

Regulatory Committee

Friday, 28 June 2024 at 11.30 am
Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton

Next ordinary meeting
Friday, 6 December 2024 at 11.30 am

Please Note: This meeting will take place at Phoenix House and members of the public and press are able to attend via Teams. If you are intending to attend in person please contact the committee clerk in advance, in order that numbers of people can be appropriately managed in physical meeting rooms.

The meeting will be hybrid and an audio recording made and published on the website after the meeting.

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 316 996 956 115
Passcode: pzxKV9

Membership

J Buczkowski
J Cairney
S Chenore
A Cuddy
D Broom
F J Colthorpe
L J Cruwys
J M Downes
M Jenkins
S Keable
L G J Kennedy
F W Letch

A G E N D A

Members are reminded of the need to make declarations of interest prior to any discussion which may take place

- 1 **ELECTION OF CHAIR**
To elect a Chair of the Regulatory Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025.
- 2 **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**
To elect a Vice-Chair of the Regulatory Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025.
- 3 **START TIME OF MEETINGS**
To agree a start time for the Regulatory Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025.
- 4 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**
To receive any apologies for absence and notices of appointment of Substitute Members (if any).
- 5 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**
To receive any questions relating to items on the Agenda from members of the public and replies thereto.
- 6 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**
To record any interests on agenda matters.
- 7 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** (*Pages 5 - 8*)
To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on
- 8 **HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE (TAXI) POLICY UPDATE**
(*Pages 9 - 188*)
To present to members an update following the three month consultation carried between January and April 2024 to consider the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.
- 9 **LICENSING UPDATE REPORT** (*Pages 189 - 194*)
To provide the Committee with an overview of the regulatory activity undertaken by the Licensing Team as applicable to the Regulatory Committee.

Guidance notes for meetings of Mid Devon District Council

From 7 May 2021, the law requires all councils to hold formal meetings in person. The Council will enable all people to continue to participate in meetings via Teams.

If the Council experience technology difficulties at a committee meeting the Chairman may make the decision to continue the meeting 'in-person' only to conclude the business on the agenda.

1. Inspection of Papers

Any person wishing to inspect minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the agenda should contact Democratic Services at Committee@middevon.gov.uk

They can also be accessed via the council's website [Click Here](#)

Printed agendas can also be viewed in reception at the Council offices at Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton, EX16 6PP.

2. Members' Code of Conduct requirements

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: Honesty; Integrity; Selflessness; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Leadership.

The Code of Conduct can be [viewed here](#):

3. Minutes of the Meeting

Details of the issues discussed, and recommendations made at the meeting will be set out in the minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting. Minutes of meetings are not verbatim.

4. Public Question Time

Residents, electors or business rate payers of the District wishing to raise a question and/or statement under public question time are asked to provide their written questions to the Democratic Services team by 5pm three clear working days before the meeting to ensure that a response can be provided at the meeting. You will be invited to ask your question and or statement at the meeting and will receive the answer prior to, or as part of, the debate on that item. Alternatively, if you are content to receive an answer after the item has been debated, you can register to speak by emailing your full name to Committee@middevon.gov.uk by no later than 4pm on the day before the meeting. You will be invited to speak at the meeting and will receive a written response within 10 clear working days following the meeting.

Notification in this way will ensure the meeting runs as smoothly as possible

5. Meeting Etiquette for participants

- Only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.
- If you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number.

For those joining the meeting virtually:

- Mute your microphone when you are not talking.
- Switch off your camera if you are not speaking.
- Speak clearly (if you are not using camera then please state your name)
- Switch off your camera and microphone after you have spoken.
- There is a facility in Microsoft Teams under the ellipsis button called "turn on live captions" which provides subtitles on the screen.

6. Exclusion of Press & Public

When considering an item on the agenda, the Committee may consider it appropriate to pass a resolution under Section 100A (4) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, as defined under the terms of the Act. If there are members of the public and press listening to the open part of the meeting, then the Democratic Services Officer will, at the appropriate time, ask participants to leave the meeting when any exempt or confidential information is about to be discussed. They will be invited to return as soon as the meeting returns to open session.

7. Recording of meetings

All media, including radio and TV journalists, and members of the public may attend Council, Cabinet, PDG and Committee meetings (apart from items Media and Social Media Policy - 2023 page 22 where the public is excluded) you can view our Media and Social Media Policy [here](#). They may record, film or use social media before, during or after the meeting, so long as this does not distract from or interfere unduly with the smooth running of the meeting. Anyone proposing to film during the meeting is requested to make this known to the Chairman in advance. The Council also makes audio recordings of meetings which are published on our website [Browse Meetings, 2024 - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](#).

8. Fire Drill Procedure

If you hear the fire alarm you should leave the building by the marked fire exits, follow the direction signs and assemble at the master point outside the entrance. Do not use the lifts or the main staircase. You must wait there until directed otherwise by a senior officer. If anybody present is likely to need assistance in exiting the building in the event of an emergency, please ensure you have let a member of Democratic Services know before the meeting begins and arrangements will be made should an emergency occur.

9. WIFI

An open, publicly available Wi-Fi network is normally available for meetings held in the Phoenix Chambers at Phoenix House.

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **REGULATORY COMMITTEE** held on 1 December 2023 at 11.30 am

Present

Councillors

J Cairney (Chairman)
A Cuddy (Vice Chairman), C Adcock,
D Broom, F J Colthorpe, L J Cruwys,
J M Downes, M Farrell and L G J Kennedy

Apologies

Councillor(s)

J Frost

Also Present

Officer(s):

Simon Newcombe (Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing), Deborah Sharpley (Legal Services Solicitor), Harriet Said (Team Leader (Commercial), Public Health), Alan Drake (Specialist Lead (Licensing)) and Angie Howell (Democratic Services Officer)

Councillors

Online

S Chenore, A Glover and G Westcott

9 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (03:38)

Apologies were received from Cllr J Frost and Cllr S Chenore attended as his substitute online.

