Code tests every six years.

Comment:

We strongly oppose the proposed re-testing requirement for existing drivers every six years. This is not standard practice across the industry and imposes unnecessary financial and operational burdens. Drivers are already required to pass these assessments at initial licensing and are subject to ongoing oversight through the enforcement framework. There is no evidence or consultation data to justify this measure as enhancing safety or service quality. We urge the Council to withdraw or suspend this proposal and consider alternative options such as targeted refresher training, CPD, or re-testing following specific incidents.

Pages 37–38 – Motoring Convictions (Sections 13.1, 13.2, 16.4, 16.5)

Comment:

We support initiatives to enhance road safety and suggest a tiered approach for handling motoring convictions:

- Drivers with more than 7 but fewer than 10 penalty points should be given the opportunity to complete an approved advanced driving course.
- For drivers with 10 or more points, we support formal review and potential licensing action, in line with national guidance.

This graduated model promotes driver improvement while maintaining public safety.

Pages 39–41 – Section 19 – Penalty Point System

Comment:

We do not support the implementation of a council-operated penalty point system unless the following safeguards are in place:

1. Clear and consistent application.
2. Well-defined breach categories.
3. A robust and transparent appeal process.

If introduced, we recommend the following framework:

- Enforcement action at 16 points (drivers) or 36 points (operators).
- Automatic expiry of points after 12 months.
- Minor breaches (e.g., dress code, paperwork errors): 1–2 points.
- Major breaches (e.g., safety violations): 4–6 points. We also request a full breakdown of the breaches covered by the scheme and how they will be recorded and reviewed.

Pages 52–53 – Section 3.8 – Engine Idling

Policy:

Drivers must switch off engines if idling for more than one minute.

Comment:

We request further clarification on the intent and enforcement of this requirement. For instance, in cold weather, engine use may be necessary for heating or demisting. Clarification is also needed regarding whether the rule applies while waiting at ranks, during client pick-up, or at short stops. While we support efforts to reduce emissions, practical flexibility is essential to ensure compliance without compromising service.

Page 65 – Section 3j – Daily Vehicle Checks

Policy:

Daily checks must be documented in writing and retained for six months (including 30 days in the vehicle).

Comment:

We fully support the principle of daily vehicle safety checks. However, the requirement for written record-keeping is overly burdensome, particularly for sole traders. We recommend making written documentation optional, provided checks are demonstrably completed.

Page 67 – Section 8.18 – Tyre Tread Depth

Policy:

Minimum tyre tread depth of 2mm, exceeding the UK legal minimum of 1.6mm.

Comment:

We request a justification for exceeding the national legal standard. While safety is paramount, the current UK requirement of 1.6mm is based on extensive evidence. Unless supported by specific local risk assessments or data, we recommend aligning with the national standard to balance safety with

Page 93 – Section 56 – Driver Working Hours

Policy:

Operators should ensure that drivers do not exceed 10 hours per day and take a break after 5.5 hours.

Comment:

We request clarification on whether the 10-hour cap refers to total working hours or active driving time. Currently, there are no statutory limits for private hire drivers outside EU or PSV/PCV regulations.

25. Trade Member

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

26. Trade Member

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

27. Trade Member

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

28. Trade Member

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

Respondent Also later submitted the same response as No 44 below.

29. Trade Member

After I read the proposal I found that some terms and conditions are inappropriate. Like penalty points scheme is extremely harsh and disproportionate. It clearly threatening drivers livelihood.

And another thing every six years drivers need to retaking the practical driving test, local knowledge test and Highway Code test. For me it's like to achieve a degree then after six years it will be expired and you have to do it again.

So I strongly oppose against the proposal because drivers will be affected because of the law. My humble request to the authority please rethink about the proposal.

30. Trade Member

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

31. Transport Officer

I support the consultation of the Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2025-2030 and the purpose to which it has been developed, however, I do have some concerns which correlate to the provision of Transport within the Local Authority, which I have detailed below:

Section 4 First; Section 5 Second; and Section 6 Third Accumulation of 12 Penalty Points

Whilst in principle I think the Penalty Point system is good in that it will make the Drivers and Operators accountable, I have concerns how a 14 and 21-day suspension may affect the delivery of Home to School Transport. Although Operators are required to have a Business Continuity Plan, this is sometimes harder for Sole Traders. If there could be an agreement that Licensing share information of suspensions with Transport colleagues, this would be useful so that we can ensure that we deliver on our statutory duty for home to school transport.

Section 24. School Contracts

West Berkshire Council Transport Services do not accept School Only Driver and/ or Vehicles. The Contracts we issue through the Councils e-procurement portal in-tend and the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for all Client Transport explicitly states under Section 13 Statutory Requirements that 'School Only' taxi plates will not be acceptable for the purposes of this Agreement. The terms and conditions of the contract can be found here - [Model Terms and Conditions of Contracts for Services](#). This Contract is not due to be updated until 2029 when the DPS expires, and it remains unlikely that the decision would be made to accept School Only licences due to the lack of a knowledge test and inconsistency of standards required compared to that of a Hackney and/ or Private Hire Drivers/ Vehicles.

32. Trade Member

See Cabco Response table below

Although I support council's effort to improve, safeguard and make taxi trade more transparent I would appreciate if the above mentioned policy changes could be reviewed as there is a lot of concern within the trade. There are a lot of financial and mental burden in our trade with the current economical situation in the country and risk of losing the trade of likes of Uber, Bolt etc. Uncertainty of the future and the ease of losing the job (badge) would add unnecessary stress to all of our livelihood.

33. Trade Member

I am emailing regarding west Berkshire taxi draft policy I have a strong objections on the following sections

Page 14 – Vehicle Age

Support increasing age limit from 5 to 6 years to reflect costs and industry norms.

Page 20 – Good Conduct Certificate

Suggest 6-month threshold (past 3 years), aligning with practical challenges and DfT guidance.

Pages 22–23 – Retesting

Oppose six-yearly tests—costly, unnecessary, no evidence. Prefer CPD or incident-based retesting.

Pages 37–38 – Motoring Convictions

Support training for 7–9 points; formal action at 10+.

Pages 39–41 – Penalty Points

Oppose unless fair, defined, and appealable. Suggest: 16+ points (drivers), 36+ (operators), 12-month expiry, clear categories.

Pages 52–53 – Engine Idling

Request clarity on scope and exemptions (e.g., heating, waiting).

Page 65 – Vehicle Checks

Support checks but oppose mandatory written records for sole traders.

Page 67 – Tyre Tread

Recommend aligning with 1.6mm legal minimum unless risk justified.

Page 93 – Working Hours

Seek clarity on scope and legal basis. Must be evidence-based and practical.

34. Trade Member

I'm not agree with new policy.

Page 14 – Section A – Age of Vehicles at First Application

Policy: A vehicle licence will not be granted for any vehicle first registered (or manufactured, if imported) more than five years before the application date.

Comment:

I recommend amending the vehicle age requirement at first licensing from five to six years. Many local authorities across the UK now allow six years or more at first licensing, particularly where vehicles are well-maintained and meet Euro 6 emissions standards.

Page 20 – Section 36 – DBS / Good Conduct Certificate

Policy: Applicants who have lived outside the UK for one or more continuous periods of three months (since the age of 10) must provide a Certificate of Good Conduct (CoGC) from each country.

Comment:

I raise concerns about the practicality and fairness of this requirement. Strongly disagree. In many cases, obtaining a CoGC from certain countries is extremely difficult or impossible due to lack of process, political instability, or embassy delays. Following these concerns, Clause 3.2 of the West Berkshire current Convictions Policy (recently adopted) modified this to a six-month threshold over the last three years, with the certificate to be obtained via the relevant embassy.

This mirrors the approach taken by other Berkshire authorities and aligns with the Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards (July 2020), which emphasise a practical, risk-based approach. We recommend harmonising this section of the policy with Clause 3.2 for consistency, legal defensibility, and fairness.

Pages 22–23 – Sections 39–41 – Repeat Testing Requirements

Policy: Drivers must retake practical, local knowledge, and Highway Code tests every six years.

Comment:

I strongly oppose and disagree the proposed six-yearly re-testing for current licensed drivers. This approach is not standard across the industry and would impose unnecessary costs and logistical burdens. Drivers are already required to pass these tests on entry and are subject to continual monitoring through the complaints and enforcement process.

There is no evidence base or consultation summary provided to support this policy as a means of improving safety or service standards.

Pages 37–38 – Motoring Convictions (Sections 13.1, 13.2, 16.4, 16.5)

Comment:

I support measures to promote road safety but recommend a graduated approach:

- Drivers with more than 7 but fewer than 10 points should be offered an approved advanced driving course, enabling positive remediation.
- At 10 or more points, we agree with formal review or intervention by the licensing authority, consistent with national guidance.

This framework would encourage improvement while maintaining public safety.

Pages 39–41 – Section 19 – Penalty Point System

Comment:

I Strongly oppose and not happy the introduction of a council-operated penalty point.

Pages 52–53 – Section 3.8 – Engine Idling

Policy: Drivers must turn off engines if idling for more than one minute.

Comment:

I request clarification on the rationale, scope, and enforcement of this requirement. For example, in cold weather, running the engine for heating or demisting may be essential.

Page 65 – Section 3j – Daily Vehicle Checks

Policy: Daily checks must be recorded in writing and retained for six months (including 30 days in the vehicle).

Comment:

While i fully support daily safety checks.

Page 67 – Section 8.18 – Tyre Tread Depth

Policy: Minimum tyre tread depth of 2mm, exceeding the UK legal minimum of 1.6mm.

Comment:

I request clarification on why this higher standard is being imposed. While we recognise the safety concerns, the current national legislation sets a 1.6mm minimum for good reason.

35. Trade Member

here are my comments for a few police which I disagree

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

36. Trade Member

Thank you for the opportunity to review and respond to the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2025–2030. After reading the proposed policy in detail and discussing it with fellow drivers, I have several concerns that I believe merit further consideration.

Please find below my key points and suggestions for improvement:

1. Vehicle Age Limit at First Licensing

The proposed restriction of licensing only vehicles under five years old poses a financial challenge for many drivers. Given the rising cost of living and vehicle prices, I suggest increasing this limit to six years. Many six-year-old vehicles are in excellent condition, particularly those meeting Euro 6 emissions standards. This change would help working-class individuals enter or remain in the profession without compromising safety or environmental goals.

2. Certificate of Good Conduct from Overseas

The current requirement states that any applicant who has lived outside the UK for a continuous period of three months or more since the age of 10 must obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct from the relevant country. While we understand the need for background checks, this blanket rule is often impractical and, in many cases, unreasonable.

Many drivers moved to the UK at a young age and have since become fully integrated members of British society — often as citizens. Requiring them to produce a certificate from a country they may not have visited in decades is often unrealistic. In some cases, embassies are unresponsive, or the required procedures do not exist due to political or administrative instability.

A more balanced and practical approach is already reflected in Clause 3.2 of West Berkshire's own Convictions Policy, which states that a Certificate of Good Conduct is only needed if an individual has spent six continuous months or more overseas in the past three years. This aligns with guidance from the Department for Transport (DfT) and practices in neighbouring local authorities.

We recommend that the Council revise this section of the draft policy to reflect Clause 3.2, thereby ensuring fairness, legal clarity, and consistency with both local and national standards.

3. Repeat Testing for Licensed Drivers

The proposal to require all drivers to retake practical, local knowledge, and Highway Code tests every six years is unnecessary and would create additional costs without clear benefit. Drivers are already tested before being licensed, and ongoing performance is monitored through complaints and enforcement. In fact, experienced drivers often perform better due to years of service. There is no clear evidence this policy would improve safety, and it does not reflect practices in major authorities like Transport for London. I urge the Council to withdraw this requirement.

4. Policy on Motoring Convictions

Currently, local policy begins enforcement action at six points on a driver's licence, while the DVLA allows up to twelve. This inconsistency raises the question: why should local drivers face stricter rules than the national standard? A fairer solution would be to allow drivers up to nine points before action is taken, while requiring them to complete an advanced driving course. This would promote skill improvement and driver responsibility rather than immediate punishment.

5. Introduction of a Penalty Point System

While we support enforcement that improves safety and accountability, any penalty point system must be fair, transparent, and subject to an appeal process. Minor infractions, such as dress code breaches, should not be treated the same as serious offences like insurance violations. We propose:

- Action only when a driver accumulates 16 points or more,
- Points to expire after 12 months,
- Minor breaches to carry 1–2 points, major breaches 4–6 points,
- Appeals to be reviewed independently, possibly through the Licensing Committee.

Additionally, a clear list of offences and associated point values should be published to ensure transparency.

6. Engine Idling Restrictions

We support environmental responsibility but request clarification on how the one-minute engine idling rule will be enforced. In real-world conditions, drivers often need to keep the engine running to use heating or demisting systems in cold weather. Clear guidance is needed on whether the rule applies when waiting in ranks or for customers. Enforcement must consider practical needs and ensure drivers can continue to serve passengers effectively.

7. Daily Vehicle Checks and Recordkeeping

Daily safety checks are essential and widely supported. However, requiring drivers to record these checks in writing every day and keep documents in the vehicle for 30 days adds unnecessary bureaucracy. For independent or sole-trader drivers, this could become a daily administrative burden. We suggest continuing the checks without making written logs mandatory.

8. Tyre Tread Depth Requirements

The proposed 2mm minimum tyre tread depth exceeds the national legal requirement of 1.6mm. While safety is paramount, increasing the standard without strong evidence could add avoidable costs to drivers. Unless there is specific risk data to support this change, the Council should consider aligning with the national standard to maintain both safety and economic balance.

9. Restrictions on Use of the Word “Cab” in Private Hire Vehicles

The proposed ban on terms like “Taxi” or “Cab” on private hire vehicles would impact longstanding operators like Cabco, whose branding has been in place for decades with Council approval. Forcing companies to rebrand would result in significant financial loss and customer confusion. National legislation only restricts such terms on roof signs. We ask that the policy allow existing branding like “Cabco” to continue and that restrictions only apply to misleading signage placed on or above the roof of a vehicle.

10. Monthly Operator Record Submissions

Requiring operators to submit monthly records of driver data is redundant, as the Council already holds this information and is notified of any changes. A more efficient process would involve annual reporting, supplemented by immediate notification of any material changes. This would reduce paperwork and workload for both operators and the Council.

11. Driver Working Hours

The draft policy suggests a maximum of 10 working hours per day with a break after 5.5 hours. While we agree on the importance of driver welfare, this limit raises questions. Does it refer to actual driving time, or does it include waiting and idle periods? There is no current legislation enforcing such limits for private hire drivers. We request the legal basis for this rule and examples of where it has been effectively implemented in the UK.

Conclusion

As a full-time driver in West Berkshire, I am proud of my profession and committed to safe, responsible service. However, several aspects of the draft policy could unintentionally make our work more difficult, expensive, or uncertain. I urge the Council to revisit these points with a view to adopting a more practical, evidence-based, and balanced approach.

37. Trade Member

I am disagree about the new rules which you are trying to implement.

38. Trade Member

See Response 38 below.

39. Trade Member

I am writing to raise strong objections to several points in the West Berkshire Taxi Draft Policy:

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

40. Trade Member

I am not agree with your new policies.

41. Trade Member

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

42. Trade Member

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

43. Trade Member

I am writing to raise strong objections to several points in the West Berkshire Taxi Draft Policy

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

44. Trade Member

I am writing to formally submit my objections and concerns regarding the proposed taxi policy under consultation. I strongly believe that, if implemented in its current form, this policy will have a deeply negative impact on both existing license holders and the long-term sustainability of the trade as a whole.

While I fully appreciate and support the committee's commitment to ensuring public safety, this policy does not appear to strike an appropriate balance between regulatory oversight and the practical realities faced by professional drivers and operators. As licensed individuals, we are also members of the public and deserve fair, reasonable, and proportionate measures that both protect the community and support our ability to earn a living.

The proposed policy introduces several changes that are likely to deter new entrants into the profession, thereby worsening the current driver shortages faced by the industry. It also places undue pressure on existing drivers through the imposition of new requirements that are, in many cases, impractical, overly burdensome, and not clearly justified by evidence of improved safety outcomes.

Moreover, the draft policy lacks sufficient engagement with industry stakeholders. A policy of this magnitude should be developed in collaboration with those who are directly affected, ensuring that any proposed regulations are workable, fair, and aligned with both safety goals and the operational realities of the trade.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to reject the policy in its current form. I recommend that the draft be withdrawn and revised to incorporate a more balanced approach—one that addresses public safety while also preserving the viability of the trade. A renewed consultation should then be conducted with meaningful input from drivers, operators, and industry representatives.

I would be pleased to contribute constructively to that process, and I respectfully submit the following amendments for consideration as a starting point for a revised policy framework:

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

45. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44)

46. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of "Cab"

<p>47. Trade Member Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of “Cab”</p>
<p>48. Trade Member Response same as above (Number 44)</p>
<p>49. Trade Member Response same as above (Number 44)</p>
<p>50. Trade Member Response same as above (Number 44)</p>
<p>51. Trade Member Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of “Cab”</p>
<p>52. Trade Member Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of “Cab”</p>
<p>53. Trade Member Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of “Cab”</p>
<p>54. Trade Member Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of “Cab”</p>
<p>55. Trade Member Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of “Cab”</p>
<p>56. Trade Member See response 56 below</p>
<p>57. Trade Member</p> <p>I’m writing to share my disapproval regarding the draft taxi and private hire licensing policy.</p> <p>I understand the importance of safety and protecting vulnerable people, but I’m worried about the impact on existing drivers. Asking experienced drivers to resit driving and knowledge tests is unnecessary, especially for those with clean records who’ve been working for years.</p> <p>I’m also concerned about the point-based system for things like late MOT or insurance submissions. While I agree that rules are</p>

important, this approach seems too harsh for minor delays that often happen for genuine reasons.

I hope the council can take a more balanced view and avoid making it harder for drivers who are already doing their job well.

58. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of "Cab"

59. Trade Member

I have objection about your proposed Taxi policy, currently under consideration which is page 20 section 36, pages 22-23 section 39-41. Pages 37-38 section 13.1-16.4-16.5 pages 39-41 Section 19 pages 52-53 section 3.8. Page 65 section 3J page 67 section 8.8. I strongly disagree or believe those rules aren't supported for taxi trade. Hope you will get your kind attention to reconsider for us.

60. Trade Member

I have an objection about your proposed Taxi Policy currently under consideration which is page 20 section 36, page 22-23 section 39-41 section 19 page 52-53 section 3.8, page 65 section 3J page 67 section 8.8, I strongly believe those rules are not helpful for taxi trade. Hope and believe all those rules will reconsider for us.

61. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of "Cab"

62. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44)

63. Trade Member

By far the biggest problem I see with these conditions is 20. b. "At Renewal - All vehicles are required to be Euro 6 from 2027". This would result in great financial hardship placed on many good honest taxi drivers, forcing many out of business and others to work very long hours day and night in order recover the great costs of replacing a perfectly good vehicle before its time is due. It is not just the high cost of replacing a vehicle, but the thousands in additional expenses, such as new insurance, installation of new meters and disabled access expenses.

We have still not recovered fully from the loss of business from Covid. Business customers now largely work from home and other customers have changed their routines resulting in less frequent business. Many Taxi drivers now do less than 10,000 miles per year. This lower mileage means that the vehicle well maintained will have a much longer realistic expected lifetime in good working condition. It also results in a much lower income after expenses!

If Taxi drivers are forced to change their vehicles much earlier than expected, many will go out of business. How will a Taxi driver due to retire in a couple of years recover the great expense of unnecessary changing a vehicle in such a short time.

There is also a legal matter. A Taxi driver licenses a new vehicle with the council in good faith, complying the conditions at the time,

expecting that the vehicle will last a reasonable lifetime. If the council then forces vehicles off the road with new conditions that the vehicles cannot possibly comply with, it sends a ominous message to taxi drivers. Be careful how much you invest in a new vehicle, the council may suddenly change the conditions at any time forcing a good well maintained vehicle off the road and the taxi driver out of business.

64. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44)

65. Trade Member

I'm deeply concerned about our new rules for west Berkshire council. There are lots of things which are not convenient for us. It's need be more effective and efficient.

66. Trade Member

I am writing to formally express my objections and concerns regarding the proposed taxi policy currently under consultation. I believe that if this policy is implemented in its current state, it will significantly impact existing license holders and the long-term sustainability of the trade.

While I appreciate the committee's dedication to public safety, I believe the policy could benefit from a balance between regulatory oversight and the practical challenges faced by professional drivers and operators. As licensed individuals, we are also part of the public and deserve reasonable and fair measures that safeguard the community while supporting our livelihoods.

The proposed policy introduces changes that may discourage new entrants to the profession.

Furthermore, the draft policy has not adequately engaged with industry stakeholders. Such a significant policy should be developed in collaboration with those directly impacted to ensure workable regulations that are fair and align with safety objectives and operational realities of the trade.

Therefore, I strongly recommend the committee reconsider the current policy and suggest withdrawing it for revision. I recommend a more balanced approach that upholds public safety while ensuring the trade's viability. A renewed consultation process should involve meaningful input from drivers, operators, and industry representatives.

I would like to contribute to this process and have provided detailed amendments for your consideration to initiate a revised policy framework:

- Vehicle Age Requirement: Recommend adjusting the initial licensing age requirement for vehicles from five to six years to reflect current economic conditions.
- Good Conduct Certificates: Propose aligning this requirement with a six-month threshold over the last three years for practicality and fairness.
- Repeat Testing: Strongly oppose the proposed six-year re-testing for current licensed drivers and suggest exploring less disruptive alternatives.

- Motoring Convictions: Recommend a graduated approach for drivers with specific points, emphasizing improvement while ensuring public safety.
- Penalty Point System: Oppose the introduction of a penalty point system unless certain criteria are met and suggest specific guidelines for fair implementation.
- Engine Idling: Seek clarification on the rationale and enforcement of this requirement to ensure practicality and flexibility.
- Daily Vehicle Checks: Support daily safety checks but recommend making recording them non-mandatory for efficiency.
- Tyre Tread Depth: Request clear justification for imposing a minimum tyre tread depth of 2mm exceeding the national legal standard.
- Advertising Restrictions: Seek detailed guidelines on branding restrictions and requirements.

Thank you for considering my concerns and suggestions. I look forward to working together to develop a fair and effective policy that benefits all stakeholders.

67. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44)

68. Trade Member

See Response 68 below.

69. Trade Member – This response was signed by 82 members of the trade

We are writing formally regarding the proposed taxi policy currently under consultation.

After thoroughly reviewing the draft policy, we respectfully urge the committee not to approve it in its current form, as it contains significant errors and problematic clauses that will likely have a serious negative impact on both drivers and operators across the trade.

The Department for Transport recommends that any such policy should be developed in discussion with the trade before implementation. Unfortunately, there was no prior engagement with trade representatives before this policy was released for consultation. Following the Licensing Committee's decision to proceed with the consultation, we were invited to attend three meetings with licensing officers. During those meetings, we raised multiple objections and clearly outlined our concerns. However, we were informed that no changes could be made to the policy, and that any amendments would have to be considered at the committee meeting scheduled for 7th July.

The Department of Transport's best practice guidance for private hire and taxis in November 2023 states in clause 3:

"As indicated above, the primary function of the licensing regime is public safety; however, an unduly stringent regime on other issues may restrict the supply of taxi and private hire vehicle services by putting up the cost of operation, or otherwise restricting entry to the trade. Licensing authorities should recognise that too restrictive an approach can be counter-productive, restricting the licensed trade to such an extent that the public resort to the use of unlicensed, unvetted and uninsured drivers and vehicles."

We are of the opinion that this policy is too stringent and punishing towards the trade, and the Department of Transport guidelines were neglected on multiple clauses, only taking note of the officer's preferred part.

Many aspects of the proposed policy appear overly punitive toward existing drivers and operators, and we believe it will deter new entrants to the trade. There is growing anxiety among drivers about their futures, and we are already seeing the mental toll this uncertainty is having. When someone become a taxi driver, they invest money i:e buying cars, taxis and for sure its growing concern for this investment safety if the driver lose their badge due to minor mistakes.

If approved, this policy may lead to a significant decline in the number of licensed drivers, as many current members of the trade have indicated they would leave, while potential new drivers would likely be discouraged from applying due to the unnecessarily strict and unwelcoming conditions, which will lead to disruption in transport service in west Berkshire and of course loosing revenue for the council—many of which are not standard elsewhere in the UK.

It is also worth noting that large sections of the policy appear to be directly copied from the Bracknell Forest Council's. A number of clauses in the policy contradict with other clauses in the same policy.

As we got confirmation from licensing officer that this proposed policy was reviewed by the council legal team, our question is how the legal team couldn't verify a large number of errors in the policy, especially contradiction with Bylaws and legislation. Attached is the response document from a trade member, Damien Cox ([See Response 68](#)), who specifically points out all the grammatical errors and missing information.

While public safety is, of course, paramount, this policy fails to balance that with the safety and wellbeing of drivers and operators—who are also members of the public and deserve fair treatment and support.

We strongly urge the committee not to approve the current draft and instead to commission a revised policy, developed through genuine consultation with the trade. Attached, we have outlined our key concerns along with proposed changes and amendments for consideration in the next draft.

The following additional comments were also submitted jointly by Cabco and the National Private Hire and Taxi Association

Page 20 – Section 36: Certificate of Good Conduct (CoGC)

The proposed policy should be fully aligned with the government's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards. It would be contrary to principles of natural justice for drivers to be excluded from the profession based on criteria that may be practically impossible to meet—particularly when such criteria are unsupported by clear, robust evidence.

While local authorities retain the discretion to deviate from national guidance, such departures must be justified by a substantial and evidence-based rationale. Anything less undermines the legitimacy of the policy and exposes the authority to potential legal challenge.