10 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (03:54)

There were no members of the public present and no questions were asked.

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (04:03)

There were no declarations of interest received.

12 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (04:17)

The minutes of the 30th June 2023 were **APPROVED** and signed by the Chairman.

13 **REGULATORY UPDATE REPORT (04:49)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, the Service Update.

The contents of the report were outlined by the Team Leader, Commercial, Public Health and highlighted the following:

- The report provided an overview of the activity carried out by the Licensing Team during the first half of 2023/2024.
- Mid Devon District Council currently had 125 licensed vehicles within the District and 134 licensed drivers.
- The Licensing Team were currently working with a new operator who would bring more than 40 drivers and over 70 vehicles across from Exeter. This would include 9 wheelchair accessible vehicles.
- A total of 45 taxi inspections were carried out in the first half of the year.
- There were currently 41 animal related licences within the District.
- Animal welfare inspections for the granting of licences were carried out by a contractor. However, a Licensing Officer was currently undertaking the qualification and the taught component of this course would be completed by December 2023 followed by a period of experiential learning. This would enable the Licensing Team to deliver inspections in the future.
- There were 45 Mobile Home Sites across Mid Devon, 30 of which were touring sites.
- New legislation in 2021 required a fit and proper person to manage sites where there were permanent residential pitches. The Licensing Team were currently re-engaging with site owners to ensure that all site owners had identified a fit and proper person to manage the site.
- There were currently no timetable for the new non-surgical cosmetic licensing provisions to come into force.
- The new Health and Care Act received royal assent on 28th April 2022. Practitioners would now need to be licensed to perform specific procedures and the premises from which they operate would also need to be licensed. This was likely to impact on the service when the new licensing framework was rolled out.
- The Regulatory Sub-Committee held 2 Hearings in the first half of 2023/24.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

14 **HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE (TAXI) POLICY UPDATE (21:48)**

The Committee had before it and **NOTED**, a report for the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire (Taxi) Policy Update.

The contents of the report were outlined by the Team Leader, Commercial, Public Health and highlighted the following:

- That Members of the Regulatory Committee consider the draft proposed policy document.

- That Members of the Regulatory Committee authorise for a formal consultation of that draft proposed policy for a period of 3 months from January 2024.
- There had been, since drafting the proposed policy, significant changes in terms of guidance to local authorities that had not taken into account the proposed policy. These changes would be addressed in the consultation documents.
- It was proposed that a three month consultation be carried out with individuals and organisations starting in January 2024.
- As part of the consultation there would be separate engagement sessions with Members and the trade.
- Following the consultations the changes would be reported back to the Regulatory Committee for further consideration in Spring 2024.

Consideration was given to:-

- The fact that the Council had an aging taxi fleet the majority of which were registered prior to new standards on emissions.
- Alternative ways to power vehicles without using fossil fuels and to reduce emissions.
- The impact of increased training and additional requirements on the taxi trade from a costs perspective and the need to consider public safety.
- The aspiration of having taxis available 24 hours a day.

The Committee **APPROVED** a formal consultation of the draft proposed policy for a period of 3 months from January 2024.

(Proposed by Cllr F J Colthorpe and seconded by Cllr J Cairney)

Notes: (i) * Report previously circulated.
(ii) Cllr G Westcott left the meeting at 12.00.

(The meeting ended at 12.08 pm)

CHAIRMAN

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Report for: Regulatory Committee

Date of Meeting:	28 th June 2024
Subject:	HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE (TAXI) POLICY UPDATE
Cabinet Member:	David Wulff, Cabinet Member for Quality (Cost) of Living, Equalities and Public Health
Responsible Officer:	Simon Newcombe – Head of Housing and Health
Exempt:	No
Wards Affected:	All wards
Enclosures:	Annex A – Updated Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy 2023 Annex B – Consultation summary responses Annex C – Equalities Impact Assessment

Section 1 – Recommendations

At the Regulatory Committee on the 1 December 2023 considered the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing policy and agreed to a formal consultation for a period of 3-months from January 2024.

The draft policy and as summarised in the accompanying report set out a number of proposed changes which included the introduction of both a Code of Conduct and policy non-compliance penalty points scheme. Other key proposed changes included increased testing of older vehicles, renewal of safeguarding training and a number of legislative led changes including those with regard to immigration checks, taxation and medical certificates.

The purpose of the report is to present to members an update following the three month consultation carried between January and April 2024.

The draft policy has been updated in response to the consultation as set out in the report and therefore the following recommendations are made in respect of taking the policy forward for adoption:

1. That the Committee consider the proposed final amendments to the policy document outlined in section 4.1 of this report.
2. That the Committee approve the draft proposed policy attached as Annex A and recommend its adoption to Full Council in July 2024, with a proposed implementation date from 1st September 2024.
3. Recommendation that Committee delegate authority for amendments to the Penalty Point Scheme to the Head of Housing and Health
4. Recommendation that Committee delegate authority to approve the standard for English communications assessment to the Head of Housing and Health

Section 2 – Report

1 Consultation responses

- 1.1 A public consultation ran between 15th January and 15th April 2024, on the Let's talk Mid Devon platform. The consultation questionnaire asked some direct questions relating to key policy changes and also invited comments/feedback on the wider policy document.
- 1.2 Direct consultees included; Members, residents, the local Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade (including all licence holders), Devon and Cornwall Police, Devon County Council; Public Health (MDDC); Community Safety Partnership (MDDC); Town & Parish Councils within Mid Devon; the Department for Transport; the Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency; Age UK.
- 1.3 The draft policy considered through the consultation included some tracked changes that had been included following publication of the revised "Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice for licencing authorities in England" (Department for Transport, 2023).
- 1.4 A total of 41 responses were received during the 3 month period, a summary of these can be found at Annex B.
- 1.5 A workshop was held with Members of the Regulatory Committee in January 2024, which focused on the key proposed changes of the policy. A summary of the gathered information is available on request prior to Committee, please email licensing@middevon.gov.uk.
- 1.6 A further workshop was held in February 2024 with Mid Devon Licenced drivers, proprietors and operators. Feedback was sought on the key proposed changes and any wider feedback welcomed. 26 licensees attended the workshop. A summary of the gathered information is available on request prior to Committee, please email licensing@middevon.gov.uk.

2 Member workshop feedback

- 2.1 Members of the Regulatory committee were invited to a workshop which specifically looked at the following areas within the policy:
 - Emissions considerations
 - Frequency of testing for vehicles

- Frequency and training requirements for licensees
- Penalty point scheme
- Wider policy considerations

2.2 Member feedback was reviewed and has fed into the recommendations made within section 2.4.1 of this report.

3 Licensee workshop feedback

3.1 Members of the Licensing team, along with the Chair of the Regulatory Committee held a workshop to seek views and feedback from Mid Devon Licensees. Directed feedback was sought on the Penalty Point Scheme, emissions standards, frequency of vehicle testing and training requirements. Further feedback on all areas of the draft policy was invited.

3.2 The session was engaging and positive generally, and all feedback was captured informally. Feedback received through this session has been taken into consideration within the recommendations made within section 2.4.1 of this report.

3.3 Any relevant individual responses/feedback that were not considered as significant to feed into the current Policy review, will be considered by the Licensing team and may feed into review of internal procedures in the future.

3.4 Licence holders were generally positive about proposals for the Penalty Point Scheme and the introduction of an emissions standard based on ULEZ.

4 Proposed final amendments following consultation

4.1 Responses and feedback gathered through the survey and workshops have been reviewed and a number of recommendations made as below:

Proposed change	Consultation response / feedback	Officer recommendation
Safeguarding training to be refreshed every 3 years for drivers and 5 for operators (section 12.5)	70.7% survey responses agree or strongly agree Members suggested that operators should have training as frequently as drivers.	It is recommended that all Licence holders undertake refresher training on Safeguarding every 3 years.
Penalty points scheme a. Introduction of a penalty points scheme (Annex A)	a. Licensee workshop responses generally positive. Suggested a star rating. Committee workshop felt it was a good idea and promoted public safety. Suggested a star rating. Survey response: 60.9% felt that the introduction of a scheme would help	a. Recommend introduce Penalty Point Scheme from 1 st September 2024 Impact of the scheme will be continuously monitored and Committee will be updated on the progress of the scheme through biannual Regulatory Committee meetings.

<p>b. Appeal to Team Leader Annex A, section 1.7)</p>	<p>protect the public.63.4% felt that a scheme would help ensure compliance with requirements. b. 82.9% of responders felt that an appeal to Team Leader should be in place.</p>	<p>b. Recommend appeal process to Lead Officer or above.</p>
<p>Proposed change</p>	<p>Consultation response / feedback</p>	<p>Officer recommendation</p>
<p>Driver training / Assessment (Annex C, section 3.8.2)</p>	<p>61% of responders felt renewal every 10 years was appropriate. 26.8% felt it should be 3 yearly Licensees suggested rather than setting a timeline, react to complaints. Members felt refresher is a good idea, but consider higher frequency than 10 year</p>	<p>Recommend introduce 10 yearly requirement for driver training/assessment on renewal of licence. This is a first step and a higher frequency can be considered at the next review if deemed necessary. Additional training/assessment can be required in the event of enforcement action following complaints / issue or penalty points.</p>
<p>English language assessment should be written and spoken Not in draft but in 2023 guidance The Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards recommend that a licensing authority's test of a driver's proficiency should cover both oral and written English language skills.</p>	<p>63.4% of Responses felt both. 26.8% felt oral only.</p>	<p>Recommend add to policy at section 14.2 as this was asked as a direct question through the consultation. Recommend Officer define standards for English assessment and authorised by Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing.</p>
<p>Medicals a. Right to request a medical second opinion (Annex C, section 3.9.2) b. Eye tests (Annex C, section 3.9.1) c. Use any medical practitioner (Annex C, section 3.9.1)</p>	<p>a. 65.8% of responders felt this was appropriate b. 58.5% felt that we should require eye tests through the policy c. 84% would like to be able to use any medical practitioner for a medical. Licensee feedback - difficulties accessing GP for medical. More options</p>	<p>a. Recommend include within policy b. Recommend include within policy as part of medical assessment c. Recommend include within policy</p>