Pages 22–23 – Sections 39–41: Repeat Testing Requirements

The requirement for repeat testing places a disproportionate and unnecessary burden on licensed drivers and risks encouraging them to seek licensing with other authorities. This would erode local control and reduce revenue available for enforcement.

Repeat testing should only be mandated in cases where there are significant regulatory updates or where a licence has lapsed for a

considerable duration and the driver has not remained active in the trade. Mandating identical re-testing in other circumstances is not evidence-based and serves no practical regulatory purpose.

Pages 39–41 – Section 19: Penalty Point System

The proposed implementation of a penalty point system is inconsistent with legal precedent, notably the decision in *Cardiff City Council v Singh*, which emphasises that decisions to revoke or suspend a licence must be based on the individual merits and circumstances of each case.

See: [Cardiff v Singh – Taxi Driver Forum](#)

A case-by-case formative approach is legally and ethically preferable to a summative, cumulative point-based system, which may pre-judge drivers without due regard for context.

Moreover, enforcement across all licensing regimes should be consistent and proportionate. Taxi and private hire drivers should not be subjected to uniquely punitive measures compared to other licensed professions.

Where minor transgressions occur, the authority already has a full range of proportionate enforcement options under Section 61 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, including:

- No action
- Verbal and written warnings
- Suspension (short or conditional)
- Revocation

Introducing a demerit points system risks undermining drivers' right of appeal, thereby conflicting with principles of due process.

Page 65 – Section 3j: Daily Vehicle Check

The proposed requirement for daily checks—estimated to take 15–20 minutes—is impractical and likely to result in low compliance. This may inadvertently become a tool for penalising rather than supporting the licensed trade.

Mere completion of a check sheet does not constitute verifiable proof that a proper inspection has occurred. The policy amounts to an unfunded administrative burden, with negligible demonstrable benefit to public safety.

Pages 79 – Sections 33 & 34: Advertising and Use of the Word “Cab”

We object to the proposed blanket ban on the use of the terms “Taxi” or “Cab” in private hire signage.

Our company, Cabco, has operated in West Berkshire since 1988, with longstanding approval from the Licensing Authority regarding our branding, including the word “Cab.” We respectfully request that the Council provide evidence of actual public confusion or

detriment arising from our use of this term over the past 35 years.

Absent such evidence, we reserve the right of appeal in the Magistrates' Court against any requirement to alter our recognised and lawfully established trading name.

Regulatory Engagement & Legal Considerations

Under Section 2 of the Regulators' Code (2014), local authorities are required to engage meaningfully with those they regulate:

See: [Regulators' Code – GOV.UK](#)

Furthermore, the High Court ruling in *Sardar and Others v Watford Borough Council* [2006] held that it is unlawful for a consultation process to be predetermined at the outset:

See: [Sardar v Watford – CaseMine](#)

We trust this consultation will not be pre-judged and that meaningful dialogue with the licensed trade will continue. Should the Council impose conditions that are disproportionate or not the least restrictive means of achieving policy objectives, we reserve the right to pursue an appeal through the Magistrates' Court.

We also wish to remind the Council of its statutory obligation to support local business as part of its regulatory approach, in line with the binding principles of the Regulators' Code.

See Response 69 below.

70. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44)

71. Trade Member

As a driver of a hackney carriage car for over 25 years, I have read the draft policy. After thinking what is being proposed, i am thinking, do the people writing this actually know the trade. In theory great, practically NO. (From day 1 every driver will break the policy) There are at least 10 things that are in the draft that any decent driver will override to make the clients journey a happy experience. If we all adhered to this policy we might just as well be robots. It is not just a case of A-B. There are several types of taxi clients, each one has a different outlook on what they expect.

Corporate, shoppers, night outers, general, drunks, school, people with disabilities, and reading this draft some of these categories will be not be straight forward.

As for the points system, how do you define what is acceptable. i.e. a dirty car. with the rural roads in this area, flooding, mud off of the fields, potholes, spray from other vehicles. Who determines this?

There are many more things i could say about this draft but i won't, as i think the people writing this draft are not clued up on the trade, and probably don't even use them.

72. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of "Cab"

73. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44)

74. Trade Member

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the proposed amendments to the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy. I appreciate the Council's ongoing commitment to developing a regulatory framework that is robust, fair, and responsive to the realities and challenges facing our industry. I trust that my comments and suggestions will contribute to a policy that prioritises public safety, maintains high standards, and enables drivers and operators to sustain viable businesses.

Having carefully reviewed the draft policy, I respectfully submit the following observations and recommendations:

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

75. Trade Member

See Cabco Response table at 20b below

76. Trade Member

Response same as above (Number 44) but without the comments about Advertising and Use of "Cab"

77. Trade Member

Please find my comments, not complete. Having had meetings with the team we have discussed within the three meetings about 60% of the policy.

Running a business and reading this policy has not been good, Mind bending Bulking and totally over the top

See Response 77 below

78. Trade Member

I would like to bring some concerns regarding the Licensing Policy 2025-2030 for discussion.

16.1

I would like to see current plate/Drivers to be allowed to carry on this and changes be made to new partnerships that may be formed after the final decisions have been made regarding leasing of Plate/Vehicle

19.1

Smoking signs to also carry vaping signs as well

37.9

Medical I would like to put forward that as we are all living longer and many more healthier I would like to ask that unless a problem regarding someone's health arises then we should be allowed to run to be in line with our 3 year renewal upto 70 as our Government Driving license run.

40.A

Drivers are always learning on the job as therefore I believe long term drivers should only be asked to do knowledge test 1 in 3 renewals

40.c

Shortest/Quickest route needs to take into account timings and road conditions when doing journeys

Penalty Points

I would like to see the right to appeal

Lost Property

I believe we should be able to hang onto this for 48 hours as many people on a Friday/Saturday miss there items later the next day (also Newbury

Police Front Desk is unmanned at the weekends

Car Insurances

Are you asking for all vehicle to carry fully com insurance?

As some vehicles have more than one driver important documents are always retained in the office.

I would like you to consider the idea of a fast track system for those that may miss the 4/6 week deadlines for putting in PLATE OR Drivers renewal. Which could be explained at time of application for fast tracking

79. Trade Member

I agree that everyone should be doing wheelchair training and I agree that they should all get rid of swivel seats as there is enough wheelchair vehicles out there now and I don't think there fit for purpose anymore.

80. WBC Transport Team

Please find below a response prepared by WBC Transport Policy in relation to the Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2025-2030.

It is recognised that the draft Policy has been developed to cover the DfT Standards and regulatory framework, meaning that it is very much operational-based, covering a wide range of issues.

However, there is a section in the draft Policy covering the specification of the vehicles that can be used. The issue of vehicle emissions is covered in the vehicle specifications with new application vehicles requiring to be Euro 6 compliant (typically first registrations after 2014/15) and for all vehicle renewals to be Euro 6 compliant from 2027. This is welcomed and presents an opportunity to help reduce carbon emissions from the District's taxi/PHV fleet, although it would be nice to see readiness relating to a wider decarbonising of the vehicle fleet or setting longer term targets for ZEV's post-2030. This would also help contribute to the Council's Environment Delivery Strategy to 2030, which seeks to create a Net Zero West Berkshire by 2030.

The Council's draft Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle (ULEV) Strategy looks at issues relating to decarbonising the local taxi/PHV fleet. This includes noting that the PPP have introduced reduced licensing fees for EV and hybrid taxis from 1st April 2023, which does not appear to be mentioned in the draft taxi policy. The ULEV strategy also notes that drivers are increasingly adopting ULEV's (not sure whether these are hybrids or EVs) and considers some of the issues raised in the 2021 drivers survey. The ULEV strategy also outlines that by 2030, it will be compulsory for new PH/taxis to be ULEV and that planning needs to begin now to ensure the sector is

future ready. Discussions will need to be had with taxi/PHV operators to determine whether there would be any infrastructure requirements (such as electric vehicle charging points) that would need to be provided to help operators manage a longer-term transition to zero emission vehicles.

I am aware that the Energy Team undertook a survey of local taxi/PHV operators and drivers in 2021. It may worthwhile working with the Environment Delivery Team to undertake a new survey to determine the current level of ULEVs in the WBC fleet (there was only 1 plug-in hybrid recorded in 2021) and whether the issues identified concerning the use of PHEV's by the operators/drivers remain the same.

What We Are Proposing To Do

Your feedback will be used to inform the final policy when it is submitted for consideration by elected members at the Licensing Committee on Monday, 07 July 2025. The policy, with or without modifications, will then be adopted and published on both the PPP website and on the [Strategies, Policies and Plans](#) page of the West Berkshire Council website.

Revised 18th March 2025 Hackney Carriage and
Private Hire Policy 2025-2030 (V4)

Another version of Version 4, one less page than January 2025, but still with errors.

The Licensing Committee met and approved this document to go out for consultation on the 17th of March 2025. This meeting is on Utube, were a Licensing Officer told members Legal have agreed with the document. The Vice Chair commented there were only a few typos.

Minutes of the meeting Taxi and Private Hire West Berkshire Council Liaison Group 24th of October 2024. Number 6 Update on the Taxi Policy (no page number), reads "a legal overview on the document would be required". Given the many errors in this document, it would suggest legal have not sufficiently proof checked/proof edited this document.

This document states – licensed drivers as ‘ambassadors’ In promoting the good image of West Berkshire. First impressions are vital in encouraging tourism and new businesses to relocate in this area.

This document is full of repeats about how the trade conducts themselves, whilst in or out of work. Should outside people read this document, they could consider the Trade as a problem, so therefore not travel with Trade. So, explain, how Trade are Ambassadors? People within the Trade are considering giving up. Has the PPP/Council got themselves so involved in thinking of ways to punish the trade, that you have forgotten how to be KIND.

Why not start this document off with words like –

- Welcome to West Berkshire.
- We consider the Trade like ambassadors helping to promote West Berkshire.
- The Government requires Councils to have a Policy describing the Trade, this Policy is the standards we wish you to adopt.

PPP/Council need to be proactive and promote the Trade in a good light and start to recruit drivers, which find this document acceptable.

Drivers are concerned and worried that they could get into trouble because they wear the wrong item of clothing, engage in general conversation but someone may not wish to have a conversation, therefore report the driver. Mud on vehicle because of, driving on muddy, potholed, flooded country lanes/ordinary roads. Drink out of an environmentally friendly container, the list goes on.

This document informs us (against other Council policies), that we should not involve ourselves with passengers. Having spoken to a single elder woman, she has become concerned about not being able to contact us for help/in emergency, be friends, because this document prevents Trade from helping people. Will you be contacting Age Concern? to inform them the trade should no longer be helpful to passengers, once passenger has left vehicle?

The introduction of this document says plain English, I have found this document very confusing, so many mistakes.

As this document is read through, you will notice there is a lot of repeats and many errors, so document could be reduced in size. Many cut and paste sections, have repeated errors.

The Appendix are repeats of other Appendix, paragraphs in Appendix are also repeated, (hidden in paragraphs not the required topic, for instance Collision Report timings). Most of Appendix have already been read in pages up to twenty nine. Compare the different rule breaking sections, different points are given for same rule, under different topics.

Given there are so many repeats, the Content List should show each page number, so Trade can read about a topic, although there are a number of different pages covering a topic.

For instance -

7 Enforcement on Content List is page seven, (although the column does not have a title). There are another eleven pages that mentions Enforcement.

9 Appeals page eight, will be found on another two pages.

11 Criminal Records Checks page nine, will be found on another five pages.

DBS is referred to in the document, but not on Contents List, will be found on twelve pages.

Disclosure and Barring Service, not listed in Contents List, will be found on three pages.

20 Age of Vehicles Page 14, will also be found on another two pages.

22 Roof Signs are on seven different pages, this is not acceptable. Roof Signs could be put together as one topic. None of these seven pages give the specification of Roof Signs, but we are told on Page 69 dimensions and specifications are detailed in the Taxi Policy! Where is a Page Number that says Taxi Policy that gives the required specifications?

School Contracts, topic also on one other page.

Novelty Vehicles, topic also on two other pages.

Equality Act 2010, topic also on four other pages.

Data Protection, topic also on four other pages.

Grant and Renewal of Licences, topic also on two other pages.

Right to Work, topic also on two other pages.

Criminal Record Checks, topic also on four other pages.

Certificate of Good Conduct, topic also on two other pages, whilst being listed twice on page two.

Medical Examination, topic also on one other page.

Disability Awareness Training, topic also on one other page.

Code of Conduct, topic also on five other pages. Also referred to as Code of Good Conduct.

Private Hire Operator Licence, topic also on three other pages.

Grant and Renewal of Licence, topic also on one other page.

Criminal Record Checks - listed twice on page two, with four other page numbers to read.

Right to Work in the UK, topic already listed on page one.

Certificate of Good Conduct - also listed on page two.

Previous Convictions - topic also found on page thirty four.

Drivers and Vehicles - also found on three other pages.

Enforcement and Options, but says Sanctions in document, also found on one other page.

Appeals - already listed on page one, to be found on another two pages.

If you actually read through my comments, you will also realise many of my concerns/comments, are repeats, because this document is bulked out by repeats, therefore many of the same errors.

Bad grammar.

Not using Capital Letters.

Not starting a new topic with a new page.

Where the Alphabet is used, letters are missing.

Where Numbers are used, numbers are missing.

No Page Headers or Footers to help readers, given the length and errors and topics being mixed up, there is a need to constantly go back, to check what topic is being written about.

West Berkshire is not a District, but you will find many entries saying District (78 times).

West Berkshire Council became a Unitary Authority in 1998, why identity as a District Council?

When writing, using a number, do not change to the written version of numbers, see Page 3 and elsewhere.

Lacks referencing when writing about other organisations, no website addresses.

When referencing Town Police Clauses, use the exact wording (Page 61).

This document does reference to local Byelaws, but actually goes against the Byelaw, i.e. Lost Property.

To put Penalty Points against the trade, because lost or found property has not been handed into a Police Station! Please advise where you believe there is an open rural Police Station, which wants to see the trade outside, waiting to hand in other people's property such as hair clip, button etc.

Found/lost/misplaced are words mentioned in document, make up your mind which word to use. Would be better to request found/lost property is handed into the office, passenger could ring about found property. Remember – driver is not allowed to make contact with passenger after journey has finished (Page 54 6.6).

Code of Conduct tells trade not to contact passengers after journeys, but driver could find property, could make an immediate telephone call to give back property: - but no, found property has to be taken to a Police Station! Why go against Byelaw?

Police Officer and Constable. This document is not consistent in the description given for Police.

The Penalty Point Scheme has so many listings, I wonder where you will get time to check each vehicle you come across, especially as minutes of last Trade meeting mentioned you do not have time or staff to get the work done in the department. The system is issuing different points to Hackney Carriage than Private Hire Vehicles, for the same wrongdoing, as previously mentioned - (see found property).

Page 48 D47 4 points - failure to keep vehicle reasonably clean. Please explain the word reasonably, this is the first time this word has been used in document in relation to vehicle, which is putting four points against vehicle. Document uses different words, such as - clean condition, clean, cleanliness, clean state, acceptable standard, but not reasonably. How do you put points against a vehicle with no explanation of word, whilst using a collection of other words not shown in the List of Offences/Breach of Vehicle Licence Conditions/Byelaws?

With the use of words such as - corrosion, chips, dents and scratches (Page 76 3.7.(b) for example), vehicles should be free of. Given the bad condition of roads/country lanes, Highways Department need to be informed of how trade will be taken off the road. Highways Department need to fill potholes, deal with drainage issues and get the road surfaces fit and roadworthy for the Trade vehicles. The Trade can then keep vehicles in good condition as policy requires. The Trade are available where and when required (Page 3 b).

The Code of Conduct, Appendix C Page 52. In the written sections 1.2 1.4 etc the Word Good is used i.e. "The Code of Good Conduct." Think this is messy, as there is "The Code of Conduct" and a "Certificate of Good Conduct."

No information about how the Trade as in - driver/operator/proprietor/escort - can protect themselves, who to report an incident to, how the Council will protect and promote the Trade.

DBS checks, this document does not mention using Taxi-Plus. See Minutes of Trade Meeting 24.10.2024, Trade still waiting for information about Taxi-Plus.

Training please answer, will training still be offered by the Council? Or move to Taxi-Plus.

Appendix E Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions Page 83. Do you really want these measurements? They do not meet with manufacturers specification. You need to inform School Transport that the Trade can no longer provide Mini-Bus Transport, as you are taking said vehicles off the road.

West Berkshire called a Climate Emergency in 2019, so are those involved in writing this document, going to inform the Climate Emergency Committee/those involved, that PPP/Council are going against their advice. Page 79 states drinking vessels must be either toughened glass or plastic. Would prefer drinking vessels were recyclable, reuseable, biodegradable containers, so supporting Climate Change.

Question why Trade is being told not to eat?

Would be interesting to know who signed the KPI for staff involved in writing this document, which would suggest these people are Fit and Proper to produce this document, given all the errors.

Would like to see the correspondence from Legal, who said document was fit for purpose to go out for consultation.

Page 65 is the start of a professional written document, a long read beforehand.

See below for my comments/corrections needed.

Two pages for Contents, please identify the columns.

Page One - if there is a need to underline the numbers on the lefthand side, then why isn't number twelve underlined?

The Contents List should not shortened words, use His Majesty's (see 12). CCTV should read Closed Circuit... (see 18).

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licences does not have a number on the lefthand side of sheet.

Written page (Page 17), should include the word Hackney Carriage, change title on Page One.

Why no number for Dual Driver and Private Hire Driver Licences?

Page Two - 38 DVLA should be in full.

43 Please write in full CSAE, what is it?

Why no number for Private Hire Operator Licence? Which should read Licences, as seen on Page twenty-five.

56. Title on Page One does not read the same as title on Page twenty eight, so which do you want? Should read the same - Options or Sanctions.

58. Should be typed out in full.

Appendix C Page starts on Page fifty two. The title should read the same as the title seen on Page fifty two.

Appendix F, the title is seen at the bottom of Page eighty four, should be at the top of Page eighty five.

Page Three – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

1 1.a. Remove word District on first line.

Remove D from WBDC second line.

Last line replace was with IS, so present day used not past tense.

b. Ensure has been used twice, believe this should be replaced with assure.

b. Available where and when required? How do you think you are able to control this?

c. bad grammar, remove comma after i.e.

d. Make your contact details available.

e. Bad grammar, remove the comma after drivers.

e. Make your contact details available.

f. ...Licence use a capital L.

f. Remove the word District.

g. Indent the start of paragraph.

2. Indent C.

Page Four – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

No Header to remind readers what subject is being continued.

2. Scope, sub sections started with: then a comma decide on one format.

d. Insert: remove comma.

Page Four continued: -

Third line down, remove the word District.

4.a. See first line remove comma after the word driver.

Third line remove the word District.

Insert contact details to get information.

b. Second line remove District.

Page Five - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

h. Remove the word District.

Page Six - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

6.a. Refers to Appendix C Code of Conduct for Licensed Dual and Private Hire Drivers. This title does not exist on the Contents List.

The letter c) is not listed.

Page Seven - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

7.a. third dot down, remove the word District.

7.a.5th dot down, HMRC type out in full.

7.c. The paragraph is out of line.

7.c. First line remove the word District.

7.c. Second paragraph remove the word District.

7.c. Why the use of the word Sanctions (used four times).? Page two on Contents List says Options. Page twenty-eight says 56. Enforcement Sanctions. Have you got yourselves rather confused?

Page Seven continued: -

Should last sentence read failing acceptable, not falling?

7.d. First line of typing is out of line.

8.a. Whole paragraph needs realigning.

Page Eight - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

9.Appeals - What a shame you do not mention about costs, should you lose a Court Case.

10.a. Paragraph needs realigning.

10.a. Remove space between pre-booked.

10.b. Second line, remove the word District.

10.c. See members package Page 10 Environmental Impact says Euro 5 or Euro 6 emissions standards. So, briefing of meeting and this Policy are not the same.

10.d. Second dot down, second line, remove the space between adapted/modified.

10. Where is letter E?

Page Nine - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

11. No details of how to get a DBS check. In the last trade meeting, it was mentioned that Taxi-Plus was the preferred agent. There is not information in this policy about Taxi-Plus. Taxi-Plus are not registered with Gov.UK, as they are sub division of a larger company.

11.e. Realign the paragraph.

12.b. Insert website address.

13.a. Align the paragraph.

Page Ten – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

You have got yourself in a muddle with the lettering system.

15.d. Insert website address.

16.k. Insert website address.

Page Eleven – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Letters system in whole section is wrong. As previously mentioned.

m. Last dot down, remove S from InspectionS.

m. last dot down, remove the word District.

Table – remove gaps between the words Compliance and test.

Page Twelve

18. The letter G is missing from list.

Page Thirteen – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

19.a. Start sentence with Vehicle.

19.a. Change AND with OR.

19.a. List the nominated garages.

19.e. Finish sentence with a full stop.

19.h. Signage has been taken out of this document.

Page Thirteen continued: -

19.k. Now you mention Testing STATIONS, please provide details, how are they different from a nominated garage?

19.k. Provide website address.

Page Fourteen - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

20.b. Need full stop at end of sentence.

20.c. In policy below, where? Below is about electronic payments.

21.a. No allowance for no network coverage. Read your page 61 15.3 and 15.4.

22.a.c. Second dot down. What colour should the word Taxi be?

22.a.c. Second dot down. Remove S from WordsS.

January 2001 agreement for Taxi Livery, but now all gone. Passenger currently should feel safe getting into a taxi with livery/identification, this policy could endanger passengers getting into a vehicle with just a Taxi Roof Sign.

Page Fifteen - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

24.a. Last line remove S from contractS, you only show one contract, which is School Contracts.

25.c. Either Category, what are they? you only have School Contracts.

Page Sixteen - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Page Sixteen continued: -

e. Remove the word District.

f. Remove the word District.

Page Seventeen - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Title should include the words Hackney Carriage.

30.a. Identification card, there is no information in Appendix C about wearing an identification card, that is because it is a Badge.

32.a. Second line, remove the word District.

Page Eighteen - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

33.a. Where the lettering system starts again but in brackets, then letters should be tabbed in.

33.c. Use full stop at end of paragraph.

Page Nineteen -

34.b. Remove the word District.

35.a. Align the paragraph.

35.b. Remove gap between conviction/warning, on second line.

35.e. DBS no information provided on how to gain Certificate. Still waiting from last Trade Meeting details about the Taxi-Plus, that Council want Trade to use for DBS. Taxi-Plus is not registered with Gov.UK.

Page Twenty – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

36.a. Align paragraph.

36.f. Insert full stop at end of sentence.

Note at bottom of page, remove the word District.

Page Twenty-One – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Page Twenty-One continued: –

37.a. Last line, remove the word District.

Page Twenty Two – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

39.b. Retest every six years – before a second three year licence will be issued, does not make sense.

39.c. Third line down, remove the word District.

Page Twenty Three – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

d. It is extremely difficult to get any booking for Driving, as there is a shortage.

e. Remove the word District.

40.a. What is the surrounding area radius?

40.a. Retest before second three year licence, does not make sense.

40.b. Align paragraph.

40.c. Seems harsh, how could anything to proven.

Page Twenty Four – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Page Twenty Five – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Many pages in this document's identity the Local Authority as Council, should have full name, remembering of course that the Local Authority is not a District Council.

45.b. West Berkshire Council should be named, otherwise someone from outside could debate they fit into policy, as West Berkshire Council is not named in paragraph.

47.b. Align the paragraph.

47.c. Remove the word District.

Page Twenty Six – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

48.a. Put full stop at end of paragraph.

49.a. Remove the word Taxi, subject is about Operator Licences, which has nothing to do with Taxi/Hackney Carriage.

49.c. Put full stop at end of paragraph.

49.e. Bad grammar to use the word BUT at the beginning of a sentence, so remove the word BUT.

49.g. Align the paragraph.

49.g.a) and b) the first should be lower case – ANY.

Bottom of page remove the word District.

Page Twenty Seven – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

50.a. What is the timeline for Operators Licences? You have included a timeline with Drivers Licences/Vehicle Licences, so why not here?

50.. Under (b) remove the random dot.

51.a. These pages are about Operator Licences, so explain the connection between these pages and Appendix A.

Second paragraph, remove dual, these pages are about Operator Licences, but now include Vehicle Licences. Explain connections.

Last paragraph include Operator Licence, this is what this section is supposed to be about.

52.a. Provide website address.

Page Twenty Eight – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

54.g. Use letter a.

54.g. Remove the word District.

56.a. Remove the word Hackney Carriage; these pages are about Operator Licence. Hackney Carriage does not need an Operators Licence.

56.a. Align the paragraph.

56.a. Remove the word District.

56.b. Align the paragraph.

Page Twenty Nine – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

58. a and b.

Page Twenty Nine continued :-

Remember an operator could be an employee so on PAYE scheme.

58.a. Who informs applicant?

58.a. Align paragraph.

58.b. Insert website address.

Page Thirty - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Insert Dual into the title.

Page Thirty One - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Page Thirty Two - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

3.10 Align the paragraph.

3.11 Align the paragraph.

Page Thirty Three - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

First dot paragraph, use a comma - third line - not a full stop.

316 Align the paragraph.

Page Thirty Four - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Page Thirty Four continued: -

4.1. Criteria for Hackney Carriage/Dual and Private Hire Drivers Licence, are considered together, then please explain why are there so many repeats, under so many different titles?

Page Thirty Six - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

10.3. Where is letter f?

11.1 Align paragraph.

Page Thirty Seven - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

12.1. Align paragraph.

13.2 Align paragraph.

Page Thirty Eight - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

15.1. Last line, last word remove space between Hand-held.

16.2. Insert website address.

16.3. Insert website address.

16.6 Align paragraph.

16.7. Who are the approved providers?

Page Thirty Nine - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

16.8 To revoke and stop someone from their right to work, because they have six points on their driving licence, is harse. DVLA/Courts make such decisions.

Page Forty One – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Where to you find the time for these points?