	would be good. They all charge different and own GPs can be expensive.	
Emissions Adopt Euro 6 standard for new applications (Appendix 4, section 4.5)	51.2% agree or strongly agree, 21.9% no opinion, 26.8% disagree or strongly disagree. Very mixed views in the feedback, concerns over the impact on trade if the policy is too strict. Suggestion of ULEZ standards in phased approach. Members suggested adopting ULEZ standard in phased approach, this proposal was then discussed with Licensees. Licensees felt the policy didn't consider hybrid vehicles and they felt this was the way forward. Agreed using emission rather than age as a standard.	Recommend adopt the following standard from 1 st September 2024: ULEZ for new vehicles and no change for renewal. From January 2027 apply ULEZ standards to vehicles at both new and renewal application. From January 2030 apply ULEZ standards for renewal and zero emissions for new. Hybrid vehicles would be considered under the same criteria.
Proposed change	Consultation response / feedback	Officer recommendation
Dispatch and booking staff to have DBS and operator to apply a criminal conviction policy (Appendix 5, section 4.11.2)	60.9% felt that booking staff should be subject to the same checks as PHO. 63.4% felt a fit and proper assessment of dispatch and booking staff would help protect the public. Licensees did not see the need for this.	Recommend accept proposed change. From the responses it was felt there was a lack of understanding of the risks and safeguarding opportunities and this could be addressed through the requirement for increased safeguarding training.
Disability awareness training (section 11.5)	No specific questions asked through survey, however detailed response from Guide dogs for the blind suggesting Disability equality training in line with proposal: All drivers should be required to undertake disability equality training.	Recommend accept proposed change.
Lost property checks (Annex C, section 5.11)	Members felt this is the responsibility of the hirer and not the driver. Return to police station within 48 hours – is that realistic (police will not necessarily accept lost property).	Recommend remove the proposed change. Our understanding on this has evolved, this is actually a byelaw and we have not adopted the byelaws, so we can remove this. No history of any problems, or frequent complaints of this nature.

	Licensees asked why we need to do this. Have there been problems with this?	
Proposed change	Consultation response / feedback	Officer recommendation
Appendix 4, section 14.1 requirement to have a road atlas at least 5 years young	Member's and Licensees feedback was that this is no longer how people interact with maps. What is the evidence for this requirement?	Recommend remove the proposed change.
Appendix 4, section 4.26.3 – adhesive sign with Councils logo	Licensees had concerns about this change and asked what the evidence for this requirement is? Concerns that this would have a detrimental impact on the trade, due to devaluing vehicles and impact when working outside of the District.	Recommend remove the proposed change.
Annex C, section 5.9.2 – you must not eat or drink or allow people to eat or drink	Consultation feedback - consider those who need to eat or drink due to a medical condition. – Disability specialist.	Recommend amend wording to include a discretion in certain circumstances.
Appendix 4, section 4.23 Taxi meters – calendar controlled and sealed meters	Concerns from Licensing team that the impact of this proposed change is not fully understood.	Recommend remove the proposed change and Licensing to consider the issue and discuss with trade.
Executive Functions	Requests through the Licensee workshop to be able to have no plates / signs on the dash as they often do corporate work e.g. airport runs.	Recommend add to policy. Legislation allows for applications for executive functions, which we have not previously put in place.

5 Penalty Point Scheme

- 5.1 Overall feedback regarding the proposed scheme was positive, although there were some individual concerns about the scheme and Operators in particular accruing points if they are also drivers and/or proprietors. It is important to note that the scheme is designed to highlight the minority of Licensees who do not uphold the required standards and ensure they are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner. If Licensees are readily accruing points and referrals are being made to Sub-Committee, we need to review the Fit and Proper person considerations through the new and renewal application process.
- 5.2 Feedback from both Members and Licensees on a star rating scheme to recognise Licensees with no or low number of penalty points was considered, and it is felt that this was not appropriate. This is because the requirement is for Licensees to be fit and proper and the issue of points may bring that into question. By applying a star rating scheme we are determining a level of

acceptability for non-compliance, and this could send the wrong message to Licence holders and members of the public.

- 5.3 Minor changes to the Point scheme may be required, either to add, remove or amend specific criteria, or alter the point's value for specific criteria. Changes may also be required following new guidance or changes in legislation. To avoid unnecessary delay to introduce such changes, it is recommended that authority to make such changes is delegated to Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing.
- 5.4 We have capability within our existing system, Lalpac to record the information on Penalty points issued to Licensees. We will need to devise the internal procedures to administer the scheme, and we will keep under review the impact on demand of the introduction of the scheme.

6 Emissions standards

- 6.1 ULEZ standards are based on emissions limits for different types of vehicle, NOx and PM for diesel vehicles and NOx for petrol vehicles. More information on the ULEZ standards can be found on the [Department for Transport London website](#).
- 6.2 By adopting an existing standard that is widely accepted within the UK, we can validate the change to our policy to have a positive impact on emission levels moving forward, without the need for further scientific evidence.
- 6.3 The proposed changes provides a direction of travel over the next 6 years, as recommended within the guidance, mapping out our policy to enable the trade to plan the change over a longer period. Note there will be another policy review in this period, but unless there are significant changes to the central emissions reduction ambition, it is unlikely that this proposal will change.

7 English language assessment

- 7.1 The new policy does not specify the standard that will be applied when considering English Language assessments. The method of assessment and acceptable pass mark will be recommended at officer level and authorised by the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing. This will then be communicated to applicants through the application process.

8 Further proposed actions

- 8.1 The Licensing team intend to run face-to-face safeguarding training sessions during the 6/9 months following introduction of the new policy. This will support Licence holders to comply during the transitional period.
- 8.2 The handbook summarising the current policy for Licensees will no longer be issued and Licensees will be asked to return them.
- 8.3 To ensure that key information is fully accessible to applicants and Licensees, the following sections will be extracted from the policy and presented to applicants/ Licensees as standalone documents.