1.2 Remove the word District.

1.5 Remove the word District.

2.1 Remove the word District.

2.4 Align the paragraph.

Page Forty Two – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Members who agreed this document to go out to Public, can fully understand the points system, as you would have just read previous pages.

2.11 Remove the word District.

Page Forty Three – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Whoever dreamt these points up, please consider that Vehicle Page 43 is different from Operator Licence points, but the same thing.

There are instances where the points for the same offence are different when looking at other pages.

Page Forty Five – 2. Breaches of both Dual and Private Hire Driver's Licence Code of Conduct, should start on a new page.

Where document has been changed, no thought that numbers are missing for points. No V41, V42 or V50.

Page Number Fifty Two

As you have stated these pages are about Hackney Carriage as well, then put Hackney Carriage in the title.

1.1 Remove the word District, twice in this paragraph.

1.1 Remove the word Hackney Carriage, these pages are about Private Hire Drivers.

1.2 Remove the word District.

1.2 Remove the word Good.

1.3 Remove the word District.

1.3 Last line cannot be proved, or reliance on Trade to promote West Berkshire Council.

1.4 Fourth line needs a full stop after licence.

1.4 Remove the word Good.

1.6 Remove this, these pages are not about Hackney Carriage.

1.7 Remove the word District.

1.8 Have you checked that what has been written in Private Hire is the same as Hackney Carriage, as it should not be.

2.1 Second line - remove the word District.

2.1 Second line - who are the reciprocal organisations?

Page Fifty Three - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

3.3.(a) use full stop at end of sentence.

3.8 second line, do not start a sentence with the word AND. Maybe use a comma.

Page Fifty Three continued: -

4. No need to use the number one.

5. No need to use the number one.

Page Fifty Four

6.2 Remove the word District.

Page Fifty Four continued: -

6.3 Remove the word District.

6.6 This presents a problem, returning found property. Many passengers or neighbours/friends/people can ask for assistance, should it be required, whilst they are not in the vehicle.

On West Berkshire Councils own website, there are pages about Adult Social Care, who friends/family/neighbours can help. Are you going to advise Adult Social Care, that the Trade can no longer offer assistance?

6.8 Same as above.

6.10 Trade cannot leave vehicle unattended, also consider some drop off points are drop and go, Trade will receive Fines if not driving off immediately.

6.11 Remove the word District.

6.11 To wear Badge, see Page 17 says wear Card, make your mind up!!

Page Fifty Five

First line remove the word District.

6.19 Remove the word District.

6.22 Remove the word District, use a word that includes rural areas.

Page Fifty Five continued: -

7.4. If you want to tell the Trade about what clothes to wear, please explain what a full body means.

Page Fifty Six

c. Amplified music, todays manufactured vehicles have an amplified radio, are you telling Trade not to play music/radio?

f. Align paragraph.

f. Use full stop at end of sentence, this is throughout the document.

Page Fifty Seven - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Second line a random s in sentence, should this be a word?

7.9 Where is the letter F.

8.2 No eating, really. What about passenger medical conditions. Further in document drinking if using a toughened glass vessel. Something not quite right here.

8.3 Someone has not been to training, dogs in vehicles wrong written article. (Dog Harness).

Page Fifty Eight - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

9.1 Check tyre pressure, really, in bad weather, weather changes the pressure.

10.2. Police Stations are not interested in Lost Property. Please notify of a public open rural Police Station?

Page Fifty Eight continued: -

Would be better if found property is put in a box in the office, wait and see if a passenger rings about a lost hair clip.

10.3 What is PHD's? type out in full.

Page Fifty Nine - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

12. Remove the number one, it is not necessary.

Remove zone and county, they do not describe West Berkshire.

13.1 You are not acknowledging advise given at Training. Dog harness required.

13.4. Do not start sentence with and as a capital A.

Page Sixty - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

(d) Align the gaps or paragraph.

13.6 Type out full the initials used, so readers know what you are referring to.

14.1. Remove the word District.

14.2. Remove the word District.

15.2. State size of signs, are they inside of outside of vehicles? Remembering of course that this document removed all livery from vehicles.

Page Sixty One - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

15.2. How do you suggest we take payment from someone who has sight problems?

Page Sixty One continued: -

15.3. It is well documented that many areas do not have working network coverage, to make card payments possible. How does PPP/Council think they can make Government/Network Companies make all of UK good with network coverage.

15.4. Explain why Licensing need to know card payment was not able to be made. You will be so busy being busy with all these requirements, but what will you do to improve the problem?

16.2. to 16.5 Put a full stop at the end of paragraph.

16.6 Driver to carry, under an agreement for a discretionary distance, the distance to which hirer is entitled for the fare.

Your explanation suggests that passenger/s cannot get out of vehicle until the agreed fare has been reached, do you want drivers to travel up and down an area to get to agreed fare, then let people out of vehicle?

Page Sixty Two - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

16.13 Who are the reciprocal organisations?

Page Sixty Three - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

16.21 Who are the reciprocal organisations?

17.2 Who are the reciprocal organisations?

17.8 Who are the reciprocal organisations?

Page Sixty Four – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

Third line remove the word District.

Fourth line typing error, change Werst to West.

Pages 64 to 84, the numbering system is wrong throughout.

1.1.2. Remove the word District, used three times in this paragraph.

Page Sixty Five

3.8.(h) Bulb-kit in vehicle. This is an expensive item to have in vehicle. Are you sure you understand bulbs, the costs, how to replace them?

Page Sixty Six – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

11. Who are the nominated testing stations?

Page Sixty Seven

8.18. Tyres – think you are wrong.

Page Sixty Eight – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

11.29. Second line remove the word District.

11.31. Advertising, this is wrong. Previous pages have removed livery from vehicles.

13. Radio Equipment, this should start on a new page.

Page Sixty Nine -

14.38. Taximeter, what makes of Taximeter is approved by the Council?

14.39 Who are the competent Meter installers?

46. Where is the Taxi Policy in this document?

46. This document does not give dimensions and specification of a Roof Sign.

48. The Table of Fares is not in document, not even as an example.

15. Insurance - this should start on a new page.

Page Seventy - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

50. Typing error, if insurance should be OF.

16. 51 First line, If should be replaced with if, or use a full stop.

16.51 Help the Trade, by allowing a person to give information, as driver may not be in a fit state to follow these orders.

18. Disabled Access - Vehicle Standards, this should start on a new page.

Page Seventy Two - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

19.66. Remove word District.

Page Seventy Three - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

67. Use full stop at end of paragraph.

Page Seventy Three continued: -

69. Remove Dual, should read a person who holds a Hackney Carriage or Dual Licence.

70. Remove Dual, should read a person who holds a Hackney Carriage or Dual Licence.

23. This number should be in bold.

Page Seventy Five - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

The numbering system from page 75 to page 83 is wrong.

The word District needs removing from this page, there are five to remove.

Page Seventy Six -

3.7.(i). Bulb kits are very expensive.

3.7.(k) Align the paragraph.

3.7. (m) and (l) swap them around.

3.7.(k) Third line, remove the word ANY.

Page Seventy Seven - Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

16. Collisions in Vehicles 51. The proprietor must, as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any case within 72 hours- From Page 70. Hackney Carriage.

If the vehicle has been involved in an collision then the proprietor must notify the Council within 72 hours with a copy of the collision report. Page 77 Private Hire.

Why not mention - insert into Private Hire - as soon as reasonably practicable.

Page Seventy Seven continued: -

Other pages mention that someone on behalf of driver can produce paperwork, as maybe driver could be unwell.

Page Seventy Eight

8.20. Tyre depth, you have got this wrong.

Page Seventy Nine

10.31 Drinking vessels to be toughened glass or plastic, so not playing a part in the Councils Climate Emergency 2019. Prefer if drinking vessels have to be mentioned, suggest words like plant based renewable materials, recyclable, reuseable, biodegradable. Is PPP/Council going to inform all those involved with Climate concerns, that the Trade cannot do their bit.

Have to wonder why drinking vessels are allowed, presumably because people get thirsty or want a drink for the occasion, but why does this document say people cannot EAT inside vehicle. Medical issues are important.

34. Previous pages have omitted livery.

Page Eighty

41. Who are the competent meter installers?

42. Are you confused, I am. How is driver supposed to get paid?

Page Eighty One

16.50. This paragraph (already mentioned) reads different from Pahe 70.

16.51 following a collision, officers may require it to be presented for inspection as soon as possible after the collision. Help the driver/owner here, allow time for repairs, then driver/owner can ask for inspection.

16.52 If the Council determine that the vehicle is unfit for use as a private hire vehicle. Council staff are now vehicle mechanics!

Page Eighty Two – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

18.58 and 59. The measurements used here, wonder where they came from.

Many vehicles will be off the road for work, so you need to tell School Transport, the Trade will be reducing vehicles available, as policy is taking them away from Trade use. Provide evidence that such measurements are required.

Page Eight Three

f) full stop at end of paragraph.

60 to 63. Query measurement, evidence please that these measurements have been obtained from a professional source.

67. This section is about Private Hire, so remove the word taxis.

Page Eighty Four – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

21.71. Remove gap between multi-purpose.

Page Eighty Four continued: -

21.72. First line at end, They should be a small t.
or use a full stop or even a comma.

21.75. Last line, first word, should read
Certificate.

Appendix F, should be a new page, to show a new
Appendix, not hided at the bottom of the sheet, how
can people find Appendix F, if it is not on a new
page?

Page Eighty Five

Second paragraph, remove the word District.

Third paragraph, remove the word District.

Numbering section is out of order.

Page Eighty Six

iv. Use of comma or full stop at end of line.

Page Eighty Seven - Not using Capital Letters, this
is a problem throughout this Policy.

12. Use commas or full stop at the end of each line,
to then use capital letters or not.

Page Eighty Eight - Not using Capital Letters, this
is a problem throughout this Policy.

19. First line remove the word District.

21. Align the paragraph.

Page Eighty Eight continued: -

22. Record keeping for twelve months, HMRC have different rules. This document does state a minimum of two years, but now this page changes, but later pages go back to minimum (Page 89).

23. Align paragraph.

25. First line, remove the word District.

25. Explain Personal Digital Assistant use. Why are you dictating this use.

26. Please explain why such monthly detail is required, private information. Licensing staff is not DBS checked. What is the reason to know Trade information. For what purpose? A lot of work, especially as Licensing cannot cope. Much of this information is logged with School Transport. Very surprised that Trade has to give out work schedule.

Page Eighty Nine

32.(b) First and second line, remove the word District.

37. Not using commas or full stops.

Page Ninety-One

38. Records should be kept for a minimum of twelve months, so the same as previous pages.

42. Align the paragraph.

10.43. Second line, remove the word District.

10.44. Remove the word District, used twice.

Page Ninety Two – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

First line, remove the word District.

12.49. Last line, remove the word District.

12.50. Sixth line, remove the word District.

Page Ninety Three – Not using Capital Letters, this is a problem throughout this Policy.

18.58. Last line, word AE explain? Is this another typing error?

Comments about the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2025-2030

I would like to make comments with regards above, as follows: -

Page 64 Appendix D – Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions –

Third paragraph - typing error, change Werst to West.

1. General 2. If the vehicle...., guessing and hoping the proprietor reads this.
Suggest changing the first word to Should.
2. Identification Plates and Cards
 3. First line – fare cards, I assume this should read Tariff. Either way the Council/PPP does not supply this, so not the property of Council/PPP. Tariff card to be downloaded.
 6. Additional signage correctly, better explanation needed, Livery has been removed.

Page 65 3. Maintenance of Vehicle

(f) Includeand should not demonstrate excessive compression of the seating area of wear within the support mechanism. As seen on Page 76 (e).

Include in Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions or explain why Maintenance of Vehicles is different.

Include Interior panels and fittings within the vehicle must not be damaged nor show excessive wear, or staining.

As read on Page 76 (g).

Include in Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions or explain why vehicle conditions are different.

Include The interior of the vehicle must not have damp other obnoxious smells.

As read on Page 76 (h).

Include in Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions or explain why vehicle conditions are different.

(h) Suggest rewording this, many vehicle bulb kits, need tools and a safe environment to replace bulbs (i.e. workshop/garage). Bulbs kits are expensive, would not suggest they are carried in vehicle.

Include.... The engine compartment must not be in a dirty condition or have evidence of leaks including water, oil, or hydraulic fluids.

As read on Page 76 (l).

Include in Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions or explain why vehicle conditions are different.

11. Page 66 Collision report to Council within 24 hours, suggest changing to 72 hours, so the same as Private Hire.

Page 68. 10. Seats and Passengers

Include Any drinking vessels provided by the proprietor or driver of the vehicle must be made of either toughened glass or plastic.

Include in Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions or explain why vehicle conditions are different.

Would also query why toughened glass or plastic, if you wish to be so picky, then use the words ... planted based renewable materials, biodegradable, a material that be used recycled.

Page 68. 11. Advertising on Hackney Carriages

29. What are the advertising standards approved?

30. Advertising must write in for approval.

31. Advertising measurements given.

32. Website address for Advertising Standards Agency Code of Practice.

All messy, can advertise, but write in for approval, but then given measurements.

I believe this should be rewritten.

Page 70 50. Change if insurance to – of insurance.

16. Collisions in Vehicles

51. Insert – or someone on behalf of, (as seen in this document).

53. Remove words Private Hire, these pages are about Hackney Carriage.

17. Temporary Replacement Vehicle

56. Remove the words Private Vehicle.

57. Temporary Licence for no more than three months, see Page 44 V.33 points against vehicle if temporary vehicle used for more than two weeks. These needs sorting out.

Page 71 59. Remove words Private Hire Vehicles, this section is about Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

59. End of sentence change see above to – see Page 66.

Where measurements are quoted, are you sure you have got these measurements correct?

Deborah Bartley-Brown

Theale Taxis

13.5.2025

Comments regarding above Policy.

Page 75 1. General 2. Paragraph starts with the word If, this is soft, recommend paragraph starts with the word Should. Although you do not seem to have a reciprocal relationship with other Licensing Authorities where this information could be shared.

Page 76 (i). To carry expensive parts in vehicle – to change a bulb will require a safe environment like a workshop/garage, not anywhere because a bulb needs changing where it is not safe to do so.

Swap m and l around, for correct use of alphabet.

Page 77 13. Insert when reasonably practicable, as seen on Page 70. 51.

Page 79 10. Seats and Passengers 31.

Drinking vessels to be toughened glass or plastic, please change to words such as recyclable, re-useable, plant based renewable materials, biodegradable. Council called an Emergency Climate in July 2019, but this does not match the calling.

32. Communication – this Policy is so picky, yet you cannot tell us how you want us to communicate, by which means?

11. Advertising

Advertising on Private Hire Vehicles is allowed, please explain why no mention of measurements of adverts. See Page 68 31, which gives measurements.

Page 80 14. Taximeter (if fitted).

40. End of second line says – above requirement -, please change, the above requirement is writing about Radio Equipment not Taximeters.

40. The paragraph does not match with Page 69 38. Please insert at the end of paragraph – the taximeter must be set for the current tariff set by the Council or a continually lower rate and must be sealed to prevent unauthorised adjustment of that meter. If not inserted, please explain why.

Page 81 47. Last few words say - statement that the Council has no control over Private Hire Fares. Yes, you do. These vehicles may have a taximeter, which this paragraph states - the fare charge must be visible inside the vehicle. The charges are set by the Council or charges the Council have agreed to. Remove the last few words, or rewrite.

49. Same problem as previously mentioned in Hackney Carriage. Fourth line down change if insurance to of insurance.

51. Reads – asap after collision has taken place. Suggests you are not allowing repair work first, is this correct?

17. Temporary Replacement Vehicle

55. Insert the word hire.

56. Temporary Licence for no longer than three months. Read Page 44 V.33 four points, should temporary vehicle be used for more than two weeks. Explain three months, two weeks. Re-write for better understanding.

Page 82. 18. Disabled Access – Vehicle Standards

58. Remove words Hackney Carriages these pages are about Private Hire Vehicles.

58. Last few words read - to those detailed above – where above? The top of page and previous page is about Temporary Replacement Vehicle not Disabled Access, or please explain.

Page 84 22. Funeral and Wedding Vehicles

75. Third line remove words Hackney Carriage, these pages are about Private Hire Vehicles.

Bottom of Page 84 – Appendix F, these words should be on the next page as a heading.

Document full of typing errors, bad formatting, but this is a problem throughout this document.

Please direct me to where in this document, if it is stated, that Policy must be in every vehicle.

If so, will Council provide a copy to every driver/operator/office.

I mention this because document states the Tariff Card (which the Council do not supply), is owned by the Council, should the need arise has to be returned to Council.

Drivers/Operators are their own expense, print this document to put in their vehicles/office, yet Council could claim ownership and if need arises request return of said printed matter, that the Council did not supply.

Page 85 The words Appendix F is on the bottom on Page 84, needing moving to Page 85 for the title of these pages.

1. General 1, This paragraph says references to Operator is the Manager.
As the document does not keep to this reference, I suggest removing this reference.

This document does not have a section called Booking Records.

Page 87. 15. Include the word minimum before the words twelve months.

Page 88. 16. These documents.... What documents?

Page 88. 21. Last line should include minimum.

Page 88. 22. Again, include the word minimum.

Page 88. 24 (a). To get written approval from the council, should there be a temporary computer breakdown, suggest this is rewritten. Should there be a failure, surely operator/company need to get on with what other means to conduct their business, not to have to stop work because they need written approval.

Page 88 26. Please explain why information is required. Surely the Council has enough work to do, so what is the point of sharing this information, admin time spent. Council PPP staff do not have DBSs. What is the point?

Page 90 (d)

Does this mean alcohol in open vessels is allowed in vehicle if passenger is over the age of eighteen. Explain how operator will visually know ?

9. Complaints 36. The operator or manager, this is the same person, see Page 85 1. General 1. Remove the word manager.

Page 91 38. Include the word minimum.

Page 93 18. Sub-contracting 58.

First word in last paragraph should read are, typing error please change.

I find this document lengthy and confusing.

Driver has to take Council to Magistrates Court. Driver has to prove themselves. So.....

Page 3 b. To protect the public.

Page 6. Fit and proper test.

So

Page 56. 7.4 Collared blouse which have a full body. Leads to

Page 46 D1 Four points for not wearing a collared blouse which has a full body (whatever that means).

Page 41.2.3. There is no right of appeal against the award of penalty points.

Page 42 3. Review by the Lead Licensing Officer. Why bother with this, there is no right to appeal. Paragraph does not mention removing of Penalty Points.

Please explain in plain English, how not wearing a collared blouse which has a full body, is against Page 3B.. To protect the public, and Page 6. Not Fit and proper person, because of the clothing the Council/PPP wish to identify.

There are many references in this document about the Enforcement Policy, I cannot see any website address, link or how to get to said policy.

If there is please make it more obvious and repeat where to find it, in the many repeats of Enforcement Policy words used.

Page 9 d. Gives a link to a government website, the link shows up as no page found.

As this document does not provide a reading list, I have started to comply one.

The reading list is hundreds of pages long, that members of the trade must memorise, for the test or being called in for re-testing via complaint, or the six yearly tests.

I am finding many problems with this document. It could be exceedingly difficult for anyone who's first language is not English.

Should members wish to approve this document, they should hold Workshops for the trade to attend, where members can explain this document, and recommend ways the trade can memorise all the reading matter.

Query on shortest distance, resitting knowledge test and Penalty Points.

Page 23 40. Knowledge of area

c. Reads quickest route, should read shortest route.

See Page 55 6.20 says shortest available route subject to any unforeseen circumstances such as any road works or congestion where it may be appropriate to take an alternative route by agreement with the passenger.

Page 62 16.19 Insert above paragraph.

Page 623 17.6 Insert words from Page 55 6.20.

Page 47 D35 Six points unnecessarily prolonging journey in distance or time.

Page 23 40.c. Officers could request driver to re-sit knowledge test. No explanation if driver fails knowledge test.

So how does this sit with the Penalty Points Scheme? Is the Penalty Points Scheme to be ignored?

Please explain how Penalty Points are not used.

RESPONSE 5

Having now had an opportunity to view this document, I can say with some certainty that it is still barely worth the paper i've printed it on.

It appears that, based on the content, very little was taken away from the hours that we spent in the original meetings.

What concerns me more is that the licencing Dept, cannot police it's current rules, so I fail to see how it think's it is going to cope with all the new ones that it is proposing.

Question:

Please explain why Sections 1-58 are sub sectioned with Letters whilst Appendix are sub sectioned with letters and numbers. Please make your minds up. This is supposed to be a policy document. you claimed it was viewed by the Council's legal Dept. I don't think so. If West Berks council is about to become part of the new Ridgeway council, does that not make this document irrelevant, will it not also make the PPP redundant.

4g/ Are you really claiming that it takes you 6 weeks to issue either a Driver's or Operator's Licence . With reference to vehicle licence's, you want the paperwork for them 4 weeks prior to renewal. This will probably mean that the vehicle MOT date would change annually as cannot do more than 4 weeks prior to MOT and maintain original date.

12b/ Renewing a licence requires a code from the HMRC website. As an employee this does not apply. so therefore this section needs to be re written to show your understanding of this.

16e/ Application 4 weeks prior to renewal. see earlier comments ref: MOT's

16f/ Serious concerns regarding supplying original docs to Licencing as they have lost documents before.

16g/ Vehicle test is carried out prior to application. not afterwards. something the licencing dept should be aware of but apparently not.

16i/ I understand why an older vehicle requires an MOT every 6 months, but please explain why a vehicle requires 2 compliance test's a year. is this just because somebody else requires it. I have discussed this issue with testing station's and apparently they see no need for it other than to force the trade to spend yet more money on pointless testing.

20b/ What are the rules for 2025 & 2026

20c/ Obviously the dept. is not aware that service intervals on modern vehicles are mileage dependant so not necessarily carried out in a 12 month period. Furthermore, I suspect that the dept. wouldn't have a clue as to what the service schedule was of any particular vehicle, therefore making this point totally irrelevant.

21a/ Obviously the dept. has no idea of the credit card systems that are currently available. Whilst I have a card reader in my car, I also have a system whereby I can send a secure link via E-Mail, Text or What's App to the client, this is used as we use sub contractors who cannot take payments on our behalf even if they have there own card reader as we are a VAT registered company. Would suggest that the dept. get's up to date with current systems available, rather than relying on other districts idea's.

24a/ This refer's to what can only be described as home to school transport, West Berks disposed of this form of licencing years ago, Why is it being re-considered. Have there been numerous requests for it to be re-instated. If not why is it even being mentioned.

25a/ As already pointed out on a number of occasions, Contracts are very rarely issued for private hire work, It has always been accepted by West Berks that the term Preferential supplier is more accurate. which makes the rest of this paragraph irrelevant. Chauffeur services do not come under the licencing dept. as they primarily involve driving a clients vehicle so therefore has nothing to do with private hire. or the licencing Dept.

25b/ This is a pointless paragraph as it is virtually impossible to conform to. We own several exempted vehicles which are used on a basis of most suitable vehicle for the job . Some common sense would therefore be appreciated

25c/ Exempted vehicles have been licenced in West Berkshire for some 25 years without charge. Please explain what the proposed fee is for and how much. What is it meant to cover.

33d/ Why does it take 6 weeks to renew a licence.

35e/ you can only apply for the update service when an application has been submitted. so what happens if you are midway when these rules are updated.

37b/ Most GP's in Newbury do not carry out Group 2 Medical's

37e/ Why can't the licencing dept. supply a list of appropriate doctor's

40a/ I understand the logic of requiring a knowledge test prior to licencing, however, i fail to see why we would need to repeat it every 6 years at our expense. I have held a P/H licence for nearly 30 years and consider this insulting.

40b/ Why is home to school transport being considered. it was discontinued in West Berks years ago, unless you have had numerous requests for it why is it being mentioned.

41a/ I am assuming that you are refering to a knowledge test. Is this not a repeat of 40a to retake a pointless Knowledge test every 6 years. if it is something else you need to make it clearer.

45b/ You should have read this before issuing as repetitive.

50a/ Photocopies not accepted, are the licencing dept. therefore going to take responsibility when they misplace documents and pay the cost's of getting documents re-issued.

58a/ This item has been raised on at least 3 occasions so far in this document.

58b/ No code is required if licensee is an employee.

Appendix b/ List of Offences: List of offences does not stipulate whether H/C or P/H. They most definately should, otherwise it leaves the interpretation of the offence wide open. they are all mixed up. surely it doesn't involve rocket science to seperate them. Penalty for displaying the word taxi on a P/H vehicle. I think that the law actually says Taxi or cab a point that the licencing dept. has been ignoring for years despite it haveing been brought up on numerous occasion's I am assuming that the Licencing team is in fact finally going to enforce the no parking on ranks ruling. Failure to keep Insurance doc. in vehicle. (see Appendix C - 2.1 need to present within 7 days. Please make up your minds.

Breaches of Code of Conduct: Since when we have had a dress code, Please provide details. What self-declaration and what fee.

Breaches of Operator conditions: Advetising Taxi or Cab on P/H vehicle (when going to enforce as this has been in law for years and you constantly ignore it.

Appendix

C

6.3

6.4

6.5

6.6

6.7 What i choose to do outside of my working environment is none opf the councils business unless it brings the trade into disrepute or involve's the police.

7.1 - 7.3 Whilst i agree with theese conditions, who decides the standard

8.2 You do not have the right to say who can or cannot eat in a vehicle. A passenger is paying for the vehicle so as long as they are not breaking the law you have no say in it.

15.2 Not a legal requirement and pointless on an executive vehicle as the whole point is to not look like a taxi with stickers all over it.

15.3 Network outage not necessarily relevant as we have a system that can send a secure link after the travel.

Appendix E You jump between subsection with either number or letters. Make a decision

Sect. 3 I am confused.

7b/ Unless this dept. is going to guarantee the conditions of the roads in and around West Berkshire you need to remove the reference to chips.