- Code of conduct
- Penalty points scheme
- Vehicle conditions
- Operator conditions

9 Recommendations

9.1 In accordance with the above, the following recommendations are made:

1. **That the Committee consider the proposed final amendments to the policy document outlined in section 4.1 of this report.**
2. **That the Committee approve the draft proposed policy attached as Annex A and recommend its adoption to Full Council in July 2024, with a proposed implementation date from 1st September 2024.**
3. **Recommendation that Committee delegate authority for amendments to the Penalty Point Scheme to the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing.**
4. **Recommendation that Committee delegate authority to approve the standard for English communications assessment to the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing.**

Financial Implications: Fees for these licences are set locally and they will be reviewed in the future to consider the impact of these proposed changes. As fees are based on cost recovery, it is likely that the introduction of a penalty point scheme will result in a fee increase. Any significant fee increase will trigger an invitation to the Trade for a review of the Hackney Carriage fare tariff.

Safeguarding training and the increased frequency of driving assessment will result in an increased cost to applicants. Licensing will ensure that we identify partners and service providers who offer value for money for these courses/assessments. It is anticipated that disability awareness assessments will be delivered through the existing driver interview, conducted by members of the Licensing team and training (at cost to the applicant) will only be required where their awareness is lacking.

Legal Implications: The main legislation regulating Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles is the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. The Council has not adopted the byelaws relating to Hackney Carriages, so the use of policy, and through this, the application of conditions is vital to ensure robust and consistent enforcement of licensees within the trade. A policy change can be judicially reviewed.

Risk Assessment: Provision of the licensing service is a statutory obligation. The overall aim of the policy and conditions is to ensure public safety. However a balance is required to ensure that conditions are realistic and achievable. In the event of a successful judicial review the Council could be liable for costs.

Impact on Climate Change: Taxis and other taxi-like services in the United Kingdom produced 3.1 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2021. Emissions from these modes of transportation have more than doubled when compared to 1990 levels. Transportation is now the most polluting sector in the UK.

Equalities Impact Assessment: An equality impact assessment in relation to the final proposed policy has been undertaken and is attached at Annex C.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: This report links directly to the Licensing Authority functions of the Council with the primary aim of protecting public safety and ensuring the well-being of our community and licensed service users. It therefore contributes to the priority of Community within the Corporate Plan.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett
Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151
Date: 19 June 2024

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leiburne
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 19 June 2024

Chief Officer: Simon Newcombe
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director
Date: 24 May 2024

Performance and risk: Steve Carr
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager
Date: 19 June 2024

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Harriet Said, Team Leader (Commercial), Public Health or Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health
Email: hsaid@middevon.gov.uk / snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 255255

Background papers:

Ultra Low Emission Zone – why do we have a ULEZ? [Transport for London](#)

Current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy 2019: [final-hackney-carriage-and-private-hire-policy.pdf \(middevon.gov.uk\)](#)

Department for Transport:

'Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance>

'Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-standards>

Institute of Licensing: Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants & licensees - hackney & private hire trades:

<https://www.instituteoflicensing.org/media/judpocw/guidance-on-suitability-online-pdf-2.pdf>

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/29/introduction/enacted> and
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/most-significant-change-to-taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-accessibility-legislation-in-12-years>

[LowCVP Low Emission Taxi Guide-March 2019 Update.pdf \(zemo.org.uk\)](#)

Carbon dioxide emissions of taxis and taxi-like services in the United Kingdom (UK) from 1990 to 2021 [UK: taxi service CO₂ emissions 1990-2021 | Statista](#)



Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy

November 2023

Mid Devon District Council
Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane
Tiverton, Devon, EX16 6PP

Tel: 01884 255255

[Licensing - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk)

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Definitions

Applicant

Person or business who has submitted an application for either a grant or renewal of a licence.

Application

A completed application made by an individual (or individuals) for the grant or renewal of a licence.

Assistance Dog

- a dog which has been trained to guide a blind person;
- a dog which has been trained to assist a deaf person;
- a dog which has been trained by a prescribed charity to assist certain disabled persons.

Authorised Council Officer

A Council officer who is authorised by the Council to exercise powers and duties conferred by legislation.

Badge

Issued to all licensed drivers and must be worn at all times when working as a licensed driver.

Byelaws

Locally adopted laws applicable to Hackney Carriages and drivers. Breach is a criminal offence.

Conditions

Conditions of licence applied by the Council to a driver's licence, an operator's licence, or a vehicle licence. Non-compliance will lead to penalty points being imposed or action against the licence.

Controlled District Boundary

Area of a local authority which has adopted the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. This is the area of Mid Devon District Council.

Conventional partnership

An arrangement where 2 or more people are in business together, but which is not a Limited Liability Partnership.

Council

Mid Devon District Council

Councillor

A councillor who is a member of Mid Devon District Council.

Date of First Registration

The date of first registration on the vehicle's V5 log book issued by DVLA.

DBS

Disclosure & Barring Service

DfT

Department for Transport

District

This is the terminology used in the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to refer to the area of the Council.

Driving licence

Full UK driving licence issued by DVLA, Northern Ireland driving licence, EEA driving licence or exchangeable driving licence as defined in section 108 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

DVLA

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

DVSA

Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (which replaced VOSA in 2014)

Endorsable fixed penalty notice

A notice which receives both a fine and points on the DVLA licence. A non-endorsable fixed penalty notice means a fine, but no penalty points.

Equality Act

Equality Act 2010 as amended

Fare Card

A card which must legally be displayed in Hackney Carriage vehicles that are fitted with a taximeter which indicates the maximum authorised fare to be charged for distance travelled, waiting time and additional charges determined by the Council under s65 and the licence plate number. This is issued by the Council.

Grandfather Rights

Also known as acquired rights, means the continuation of rights granted when the licence was issued. The applicant does not have to comply with the requirements for a new licence as they are renewing the licence that complied at the time it was first granted.

Guidance

Guidance published or issued by the Government via the DfT or any other Government Department.

Hackney Carriage Vehicle

A vehicle licensed under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847; often referred to as a taxi.