7i/ Such is the current lighting systems on modern cars, Namely LED bulbs you cannot get bulb- kits. I have to get most of my bulbs changed by a main dealer.

7k/ again the comment about stone chips. Please join the real world.

7i/ because of the under trays on modern cars you will not normally spot leaks unless it's from the top of the engine. Highly unlikely

8/ unnecessary paperwork Most vehicles are owner drivers so in there own interest to deal with when noticed.

10/ you are assuming that a police officer knows this document is being carried.

8.20/ Since when did this Dept. put itself above the law. the UK law states that a tyre with a tread depth of 1.6mm will legally pass an MOT. This council requires an MOT to licence a vehicle. An MOT centre cannot fail a vehicle with a tread depth of 1.6 therefore this dept. CANNOT put itself above the law. without the propable court case that would follow for failling to licence a legal vehicle.

11.33/ I assume that you will be proceeding with penalty notices with offenders. Most of whom you have chosen to ignore until now despite knowing that this is a legal issue. Whilst I am sure that this list is not exhuastive it does point out that there are in fact numerous flaws in this document. As per it's predessor this document was quiet obviously not proof read prior to submission. as was pointed out at it's submission to the committee,

RESPONSE 6

Dear All

This email is sent to try and enlighten how this document is completely confusing and to highlight problems within it with examples of how frustrating it is to have to deal with I have tried and failed to read completely the now current 85 pages (think that is how many at moment)

Firstly I would like to know exactly what this document is for , surely it should be easy to pick up and understand for anyone to know what is required to be a taxi driver (I will use driver to refer to all drivers private hire ,chauffeurs etc)

We already have a document that is easily understood, the requirements expected from taxi drivers , it is 5 pages long and clearly addresses all that is needed to be a professional driver it is called Hackney Carriage Vehicle Drivers Licence Conditions and Byways ! covers

- Standard of service
- Eligibility to work and live in the uk
- How many passengers Animals
- Complaintsyou all carry this document so won't list all

It seems to me this new policy is a document to allow the Licencing to make our lives as difficult as possible and have a document that will help them make it easier to take away our rights and take away our licenses.

With regards to 6 week issuing of licences ...it has always stated that as long as we have our documents in 7 days prior to renewal we will have our plates back in time ,

Example of interpretation

If you wanted paperwork in prior 6 weeks before , how come you charged a driver who handed in paperwork 4 weeks prior to expiry as was changing her vehicle the charge for a new plate and not a renewal !

You told her that it was not a renewal but a new plate as still 1 month to go on expiration, she was renewing the plate 4 weeks early not asking for a new plate !! Same no. same driver , only thing that was new was vehicle, you also did the same to me as I had to replace my vehicle 6 months into my yearly licence, and instead of paying for the remaining 6 months I asked for a full year renewal, the licensing officer then held me to ransom if I didn't pay for the cost of a new plate they would not be issuing my plate that I had held for over 20years, I needed to work so payed the extra amount so I could start earning a living again ,it then took 6 months of back and forth with Licencing to get the refund of difference of renewal or new plate , there is nowhere that states I have to wait for my plate to expire to renew if I choose to renew with a new vehicle for a full year then that is up to me , the other driver never got a refund !

Just recently another driver was going on holiday so asked if could submit his renewal early so could have the plate ready for when he got back from holiday , the Licencing said no problem and would have it for him. He gave in all paperwork at beginning of March , he went on holiday on 13th March , Licencing gave him their word that would be ready for when plate expired at end of March , he had an email on 1st April saying plate ready to be picked up !!

We used to hand all our paperwork and documents required 7 days prior to expiry and have it made up and ready to collect within that week normally took just a few days ,this was when we had an officer called Cheryl, who we mainly contacted for anything that we needed help with and Amanda or Brian, this was Licencing along with a few other who we met out on rank doing our checks on the vehicles, now if we contact Licencing, we never know which name will be at bottom of email as there is always a new name we have never heard of Licencing officer / Admin?? Who knows That's if you actually get a response as is usually reply of out of office back in office at whatever date inserted , maybe the governments model regarding NHS England needs to be brought intoo many cooks !

I will just ask why we need 2 compliance tests a year is somebody just justifying their job, there is literally no need , let me give you an example, When I renewed my plate recently I was asked to to provide my V5c document as is usual, so scanned page 1 and 2 everything relating to Veh, if I have to produce my proof of ownership to police that is all I require to produce, pages 3&4 are for transferring ownership scrapping or exporting and back page is blank nothing except do not write on this page !, Email back....please send all pages so sent in page 3 and back is blank nothing to send! So sent page 3 Email backplease send all pages including back page (WHY ITS BLANK) So send that in as well Email backplease resend all pages all together ..

Why the emails I sent had all documents in the group can no one look back at a previous document send in same group of emails , just a note that all this correspondence of please send pages , where always sent at end of council working day so always delt with the next day, the outcome being that after all back and forth emails I was nearly left without a valid plate for as I see it petty bureaucracy. Personally I think it was done on purpose to be awkward, but addressed that at the time and was assured was not the case .

I refer to Graham saying repeating our knowledge test every 6 years, I also find this insulting, I have driven for over 20 years as a taxi driver I know where I'm going or research before I get on road , and at the rate we have new housing estates popping up all over the test would be out of date within a month !

When talk of breaches of conditions in this policy, a joke ? Let me give you an example I informed the council of a Veh plying for hire at the Thatcham Broadway never on rank but opposite on other side of parking, for a couple of weeks had been displaying a photocopy of a taxi plate in the rear window, 2 weeks later said Veh still had photocopy no hard plastic plate, informed Licencing again and the response was, It has been dealt with Jennie no more action is going to be taken , stating he had lost his plate and was using the photocopy that he done just in case he lost it in the meantime.

Can any of the seasoned taxi drivers tell me have they ever taken photocopies of their plates just in case they lose it, in over 20years of taxiing I have never done this ..if I lost my plate I would apply for a replacement and pay the charge !

Chips on cars, I have lost count of the times I have used to t cut to restore my paintwork due to shoddy roads of west berkshire and of hedges overgrown into roads that you end up scraping you Veh so as not to impose on wrong side of road.

I have let some of my customers look at said policy as I assume will be a requirement to carry in our vehicles just as licences conditions are now, non of them can make any sense or understand the document , it does not need all the legal appendix this, section this...subsection this..it needs to be easy to understand and explain what is expected of us as taxi drivers , my customers also told me as long as I was clean and fresh I could turn up in a bin bag if I wanted to as long as I was reliable.

I feel the council think they employ us, you don't ! We rent /buy a plate so that the public know we are safe and have all relevant training etc to take them from A to B or even C D E and F,

I run my business and have done for over 20 years I have never advertised all my clientele have come from word of mouth recommendation on a good job well done, repeat business meaning you did a good job and people can rely on you , if you want to tell me my dress code or anything else , I own my Veh and take pride in its appearance presenting a clean and comfortable Veh for people to travel in comfort , if you want to tell me how to run my day to day business maybe you should employ me , but that comes with paid holidays , PAYE pension etc , are the council willing to provide us with all these benefits , I think not.

No doubt I will have the passive / aggressive reply saying nothing in my email is relevant to the policy being discussed it is , please read properly and realise it is saying we already have a document fit for purpose in our Licencing conditions just change conditions to policy, the council is trying to make it so complicated that no one can understand the document, but it does give the council ways of interpreting it to make our jobs harder and maybe make it easier for the council to target drivers who they consider a pain ?and would be able to revoke a plate on a technicality..?.

That is why I have given examples in this email of needless bureaucracy to highlight the silliness of all these pages of appendix, section and subsection, it needs to be readable, which at the moment it is not understandable or readable.

-
- I have no confidence in this policy document at all, it seems to have been put together for the Licencing team to interpret in any way that fits their agenda.
 - On reading this document and trying to understand it , it refers to many different points and places within the document that are repeated all in different sections, it means that I don't trust the Licencing team to treat the trade fairly, as this has been put together as a rules must be obeyed document telling us we can't do this and can't do that.

- For instance I am very concerned about the points system regarding chips and scratches to our vehicles, these will incur points against us which as I see it we have no way of controlling with the state of Berkshire and surrounding areas due to the councils lack of maintenance of our roads and how in rural areas in bad weather are we supposed to keep our car free of mud !
- Can the Licencing team remove our licences when we reach the limit on black marks ??seems to me the Licencing team can make it so we are breaking our terms and conditions and punish us for dirty “working” vehicles, if they see fit!
- I don’t see how anyone can understand 95 pages of rules and regulations , they are often repeated in many different sections and subsections, I have gone cross eyed trying to navigate the document, I say again I don’t trust that this is not so it can be interpreted to meet the councils own ends!
- I have shown this to my customers and they have handed it back to me , withwhat an earth does all that mean, it’s too long and to many details for the public to even want to look at.
- It reads as an all out vendetta to the taxi trade, it’s all about what we should not be allowed to do, very negative ! It has been written with no understanding of our roles as taxi drivers at all.
- The dress code worries me as what does the Licencing team feel is appropriate attire, and surely this will be down to the individual at the time in what is appropriate, again the council making something that they can interpret for themselves at however they feel at the time !!
- Trying to tell us the conversations we should be having or not having in our vehicles, with our own clients who we have built professional relationships with over many years, if we were offending them they would not return time and time again!
- The code of conduct ,which has been pointed out is repeated so many times in this document, our job is very complex , it is a people facing job so customer service is a priority to us all in the trade, we know our clients , they trust us , I asked a customer if they had dropped something in my car and I had to take to the police station and not hand back to them knowing that it was theirs,
- I quote “that is ludicrous, what justification can you possibly give to this rule that means you cannot go above and beyond and give me back my property without having to make it awkward to get my property back “ I also wanted it noted that the police will not take lost property anymore , so again the council not knowing what can and can’t be done but just putting something down without research !
- I go the extra mile for my customers, inevitably that is why my customers return time and time again, as the document reads I could again be punished for not

handing into a police station, again a way of punishing the trade in the every day workings of our jobs as taxi drivers.

- We have had many meetings regarding this policy and has been pointed out to the council that this document has many errors and makes very little sense at all, there are so many mistakes that should not be in a legal document, grammar spelling and repeating in different parts of the policy much the same things, they can mean one thing in one instance and be interpreted different in another part of policy, if the council cannot get these simple mistakes right in a legal document then it should not be out for consultation, it is not fit for purpose and has been put together by people who really don't understand our roles as taxi drivers at all, we are not simply steering wheel attendants , this document seems to be trying to stop us being human!

RESPONSE 20a

Formal Response to Proposed Licensing Policy Changes

Section A – Age of Vehicles at First Application (Page 14)

Policy:

A vehicle licence will not be granted for any vehicle first registered (or manufactured, if imported) more than five years before the application date.

Comment:

We recommend amending the vehicle age requirement at first licensing from five to six years. This minor adjustment would reflect the current economic conditions for drivers and operators, acknowledging that newer vehicle costs have risen significantly in recent years. Many local authorities across the UK now allow six years or more at first licensing, particularly where vehicles are well-maintained and meet Euro 6 emissions standards. The change would not compromise safety or environmental standards but would ease access for prospective licence holders.

Section 36 – DBS / Good Conduct Certificate (Page 20)

Policy:

Applicants who have lived outside the UK for one or more continuous periods of three months (since the age of 10) must provide a Certificate of Good Conduct (CoGC) from each country.

Comment:

We raise concerns about the practicality and fairness of this requirement. In many cases, obtaining a CoGC from certain countries is extremely difficult or impossible due to lack of process, political instability, or embassy delays. Following these concerns, Clause 3.2 of the West Berkshire current Convictions Policy (recently adopted) modified this to a six-month threshold over the last three years, with the certificate to be obtained via the relevant embassy. This mirrors the approach taken by other Berkshire authorities and aligns with the Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards (July

2020), which emphasise a practical, risk-based approach. We recommend harmonising this section of the policy with Clause 3.2 for consistency, legal defensibility, and fairness.

Sections 39–41 – Repeat Testing Requirements (Pages 22–23)

Policy:

Drivers must retake practical, local knowledge, and Highway Code tests every six years.

Comment:

We strongly oppose the proposed six-yearly re-testing for current licensed drivers. This approach is not standard across the industry and would impose unnecessary costs and logistical burdens. Drivers are already required to pass these tests on entry and are subject to continual monitoring through the complaints and enforcement process. There is no evidence base or consultation summary provided to support this policy as a means of improving safety or service standards. We urge the Council to withdraw or suspend this clause, or at the very least consult further with the trade and explore less disruptive alternatives (e.g., refresher workshops, CPD, or targeted re-testing after specific incidents).

Motoring Convictions (Sections 13.1, 13.2, 16.4, 16.5) (Pages 37–38)

Policy:

Policies regarding drivers with motoring convictions.

Comment:

We support measures to promote road safety but recommend a graduated approach:

- Drivers with more than 7 but fewer than 10 points should be offered an approved advanced driving course, enabling positive remediation.
- At 10 or more points, we agree with formal review or intervention by the licensing authority, consistent with national guidance.

This framework would encourage improvement while maintaining public safety.

Section 19 – Penalty Point System (Pages 39–41)

Policy:

Council-operated penalty point system proposed.

Comment:

We oppose the introduction of a council-operated penalty point system unless it is:

1. Fairly applied,
2. Clearly defined, and
3. Subject to appeal.

If implemented, we propose:

- Action only at 16 points or more for drivers, and 36 for operators.
- Expiry of points after 12 months.
- Minor breaches (e.g., minor dress code or paperwork errors): 1–2 points.
- Major breaches (e.g., passenger safety or insurance violations): 4–6 points.
- A transparent appeal process, preferably through an independent panel or the Licensing Committee.

We also ask the Council to provide a breakdown of which breaches would incur points and how these would be recorded and reviewed.

Section 3.8 – Engine Idling (Pages 52–53)

Policy:

Drivers must turn off engines if idling for more than one minute.

Comment:

We request clarification on the rationale, scope, and enforcement of this requirement. For example, in cold weather, running the engine for heating or demisting may be essential. Additionally, clarification is needed on whether this applies during short stops, rank queuing, or client waiting periods. Guidance from DEFRA and DfT does encourage reduced idling, but implementation must be practical and flexible to ensure compliance without affecting service quality.

Section 3j – Daily Vehicle Checks (Page 65)

Policy:

Daily checks must be recorded in writing and retained for six months (including 30 days in the vehicle).

Comment:

While we fully support daily safety checks, the current requirement is excessively bureaucratic, especially for sole-trader drivers. We suggest to make it not mandatory to record it.

Section 8.18 – Tyre Tread Depth (Page 67)

Policy:

Minimum tyre tread depth of 2mm, exceeding the UK legal minimum of 1.6mm.

Comment:

We request clarification on why this higher standard is being imposed. While we recognise the safety concerns, the current national legislation sets a 1.6mm minimum for good reason, balancing safety with economic practicality. Unless the Council provides clear data or risk assessments justifying the increase, we recommend aligning with the national legal standard.

Sections 33 & 34 – Advertising and Use of “Cab” (Page 79)

Policy:

No signs on private hire vehicles may include the words “Taxi”, “Cab”, or similar.

Comment:

Cabco has been operating in West Berkshire since 1988, with branding approved under previous licensing regimes. The proposed change would require rebranding of vehicles and company signage, causing significant financial loss and undermining brand recognition. Under the Transport Act 1980 (Section 64), restrictions apply only to signage on or above the roof of a private hire vehicle. We request that this section be reworded to mirror Section 17.9, prohibiting misleading signage only “on or above the roof”. We also request formal confirmation that existing branding including “Cabco” is grandfathered and may continue.

Section 26 – Operator Record Submission (Page 88)

Policy:

Monthly driver/operator data submissions required.

Comment:

This requirement is duplicative, as the Council already receives up-to-date licensing information. We propose switching to an annual update process, supplemented by mandatory ad hoc notifications of any changes (e.g., new drivers, terminations). This would reduce administrative workload for both the Council and operators without affecting data accuracy.

Section 56 – Driver Working Hours (Page 93)

Policy:

Operators should ensure drivers do not exceed 10 hours per day, with a break after 5.5 hours.

Comment:

We seek clarification on whether the 10-hour limit refers to active driving time or total working time, including waiting periods. There is currently no statutory maximum working hours for taxi and private hire drivers outside of those operating under EU or domestic PSV/PCV regulations. We also request information on:

- The legal basis for this recommendation.
- How many other UK authorities enforce similar limits.

We support driver welfare, but any policy must be evidence-based, enforceable, and clearly defined.

This document was prepared by [Your Organisation / Name] in response to the proposed changes to the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy. We welcome continued consultation and collaboration to ensure practical, fair, and effective licensing standards.

RESPONSE 20b

CABCO Responses

[illegible]

[illegible]

Cabco Newbury – Feedback on the Proposed Taxi & Private Hire Licensing Changes

Section A – Vehicle Age at First Licensing (Page 14)

Policy:

Cars older than five years (from registration or manufacture) won't be granted a licence.

Our Thoughts:

We suggest bumping the age limit up to six years. With how much car prices have gone up lately, this would help drivers out financially. Loads of councils already allow this if the vehicles are in good condition and meet Euro 6 emissions. It won't lower safety or environmental standards—it'll just make things a bit more manageable for people starting out.

Section 36 – DBS / Certificate of Good Conduct (Page 20)

Policy:

If someone has lived outside the UK for 3+ months (since age 10), they need to get a Certificate of Good Conduct from those countries.

Our Thoughts:

This rule's a bit tricky. In some places, getting that certificate is really hard—sometimes impossible—because of bureaucracy or political issues. West Berkshire already updated their convictions policy to require this only if someone's been abroad for 6+ months in the last 3 years, and other councils do the same. We think this policy should match that—it's more practical and still safe.

Sections 39–41 – Re-Testing Drivers (Pages 22–23)

Policy:

Every six years, drivers would need to retake their practical, knowledge, and Highway Code tests.

Our Thoughts:

We're not fans of this idea. It's not something most areas do, and it adds extra stress and costs for drivers who already passed these tests when they first started. Plus, drivers are constantly being monitored through feedback and enforcement. If there's no solid evidence that this improves safety, we say pause this idea and maybe look into other options like optional workshops or targeted refreshers after incidents.

Motoring Convictions (Sections 13.1, 13.2, 16.4, 16.5) (Pages 37–38)

Policy:

Rules around what happens if a driver has motoring offences.

Our Thoughts:

We're all for road safety, but a one-size-fits-all approach isn't the way. Here's what we suggest:

- Drivers with 7–9 points should be offered an advanced driving course.
- Once someone hits 10 or more points, then a formal review makes sense.

This way, people have a chance to improve before more serious action is taken.

Section 19 – Penalty Point System (Pages 39–41)

Policy:

The council wants to introduce a new penalty point system for drivers and operators.

Our Thoughts:

We're only on board if it's fair, clear, and includes a proper way to appeal. If you're going to do it, here's what we'd prefer:

- Action kicks in at 16 points for drivers, 36 for operators.

- Points expire after 12 months.
- Small issues (like dress code or minor admin mistakes): 1–2 points.
- Bigger issues (like safety or insurance problems): 4–6 points.
- Appeals should go to an independent panel or committee.

Also, can we get a clear list of what actions earn how many points?

Section 3.8 – Engine Idling (Pages 52–53)

Policy:

Engines must be turned off if idling for more than a minute.

Our Thoughts:

We get the environmental aim here, but we need more info. In cold weather, you need the engine on to heat the car or clear the windscreen. Also, does this rule apply when waiting at ranks or for customers? DEFRA and DfT do push for less idling, but the rules should be flexible so drivers can still do their jobs properly.

Section 3j – Daily Vehicle Checks (Page 65)

Policy:

Drivers have to do daily safety checks, write them down, and keep the records for six months (including a copy in the car for 30 days).

Our Thoughts:

We fully support doing checks. Safety is key. But making drivers write it all down every single day, especially if they're sole traders, is over the top. Let's simplify this—no need to log it unless something actually goes wrong.

Section 8.18 – Tyre Tread Depth (Page 67)

Policy:

Tyres must have at least 2mm of tread—more than the legal minimum of 1.6mm.

Our Thoughts:

We're curious why this extra tread requirement is needed. The national standard of 1.6mm already works well and balances safety with cost. Unless there's strong evidence backing this change, we think it's best to stick with the UK legal minimum.

Sections 33 & 34 – Use of “Cab” in Branding (Page 79)

Policy:

Private hire vehicles can't use the words “Taxi”, “Cab”, or anything similar.

Our Thoughts:

Cabco has been around in West Berkshire since 1988, and our branding has always been approved. Forcing us to rebrand now would hit us hard financially and weaken the brand people recognize. The law only bans these words if they're on or above the roof of the car. So let's tweak this section to match that—and please confirm that we're allowed to keep using “Cabco” as we always have.

Section 26 – Submitting Operator Records (Page 88)

Policy:

Operators need to submit driver and operator data every month.

Our Thoughts:

This is doubling up on work. The council already has access to current info. How about we just do an annual update, with mandatory notices if something changes (like hiring or letting a driver go)? It saves time for everyone without losing any accuracy.

Section 56 – Driver Working Hours (Page 93)

Policy:

Operators should make sure drivers don't go over 10 hours a day, with a break after 5.5 hours.

Our Thoughts:

We need some clarity here. Is that 10 hours of actual driving or total time on the job (including waiting)? Taxi and private hire drivers don't fall under strict hour laws like bus drivers do. We'd also like to know:

- What's the legal basis for this?
- Are other councils doing the same?

We support keeping drivers healthy and alert, but this needs to be enforceable, practical, and based on real evidence.

Prepared by Gabriel Calin on behalf of Cabco Newbury

We appreciate the chance to give our input and hope to keep working closely with the Council to shape fair and practical licensing policies that work for everyone.

Dear Licensing Team,

I hope this message finds you well.

I am writing in response to the recent announcement regarding the proposed changes to the vehicle age limits, emissions standards, retesting requirements, Penalty point scheme as outlined in your consultation documents.

While I appreciate the Council's ongoing efforts to improve public safety and environmental standards within the licensed vehicle sector, I would like to respectfully express concern regarding the impact and timing of these proposed changes.

Given the significant operational and financial implications for licensed drivers and vehicle owners, I believe that further consultation and engagement with the trade are essential before implementing such measures. Many drivers have raised valid concerns around affordability, limited vehicle availability, and the need for clearer guidance and transition support.

I strongly believe that collaborative discussion can help shape a policy that is fair, proportionate, and sustainable for all parties involved.

I would be pleased to contribute constructively to that process, and I respectfully submit the following amendments for consideration as a starting point for a revised policy framework.

Age of Vehicles at First Application

My opinion on this policy:

The proposed policy regarding the age limit for licensed vehicles and the planned requirement for vehicles to meet Euro 5 by 2027/28 and Euro 6 by 2029/30.

While I understand and respect the Council's intention to modernise the fleet and reduce vehicle emissions, I would like to raise some concerns about the practical impact on licensed drivers and vehicle owners, particularly those operating under economic constraints.

Key Concerns:

1. Five-Year Age Limit at First Licensing

- Restricting first-time licensed vehicles to those less than five years old significantly reduces the availability of affordable and reliable used vehicles.
- This policy may exclude many safe and well-maintained vehicles that are over five years old but in excellent condition.
- It places an additional burden on new entrants, who may struggle to afford newer vehicles.

2. Emissions Standard Timeline

- While environmental goals are important, the shift to Euro 5 and Euro 6 standards must consider market availability and cost to drivers.
- Many drivers, especially sole traders, cannot afford frequent vehicle upgrades on tight margins.

3. Lack of Support Measures

- There is currently no mention of financial support, grants, or phased compliance schemes for drivers affected by these requirements.

These risks pushing experienced and compliant drivers out of the trade simply because they cannot afford newer vehicles.

Recommendations:

To balance environmental aims with fairness and accessibility, I respectfully suggest:

- Extend the age limit for first-time licensing to 7 or 8 years, provided the vehicle passes an enhanced mechanical inspection and emissions test.
- Introduce exemptions for electric or hybrid vehicles older than 5 years but meeting clean air standards.
- Phase in Euro 5/6 requirements more gradually, with flexibility for vehicles in good condition and low annual mileage.
- Explore funding or grant opportunities to help drivers upgrade vehicles without financial hardship.

- Allow an independent inspection and approval process for older vehicles deemed roadworthy and clean.

In Conclusion, while we support the Council's commitment to cleaner air and improved public service standards, it is vital that the policy does not unfairly penalise hard-working drivers, particularly those who are already compliant, experienced, and struggling with rising costs.

DBS / Certificate of Good Conduct

My opinion on this policy:

I understand the importance to obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct from each country however I have concerns about possibility and struggle to comply with this requirement.

Obtaining a Certificate of Good Conduct (CoGC) from Asian countries can present several common problems due to variations in bureaucracy, legal systems, and documentation processes. Here are some typical challenges applicants will face:

1. Bureaucratic Complexity (Different requirements, Inconsistent procedures)
2. No Online Process.
3. Requirement to Be Physically Present.
4. Need for Local ID or Residency Proof.
5. Long Processing Times.
6. Payment and Fees Issues.
7. Countries With No Clear Process.
8. Embassies Not Helpful.

Following those concerns to reduce administrative burden and focus on recent behaviour, limiting CoGC requirements to the applicant's last three years of international residence may be more effective than tracing records since age 10

Repeat Testing Requirements

My opinion on this policy:

Requiring taxi drivers to retake the practical driving test, local knowledge test, and Highway Code test every six years may improve safety and standards, but it also introduces a range of problems and challenges for drivers, especially those already licensed and working. Here's a breakdown:

1. Financial Burden

- Test fees, preparation materials, and possibly refresher courses can be costly. Time off work to prepare or attend tests means lost income, especially for self-employed drivers.

2. Stress and Anxiety

- Older drivers or those with limited formal education may find exams stressful, even if they have years of experience. Fear of failing and losing their license could cause mental strain.

3. Unfair to Experienced Drivers

- Many drivers already have a long, safe driving history. Retesting every six years may feel redundant and disrespectful to their professionalism and experience.

4. Test Availability and Delays.

5. Inconsistent Standards

6. Language and Literacy Barriers

7. Administrative Overload (Local authorities may be overwhelmed by the volume of retesting, causing backlogs and processing delays)

8. Impact on Taxi Supply (If many drivers fail or choose not to retest, it may lead to a shortage of licensed drivers, especially in our area)

9. Resistance and Low Morale (Drivers may view this policy as punitive or an attempt to push older or immigrant drivers out of the profession. It can lead to lower job satisfaction and higher dropout rates)

Following those concern my suggestion will be a balanced alternative:

To reduce these problems, the policy could include:

- Free or low-cost refresher courses
- Language support or reasonable adjustments

- Only testing drivers with prior complaints, violations, or long absences
- Offering online/self-paced options for theory/Highway Code review

Penalty Point Scheme

My opinion on this policy:

I fully support the Council's goal of maintaining high standards and ensuring public safety. However, we believe that the current structure of the Penalty Points Scheme may unintentionally place drivers at a disadvantage, especially where offences are minor, unintentional, or due to lack of clarity in policies.

Key Concerns:

- Lack of Formal Appeal Mechanism (Currently, there is no right to formally appeal issued points, which can feel unjust and diminish trust in the process).
- No Distinction Between Minor and Major Breaches
- All breaches carry equal long-term risk, even when they are low-level or first-time offences.
- Economic Impact of Suspensions (Suspensions for reaching 12 points cause loss of livelihood, especially for sole traders and self-employed drivers)

Below suggestions aim to maintain public confidence in licensed services while also protecting drivers' livelihoods and encouraging long-term compliance through education rather than punishment.

Proposed Reforms:

- Introduce a Formal Appeals Process
- Create a right to a formal appeal or review panel, particularly where there is a dispute over facts or severity.
- Implement a Warning System for Minor or First-Time Breaches
- Offer verbal or written warnings for less serious offences before penalty points are applied.
- Offer Training or Educational Alternatives

- For some breaches, replace or reduce points if the driver completes a short refresher course or policy awareness session.

Reward Good Conduct with Point Reduction

-Allow points to be reduced or expire early after 12 months of clean behaviour or participation in training.

-Provide Clearer Written Guidance

-Publish a guide detailing all pointable offences, point ranges, and examples, in plain language accessible to all drivers.

-Provide new drivers with a 6–12-month period where minor breaches are met with mentoring or education rather than points.

- Independent Oversight Panel

-Consider forming a neutral committee or ombudsman to review disputed penalties and ensure transparency.

Tyres:

The Council's policy requiring all tyres on licensed vehicles to maintain a minimum tread depth of 2mm at all times, which exceeds the current UK legal requirement of 1.6mm.

Legal Context:

Under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, the legal minimum tyre tread depth is 1.6mm across the central three-quarters of the tyre's breadth and around the entire circumference. Drivers and operators are expected to comply with this national standard.

While I appreciate the Council's intention to promote road safety, I am concerned that this stricter local requirement may have unintended negative consequences.

Key Concerns:

Financial Burden

Requiring tyre replacement at 2mm rather than 1.6mm shortens the usable life of tyres and increases costs for drivers, many of whom are self-employed or working under tight profit margins.

Unnecessary Waste and Environmental Impact

Disposing of tyres that are still legally safe leads to avoidable waste and may undermine sustainability goals.

Confusion and Unfair Penalties

Drivers familiar with national legal standards may unknowingly breach the Council's stricter rule and risk penalty points or licence suspension, despite remaining within UK law.

Disproportionate Impact on New or Low-Income Drivers

The increased frequency of tyre replacement may disproportionately affect newer entrants to the trade or those on lower incomes, potentially discouraging fair access to the profession.

Recommendation:

To strike a fair balance between safety and practicality, I respectfully propose the following:

- Align the Council's minimum tread depth requirement with national law (1.6mm), and
- Encourage 2mm tread depth as a best practice recommendation, with educational materials and regular reminders to support compliance and awareness.

This would uphold road safety while reducing the risk of hardship and penalty for drivers who are otherwise fully compliant with UK law.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be grateful if you could confirm whether additional consultation opportunities will be made available and whether further input from the trade will be welcomed before final decisions are made.



To whom it may concern

After reviewing the proposed document (Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2025 – 2030), I am deeply concerned by both the content and the process by which this document has been managed to date; summarily

1) Document Management and Control:

After being involved in the initial consultation in 2022 where multiple versions of this document were progressed, this document appears to have then been in hiatus until 2025 when the document was released as Version 1 (ignoring previous documents). This was then ‘managed’ up to Version 6, from which Version 4 was presented on the 17th March to the Licensing Committee who advised updates which were then amended and re-issued as Version 4 (without a new document revision). It should be noted that in addition to the 7 versions of this document already in existence to date, there are no change control notices, or even contingency for, in any of the versions made available.

2) Individual Points of Concern:

After reviewing the first 45 of the 97 pages, I found 369 specific concerns ranging from format and grammar to missing information and items of content concern, and whilst some may seem excessively critical, it is worth noting the quote “you must be precise, as the law is a very precise endeavour”. I have detailed the 369 specific Line items later in this letter but at a high level there are:

- 170 concerns over content
- 84 occurrences of missing information
- 86 issues with the document format
- 29 incidents of incorrect grammar

3) Document Structure:

Unfortunately, the document appears to be a concatenation of multiple documents without concern for how they align grammatically and contextually which results in significant contradictions that mean full compliance with the document is not possible.

Example 1:

- Appendix A Section 1.1: “The sole purpose of hackney carriage and private hire licensing is to protect the public...”.
- If this is the case what is the purpose of Section 12 (HMRC Requirements) which holds no effect on public protection?

Example 2:

- Article F.14: Operators will be required upon occasion to produce their records to the police or licensing officers upon request.
- To comply with this, the council would need to provide a copy of the DBS held by the licencing officer to the Operator prior to inspection of provision of records as failure to do so would result in the Operator contravening 47.d, 52.a and F.2.4.b which cover the duty of an Operator to protect information, such as vacant property.

Example 3:

If you were to use this document to understand the DBS requirements, you would assume to look in the DBS section of the document unfortunately this does not exist, it is instead section 11 which is Criminal Records Checks, and to confuse, section 35, also headed Criminal Records Checks and to complete maze, section 47 which is also headed Criminal Records Checks. If only the chaos were to end here but DBS, CRB any the associated synonyms are also called in sections 4, 33, 36, 49, A.1.7, A.19.3, F.2.3, F.2.4.B, and F.2.4.C

4) Support Documentation

This brings to the last point of this flow where there is a continuing theme of double standards including, where the timings on the trade are specific but when the licensing team were asked about their time for returning information and documents, we were informed this was covered in the SLA but this cannot be identified through the publicly available council information.

As a result of the details encompassed in these 4 points, I strongly implore the council and the other stakeholders to pause the release of this document until it is fit for purpose as, at current the document does not work for the trade or the council, and I think the likely outcome if this document were to become actionable would move between the trade members taking their licences outside West Berkshire through to a trade consolidated legal challenge.

Regards

[Redacted signature]

Item	Classification	Section	Description
1	Content Concern	General	At https://www.westberks.gov.uk/draft-taxi-policy-2025 it says the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022 was used to develop this policy but no where does this document reference it
2	Content Concern	General	Is this a fixed time document or available for review in the interim via version control?
3	Content Concern	1.a	If it is not to be applied as legislation, how are the council planning to use the points system to remove a citizens right to work outside of the legal framework as defined in current law
4	Grammar	1.b	If used as a verb in the UK, licencing is the incorrect spelling and it should be licensing
5	Missing Information	1.b	What services?
6	Content Concern	1.b	Who owns the actions against unlicensed vehicles?
7	Grammar	1.c	Missing a comma after 'operations'
8	Content Concern	1.d	This is very confusing. Either a document is fixed for a period or it under permanent review. Else 2 parties can use different versions with both being legally viable
9	Content Concern	1.d	This should be a separate point and stipulate 'at time of initial release' or should be removed as the trade aren't really affected by who WBDC outsource to.
10	Content Concern	1.d	Also, what happens when WBDC becomes RW Council/TV council etc, a defunct body has no legal recognition
11	Missing Information	1.e	Which website?
12	Grammar	1.f	Why is there no capitalised L on the Operator Licence?
13	Format	1.g	Odd indent
14	Content Concern	1.g	If 1a says this is a guideline and not legislative, how is this now regulative?
15	Content Concern	1.g	If there is option to deviate from this document but the council can't define it within this policy, does it stop becoming a policy and become 'guidance notes'?
16	Missing Information	2	Why are WBC not defined in the scope, this document includes actions on them?
17	Missing Information	2	Why are Authorising Officer not defined in the scope, this document includes actions on them?
18	Missing Information	2	Why are the Licencing Department not defined in the scope, this document includes actions on them?
19	Missing Information	2	Why are PPP not defined in the scope, this document includes actions on them?
20	Missing Information	2.a	Why through the rest of the document are Hackney Carriage Vehicles commonly referred to as Hackney Carriages, that means the scope does not cover the document
21	Grammar	2.a	'these' needs to be capitalised
22	Grammar	2.a	Are we using Eight or 8? Pick a style guide and stick with it.
23	Format	2.a	Odd Indentation
24	Grammar	2.a	'which is' should be 'which are' as the sentence begins with 'these' which makes it a pluralisation

25	Grammar	2.a	You are defining a Hackney Carriage Vehicle so why does the test refer to a Hackney Carriage, with no Vehicle statement made
26	Grammar	2.a	This middle sentence needs some commas, probably before the 'and's
27	Content Concern	2.a	Why does this not cross reference to section 13.a as that is the 'Specifications and Conditions section?
28	Grammar	2.b	Are we using Eight or 8? Pick a style guide and stick with it.
29	Grammar	2.b	Should 'private hire oehicle' be capitalised as per 1.f
30	Content Concern	2.b	Cross reference to 2.c needed
31	Grammar	2.b	Comma required after 'ply for hire'
32	Content Concern	2.a	Why does this not cross reference to section 13.a as that is the 'Specifications and Conditions section?
33	Content Concern	2.c	'These' is required at the beginning of the sentence or the object is undefined
34	Format	2.c	Odd indent
35	Content Concern	2.c	Why does this not cross reference to 45.a as that is the 'Private Hire Operators Licence Requirements and Conditions'.
36	Format	2.d	Why has this list gone from Colons to Commas for the article separator?
37	Content Concern	2.d	'These are' is required at the beginning of the sentence or the object is undefined
38	Content Concern	2.d	Just to confirm that a garage, including a WBC test centre cannot drive a licenced vehicle to, for example, investigate a fault, confirm resolution or move a car from parking to work area?
39	Content Concern	3	The consultation brief says the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022 was used to develop this policy so why is it now excluded?
40	Missing Information	3.b	Which costs is this referring to; fiscal cost to the council, fiscal cost to the trade opportunity cost, liability cost....?
41	Content Concern	3.b	How has the compromise of public safety been ascertained as acceptable if it is being balanced against other factors?
42	Content Concern	3.c	This is a duplication of 3.a, can this be condensed into 1 point?
43	Content Concern	4.c	What is the Turn-Around-Time/Return time for the council to the applicant? If this is to be defined in a Service Level Agreement, please provide where this can be found
44	Content Concern	4.e	4.e and 9.a are worded similar but slightly different. Can they be condensed to 1 entry or can they be cross referenced?
45	Content Concern	4.e	Please confirm; does this mean revocation, suspension and refusal will be based on law, not the penalty points scheme in Appendix B which is outside of the legal framework?
46	Content Concern	3.e	If appeals are to be lodged through court, are WBC, represented in this document by the licencing team, willing to stand behind this document in court; including under judicial review?
47	Content Concern	3.f	This is a new policy, what WBC's confirmed way of communicating policy change with the trade?
48	Content Concern	4.g	Does this timing for vehicle renewal applications contradict the MOT requirement that (I think) must be no more than 4 weeks prior to application?

49	Content Concern	4.g	Cross reference between 4.g and 16.e required
50	Format	5.c	Odd indenting
51	Content Concern	6.a	Are you 'taking into account' or following the document - is this a policy or a guidance note?
52	Grammar	6.a	There needs to be some punctuation around 'this policy including'. Probably a semi-colon after 'including'
53	Grammar	6.a	This makes no sense: 'Code of Conduct for Licensed Dual and Private Hire Drivers (Appendix C) Code of Conduct for Licensed Dual and Private Hire Drivers'
54	Content Concern	6.a	There is a legal guidance and legislation on statistics and probabilistic methodologies. Is the phrase 'balance of probabilities' utilising them or following a specific external source?
55	Content Concern	6.a	'50/50' is the epitome of flipping a coin, is that really how WBC deems a person suitable as the document prescribes?
56	Content Concern	6.a	If quoting text from another source, please do so with the correct acknowledgements.
57	Format	6.b	Why has the structure gone from letter dot '6.a.' letter close parentheses '6.b)'
58	Format	6.b	Odd indenting
59	Content Concern	6.b	This assumes that all driver education courses are negative. What if a driver chooses to take a driver education course such as the IAM, or RoSPA for their own enhancement?
60	Content Concern	6.b	Can all the 48hr notification times be moved to 72hrs as is standard business practice to cover weekends
61	Content Concern	6.b	Can all the 48hr notification times be moved to 72hrs as is standard business practice to cover weekends
62	Content Concern	6.b	Legal consult is required on this. If a person is arrested without charge, the council and its representative bodies have no right to know. From memory, this was attempted to be put into the DBS system when they went to the digital rolling system and caused a significant time delay and financial implication
63	Missing Information	6.b	there is no lead into the bullet pointed list so what is this about?
64	Content Concern	6.b	What about an offence involving dishonesty? If a CEO is dishonest towards his board, it is a criminal offence, if a political body lies, there is no criminal activity recorded - how do the licencing team, and the committee members want feel about this being applied both ways?
65	Missing Information	6.c	Why is this omitted from the document?
66	Content Concern	6.d	Does the information received need to be verified as UK law is based on innocent until proven guilty
67	Format	6.d	Odd indentation
68	Content Concern	6.d	There is discrepancy between 6.d and 8.b
69	Missing Information	7.a	Where is the 'overall licensing control process defined?

70	Missing Information	7.a	Council is an undefined object; is the WBC or a council of elders?
71	Format	7.a	the format of a bulleted list has changed from previous
72	Grammar	7.a	The last bullet point has awful grammar - this defines the body as the 'Police and the vehicle Standards Agency (PDVSA)
73	Missing Information	7.b	The enforcement policy of whom?
74	Missing Information	7.b	Where is the enforcement policy defined?
75	Format	7.c	Odd indentation
76	Missing Information	7.c	What is the definition or scope to allow 'generally' to be interpreted?
77	Content Concern	7.c	Does this means that sanctions will be issued by WBC and not the PPP?
78	Format	7.d	Odd indent
79	Content Concern	7.d	What is an 'Authorised Officer'. This has not been defined and this enables the licence holder refuse so comply as they do not recognise the authority
80	Content Concern	7.d	This section is concern, whilst obstructing a police officer can be obstruction of justice, not sharing documents that may be relevant to public safety to an unknown person because they claim to be an authorised officer is a very different scenario.
81	Format	8.a	Odd indentation
82	Content Concern	8.b	There is discrepancy between 6.d and 8.b
83	Content Concern	9.a	Why does this only refer to 1 type of licence?
84	Content Concern	9.a	4.e and 9.a are worded similar but slightly different. Can they be condensed to 1 entry or can they be cross referenced?
85	Content Concern	9.a	What is the drivers licence defined used here? Is this a Driving Licence issued by DVLA, or a Dual or Private Hire Drivers Licence issued by WBC
86	Missing Information	9.b	What does 'strictly' mean?
87	Content Concern	9.b	If the appeal wins, can the appellant claim costs from the council?
88	Missing Information	9.c	Who is 'we'; is this WBC, the licencing team, the current members of the licencing team?
89	Missing Information	10	Hackney Carriages are not defined, the scope of this document is Hackney Carriage Vehicles.
90	Format	10.a	Odd Indentation
91	Content Concern	10.a	There is a legal discrepancy here as the possession of an asset under lease is defined by the specifics of the lease term. Under commercial vehicle lease (and most private lease now) the possessor is still the lessor. Does this document mean the lessee?
92	Grammar	10.a	Why the space in the middle or 'pre- booked'?
93	Missing Information	10.b	Licensing Officers are an undefined object
94	Content Concern	10.d	Most vehicles are imported, does this specifically mean grey market imports?

95	Format	10.d	Document format changes between 10.c and 10.d
96	Grammar	10.d	The header and the first sentence are a duplicate of each other
97	Grammar	10.d	Should the sentence end with a colon to introduce the bulleted list?
98	Format	10.d	Bullet point format has changed again
99	Content Concern	10.d	This is a duplicate of 20.b and requires a cross reference
100	Content Concern	10.f	What do WBC define as a vintage car as HMRC classess it as over 15yrs
101	Format	10.f	Odd Indentation
102	Content Concern	11.	To confirm that there is no longer a requirement for operator office staff to hold a DBS as this is not mentioned in section 11? This is a change in policy that the trade have not been notified of.
103	Content Concern	11	Should this be Criminal Records Checks of Disclosure and Barring Service which is was it actually is
104	Format	11.a	Odd Indentation
105	Content Concern	11.a	What is the difference between a 'Vehicle Applicant' and 'Vehicle Proprietor' as both are used in this section
106	Format	11.c	Odd indent
107	Format	11.d	Good to see the website included but it is just dumped at the end of a sentence with no lead in
108	Format	11.e	Odd Indent
109	Format	11.e	Can this be clarified, if the DBS check is triggered due to reasonable cause, it is not a random check
110	Content Concern	11.e	who is to pay for the additional DBS check?
111	Format	13.a	Odd Indentation
112	Missing Information	13.a	Council is an undefined object
113	Content Concern	13.a	Where below are the specifications and conditions set out and does that make this section superfluous?
114	Missing Information	14.a	This has been omitted
115	Missing Information	15.a	This has been omitted
116	Missing Information	15.b	This has been omitted
117	Content Concern	15.c	To ensure is to guarantee so I am happy the council is guaranteeing this as opposed to assuring this or insuring against this?
118	Missing Information	15.c	No where does it make the same statement about abled bodied persons.
119	Content Concern	15.c	Does this statement add value to the document, the document is already exceedingly long?
120	Missing Information	15.d	'Council' is an undefined object
121	Missing Information	15.d	Which website is this alluding to?
122	Missing Information	16.a	This has been omitted

123	Missing Information	16.b	This has been omitted
124	Missing Information	16.c	This has been omitted
125	Missing Information	16.d	This has been omitted
126	Content Concern	16.e	How far after issue will the council accept an MOT? IF it is no more than 4 weeks before, this is not possible
127	Content Concern	16.e	Can an application be made more than 4weeks before?
128	Content Concern	16.e	Cross refence between 4.g and 16.e required
129	Content Concern	16.f	Should photocopies read digital copies and whilst I am happy to present original to the WBC, they have no right to keep then. Can this please be clarified?
130	Content Concern	16.g	The vehicle test has to occur prior to the application
131	Grammar	16.h	At this point, they are not an applicant but a holder
132	Missing Information	16.j	This is the only reference to an 'application for a change of vehicle licence'. No where else in the document is this or the process to complete this defined
133	Content Concern	16.j	This entire section makes no sense
134	Missing Information	16.k	Refers to a 'prescribed application form' but then doesn't prescribe it of define an details about where it can be found
135	Grammar	16.l	There needs to be a comma after considered or this sentence is grammatically incorrect
136	Missing Information	16.l	The legality is that the V5C is to remain secured by the vehicle owner at all times so this needs to define what is meant br 'submit'.
137	Content Concern	16.m	In the first bullet point it says to make the V5C available but section L says it must be submitted. This needs clarifying
138	Content Concern	16.m	The second bullet point doesn't read correctly; it is suggesting providing the receipt for the purchase of the vehicle where the applicant does not own the vehicle
139	Missing Information	16.m	The second bullet point refers to a 'commercial leasing company' but the document does not define what the council takes this to mean
140	Content Concern	16.m	The third bullet point refers to a comprehensive policy for fire and reward but should this also require 'Third Party Liability Insurance'
141	Content Concern	16.m	The fourth bullet point refers to the Council test, but so does the sixth bullet point. Why is this duplicated?
142	Missing Information	17.a	This has been omitted
143	Missing Information	17.b	This has been omitted
144	Missing Information	17.c	This has been omitted
145	Missing Information	17.d	This has been omitted

146	Missing Information	17.e	This has been omitted
147	Missing Information	17.f	This has been omitted
148	Missing Information	17.g	This has been omitted
149	Missing Information	17.h	This has been omitted
150	Missing Information	17.i	This has been omitted
151	Missing Information	17.j	This has been omitted
152	Missing Information	17.k	This has been omitted
153	Missing Information	17.l	This has been omitted
154	Missing Information	17.m	This has been omitted
155	Grammar	17.n	Why is there an 'or' on the fourth bullet point, this is a change in syntax from the other bullet pointed lists
156	Content Concern	17.p	if a vehicle cannot be modified, how does a taxi meter get fitted?
157	Content Concern	18	There is no reference here about the legal framework of recording minors
158	Format	18.c	This has an odd indent
159	Content Concern	19.a	This section really needs legal review. Whilst the current interpretation, I hope, is that the council will provide a list of garages which they have chosen to call 'nominated' but going forwards this could easily be taken to mean a specific garage nominated from list of approved garages. ?
160	Missing Information	19.a	Where can this list of 'nominated' garages be found.
161	Grammar	19.d	Who is the West Berkshire District Council? Using 'The' changes the object; Queen are an registered musical act, The Queen is a member of the nobility
162	Format	19.e	Odd indetnatiaon
163	Content Concern	19.e	There used to be a minimum rear seat width - what happened to that?
164	Format	19.i	Odd indentation
165	Content Concern	19.i	How does this get managed as it is asking the trade to prove that something has not been done?
166	Content Concern	19.j	Can you change from green to brown glass as per manufacturers deviations; or glass with intra-bond tinting?
167	Content Concern	20.b	This is a duplicate of 10.d and requires a cross reference
168	Content Concern	20.b	This contradicts previous statements about novelty vehicles
169	Content Concern	20.c	Most manufacturers now rely on 'on-condition' servicing and do not define schedule windows

170	Missing Information	20.c	Where below does this mean when it says 'policy below' as the next line is electronic payment
171	Format	20.a	Odd indent
172	Content Concern	21.a	This shows that there is obviously no awareness of the market or industry. Most cars carry card readers but also have the option to send a payment link in case of There being insufficient signal to transact at the point A company sub-contracting. Especially a VAT registered company sourcing to a non-VAT registered company
173	Missing Information	21.a	What is meant by the term 'must be connected' is that the payment device must be connected to a signal transmitting device (phone) of the phone must be connected to the network. If the latter, how are WBC ensuring network coverage
174	Format	22.b	Odd indent
175	Format	22.b	The first bullet point Indent is different to other bullet points
176	Content Concern	22.c	In the fifth bullet point, who decides when it is necessary and what decision map do they follow? Surely, if the council was following its earlier advice about potential vehicles being checked with the licencing team prior to application, this is not necessary?
177	Missing Information	23.a	This is the only comment in this document to wearing a badge so can this be correlated?
178	Format	24	This reads odd. Are 24 and 25 sub points of 23 as the specified contracts or are they separate?
179	Content Concern	25.a	Chauffeur services are outside of the licencing laws
180	Content Concern	25.1	Contracts are not issued as it creates a legal loophole - (issues with HMRC and outsource employment law) . The current term is 'preferred supplier'; can this still be used?
181	Content Concern	25.b	The explanation of servicing multiple contracts is not possible due to the fluid nature of the business. It also failed to work on a grander scale which is why outsourcing laws amended this scope, particularly around IR25.
182	Content Concern	25.c	Do the council not inspect any other vehicles, even on an ad-hoc basis?
183	Content Concern	25.c	Why is there now an additional fee for a dispensation?
184	Missing Information	25.d	Again, this refers to authorised officer Please define what this is
185	Content Concern	25.f	The document uses the term 'documents' with no details as to what those documents are
186	Content Concern	28	Can the operators who use a digital system, such as icabbi, please confirm they understand that they have a responsibility for the export and import of data as the servers are hosted outside the UK and the data owner (passenger has to be made aware of that)
187	Grammar	30.a	Why are we moving between identification card or identification badge?
188	Grammar	30.a	the sentence does not read well 'Code of Conduct (Appendix C) Code of Conduct for Licensed Dual and Private Hire Drivers'
189	Missing Information	33	Is this section Including or excluding renewals?