Hirer

Any person or persons who from time-to-time hires or books the vehicle.

HMRC

His Majesty's Revenue and Customs

ICO

Information Commissioner's Office

IoL

Institute of Licensing

LGA

Local Government Association

Legislation

Acts of Parliament, Secondary legislation and decisions of the senior courts, Supreme Court, European Court of Justice and European Court of Human Rights.

Licensing Authority

The licensing function within Mid Devon District Council.

Licensed Driver

A driver licensed under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 to drive a Hackney Carriage Vehicle and under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to drive a Private Hire vehicle.

Licensed Operator

A person, persons or company holding a licence to operate Private Hire Vehicles issued pursuant to Section 55 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. A Private Hire operator's licence is required to enable a person to accept or invite bookings for Private Hire Vehicles.

Licensed Vehicle

A Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle licensed by Mid Devon District Council.

Licensee(s)

The person(s) or company/firm named in the licence.

Licence Plate

The plate that licensed vehicles must display showing the licence number, maximum number of persons to be carried, expiry date, vehicle registration number, and make and colour of vehicle.

Licensed Vehicle

Vehicle licensed under Town Police Clauses Act 1847 as a Hackney Carriage or licensed under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 as a Private Hire Vehicle.

Limited Company

A company registered with Companies House.

Limited Liability Partnership

An incorporated partnership registered with Companies House.

Member

See Councillor. The terms “councillor” and “member” are effectively interchangeable.

NR3S

The National Register of Refusals and Revocations and Suspensions¹.

Officer

An employee of the Mid Devon District Council or another individual acting in the same capacity as an employee e.g. an independent contractor.

Operator

See Licensed Operator.

Policy

This policy document and all associated documents

Private Hire Vehicle

A vehicle licensed by Mid Devon District Council under the section 48 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

Proprietor

Registered owner or part owner of a vehicle

PSV or PCV

Public Service Vehicle or Passenger Carrying Vehicle

Regulatory Committee

The committee which determine taxi licensing matters as set out in the Mid Devon District Council constitution.

Regulatory Sub-committee

Members of the Regulatory Committee, usual 3 and a quorum of 2, who take decisions on behalf of the Committee.

Road Traffic Acts

¹ Full details are available at <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/licences-regulations-and-trading-standards/national-register-taxi-and-private-hire-licence>

Road Traffic Act 1988 and all associated legislation.

Stretched Limousine

Any vehicle that has been modified after manufacture with an additional body section, extending the vehicle length.

Taximeter

Device used for calculating the fare to be charged for the journey by measuring distance travelled plus any time waiting. This must be fitted in all Hackney Carriage Vehicles and may be fitted in Private Hire Vehicles.

The 1847 Act

The Town Police Clauses Act 1847 as amended and all associated legislation and the provisions within.

The 1976 Act

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and the provisions within.

WAV

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle. Certain Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles can be suitable for carrying wheelchair-bound passengers.

Working day

Any day other than a Saturday, a Sunday, Christmas day, Good Friday or a day which is a bank holiday under the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 in any part of the United Kingdom.

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 This Policy has been published and adopted by the Council to inform and assist the discharge of its functions in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing under the powers and duties contained in the 1847 Act and the 1976 Act and all associated and related legislation. The Council is responsible for the licensing of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles, drivers and operators.
- 1.2 This Policy is written in plain English, as far as possible. Where technical terms are used they will be explained clearly, and there is a list of definitions at the beginning. Any reference to external material (legislation, guidance etc.) will be clear and should be easily accessible.
- 1.3 This Policy has been drawn up with reference to the Council's Corporate Plan
- Sustainable and prosperous communities
 - A sustainable planet
 - Sustainable participation
- 1.4 The Council will adopt and carry out its licensing function with a view to promoting the following:
- The protection of public health and safety
 - The prevention of crime and disorder
 - The safety and health of drivers
 - Vehicle safety, comfort and access
 - Creating an integrated and sustainable transport service for the community
 - The protection of children and adults at risk from harm
 - Protection of the environment
- 1.5 The Council serves a rural location covering an area of 353 square miles (914 km²) in the agricultural heartland of Devon, between Dartmoor, Exmoor and the Blackdown Hills. More than half the population is scattered in villages in the rural hinterland, with the balance divided between the three main towns of Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton.
- 1.6 Mid Devon has currently a resident population of approximately 80,623 according to 2017 ONS population estimates. The population is set to increase; Devon County Council 2016 trend based projections anticipate that the population will be approximately 91,534 by 2033.

- 1.7 This will place further strains on transport systems and Hackney Carriage and Private Hire use is expected to remain important and integral to the infrastructure of the District.
- 1.8 This Policy has been adopted by the Council following consultation and reference to the Regulatory Committee and the Council. Responsibility for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing is split between the Council and the Executive – see the Councils constitution for further detail, especially Appendix AA. Council regulatory functions in relation to licensing are delegated to the Regulatory Committee and some Officers.
- 1.9 This Policy will be kept under review and revised as necessary. The Corporate Manager for Public Health and Housing Option is authorised to make minor amendments to the Policy. In addition, amendments to this Policy may be authorised by the Council without consultation.
- 1.10 In carrying out these functions, the Council will comply with the law and also have regard to this Policy and any relevant Guidance published by the DfT and any other relevant Guidance issued by any Government Department. In any situation where the Council departs from this Policy, clear reasons will be given for doing so.
- 1.11 In any case where a situation or matter is not covered by this Policy, the matter will be considered from first principles i.e. as if this Policy did not exist, and the decision will be based on the Councils' interpretation of the law and Guidance.
- 1.12 The Council is committed to ensuring that Members and Officers involved in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing are fully trained, and such training is regularly updated.
- 1.13 This Policy contains firm statements of intent which may appear to be absolute. Such statements are lawful and allow the Council to provide robust guidance to itself, applicants, licensees and citizens on the approach that will be taken. They do not fetter the discretion of the Council because each case will be considered on its merits but in consideration of this Policy.