190	Format	33.a.a	why have we gone from bullet points to (a)?
191	Missing Information	33.a.f	Where are these post qualifications and competencies documented?
192	Missing Information	33.a.g	When the document says 'the requirements are detailed below' can you please define where below?
193	Content Concern	33.a.gh	What if the applicant completed courses that are then found to not be recognised by WBDC? Ambiguity favours the party who did not draw the document
194	Content Concern	33.b	This section quotes that a requirement may be prior approval of the licensing manager but who is this? Moir - Principle officer Julia - Principle Officer Vicki - Licensing and Lead Applications Officer Sean Murphy - Service Lead, Eric - Service Director
195	Content Concern	33.c	This refers to required tests but does not define what they are or where they can be found in the document.
196	Format	33.c	Odd Indentation
197	Missing Information	34.b	Can the council please confirm which byelaws these are in reference to. I can remember the Newbury Byelaws which the current council has broken multiple times by moving taxi ranks etc
198	Content Concern	34.c	Can the council please define what they mean by 'result in enforcement action dependant upon breach' What is this dependant on, there is no clear statemtn here just a vague statement of not content
199	Content Concern	34.c	This section refers to 'prosecution of the applicant; but how is that possible if this document is not legislation but guidance?
200	Content Concern	34.c	If the matter is not illegal and just your personal moral compass, tell them and its slander, email them and its libel...
201	Content Concern	34.d	When referring to returning the licence and badge, the only physical part of the licence is the badge - this sentence is really confusing
202	Format	35	Instead of repeating lots of this section over and over through this document - just redirect to this section. That means when you have to update the document, you only have to update 1 section
203	Content Concern	35	It is no longer a Criminal Record Check but a Discloser and Barring Service check, as of 2012
204	Format	35.a	Odd indentation
205	Format	35.b	Odd indentation
206	Content Concern	35.c	There is no precedence for relaying warnings as they are non-standing
207	Content Concern	35.c	When talking about driver educational courses, these can be optional, not mandatory. Such as RoSPA
208	Missing Information	35.e	Whilst I don't disagree with this point but it raises a bigger issue of implementation date. I assume this will be on enactment from application of a new licence or renewal of an existing licence else are the council have changed the terms of a licence mid contract
209	Format	36.a	Odd indentation
210	Content Concern	36.a	Can we identify that 10yrs is to align with the UK age of criminal responsibility

211	Format	36.d	Odd indentation
212	Format	36.e	Odd indetnation
213	Format	36.f	Odd indentation
214	Format	36.f.a	we have a lack of consistency, we have gone from bullet point to {a} and now a}
215	Missing Information	36.f	An officer is an undefined object
216	Missing Information	37.b	The lack of coherent thinking is now concerning. Most GPS no longer issue these and they were, when I last did one, from West Berks Community Hospital (occupational health)
217	Content Concern	37.d	Why is the council overstepping onto a medical licence item
218	Missing Information	37.e	Why does the document not just include the information here so you don't have everyone contacting you and delaying the process further
219	Content Concern	37.g	Why is the first frequency section blank
220	Content Concern	38.a	Assuming this section means a licence, it does not state a licence for the type of vehicle the driver is applying for. Can an individual have a bike licence for 12mths and use that?
221	Content Concern	38.a	This requirement states a full DVLA for a minimum of 12 months, do we assume this means DVLA licence as opposed to a DVLA check code or other DVLA issued article?
222	Content Concern	38.c	Why is this document using 48hrs? What if it's a Friday afternoon, that is why most legal mandates are 72hrs. Are the licencing team going to be in the office Sunday afternoon to action a check code?
223	Content Concern	38.g	This is a duplication of 38.a
224	Content Concern	38.h	Accession states are included under rights of the EEA so this statement is a duplication of 38.a and 38.g
225	Missing Information	39.a	When referring to 'appropriate' when talking about a 'practical driving assessment', the assessment needs to be defined as my interpretation of appropriate may be different to WBC
226	Content Concern	39.c	If the council is only approves suitable courses from 'time to time' are the council accepting that they can't guarantee that an approved course will always be available when applications/renewals are being made?
227	Content Concern	39.c	I thought the courses were a pre-requisite to an application so isn't notifying applicants at the time too late?
228	Missing Information	39.c	If an applicant can choose a course provider then how does the individual know the course is suitable or will the council accept any course?
229	Missing Information	39.d	This refers to an enhanced driving assessment with no scope or provision
230	Format	40.a	Odd indentation
231	Content Concern	40.a	What do WBC class as the surrounding area? I haven't done a collect and drop in West Berkshire in over 5yrs.
232	Content Concern	40.a	Why, does the 'knowledge of area' have to be taken every 6 years, no other authorities do this, even TFL
233	Format	40.b	Odd indentation

234	Content Concern	40.b	Why is the knowledge provision not applicable for school or community contracts?
235	Grammar	40,c	Why are we using inadequate language such as 'commonly known'?
236	Missing Information	41.a	This refers to 'This test' but does not define which test it is?
237	Content Concern	41.a	Who can't do maths; 6yrs is not your second driving licence but your third driving licence
238	Content Concern	42.a	Please define what is 'acceptable to the council'. Historically WBC have asked the trade to go through organisations like the blue lamp trust and they provide multiple test options
239	Content Concern	42.b	If the cost of training is included in the licence fee can the trade have its money back for all the courses the council has told us to outsource and pay for?
240	Missing Information	43.a	This reads really badly; Is 'safeguarding, child sexual abuse and exploitation' 1 or 3 courses?
241	Content Concern	44.a	If the code of conduct is not legislation, how do the council intend to act against it. Especially when the enforcement plan is not issued.
242	Content Concern	45.b	Should the reference to Council in the first bullet point be referring to licencing authority?
243	Content Concern	45.b	Should the reference to Council in the second bullet point be referring to licencing authority?
244	Content Concern	45.b	Should the reference to Council in the third bullet point be referring to licencing authority?
245	Content Concern	46.a	This sentence makes no sense, how are operators dispatching an operator to complete a job?
246	Content Concern	46.d	If everyone with access to bookings information requires a DBS, the licensing team need the same requirement else it is a public safety risk to allow them to see booking information as it will give visibility of vacant properties
247	Format	49.b	Odd indentation
248	Format	49.g	Odd indentation
249	Format	49.g	Should this section be after item b?
250	Format	49.g.b	Odd indentation
251	Format	49.g.a	Back to sub-letters with a close parenthesis.
252	Missing Information	50	The 'Operator Application Process' doesn't contain a process
253	Content Concern	50.a	Why will photocopies not be accepted? Having had the licencing team lose 2, maybe 3, documents of mine alone, this is a concern
254	Content Concern	50.a	What does the photocopy of documents (the first sentence) have to do with timings (the rest of the section)?
255	Format	51	There is a formatting error with a large gap before the section
256	Missing Information	51.a	This section quotes enforcement action will be taken but again this is not defined.
257	Content Concern	52.a	The data protection legislation would stop an 'authorising officer' from conducting operator checks unless they are able to prevent a cleared DBS certificate

258	Missing Information	52.a	How do the council plan to regulate compliance to the ICO obligations? What about the dual licence holders using a purpose built app that holds their servers in Amsterdam?
259	Format	53.a	Odd indentation
260	Content Concern	53.b	What test does this section refer to and what is the pass criteria? If it is 50%, can I decline to do half the test?
261	Content Concern	53.b	When talking about onus of demonstration, this has not been tried in law because someone cannot prove they are a good person, they can prove that they are not a bad person with something a DBS
262	Missing Information	54.a	This section is omitted
263	Missing Information	54.b	This section is omitted
264	Missing Information	54.c	This section is omitted
265	Missing Information	54.d	This section is omitted
266	Missing Information	54.e	This section is omitted
267	Missing Information	54.f	This section is omitted
268	Missing Information	55.a	This document is ambiguous, which policy is this referring to, this specific document, the appeals policy or the enforcement policy?
269	Format	56.a	Odd indentation
270	Missing Information	56.a	Where is the enforcement policy found?
271	Format	56.a	Now we have moved to Roman numerals, not bullet points or letters
272	Format	56.b	There is Odd spacing before this section
273	Content Concern	56,b,v	If this document is not legislative, you can't prosecute against it?
274	Content Concern	57.a	When the council is notifying people in writing, can a time frame be put on this to align with the time frames placed on the trade?
275	Format	58.a	Odd indentation
276	Format	58.b	Odd indentation
277	Missing Information	58.b	if details are available on 'the website' which website, HMRC, WBC, PPP?
278	Format	A.1.1	Now we have moved to section prefix and suffix '1.1'
279	Content Concern	A.1.1	If the sole purpose is public protection, why is this document worried about HMRC Items
280	Content Concern	A.1.2	Section A.1.1 defies the sole purpose as something else
281	Missing Information	A.1.3	Should this be 'this policy' or another policy that contradicts and be used
282	Format	A.1.3	Odd indentation
283	Format	A.1.4	Spacing before the paragraph has changed
284	Missing Information	A.1.4	Should this be 'this policy' or another policy that contradicts and be used

285	Missing Information	1.4	Where in the document does it state that 'each case will be treated on its own merits'?
286	Missing Information	A.1.7	Which body is this document referring to, the Licensing Authority or Council?
287	Content Concern	A.3.1	This differs from section A.1.1 which says it is the sole purpose so which is it?
288	Missing Information	A.3.2	What legislation is meant when using the term 'Taxi Legislation' and can an individual, as it is undefined, ignore this in relation to a Private Hire Licence?
289	Missing Information	A.3.4	References to dual licence seem to have been omitted so are they under this part of the policy?
290	Grammar	A.3.7	What is the value of this statement? It reads as if it should lead onto something but it fails to do so
291	Format	A.3.8	This section uses ss51 and the s55; what is the acronymisation that should be used?
292	Grammar	A.3.9	If 'safe and suitable' are in quote marks, 'fit and proper' should also be ant that then removed the purpose of this section
293	Format	A.3.10	Odd indentation
294	Content Concern	A.3.10	Does the council think that an individuals attitude on their own time away from the trade would stand under legal scrutiny for public safety?
295	Format	A.3.11	Odd Indentation
296	Content Concern	A.3.12	Can the authority honestly say that they will stand behind a decision based on hearsay without evidence (that would be a conviction) whilst aware that an individual could then take legal action on discriminatory grounds such as defamation of character?
297	Format	A.3.16	Odd Indentation
298	Content Concern	A.3.16	This reads as though 3 accounts of drunk and disorderly are worse than 1 account of aggravated assault by this methodology?
299	Grammar	A.5	Is the word 'Offences' meant to be a heading or a sub-clause or a typo?
300	Format	A.5.1	Odd Indentation
301	Format	A.8.1	Odd indentataion
302	Format	A.9.1	Odd spacing between 9 and 9.1
303	Format	A.9.4.a	Odd Indentataion
304	Format	A.9.4.d	Odd spacing between identifier and subject text
305	Format	A.11	Odd spacing before the text
306	Format	A.12.1	Odd indentataion
307	Format	A.13	Odd spacing
308	Content Concern	A.13.2	This needs careful consideration. If WBC can write a document with over 400 issues in 37 pages, this sounds like double standards
309	Format	A.12.3	Odd indentataion
310	Content Concern	A.13.2	This section does not end with a full sentence and makes no sense
311	Format	A.14.1	Odd Indentation
312	Format	A.15.1	Odd spacing between 15 and 15.a

313	Content Concern	A.16.1	This is a duplicate of A.13
314	Format	A.19.1	Why does 'about their passengers which must' need to be in larger text?
315	Content Concern	A.19.1	If the information cannot be revealed to others, does this include 'authorised officers'?
316	Content Concern	A.19.1	The last sentence needs some commas in it else the private information cannot be used by an operator to say, fulfil the job
317	Format	A.19.2	Odd indentation
318	Content Concern	A.19.3	whilst the document references an Operator not meeting the licencing authorities overall standards, are the authority going to hold themselves to the same standards?
319	Format	A.19.4	Odd indentation
320	Format	A.20.1	Odd Indentataion
321	Content Concern	A.20.1	The Proprietor cannot ensure a vehicle is not used for illegal activity but they can assure it
322	Content Concern	A.20.1	Can the council please provide the correct course of action a driver is to take if 2 people attempt to use the vehicle and its driver to transport a large half statue of a bear?
323	Format	A.20.2	Odd Indentation
324	Format	A.20.3	Odd indentataion
325	Content Concern	B.1.1	By using the term 'principally', this implies that there is other governance but WBC are choosing to ignore it
326	Format	B.1.2	Odd indent
327	Content Concern	B.1.2	If the aim of the council is that the trade are of the highest standard, can the trade expect the same from the licencing department?
328	Content Concern	B.1.2	The aims and objectives of the council have changed. In appendix A, the objective was public safety, not it is the vague term of 'high standards' with no reference to public safety
329	Content Concern	B.1.3	If this is a stepped enforcement plan, you should be able to go up and down steps. This plan is only 1-way: down
330	Content Concern	B.1.3	How does this scheme allow the licencing committee to ascertain a fit and proper person? You have crated a failure only system as the most a person can achieve is zero
331	Content Concern	B.1.3	Saying a scheme does not prejudice is interesting as it would mean that this document guarantees that the licencing team are the only people in the world to not suffer passive prejudice?
332	Format	B.1.4	Odd indentation
333	Format	8.1.5	Odd indentation
334	Grammar	8.1.5	It should be 'An operator' not 'A operator'
335	Content Concern	B.1.5	Is there a justification as to why 1.4 and 1.5 follow different routes?
336	Missing Information	B.2.1	Where is the enforcement policy?
337	Format	B.2.1	Odd indentation
338	Content Concern	B.2.1	Why would the licencing officer think that this document holds the same provenance as legislation and act as though they hold the same merit?

339	Content Concern	B.2.1	Is this a policy or a requirements document?
340	Content Concern	B.2.1	How are the council going to decide if the penalty points system is appropriate and what is the process flow for this?
341	Content Concern	B.2.1	The concept that an individual has the right to decide on the penalty points is absurd. Do the licencing team understand that in the UK, jurisdiction holds with a consensus (or a jury), not 1 person who may be in a bad mood because they spilt their coffee on the way to the meeting and don't like the person for pointing out the hundreds of issues in this document?
342	Format	B.2.2	Odd indentation
343	Content Concern	B.2.2	This is a deeply concerning lack of consistency; 'There must be sufficient evidence on the balance of probabilities to prove...[]' Earlier in this document, balance of probabilities was a 50/50 call and now action may be taken without evidence as that is the same affector!!
344	Content Concern	B2.2	If the issuing of penalty points is not a formal sanction, this is contradicts this document in multiple places (such as B.1.4 & B.1.5 and other sections where multiple points has consequences including up to prosecution?
345	Content Concern	B.2.2	If the penalty points is assessing a licence holder and can only be negative, and the onus is on the applicant (in this case at renewal) to prove they are fit and proper (53.b) unless there is legal document of the applicant adhering to the good samaritan law, how can a renewal applicant prove they are fit and proper when the council system is set to prove they are not?
346	Content Concern	B.2.5	What does 'live' mean?
347	Content Concern	B.2.5	If the penalty points are to only remain live for 1 year, how will items B.1.4 and B.1.5 be enacted as these are 24 and 36 month rolling items then?
348	Format	B.2.7	We are back to bullet points
349	Format	B.2.7	Odd indentation before the bullet points
350	Format	B.2.7	Odd spacing between the bullet point and text
351	Format	B.2.8	Odd Indentation
352	Content Concern	B.2.9	What is the safeguarding procedure to ensure prejudice won't occur?
353	Content Concern	B.2.11	This reads as a repeat of 2.7
354	Grammar	B.3	If section B.2.11 introduces a list should section 3 not be 2.11.1?
355	Content Concern	B.3	There is a serious issue of double standards here; the trade have to meet timelines but the licencing officer 'will aim' to respond in 28 days
356	Content Concern	B.7.1	V2: This is not a requirement of UK vehicles
357	Content Concern	B.7.1.V3	This is not a requirement of UK vehicles
358	Content Concern	B.7.1.V4	This allows for the driver to put the wheelchair in the boot but then needs the vehicle checks to ensure a boot space requirement

359	Content Concern	B.7.1.V5	This is only applicable to WAVs
360	Content Concern	B.7.1.V6	This doesn't make sense; what is the vehicle is not licenced as a WAV?
361	Content Concern	B.7.1.V7	What if the car is a diesel?
362	Content Concern	B.7.1.V10	This is only applicable to Hackney Carriages
363	Content Concern	B.7.1.V11	This is only applicable to Hackney Carriages
364	Content Concern	B.7.1.V12	This is only applicable to Hackney Carriages
365	Content Concern	B.7.1.V11	Isn't this double jeopardy of B.7.1.V10?
366	Content Concern	B.7.1.V13	I didn't think PHV needed to display front door signs
367	Content Concern	B.7.1.V20	The law also includes terms such as 'cab'
368	Content Concern	B.7.1.V32	This is the first mention of supply of steering alignment reports
369	Content Concern	B.7.1.V32	Who decided if the vehicle alignment report is required?

Formal Submission: Response to Draft Licensing Policy Consultation

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed licensing policy. While we have several overarching concerns already communicated to the Licensing Officer, the following represent key issues that directly impact us as operators and affect our drivers' livelihoods and ability to provide high-quality services to the public.

Page 3 – Clause 2c: Operator Responsibility for Private Hire Driver Conduct

Our Comment:

We are particularly concerned about the proposal that operators be held responsible for the actions of private hire drivers, including being penalised with licensing points. This clause, as currently drafted, unfairly places liability on operators for behaviours and actions outside of their control. All drivers are self-employed and are individually licensed by the authority, with the legal and professional responsibility to adhere to licensing conditions. Operators can put in place policies, training, and monitoring systems, but we cannot guarantee a driver's real-time behaviour on the road or during service. If something is beyond an operator's control, such as a driver's personal conduct or driving style, the operator should not be penalised for it.

Recommendation:

We strongly ask that this clause be either removed or significantly amended to explicitly differentiate between responsibilities of the operator and the driver. This clarity will help ensure accountability without unfairly penalising operators for actions they did not commit or condone.

Pages 14 – Section A: Age of Vehicles at First Application

Our Comment:

We propose that the vehicle age limit at the time of initial application be increased from 5 years to 6 years. This recommendation is made in light of economic realities, as many drivers—especially new entrants—are unable to afford newer vehicles due to rising vehicle costs, financing restrictions, and general inflation.

In addition, we strongly propose a maximum service age of 10 years for licensed vehicles, applicable to both Private Hire and Hackney Carriages. Many vehicles currently licensed in West Berkshire are visibly outdated and fall below acceptable standards of appearance and mechanical reliability. These vehicles can negatively affect public perception of the trade and may present safety concerns.

We frequently observe vehicles emitting black smoke or displaying visible damage, including peeling paint or broken bodywork, which undermines the professionalism of the industry and could pose environmental and safety risks.

Recommendation:

We recommend amending the policy to increase the first registration age to 6 years and introducing a clear upper age limit of 10 years for all licensed vehicles, consistent with best

practices adopted by other licensing authorities. This dual change would improve safety, uphold professional standards, and support financial viability for drivers.

Page 20 – Section 36: Certificate of Good Conduct (CoGC)

Our Comment:

The proposed requirement that applicants provide a Certificate of Good Conduct from every country where they have lived for three months or more since the age of 10 is not practical and, in some cases, not feasible. Many countries lack an official process for such certificates, while in others the process is complicated by political instability, embassy closures, or delays. The current West Berkshire Convictions Policy (Clause 3.2) takes a more balanced approach, requiring such certificates only if an applicant has lived outside the UK for more than six months in the past three years, from the age of 18. This approach mirrors national practice and guidance from the Department for Transport, which promotes a risk-based and proportionate system.

Department of Transport statutory taxi and private hire standards 4.10 states-

“the same applies when an applicant has previously spent an extended period (3 or more continuous months) outside the UK. It should however be noted that some countries will not provide a certificate of good character unless the individual has been resident for 6 months or more.

Licensing authorities should seek or require applicants to provide where possible criminal records information or a certificate of good character from overseas in this circumstance to properly assess risk and support the decision-making process. It is the character of the applicant as an adult that is of particular interest, therefore an extended period outside the UK before the age of 18 may be less relevant.”

Recommendation:

We urge the Council to align this clause with its existing Convictions Policy Clause 3.2, ensuring consistency, legal defensibility, and fairness. Furthermore, we believe that only two councils—Bracknell and South Vale—have adopted identical proposed policies. It is our understanding that the same officer currently with West Berkshire was involved in developing or implementing these policies in those councils.

We also recommend defining a minimum age and duration threshold for such requirements, as used by other Berkshire authorities, to avoid unnecessary burdens on applicants.

Pages 22–23 – Sections 39–41: Repeat Testing Requirements

Our Comment:

We strongly oppose the policy requiring drivers to retake practical, Highway Code, and local knowledge tests every six years. This requirement is not recommended in the Department for Transport’s statutory standards (November 2022) and does not reflect common practice across the industry. Such a policy introduces unnecessary financial strain, logistical complications, and operational disruption.

Drivers already undergo initial testing and are subject to continuous oversight through complaints, enforcement, and ongoing assessments. Re-testing experienced drivers without cause is not only redundant but may also be seen as punitive, especially when no evidence is provided to demonstrate that this policy improves safety or service quality.

The department of transport for taxi and private hire best practice guidelines for licensing authorities in England states on 3 -The rule of licensing authorities-

‘As indicated above, the primary function of the licensing regime is public safety; however, an unduly stringent regime on other issues may restrict the supply of taxi and private hire vehicle services by putting up the cost of operation, or otherwise restricting entry to the trade. Licensing authorities should recognise that too restrictive an approach can be counter-productive, restricting the licensed trade to such an extent that the public resort to the use of unlicensed, unvetted and uninsured drivers and vehicles’.

Therefore, we believe that the requirement for retesting existing drivers is unduly punitive and overly stringent. We respectfully request that the committee reconsider and remove this clause

Recommendation:

We recommend that this clause be withdrawn. If any refresher training is deemed necessary, it should be implemented through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) modules or workshops—not full retesting. Alternatively, targeted re-testing could be applied only in response to incidents or repeated complaints.

Pages 37–38 – Motoring Convictions (Sections 13.1, 13.2, 16.4, 16.5)

Our Comment:

We support the promotion of road safety but urge a fair and proportionate approach to motoring convictions. We strongly oppose the policy of revoking or suspending a driver’s license for accumulating more than six penalty points due to minor offences

Recommendations:

- Existing drivers who accumulate up to 9 points for minor offences should not have their licenses revoked. This is consistent with the approach taken by many other licensing authorities.
- Drivers with 9 or more points should undergo a formal review by the licensing authority and may be referred to remedial action, such as additional driver training or safety courses.
- New applicants should not be granted a license if they have more than 9 points. However, those with fewer points for minor infractions should still be eligible, depending on the nature and age of the offence.

This balanced framework recognises that taxi drivers operate under significantly more demanding driving conditions than the general public. Minor infractions should not result in career-ending penalties. Otherwise, the trade may lose current drivers and deter new applicants, leading to service disruptions for the public.

Pages 39–41 – Section 19: Penalty Point System

Our Comment:

We oppose the introduction of a penalty point system administered by the Council. The proposed system is complex, inconsistently applied across offences, and may become an instrument of unfair punishment rather than fair regulation.

The DfT's statutory guidance explicitly warns against overly strict or punitive regimes that could reduce the number of drivers and operators—ultimately harming public transport services (please see department of transport best practice guidance November 2023 Clause 3). The point system proposed here risks doing exactly that.

Recommendation:

We request that this system be removed entirely. If the Council feels a point-based approach is necessary, it must be:

1. Clearly defined and easy to understand,
2. Fairly and consistently applied across all cases, and
3. Subject to a transparent appeals process through an independent panel or the Licensing Committee.

Additionally, we propose:

- Points expire after 12 months,
- Action thresholds: 16 points (drivers), 36 points (operators),
- Minor breaches (e.g., dress code or paperwork errors): 1–2 points,
- Major breaches (e.g., passenger safety issues): 4–6 points.

This structure promotes fairness, transparency, and trust in the enforcement process.

Pages 52–53 – Section 3.8: Engine Idling

Our Comment:

While we support efforts to reduce emissions, we ask for clarification on how the engine idling rule will be enforced. Specifically, guidance is needed on whether this rule applies when drivers are waiting for clients, queuing on ranks, or operating in cold conditions where idling is necessary for heating and demisting.

Recommendation:

We propose that the rule be revised to include reasonable exemptions for weather conditions, safety, and passenger comfort. Enforcement should be practical and aligned with real-world working conditions, consistent with DEFRA and DfT guidance.

Page 65 – Section 3j: Daily Vehicle Checks

Our Comment:

We fully support daily safety checks, but the requirement to keep written records for six months (and to carry 30 days of records in the vehicle) is excessive, particularly for sole-trader drivers.

Recommendation:

We suggest that written record-keeping be optional or reduced in scope, especially for drivers operating independently. A declaration system or periodic compliance checks could be a suitable alternative.

Page 67 – Section 8.18: Tyre Tread Depth

Our Comment:

The policy's proposed minimum tread depth of 2mm exceeds the legal UK standard of 1.6mm. While we recognise the importance of tyre safety, this higher standard imposes an additional cost on drivers without clear justification.

Recommendation:

Unless the Council can provide data or risk assessments showing the necessity of a 2mm threshold, we recommend that the policy align with the national legal standard of 1.6mm, which already balances safety and practicality.

Pages 79 – Sections 33 & 34: Advertising and Use of the Word “Cab”

Our Comment:

We oppose the blanket ban on the use of terms such as “Taxi” or “Cab” in private hire vehicle signage. Cabco has been operating in West Berkshire since 1988, with full approval of its branding, including the word “Cab,” by the Licensing Authority.

The proposed policy would require costly rebranding and the removal of well-established signage, causing substantial financial loss and confusion among the public. The Transport Act 1980 (Section 64) only restricts misleading signage “on or above the roof,” and does not prohibit use of such terms elsewhere on the vehicle.

Recommendation:

We ask that this clause be reworded to mirror Section 17.9, limiting signage only “on or above the roof” and not on vehicle sides or bodywork. We also request written confirmation that Cabco's existing branding is grandfathered and may remain in place unless evidence suggests it causes public confusion or safety risks.

We await a response to our prior email to the Principal Licensing Officer on this matter.

Page 88 – Section 26: Operator Record Submission

Our Comment:

The requirement for monthly data submissions from operators is duplicative, as the Licensing Authority already holds all relevant driver and operator licensing data.

Recommendation:

We suggest an annual update process with mandatory ad hoc notifications for material changes (e.g., new driver recruitment, driver resignations). This would streamline administrative work for both operators and the Council.

Page 93 – Section 56: Driver Working Hours

Our Comment:

We request clarification regarding the proposed 10-hour daily working limit. Specifically, we ask whether this refers to total time on duty or only to time spent actively driving. Many drivers spend significant periods waiting between bookings, which are not equivalent to active driving time.