- 1.14 Where this Policy differs from the previous policy, consideration will be given by the Council to licences that were granted or renewed before this Policy was adopted. There is no guarantee that any licence will be renewed and the Council will consider all new and renewal applications in the light of this Policy. The fact that a licence has been granted in the past will be taken into account and will be a relevant consideration, but there is no legitimate expectation that any Hackney Carriage or Private Hire licence will be renewed.
- 1.15 This Policy will also be used to inform action that may be taken against any existing licence.
- 1.16 In 2015 the Deregulation Act introduced some amendments to the 1976 Act, the most significant of which was the ability for a Private Hire operator to subcontract to another Private Hire operators licensed anywhere in England, Wales, Scotland or Greater London.
- 1.17 The introduction in 2016 of more of the provisions relating to Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles contained within the Equality Act, and the additional amendments introduced by the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022 has improved the access to and use of these vehicles for those with disabilities, and the Council works actively to support both those who require and provide such transport.
- 1.18 The Policy refers to guidance that is available to applicants, drivers and operators and proprietors to assist them with the application processes and the running of their business under their licence. This guidance, application forms and current fees are available on the Council's website.
- 1.19 Council Officers involved in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing and other associated functions will always be polite, courteous, civil and professional. The same standards of behaviour are expected from applicants and licensees and the Council has a policy of zero tolerance to any abuse, bullying, violence or similar behaviour towards staff or councillors. Any such behaviour on the part of an applicant or licensee will be taken into account when considering whether a licence should be granted, or whether action should be taken against any existing licence.

- 1.20 The Council recognises its duties and responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679. Full details of the privacy policy and the specific policy for taxi licensing are detailed on the Council's website.
- 1.21 The Council takes its Enforcement Policy seriously, and will have regard to its Enforcement Policy when considering taking action under this Policy.

Section 2: Council Service Standards

- 2.1 Subject to unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the Council, the Council will endeavour to maintain the following service levels:
- 2.2 Licensees and applicants should be able to contact the licensing team by email, through the website, by appointment in person, or by phone. However, the preferred method of contact is via email to reduce the need for licence holders to travel to the Council offices and to allow the team to deal with enquiries as effectively as possible.
- 2.3 The primary method of contact for the Licensing team is by email at: licensing@middevon.gov.uk. Emails are constantly monitored during normal working hours, Monday to Friday.
- 2.4 The team can also be reached by phone, on **01884 255255** during working hours Monday to Friday.
- 2.5 The Council will always aim to issue a licence within 14 days from receipt of a valid application and payment.
- 2.6 If you have any concerns or complaints about the service you have received, please contact the licensing team. If you are still not satisfied, please use the Council's complaints procedure, details of which can be found here [Licensing - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk/licensing)

Section 3: Background, guidance & legislation

- 3.1 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles have an important role to play in the transport system. They are able to provide services in situations where public transport is either not available (for example in rural areas,

or outside "normal" hours of operation such as in the evenings or on Sundays), and/or for those with mobility difficulties.

- 3.2 The DfT has national responsibility for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire legislation and policy in England. They also provide guidance for local licensing authorities. Their principal document is *the 'Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance'* (referred to as "Best Practice Guidance" in this Policy²). This is supplemented by the '*Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards*' (referred to as "the Statutory Standards" in this Policy³). They have been taken into account in preparing this Policy. Additional and revised guidance is anticipated and this Policy may require amendments in the light of that.
- 3.3 The DfT guidance recognises and emphasises that licensing authorities can reach their own decisions both on overall policies and on individual licensing matters, in the light of their own circumstances.
- 3.4 This Policy takes account of the law which forms the basis of the Council's taxi licensing functions. The principal pieces of legislation are the 1847 Act and the 1976 Act both as amended. In addition the Senior Courts (High Court and Court of Appeal) have handed down judgments which explain and interpret this legislation.
- 3.5 This Policy also takes into account guidance produced by the IoL including "*Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants & licensees - hackney & private hire trades*"⁴.

3.6 Purpose of Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing

- 3.6.1 The sole consideration in relation to the licensing of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles is public safety (See DfT Best Practice Guidance). Public safety includes the safety of drivers, operators, vehicle proprietors and their staff as well as the users of Hackney Carriage and

² Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance> . This dates from 2010 and is expected to be updated

³ Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-standards>. This dates from 2020

⁴ Available at [guidance-on-suitability-online-pdf-2.pdf \(instituteoflicensing.org\)](https://www.instituteoflicensing.org/guidance-on-suitability-online-pdf-2.pdf)
This dates from 2018

Private Hire Vehicles, and the wider public. The public must have confidence in the safety of Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles as a form of transport and as a consequence the highest standards will be expected from all applicants and licensees.

3.6.2 Public safety includes safeguarding which also includes prevention of child sexual abuse and exploitation. All licensees will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of public safety and safeguarding and ensure that their actions do not infringe those requirements at any time. Any member of the public, licensee, Officer or Member who becomes aware of any safeguarding issues, or any other criminal behaviour relating to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing should inform the Council. They can be secure in the knowledge that the Council's Whistleblowing Policy will be used to take all reasonable steps to protect them.

Section 4: Policy aims & objectives

4.0.1 This Policy is intended to enable the Council to provide a robust licensing regime which enables the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades to provide the best possible service to the public with the overriding aim of maintaining and improving public safety.