Currently, there is no statutory working time limit for taxi and private hire drivers not operating under EU or PSV/PCV regulations.

Recommendation:

We request the Council provide:

- The legal basis for this limit,
- Comparative data showing how many UK authorities enforce similar rules.

We support reasonable measures to protect driver health and public safety, but such limits must be based on evidence, clearly defined, and practically enforceable.



Registered in England No. 2308001
VAT Registration No. 491 7893 90

Cabco Limited
34A Kingfisher Court
Hambridge Road
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 5SJ

Telephone: 01635 33333

I formally authorise the Director of Cabco to represent and act on my behalf
in all matters pertaining to the proposed taxi licencing policy under
consideration by West Berkshire

DRIVER NAME	BADGE NUMBER	PLATE NUMBER	SIGNATURE
Abdoulaye Diallo	379	277	
Md Waleed Ahmed	489	566	
KAROL POPIELANSKI	377	196	
MR MUAZZIM HUSSAIN	2244	145	
RUBEN PEREZ FERNANDEZ	474	437	
RASHID ALI	437	477	
Abhishek Singh	307	457	
TIAGO CORONIA	975	919	
CAVIN SWAMI	2171	31	
MD. NURUL ISLAM	2279	856	
MOHAMMAD EMRAN AHMAD	2306	294	
Mohammad Selim Ahmed	394	168	
Thierno Diallo	487	458	
Artur Ankil	559	194	
ZAFAR IQBAL	2088	834	
RAFAQAT AZIZ	2188	832	
GABRIEL CALIN	143	438	
ALEXANDRA MADALINA CALIN	431	194	
MARCIN PAWLOWSKI	2295	186	
ABDULGHANI SAIL	2333	307	
ABDUL MURAKIR	2107	247	



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DRIVER NAME	BADGE NUMBER	PLATE NUMBER	SIGNATURE
Himanshu Sethi	2002	725	
MOHAMMED ABDUL HAMID CHOWDHURY	2308	868	
ABDUL REHEEM	338	129	
RAHMAN AHMED	2185	772	
Joaquin Caeiro	361	361	
LADISLAV SZABO	380	342	
MOHAMMED HUSSAIN	2176	207	
SULTAN MAHMUD	2084	786	
SHYAM THAKK	439	149	
GARY STACEY	408	201	
Jeannette Fenemore	2218	777	
ARRON FERNANDES	327	117	
THIERNO DIALLO	2058	428	
ARIF JAW	2183	558	
ABDUL LOHID	2267	492	
REJO CHAPA	341	149	
HARI NAIR	2873	884	
Shafiq Hossain	540	496	
DAVID TAYLOR	2153	278	
STUART WARREN		29	
STEVEN OCKWELL	2182	170	



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in all matters pertaining to the proposed taxi licencing policy under
consideration by West Berkshire**

DRIVER NAME	BADGE NUMBER	PLATE NUMBER	
MARK SMITH	2029	38	
PAUL HOWE	2122	496	
CONSTANTIN-VASILE CIORAR	360	441	
TARUN KUMAR	455	457	
SAMIR YATTOU	2011	134	
USMAN KHAAN	2334	113	
SEBASTIAN KARMIERCZAK	357	304	
ALADOR RAHAMAN	2310	523	
Narresh Pandya	471	443	
MICHAEL BRINDLEY	443	437	
IAN STEPHENS	435	380	
Mohammed Dinty	2053	YY67 FEO	
MOSHAROF - HOSSAIN	2321	KP67 PGO	
Teieb Abdelhakiz	2332	GL20 PAA	
Chloe Renault	2003	07	
Martin Renault	315	444	
LUCKY MIAH	570	570	
Juraid Ahmed	2196	102	
Sandis Krilovskis	2139	555	
Razon Dash	2397	239	
Mohammed Habbal	2085	395	



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in all matters pertaining to the proposed taxi licencing policy under
consideration by West Berkshire**

DRIVER NAME	BADGE NUMBER	PLATE NUMBER	
KELVIN POTTINGER	2158	533	
SHAFI UDDIN SYED	2209	116	
MICHAEL SKINNER	2265	377	
Mark Driscoll	2285	133	
Noor Afridi	430	436	
LASZLO BALDA	2151	888	
Hafiz Malik	352	558	
MR KEVIN PORTER	2042	35	
MARTIN DOYLE	2249	222	
MD MASUDUL HOQUE	392	198	
DEWANE CHOWDHURY	2174	763	
LUKAS MELIS	138	342	
Calin Miranda	319	106	
Boris Zolna	2219	501	
SURESH BABU THOTA	2051	435	
SHAMIM AHMED	2256	862	
Ryan Hanafin	450	390	
KRISTINA SIBILEVA	451	380	
LUKASZ LONIEWSKI	309	458	

22 Roof Signs

Page 14

A I agree

The roof sign must be lit when the taximeter is not active and not lit when the taximeter is in use.

RE WORD

The roof sign must be illuminated when the taximeter is in the For Hire mode, when hired the roof light will be off (Automatically controlled by the Taximeter)

The entire details are incorrect going forward, Members and the trade have agreed Roof sign standards. We must not go backwards, actually the trade have points to raise with regards to Signage that need to be added to the policy.

B C D I disagree with all comments

The council has a Roof Sign specification first adopted in January 20019 (Members approved)

Was re consulted on in the name of Julia O Brian 16th November to 28th December 2012 (Members Approved)

All new Licences issued from 1 January 2013 had to conform to new specification condition, the existing trade had to change at Licence renewal or by the 31st December 2013.

Let's get back on track and tidy up the roof signs

Door Signs

The trade also has livery standards that have been removed from this policy WHY!

These need to be added back in, and the trade would like to discuss a revised door sign to be added to the policy

1. General Page 64

If the vehicle is licensed by any other Council, the proprietor must immediately stop conducting any work under their West Berkshire District Council licence. They must return the licence issued by West Berkshire District Council to the Licensing Team of West Berkshire District Council within 7 days.

WBDC should not have licenced it, if already licenced elsewhere.

History within WBC that a Proprietor already licenced with Windsor & Maidenhead was also granted WBDC Private Hire Vehicle Licence. Both Plates were affixed by magnets and swapped around

Re Word the above:

If the vehicle is / or to be licensed by any other Council, the proprietor must immediately stop working under their West Berkshire District Council licence, and return the licence issued to the Licensing Team at West Berkshire District Council within 7 days.

2. General Identification Plates and Cards Page 64

3. The identification plate, additional signage and all fare cards and licence cards remain the property of the Council at all times and must be returned to the Council within 7 days on surrender, suspension, revocation or expiry of the licence or if the vehicle is sold, or disposed of, out of the licensed trade. If a plate is lost or stolen it must be reported to the police. A crime or lost property number must be obtained, and the Council informed within 24 hours.

Re Word the above:

The internal and external identification plates remain the property of the Council and must be returned within 7 days in the event of surrender, suspension, revocation, or expiry of the licence.

If the vehicle is sold or disposed of outside the licensed trade, all Hackney Carriage-related signage must be removed.

In case of a lost or stolen plate, it must be reported to the police immediately. A crime or lost property reference number should be obtained and forwarded to the Council within 24 hours.

2. General Identification Plates and Cards

Page 64

4. The plate must be securely fixed to the rear exterior of the vehicle using the Council's approved backing plate and permanent fixings, Velcro, adhesive, magnets and brackets are not acceptable. The security of the plate will be checked as part of the scheduled vehicle test and at any spot checks. The licence plate will be fixed with security toggles under the supervision of an authorised officer of the Council. The Council reserves the right to inspect the plate at any time.

Re Word the above:

4. *The licence plate must be securely attached to the rear exterior of the vehicle below the rear window using the Council-approved backing plate. Velcro, adhesive, magnets, and brackets are not allowed. This will be checked during vehicle tests and spot checks. The Council can inspect the plate at any time.*

5. All vehicles must display the roof sign correctly at all times. Such signs must be securely affixed by means of magnets unless they are an integral part of the vehicle.

Re Word the above:

5. *All Vehicles must display Roof Signs and should always be legible. Securely mounted centrally on the roof. between the windscreen and front door pillars (the B Post). Alternatively fixed to a Roof Bar if fibreglass or glass roofs, where no suitable magnetic adhesion is possible. Unless they are an integral part of the vehicle.*

6. All vehicles must display the additional signage correctly at all times.

6. *Please explain what Additional Signage is.*

7. *All vehicles must display the licence cards, provided by the Council, in the front and rear windscreen at all times.*

7. *All vehicles must display the internal licence plate provided by the Council, in the front windscreen at all times. YOU DON'T SUPPLY A REAR*

3. Maintenance of Vehicle Page 65

(F) Private hire E page 76 different wording

(H) The vehicle must be equipped with a suitable bulb-kit indelibly marked with the registration number or licence number of the vehicle to provide for the replacement of defective bulbs.

(H) Remove as tools are required to change most bulbs, and not required to carry any, My Headlight bulb costs £107 and to change a rear light two different tools required.

J The proprietor/driver employed to drive the vehicle must undertake a daily safety check of the vehicle. As a minimum this must be a visual check of all lights, oil, water, tyres, mirrors, seat belts and cleanliness. A written record must be made of each safety check, details of faults recorded, and remedial action taken. The record must be signed by the person undertaking the safety checks and kept in the vehicle for a minimum of 30 days and then for a further six months by the proprietor.

Re Word the above:

J The proprietor/driver Who is to drive the vehicle must undertake a daily safety check of the vehicle. As a minimum this must be a visual check of all lights, oil, water, tyres, mirrors, seat belts and cleanliness. A written record must be made of each safety check, the vehicle must be fault free at the start of any shift, details of faults that may occur during a shift must be recorded, and repairs delt with before the next shift starts. The record must be signed by the person undertaking the safety checks and kept in the vehicle for a minimum of 30 days and then for a further six months by the proprietor /driver.

K Remove as explained above

Page 66

9 If a vehicle fails a vehicle inspection, the test station will inform the Council outlining the grounds of the failed test. An authorised officer will then issue a suspension notice under section 68 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. That will immediately suspend the vehicle licence, from which point it cannot be used as a licensed vehicle. The proprietor/driver will be invited to surrender the vehicle plate. If the plate is not surrendered, a "licence suspended" sticker will be affixed to the plate which will mean that the proprietor must purchase a new plate when the suspension is lifted. That suspension notice will be lifted when the vehicle is presented for a retest and that test is passed. If the suspension notice is not lifted within a period of two calendar months from the date on which it was issued, the vehicle licence will be deemed to be revoked. In that circumstance, any acquired rights will be lost.

Page 66

Re Word the above:

9 *If a vehicle fails the 6 monthly vehicle inspection, the council's nominated testing station will inform the Council outlining the grounds of the failed test.*

An authorised officer will then issue a suspension notice under section 68 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. That will immediately suspend the vehicle licence, from which point it cannot be used as a licensed vehicle.

The proprietor/driver should be invited to surrender the vehicle plate, to the council's nominated testing station when informed of the failure. Soon as the proprietor/driver has rectified the failure items and had a retest and passed the surrendered plate is refitted and the suspension is lifted automatically when the proprietor/driver and council receive the pass certificate.

If the plate is not surrendered, a "licence suspended" sticker will be affixed to the plate which will mean that the proprietor must purchase a new plate when the suspension is lifted. That suspension notice will be lifted automatically when the vehicle is presented for a retest and that test is passed.

If the suspension notice is not lifted within a period of two calendar months, from the date on which it was issued, unless its proven extra time is agreed between the proprietor/driver and council is needed, the vehicle licence will be deemed to be revoked. In that circumstance, any acquired rights will be lost.

10. The proprietor of the vehicle must provide a copy of all hackney carriage test certificates to the Council within 48 hours of receiving them.

Re Word the above:

10. The proprietor/driver of the vehicle must provide a copy of the latest Hackney Carriage test certificate to the Council within 48 hours of receiving it.

11. If the vehicle has been involved in a collision, then the proprietor must notify the Council within 24 hours with a copy of the collision report, photographs and Police incident number (if attended) and at the discretion of the Council, the vehicle may have to undergo a further inspection at one of the Council's nominated testing stations.

Re Word the above:

11. If the vehicle has been involved in a collision, then the proprietor / driver must notify the Council within 72 hours with a copy of the collision report, photographs and Police incident number (if attended)

At the discretion of the Council, the vehicle may have to undergo a further inspection at one of the Council's nominated testing stations. [INSERT COLLISION REPORT LINK](#)

4 Doors

13. Tailgates and rear doors must only be used for loading/unloading luggage or as an emergency exit, unless the vehicle has been designed, modified or adapted to carry wheelchair using passengers, and has the relevant M1 or M2 type approval certificate, in which case the rear doors may be used for loading those passengers only.

Re Word the above:

13. Tailgates and rear doors must only be used for loading/unloading luggage or as an emergency exit, unless the vehicle has been designed, modified or adapted to carry wheelchair using passengers, and has the relevant M1, M2 or IVA type approval certificate, in which case the rear doors may be used for loading/unloading those passengers only.

6 Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV's)

PAGE 67

16. The licensee must ensure that all drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles have received the required training to be able to load/unload and convey wheelchair using passengers in safety and comfort. The training is to be conducted prior to every renewal of any licence applied for or on application if a new application.

Note the below

16 The licensee must ensure that all drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles have received the required training to be able to load/unload and convey wheelchair using passengers in safety and comfort. The training is to be conducted prior to every renewal of any licence applied for or on application if a new application.

Please inform the licensee / driver their right to say no if they feel unable to load and unload safely (HSE advise) also record any instances

Surely this should be covered in Drivers Licences as well

.

7. Seatbelts

17. Seat belts must be used in accordance with the requirements of the legislation that is applicable at the relevant time. **Add Link to the detail**

8. Tyres

18. All tyres on the licensed vehicle and any trailer used on the licensed vehicle must be in good condition and conform with the minimum legal requirements subject to an additional requirement that there must be at least 2 Millimetre (mm) tread depth at all times.

Re Word the above:

18. All tyres on the licensed vehicle and any trailer must be in good condition and meet legal requirements as to the vehicle fitted to. Tyres must be changed at a tread depth no less than of 2mm and not be devoid of tread on the inner and outer sections of tyre

21. All replacement tyres fitted to licensed vehicles must be new (i.e. not have been used previously on any other vehicle), meet the vehicle manufacturer's minimum specification for tyres and must have been fitted by a reputable vehicle maintenance company / contractor. Vehicle proprietors are required to retain invoices / receipts to show that any tyre that is purchased meets this requirement.

Re Word the above:

21. All replacement tyres fitted to licensed vehicles must be new (i.e. not have been used previously on any other vehicle), meet the vehicle manufacturer's specification for tyres and must have been fitted by a reputable vehicle maintenance company /

contractor. Vehicle proprietors are required to retain invoices / receipts to show that any tyre that is purchased meets this requirement.

11. Advertising on Hackney Carriages

31. Advertising on the outside of any licensed vehicle is restricted to the name and telephone number of the owner or operator of the Hackney Carriage, such advertisements must not exceed 50cm x 25cm and can only be affixed to the front and rear passenger doors, the boot, and the bonnet. Applications for departures from this limitation can be made in writing to West Berkshire District Council's Licensing Team.

Re Word the above:

31. Advertising on the outside of any licensed vehicle is restricted to the name and telephone number of the owner or operator of the Hackney Carriage, such advertisements must not exceed 50cm x 25cm and can only be affixed to the rear passenger doors, the boot, and the bonnet. Applications for departures from this limitation can be made in writing to West Berkshire District Council's Licensing Team.

12. Luggage

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34. Luggage must be suitably secured in place and must not obstruct any exit, or emergency exit.

Re Word the above:

34. No Luggage must be stored within the passenger compartment at any time and must not obstruct any exit, or emergency exit.

35. Vehicles with open luggage space such as estate cars must be fitted with a suitable guard between the luggage space and the passenger compartment which must be in use whenever passengers are carried.

Re Word the above:

35. Vehicles with open luggage space such as estate cars must be fitted with a suitable guard or luggage cover between the luggage space and the passenger compartment which must be in use whenever passengers are carried.

14. *Taximeter*

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38. The proprietor must ensure the vehicle is fitted with a taximeter approved by the Council, and that meter must be kept in good repair and proper working order at all times. The taximeter must be set for the current tariff set by the Council or a continually lower rate and must be sealed to prevent unauthorised adjustment of that meter.

Re Word the above:

Council approved meters need to be identified, and Meter agents added

38. The proprietor must ensure the vehicle is fitted with a taximeter approved by the Council, and that meter must be kept in working order at all times. The taximeter must be set for the current tariff set by the Council or a continually lower rate and must be sealed to prevent unauthorised adjustment of that meter.

39. All taximeters must be so constructed, or programmed, that it is not possible for any person to manually alter the tariff rate, or otherwise alter or tamper with the meter, without breaking the affixed seals. Each meter must be set, calibrated, and sealed with a tamper-proof seal by a competent meter installer. The vehicle licensee must obtain and retain written certification of such calibration and sealing. This certification must be provided to an authorised office of the Council upon request.

Re Word the above:

39. Approved taximeters are constructed to be tamper proof, it's not possible for any person to alter the tariff, or otherwise tamper with the meter, without breaking the affixed seals. Each meter must be set, calibrated, and sealed with a tamper-proof seal by the council approved meter agent / installer. The vehicle licensee / driver must obtain and retain written certification of such calibration and sealing. This certification must be provided to an authorised office of the Council upon request.

46 Needs to show specification

16 Collisions in Vehicles

Page 70

51, Add link to Council Collision Report form

53, Remove Private Hire Replace with Hackney Carriage

56. Remove Private Vehicle

57. The temporary period will be determined by the council, 3 months must be flexible and not quoted as exceeding three months

58, Remove Private Hire

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59. Remove Private Hire

- | | | |
|------|------------------|---------|
| ii | Reads 75 cm | 750 mm |
| iii. | Reads 1.2 meters | 1200 mm |
| | a) Reads 380 mm | 380 mm |

61 1.3 meters 1300 mm

62 42.5cm 425 mm

63 66cm 660 mm

64 MISSING

Change in vehicle type here, You have just changed the type of vehicles available

Please keep measurement the same

64. A ramp for the loading of a wheelchair and occupant must be available at all times for use, as a minimum, at the **nearside passenger door on all new vehicles presented for licensing.**

The ramp must have a safety lip, be 70cm wide, as a minimum, and comprise a single non-slip surface. It is desirable for this facility to be available at the offside passenger door also. An adequate locking device must be fitted to ensure that the ramp does not slip or tilt when in use. Provision must be made for the ramp to be stowed safely when not in use.

WHY, when was this Introduced, Classis Cut and Pasting from another Policy

67 Remove Private Hire Vehicles

Appendix D

Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions

69. The proprietor must not allow the vehicle to be driven by any person who does not hold a current Dual Driver Licence issued by the Council.

Re Word

69. The proprietor must not allow the vehicle to be driven by any person who does not hold a current Dual Driver Licence issued by the Council.

Exception's: Garage Technician's, Meter Agents conduction Taximeter installations and Calibrations are allowed for those purposes only

Display of Conditions

71. The proprietor of this vehicle must have a copy of these conditions within the vehicle for inspection by those passengers at all times.

A copy of the policy or just the above Conditions what's it to be

Notes

Legislations below show the Sections the trade need to read with reference to the trade.

The Equality Act 2010 is the prime example what we would expect to see, it quotes the Act and the sections relevant to it. (sections 168 - 171 for the carriage of guide dogs etc)

With reference to the Legislation below the trade would welcome the exact sections to be shown that are relevant.

May I ask why the following pieces of legislation are missing from the Web site, as some of these are mentioned within the Extraordinary Licensing Committee report before members on the 17th March 2025. I know the web site is under development, the usual way of up dating is have the new detail ready and close the old one when live.

We have been working under revised bylaws from 25th June 1992. These have never been displayed on the PPP or Council Website let alone given to drivers on application or inception of licence, The conditions and bylaws within one document issued to the trade actually conflict with each other.

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022

Data Protection Act 2018

Immigration Act 2016 (Exceptions)

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975

Health Act 2006

The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1988

Transport Act 1980

Byelaws Relating to Hackney Carriages in the area of the former Borough of Newbury
25th June 1992

Byelaws Relating to Hackney Carriages in the whole of the councils area except the area
of the former Borough of Newbury 25th June 1992

Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards

Updated 25 November 2022

Legislation available on the council web site 18-5-25

Town Police Clauses Act 1847 (the 1847 Act)

Part II Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (the 1976 Act)

Road Traffic Act 1988 Part 11 (a) Construction and Use of Vehicles and Equipment

Motor Vehicles (Tests) Regulations 1981

The Equality Act 2010 (sections 168 - 171 for the carriage of guide dogs etc)

Roof Signs

The roof sign must be lit when the taximeter is not active and not lit when the taximeter is in use.

RE WORD

The roof sign must be lit when the taximeter is in the For Hire mode, When hired the roof light will be off (Automatically controlled by the Taximeter)

Taximeter

38. The proprietor must ensure the vehicle is fitted with a taximeter approved by the Council, and that meter must be kept in good repair and proper working order at all times. The taximeter must be set for the current tariff set by the Council or a continually lower rate and must be sealed to prevent unauthorised adjustment of that meter.

The council will need to inform the trade and Taximeter companies which meters are approved

40. The taximeter must be fitted with a mechanism which will start the taximeter and make the word “HIRED” to appear on the display, and a means of stopping the taximeter from recording time and distance so that for that period no fare is recorded.

Taximeters in stopped (Stopped will show on the meter) mode will not charge waiting time, distance will always be charged.

43. The taximeter must be located so that the entire display is plainly visible to any person travelling in the vehicle. The mechanism for activating the meter must be linked to the roof sign to ensure that when the meter is activated the roof sign light is switched off. It must not be possible to illuminate the roof sign by any other means.

RE Word

The taximeter must be located so that the entire display is plainly visible to any person travelling in the vehicle. The mechanism for activating the meter must be linked to the roof sign to ensure that when the meter shows Hired the roof sign light is switched off. It must not be possible to illuminate the roof sign by any other means.

Appendix C

60 - Code of Conduct for Licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers

11. Taximeters In Private Hire Vehicles

[Taximeter Use in Hackney Carriages Is Governed By The Byelaws]

11.5 You must ensure that when the vehicle is not hired the key is to be locked and the machinery kept inactive and the meter must show no fare at any time.

Please explain the above 11.5 its not needed

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING

NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 7 APRIL 2025

Trade Representatives: Deborah Brown (DB), Richard Brown (RB), Matt Castle (MC), Damien Cox (DC), Graham Cox GC), Sunny Hussain (SH)

Officers Present: Mark Groves (MG), Julia O'Brien (JOB), Vikki Rigden (VR) and Linda Pye (LP)

Introduction

JOB welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that this was an open meeting for trade representatives to exchange feedback on the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2025-2030 which had been considered at the Licensing Committee meeting on 17 March 2025. The amended policy was now out for consultation from 18 March 2025 to 18 May 2025.

The trade representatives present at the meeting raised the following general comments and concerns on the revised policy. They felt that the document contained a large number of grammatical and typographical errors and they queried why this had not been picked up before. The policy was not welcoming and it was difficult to understand particularly where English might not be a person's first language. It was also felt that there seemed to be a huge amount of replication throughout the document which could be condensed down.

MC asked what the point was of taking notes of the meeting. JOB confirmed that the comments raised at this meeting would be presented to the Licensing Committee as part of the consultation process.

Discussion then moved on to the points system and it was queried where that had come from as it was causing some concern to both operators and drivers. JOB confirmed that a lot of Councils had this in place and the idea was to have a progressive enforcement action for the trade. Minor offences could be dealt with by way of a verbal warning the first couple of times before points were awarded although it was noted that that had not been mentioned in the policy. As this was the main issue of concern MC recommended that Appendix B Penalty Points Scheme should be taken out of the consultation on the policy at this stage and dealt with separately. This would need to be a recommendation to the Committee.

SH suggested that the discussion at the meeting should now focus on the content of the policy rather than typographical errors as this would be too time consuming. This was agreed.

**HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING – 7
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HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING – 7 APRIL 2025

The meeting then considered the policy on a page-by-page basis as follows:

Para No.	Heading	Comment	Officer Recommendation/Reasons	Legal Comment	Completed
	Front Page	It was queried whether it was necessary to have a fixed timescale for the policy as there was no mandate for that. It would save a lot of time for officers if it could be managed via version control.	JOB would have a discussion with Legal.		
	Front Page	It was queried whether the local authority should be known as West Berkshire Council or West Berkshire District Council. Include the definition in the Scope section.	VR confirmed that she had received a response from Legal on this issue. West Berkshire District Council was the legal name of the authority but it was known informally as West Berkshire Council.		
	Contents	DB felt that the document could be condensed down and cross references included to other pages. Information in the policy was repeated in the Appendices.	VR confirmed that Officers could look at this but it was a contents page which was automatically generated rather than an index. JOB would look at the Appendices.		
1a	Introduction	DC said that this was a policy and not legislation.			
1b	Introduction	Second line – define the word 'services'			
1b	Introduction	It was queried who managed unlicensed vehicles?			
1b	Introduction	'Ensuring licenced vehicles were available where and when required'. It was queried how that would be controlled.			
1d	Introduction	Move this paragraph into section 2 – Scope			
1e	Introduction	Include a link to the website for the policy, application forms and current fees.			
2d	Scope	<i>After the words 'Only a licensed driver can drive a licensed vehicle' add the words 'for hire or reward'.</i>	VR/JOB to check if that is okay.		
3c	Legislation, Byelaws, Guidance and Policy	Remove this paragraph as it was a duplication of 3a.			
4c	Applications for Licences	Timescales should be included for an application to be determined.	VR would check but she said that that would be included in the Service Level Agreement.		

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING – 7 APRIL 2025

4f	Applications for Licences	This paragraph states that no reminders would be sent out but DC said that this was a change to policy and he queried what the process was for alerting the trade.	VR explained that the expiry dates were included on the licences. It was not possible for the team to send out reminders and it would be the responsibility of individual drivers to make sure that they applied for a renewal in the appropriate timescale. She would include an item in the next newsletter to remind drivers of this requirement.		
6b	Suitability to Hold a Licence	Include the word ' <i>stipulated</i> ' before the words ' <i>driver education courses</i> '.			
6b	Suitability to Hold a Licence	'48 hours' to be amended to '72 hours'.			
6b	Suitability to Hold a Licence	5 th line amend to read – 'In addition, all operators <i>or their nominated person ...</i> '.			
6	Suitability to Hold a Licence	DC asked if Legal could check this section to clarify what the Council actually means.		Legal to comment.	
7b	Enforcement	Include a link to the Enforcement Policy.			
7c	Enforcement	Remove the word 'Generally'.			
7c	Enforcement	Third paragraph – word should be ' <i>failing</i> ' and not ' <i>falling</i> '.			
8a	Action against Licences (Suspension, Revoke or Refuse)	This paragraph refers to Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Should Part I of that act also be referenced?	VR/JOB to check.		
8b	Action against Licences (Suspension, Revoke or Refuse)	There is a discrepancy between this paragraph and paragraph 6d.	VR/JOB to check.		
9a	Appeals	Should other licences be referenced in this paragraph.	VR/JOB to check.		
10a	Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles – Applications for Vehicle Licences	Third line – change to 'a proprietor is the <i>lessee</i> in possession ...'			
10c	Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles – Applications for Vehicle Licences	Delete the words '(or, in the case of imported vehicles, manufactured)'			

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING – 7 APRIL 2025

10d	Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles – Applications for Vehicle Licences	Should just refer to Euro 6.			
11	Criminal Record Checks	Include the words ' <i>and DBS</i> ' in the title.			
11d	Criminal Record and DBS Checks	DC said that it was positive to see that the link to a certified translation service had been included.	Noted.		
12a	HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Requirements	DC stated that if an employee is PAYE they cannot register for tax with HMRC so this paragraph will need amending.	VR/JOB will check.		
15c	Accessible Vehicles	Change the word 'ensuring' to ' <i>assuring</i> '.			
15d	Accessible Vehicles	RB was told at a training course that assistance dogs had to be secured in the vehicle by a lead or harness but that had not been included in the policy. Some did not agree with that advice.	VR/JOB would consider that.		
16e	General Application Process for Vehicles	Change the words ' <i>must be made 4 weeks prior to ...</i> ' to ' <i>must be made no later than 3 weeks prior to ...</i> '.			
16f	General Application Process for Vehicles	Include wording to clarify that on first application original documentation would need to be seen and photocopied. For renewals a photocopy or digital scan would be acceptable provided that there had been no changes to personal details.	VR/JOB to amend.		
16g	General Application Process for Vehicles	This paragraph needs to be reworded.	VR/JOB to amend.		
16h	General Application Process for Vehicles	Change the word ' <i>applicant</i> ' to ' <i>licence holder</i> '.			
16j	General Application Process for Vehicles	Paragraph needs to be reworded as it does not make sense.	VR/JOB to amend.		
16k	General Application Process for Vehicles	Include link to the fees page.	VR/JOB to amend.		
16l	General Application Process for Vehicles	Third bullet point – Should read full V5C or green slip until V5C is available.	VR/JOB might need to amend first bullet point.		
16m	General Application Process for Vehicles	Bullet points 4 and 6 are a duplication	VR/JOB to amend.		
16m	General Application Process for Vehicles	MOT requirement and Compliance Test inspection	VR/JOB to look into this as it might be necessary to go out to tender for authorised garages.		
16m	General Application Process for Vehicles	There were a number of comments as to why vehicles of 6 years of age needed to have a			

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING – 7 APRIL 2025

		compliance inspection every six months. They could not see the point as the vehicle would have an MOT and it would only cost the trade more money.			
18a-k	CCTV in Vehicles	The trade said that the CCTV which they used in their vehicle was not compliant with the requirements set out in the policy. It was noted that if a minor was present in the vehicle then written permission would be required before they could be filmed. This might also have an impact on Home to School Transport.	VR asked people to let her know which provider they used and what it complied with so that she could revisit the requirements in the policy if necessary.		
19e	Vehicle Standards/ Testing	The words ' <i>no fewer than four passengers</i> ' to be amended to ' <i>no fewer than three passengers</i> '.			
20a	Age of Vehicles	A discussion took place about the age of vehicles and in particular the fact that a licence would not be granted in respect of vehicles that were first registered more than five years prior to the date that the application was made. It was good to have a mixed fleet but there was not so much choice when purchasing a wheelchair accessible vehicle and they were more expensive than non-accessible vehicles. It was therefore suggested that instead of having a period of five years across the board it was suggested that wheelchair accessible vehicles could be six years and non-accessible vehicles could be four years. It was queried what percentage of the population in West Berkshire was registered as disabled?	VR confirmed that there were 108 hackney carriage vehicles in West Berkshire 51 were not accessible and 57 were suitable for disabled people. There were 177 private hire vehicles and of those 172 were not accessible and 5 were. Bracknell and Wokingham were fully accessible. VR/JOB to consider the options and make a recommendation to Committee.		
20c	Age of Vehicles	Include the words ' <i>or quality condition</i> ' at the end of that paragraph.			
20c	Age of Vehicles	Include the page reference in the appendix where the minimum standards are outlined.	VR/JOB		
21a	Electronic Payment Devices in Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles	Change the last sentence to read – 'The device must be connected, maintained, and working at all times to ensure customers are able to pay by card, other electronic means <i>or by a digital payment link.</i> '			

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING – 7 APRIL 2025

22c	Roof Signs	Include information about the livery from the old document.	VR/JOB		
23a	Dispensation/Exemption Certificates	Change the word ' <i>badge</i> ' to ' <i>identification card</i> '.			
24	School Contracts	Remove this section.			
25a	Executive Hire	Delete the sentence which reads – ' <i>This type of activity includes chauffeur services.</i> ' Change the word ' <i>contract</i> ' to ' <i>preferential supplier</i> '.			
25c	Executive Hire	Dispensation notice – it was noted that a fee would be payable for this. However, that had not been the case previously and it was queried why there would be a charge for this now.	VR to check.		
28	Data Protection	MC advised that if the system for recording personal information was bought and hosted outside the UK it needed to comply with the Data Protection legislation.	All to note.		
DUAL DRIVER AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCES					
33a(7)	Pre-requisites to making an application	The requirements need to be listed.	VR/JOB to amend.		
33b	Pre-requisites to making an application	Specify who the Licensing Manager is.	VR/JOB to amend.		
33c	Pre-requisites to making an application	Discussion took place on the requirement to retake the knowledge test every six years. Some members of the trade did not feel that it was necessary and there were concerns that if a driver did not pass the test then they would not be able to work as they would not have a valid licence. It was suggested that it might be better to complete a refresher course rather than having to do the whole lot again.	VR confirmed that a driver would have three goes to pass the test and drivers would be encouraged to take the test well in advance of their licence expiring so that they could continue to work. The knowledge test covered a number of areas e.g. geographical, highway code, policy and safeguarding etc. The reason that it was proposing to ask drivers to retake the test every six years was because the policy would have changed over that period. VR confirmed that she could look at putting together a refresher but it would still need to include a number of sections as drivers would need to know the policy and what was in it. It might be possible to split the knowledge test into two parts with the refresher focusing on		

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING – 7 APRIL 2025

			any changes to policy.		
34b	Behaviour and Conduct of Drivers	Include the words ' <i>(Appendix D)</i> ' after ' <i>Code of Conduct for Licensed Dual and Private Hire Drivers</i> '.			
35	Criminal Record Checks	DBS checks – it was queried why the Council was using TaxiPlus for these checks.	VR advised that TaxiPlus offered a complete screening solution and whose services were driven by technology. Drivers were encouraged to sign up to the Update Service in order that local authorities could manage the service more easily via a status checking module. Notifications would be received if there was a problem with a check or if there was an issue with the credit card payment. She was able to add drivers onto TaxiPlus provided that they let her have a copy of three documents. She confirmed that TaxiPlus was an umbrella body and was therefore not registered with the Government.		
35c	Criminal Record Checks	The word 'warnings' – specify or remove.	VR/JOB to check.		
35c	Criminal Record Checks	Insert the word ' <i>mandated</i> ' before ' <i>driver education courses</i> '.			
35e	Criminal Record Checks	Include timescales for when this would apply.	VR/JOB to amend.		
36	Certificate of Good Conduct	Concerns were again raised about the need to have a Certificate of Good Conduct (CoGC) and why it would be necessary from the age of 10. SH felt that it was discriminatory.	VR explained that 10 years was the age of criminal responsibility and the policy had been brought in line with that. She confirmed that she had not had any problems in obtaining CoGC's but if there was a problem then issues would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.		

(The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 1.02pm)

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING

NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 28 APRIL 2025

Trade Representatives: Deborah Brown (DB), Richard Brown (RB), Matt Castle (MC), Graham Cox (GC), Jennie Harrison (JH) (left at 11.55am), Sunny Hussain (SH) and Dave Taylor (DT)

Officers Present: Julia O'Brien (JOB), Vikki Rigden (VR) and Linda Pye (LP)

Minutes

The notes of the meeting held on 7 April 2025 were noted. One amendment was highlighted in that paragraph 10(d) should just refer to Euro 6.

Introduction

JOB welcomed everyone to the second meeting and explained that this was an open meeting for trade representatives to exchange feedback on the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2025-2030 which had been considered at the Licensing Committee meeting on 17 March 2025. The amended policy was now out for consultation from 18 March 2025 to 18 May 2025.

SH referred to paragraph 2(c) of the policy which stated that *'The private hire operator was also responsible for the actions of the drivers that they use and the condition of the vehicles that they use.'* He asked for clarification as to whether the above should be the responsibility of the operator and/or the driver. JOB replied that that would depend on what the offence was. MC suggested that it was linked to the points issue which would be discussed later in the policy.

JH stated that she was not happy with how the policy had been put together and what was in it. She felt that the Council was using the policy to make drivers look bad in order to get rid of their licences and she felt victimised and unsafe. The trade had not been consulted or had any input into what should be included in the policy. JOB responded that it was necessary to have a starting point and this was the purpose of these meetings to go through the policy in detail and pick up any points that the trade was not happy with. The points raised had been noted and would be considered at the Committee meeting when the policy would be discussed. VR added that the statutory guidance stated that licensing authorities had to have a policy in place which was very prescriptive and therefore it had been necessary to go with this as a starting point. Prior to leaving the meeting at 11.55am JH said that the trade felt like it was being picked on. The contents page did not make sense and she suggested that it would be necessary to get together and look at rewriting each paragraph so that it was clear. VR/JOB replied that it would not be possible to rewrite the policy from scratch.

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING – 28 APRIL 2025

The meeting then considered the remainder of the policy on a page-by-page basis as follows:

Para No.	Heading	Comments	Officer Recommendation/Reasons	Legal Comment	Completed
37(e)	Medical Examination	Delete paragraph e.			
37(f)	Medical Examination	Change 48 hours to 72 hours.			
39(b) & (d)	Practical Driving Assessment	<p>Paragraph (b) needs rewording although it was suggested that this paragraph could be removed as it was covered in 39(d).</p> <p>GC did not think that existing drivers should be required to have passed a practical driving and wheelchair assessment unless a complaint had been made about them. He was in agreement that new drivers should be made to pass such an assessment. It would also be difficult to undertake an enhanced driving assessment within three calendar months. Links should be included in the policy for organisations which provided these assessments.</p> <p>SH asked how many Councils had this in their policy. VR confirmed that she was undertaking a benchmarking exercise but had not completed it as yet due to other work pressures.</p>	VR/JOB to consider and amend as appropriate.		
40(a)	Knowledge of Area	<p>It had already been agreed at the first meeting that the Licensing Team would look at putting a refresher course in place for existing drivers.</p> <p>SH asked if operators could see the proposed refresher course prior to implementation. VR said that it might be possible to include it in the licence fee but she would need to check that.</p> <p>She advised that Bracknell trade had wanted to keep the full test in order to ensure that the service provided was professional. It was timely to revise the Knowledge test in any event which could be designed to be a multiple-choice option or possibly producing a map with some places left blank for the driver to complete.</p>	VR to action.		
40(b)	Knowledge of Area	This paragraph to be deleted.			
40(e)	Knowledge of Area	The word ' <i>quickest</i> ' to be replaced with ' <i>shortest</i> '.			

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING – 28 APRIL 2025

Para No.	Heading	Comments	Officer Recommendation/Reasons	Legal Comment	Completed
		It was noted that the majority of drivers would check with the customer as to which route they would like them to take and that would usually be the shortest route. VR suggested that a new Tariff Card could be produced which would include the words <i>'The shortest route will always be taken unless specified otherwise'</i> . A QR link could also be provided to the tariff card and the comments/complaints page on the website.			
42(b)	Disability Awareness Training	The cost of this training was not now included in the licence fee and therefore this paragraph would need rewording. GC advised that he was still awaiting refunds on courses which had been cancelled. VR would look into that as that should have happened when an application for renewal had been received. DB suggested that there should be a separate training section which would include everything as that would make it clearer for operators and drivers.	VR/JOB to consider and amend. VR would check.		
44(a)	Code of Conduct	Appendix C should read Code of Conduct for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire (Dual) Drivers.			
PRIVATE HIRE OPERATOR LICENCES					
		DB stated that as this was a new section the numbering should restart from 1 as that would be less confusing. A description should be included as to what an operator was e.g. the person in charge of the business.	VR/JOB to consider.		
47(c)	Criminal Record Checks	Insert the timeframe for the suspension or revocation of the licence. This was a recurring issue as timeframes did not seem to be given when it was something the Licensing Team had to do.	VR/JOB to action		
49(a)	Certificate of Good Conduct	Again, the issue around the period of three months was raised. VR advised that this was the			

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING – 28 APRIL 2025

Para No.	Heading	Comments	Officer Recommendation/Reasons	Legal Comment	Completed
		statutory standard.			
50(a)	Operator Application Process	Make it clear that once original documents had been scanned at first application then photocopies or electronic copies could be provided for renewals provided that there had been no change of circumstance. The timescales should be stated.	VR/JOB to action.		
52(a)	Data Protection	The point was raised that the Licensing Team did not currently have Enhanced DBS checks and therefore would not be able to check operators' records. VR responded that HR did not require Licensing staff to have a DBS check but some members of staff had volunteered to have one and that would be put in place shortly. Link to ICO website to be included in the policy.	VR/JOB to action.		
54(g)	Drivers and Vehicles	Paragraph should be (a) and not (g).			
54(g)	Drivers and Vehicles	Paragraph to be reworded to make it clearer.	VR/JOB to action.		
57	Appeals	Timeframe needs to be included after the words ' <i>informed in writing</i> '.	VR/JOB to action.		
	Operator Base	A definition was required in respect of an operator base. It was felt to be important to ensure that the wording was correct.	VR to draft some wording and send the trade a copy for their comments.		
APPENDIX A – HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING CONVICTIONS POLICY					
General		Page endings/headings need to be looked at so that they were not separate from the text in each section.	VR/JOB to action.		
1	Introduction	It was thought that the policy seemed to be negative in terms of the trade and it would be nice to have a positive introduction.	VR/JOB to action.		
4.1	Drivers	Private hire should not be referred to as a taxi and therefore this paragraph needed to be amended.	VR/JOB to action.		
10.3	Dishonesty	List paragraph numbers need to be renumbered.			
12.1	Discrimination	VR to check whether the reference to SEVEN YEARS was a statutory standard timescale.	VR to check.		
General		Where the Council was required to do something there did not seem to be any timescales included.	VR/JOB to action.		

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In terms of **Appendix B – Penalty Points Scheme** it was felt that further work was required or an explanation should be provided as to how it would work. VR clarified that this appendix needed to be included and adopted at the same time as the policy as the policy made reference to it. The same scheme was being operated in Bracknell and there did not seem to be any issues with it. She confirmed that discussions would take place with drivers in terms of the level of penalty points awarded if there had been a breach of legislation or the requirements of the policy had not been adhered to. JOB confirmed that any accumulation of 12 points or more in a 12-month period would be referred to the Licensing Committee of West Berkshire Council for consideration of disciplinary action. VR said that it might be possible to separate driver and operator points. It was agreed that a further session would be arranged to go through Appendix B – Penalty Points Scheme. The date for the meeting had been scheduled for **10am on Monday 12 May 2025 at Theale Library**.

SH queried what would be classed as ‘working hours’ and how would that be calculated. VR confirmed that she would clarify but it would be based around active hours rather than rest time (**VR to action**).

(The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 12.45pm)

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY MEETING

NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 12 MAY 2025

Trade Representatives: Deborah Brown (DB), Richard Brown (RB), Matt Castle (MC) and Sunny Hussain (SH)

Officers Present: Mark Groves (MG), Vikki Rigden (VR) and Linda Pye (LP)

Introduction

VR welcomed everyone to the third meeting and explained that this was an open meeting for trade representatives to exchange feedback on the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2025-2030 which had been considered at the Licensing Committee meeting on 17 March 2025. The amended policy was now out for consultation from 18 March 2025 to 18 May 2025.

RB queried whether a member of the Trade could bring someone with them when there was an appeal. MG confirmed that an individual could bring in a representative and to his knowledge this had never been refused.

DB stated that it was difficult to find out where the offences in the three lists corresponded to the relevant section in the actual policy. VR asked if it would be useful to include another column which set out where it was referred to in the policy. DR replied that alternatively the appendices could have a contents list but VR said that that would be more difficult as there was so much in there. SH suggested that the offences and points could be included in the relevant sections within the policy. MG felt that it was clear within Appendix C as there were three lists - one for Vehicles (Code V), one for Drivers (Code D) and one for Operators (Code C). It was agreed that an additional column would be added to the list of penalty points.

SH felt that the minor offences in the Penalty Points Scheme should be lower numbers and those that were listed as '4' should be '3'. VR also felt that the lowest point should be three in line with the DVLA but MG had disagreed.

VR confirmed that in the previous authority where she had worked she could only remember two or three drivers who accumulated 12 penalty points. It was a similar situation as with a driving licence – if a person had three points on their licence for speeding then they would be more careful about that going forward.

RB noted that mention had been made about taxi meters in several locations and he queried why they were not listed together to make it much easier to locate.

It was clarified that even if a charge had been agreed beforehand a driver should put the meter on for that journey to allow for the passenger to choose the price they wanted to pay.

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MC noted that if a wheelchair turned up at the rank all of the taxis would disappear. He had received a number of complaints about wheelchairs. He suggested that the driver of every single vehicle that was plated should come to the Licensing Team to practice dealing with a wheelchair so that the owner of that vehicle knew how use wheelchairs on that car. VR suggested that it could be made mandatory that they would have to complete a wheelchair assessment but there would be a cost. That would be separate from the Disability Awareness training. SH was concerned that this would increase the number of tests a driver needed to complete. VR was aware of another operator who had said that for school transport they had had to complete a specific Blue Lamp training assessment and they wanted that to be implemented. RB felt that if the points system was tidied up that would cover off the angles of all the extra testing. VR said that the issue was in relation to the drivers who did not know how to use the vehicle. RB suggested that the operators could undertake a self-test of their own drivers and send a certificate to the Council. SH asked if all the courses could be amalgamated into one and repeated every six years as that would make things a lot easier. VR said that if the wheelchair element was outsourced to Blue Lamp then they would take on the responsibility of training everyone and keeping up with legislation. It was therefore suggested that the wheelchair element could be added on to the Disability Awareness course. This was agreed.

MC asked if a wheelchair sticker could be made available in the Council's livery to place on the sides of wheelchair accessible vehicles. This was agreed.

MC noted the concerns raised about the penalty points system but this was the proposed policy and if after a year there were problems with it then would be the time to lobby for changes. The policy would be in place for five years but it would be reviewed annually.

It was queried whether reminders for licence renewals would be sent out. VR advised that the new package had limitations but it worked well for some things and not for others. It would be necessary for her to manually send out reminders which would take up a lot of her time. The team was looking at other options to see if it was possible to send out reminders.

SH stated that the Trade was finding it difficult at the moment to recruit new drivers. If a taxi company lost a driver then it was hard to replace and he felt that the policy as it stood would be a further barrier. RB agreed that the Trade did not like the format of the document but suggested that a bullet point summary would be useful as it was too long. MG reiterated that the Government had requested that all the elements of the policy should be included in one document.

The meeting discussed Appendices C through to E on a page-by-page basis as follows:

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Para No.	Heading	Comments	Officer Recommendation/Reasons	Legal Comment	Completed
APPENDIX B – PENALTY POINTS SCHEME					
1.4	Penalty Points Scheme	Delete the words 'in any rolling 12-month period' and replace with the words 'over the same length of time as the licence'. VR confirmed that this was what was in the statutory standards and therefore had to be used.			
2.2 & 2.3	The Penalty Points Scheme will operate as follows:	Use a different word instead of 'sanction'. 2.3 needs rewording as it says that there is no right of appeal – please clarify as it was thought JOB would review and make the final decision.	JOB/VR to action.		
7.1	List of Offences/Breach of Vehicle Licence Conditions/Byelaws	Include the word 'Vehicle Operator' (Done) V1, V51 and V52 – timeline should be included.	JOB/VR to action. VR clarified that any points for an offence with a code 'V' would not go to the operator unless the vehicle was registered in the operator's name. The trade felt that this was not clear and an explanation should be provided on that in the introduction.		
7.1 V13	List of Offences/Breach of Vehicle Licence Conditions/Byelaws	V13 should read 'Failure to display Council livery front door signs'.	VR confirmed that livery was being brought back in.		
7.1 V33	List of Offences/Breach of Vehicle Licence Conditions/Byelaws	V33 timescale was different to what was stated in paragraph 17.57 on page 70 in relation to a Temporary Replacement Vehicle. Three months would be a fairer timescale than two weeks as stated in V33.	JOB/VR to action.		
7.1	List of Offences/Breach of Vehicle Licence Conditions/Byelaws	Numbering is out – there is no V41, 42 or 50.	JOB/VR to action to make sure codes ran consecutively.		
7.2	Breaches of both Dual and Private Hire Driver's Licences Code of Conduct	D4 – remove vaping. Trade was keen for vaping to be removed for now. Smoking was illegal due to health and safety reasons but vaping was legal at the moment.	JOB/VR to consider.		
APPENDIX C – CODE OF CONDUCT					
1.2 & 1.4	Code of Conduct for Licensed Drivers	Should read 'Code of Conduct' and not 'Code of Good Conduct'.			
1.6	Code of Conduct for	Include in a Glossary at the front of the policy	JOB/VR to action.		

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Para No.	Heading	Comments	Officer Recommendation/Reasons	Legal Comment	Completed
	Licensed Drivers				
3.8	Driving	It was felt that one minute was not sufficient time to pick up or drop off passengers.	JOB/VR to consider.		
6.6 & 6.7	Conduct and Behaviour	Trade felt that it was sometimes necessary to contact customers about bookings or lost property. Operators would try and reunite lost property with their owners if possible. The Police would not be interested in returning any lost property. In any event paragraph 10.2 contradicts paragraph 6.6 as it states that you can return property personally to the owner. In that case it would be necessary to make contact with the owner. Most operators had a log book in the office in which lost property was logged.	JOB/VR to consider. VR stated that this was in the Code of Conduct for safeguarding reasons. However, she would do some research and would contact Inspector at Newbury for their thoughts. If they notified us in writing that they did not want to receive the lost property then it could be removed from the policy.		
6.10	Conduct and Behaviour	Amended to read 'To give reasonable assistance in removing luggage to and from the vehicle.'			
6.19	Conduct and Behaviour	24 hours should be amended to read '72 hours'.			
6.23	Conduct and Behaviour	Add in wheelchair training and paragraph amended by removing the words 'or where it will improve the good image of West Berkshire for the benefit of passengers.'			
6.24 (c)	Conduct and Behaviour	Paragraph to be amended to read 'Do not play music whilst carrying passengers unless they had a licence.'	VR to check if a licence is required to play music in a taxi and amend paragraph further if required.		
6.24 (d)	Conduct and Behaviour	Move the words 'to avoid disturbance to local residents' to the end of (a) and delete the rest of (d).			
7.4	Personal Appearance and Dress Code	Remove the words 'full body' and replace with the words 'no cropped tops or cut out sections'.			
7.5	Personal Appearance and Dress Code	Put the word 'tailored' in front of 'shorts'. Include 'Avoid wearing tracksuits or hoodies' at the end of that bullet point.			
8.2	Use of the Vehicle	Remove 8.2			
9.1	Vehicle Checks	There was no mention of where and how evidence of the walk around checks should be recorded.	JOB/VR to action.		
9.2	Vehicle Checks	Replace the words 'to the outermost rear of the			

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Para No.	Heading	Comments	Officer Recommendation/Reasons	Legal Comment	Completed
		vehicle' with 'below the rear window'.			
10.2	Lost Property	See comments in respect of 6.6 and 6.7. Amend if necessary	VR to look at.		
APPENDIX D – HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENCE CONDITIONS					
3. 8(j)	Maintenance of the Vehicle	Also referred to in Appendix C 9.1. There was no mention of where and how evidence of the walk around checks should be recorded and did not refer to digital records.	JOB/VR to action.		
17.57	Temporary Replacement Vehicle	Paragraph states that no temporary licence will be granted for a period exceeding three months. The Trade were querying the time period.	JOB/VR to consider.		

It was noted that there had not been time to go through Appendix E – Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions and she suggested that any comments on that document should be submitted online. VR concluded that all of the points which had been raised at these meetings would be amalgamated and considered by the Committee together with any further written representations which were received prior to the deadline of 18 May 2025. She thanked the Trade for their time and commitment in attending these meetings and putting forward their suggested amendments to the policy.

(The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 12.55pm)