4.1 Aims

4.1.1 The aims of this Policy are:

- the protection of the public
- the maintenance and development of professional and respected Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades
- enabling access to an efficient and effective local transport service
- the protection of our local environment
- to support all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire businesses by ensuring a consistent and fair approach

4.2 Objectives

4.2.1 The Council will achieve these aims by delivering the following objectives:

- by ensuring that licensed drivers are fit and proper persons and achieve and maintain the highest standards of professional practice

- by ensuring that licensed vehicles are safe for passengers, drivers and other road users, and properly insured
- by ensuring that licensed vehicles comply with Council standards
- by checking all documents provided as part of an application for authenticity, including contacting the maker of the document and other tests when necessary
- by specifying emissions standards
- by ensuring that licensed vehicles are comfortable
- by working across the Council to ensure that Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles form part of wider strategic transport and local transport plans
- by working in partnership with a variety of other agencies to support the Council's objective in relation to both the public and the trade
- by reducing the frequency with which licence holders are required to attend the Council offices
- by ensuring online accessibility to allow remote application by new and existing licence holders, so far as is permissible under the legislation
- by utilising electronic and mobile communication methods and other technological methods including web sites

4.3 Methods

4.3.1 The methods the Council will use to achieve this will include (but this is not an exhaustive list):

- setting the standards for the licensing of vehicles, drivers and operators;
- use of the NR3S database;
- assessing knowledge of the District, highway code and this Policy as well as driving ability (at the time of application);
- annual licensing and routine inspection of vehicles, with appropriate follow-up action including enforcement;
- routine inspection of documents, with appropriate follow-up action including enforcement;
- routine checks of driver's medical fitness and criminal record history during the time the licence is in force;
- timely investigation of complaints with appropriate follow-up action
- liaison with the Devon and Cornwall Police and other constabularies as required, neighbouring local authorities and other agencies regarding issues of concern relating to public safety;

- robust enforcement (taking account of the Regulators' Code) including, monitoring of contraventions, suspension or revocation of licences for breach of conditions or legislation and prosecution;
- regular training and development of Council Officers and Members;
- provision of mandatory training (at the cost of the applicant) for applicants and licensees when considered necessary;
- promotion of training courses and information for licensees.

4.4.1 To achieve this the Council will actively cooperate with, assist, provide and obtain advice from a wide range of agencies including (but not limited to):

- The Devon and Cornwall Police and other constabularies including British Transport Police
- The DVSA
- Other local authorities
- Town and Parish Councils
- National Rail and other railway companies
- The DBS
- The DfT
- The DVLA
- Home Office
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Other relevant agencies and departments

4.4 Uniformity

4.4.1 The Council will conduct its functions in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing in a consistent and uniform manner and will take a reasonable and proportionate approach to enforcement action.

Section 5: Applications and licences

5.1 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licences can be granted for a maximum period of time. Those maximum periods are

- Hackney Carriage Vehicle – 1 year;
- Private Hire Vehicle – 1 year;
- Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver – 3 years;
- Private Hire operator – 5 years.

The Council reserves the right to issue licences for a shorter period than those specified if it is believed to be appropriate in particular circumstances.

- 5.2 Applicants for licences must submit a complete application. A complete application means that the application form has been properly completed with all required information provided, all supporting documentation that is required has been submitted, and the fee has been paid.
- 5.3 If an application is made which is not complete, the applicant will be contacted and given an opportunity to rectify the problems. Any such application will be held on file for 3 months during which time additional and/or updated information can be provided to enable the application to proceed. After 3 months a new application would need to be made in its entirety.
- 5.4 Applications for renewals of licences must be received before the expiry of the current licence. Any application received after that date will be treated as a new application. This will extinguish any grandfather rights and the applicant will have to comply with all requirements for a new licence.
- 5.5 There may be exceptional circumstances where renewal applications will be accepted beyond expiry of the Licence. This will be at the discretion of the Council and apply in instances where failure to renew is due to unforeseen circumstances.
- 5.6 To ensure continuity of a licence on renewal, applications must be received 14 days prior to expiry.
- 5.7 As part of the application process applicants will have to attend certain appointments. If the date and time provided is inconvenient, the applicant should contact the Council as soon as possible to arrange an alternative date and time. Failure to attend an appointment without having notified the Council in advance will lead to the entire application being cancelled and a fresh application will have to be commenced.
- 5.8 Licensees must ensure that they notify the Council of any change of address, change of name, or change of contact details (telephone numbers or email addresses).

- 5.9 Any notice required to be served by the Council under this licence or under any statutory provision shall be deemed to have been properly served if sent by pre-paid post to, or left at the last known address of, the holder of the licence.
- 5.10 All information held on files and databases about an applicant is confidential, under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679. However, this information can be used (“processed”) by the Council as part of the application process and used within the Council. This will include communicating information to relevant Officers and Members who are involved in any decision-making process. In addition, the Council is under a duty to protect the public and to protect the public funds it administers, and may use any information provided by an applicant for this purpose. This may include sharing this information with other agencies where that is lawful.
- 5.11 The legislation requires the Council to maintain Public Registers, which will be available for inspection at the Council offices and also via the Council’s website. That duty overrides any data protection provisions.
- 5.12 It is a privilege to hold a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire licence and licensees have responsibilities to their passengers (drivers) and customers (drivers, operators and proprietors), other road users (drivers and vehicle proprietors) and the public generally. The requirement to satisfy the Council that the applicant is a fit and proper person continues throughout the duration of the licence. If at any time a licensee falls below the standards expected of a new applicant, the Council will consider taking action against that licence. This could be suspension, revocation or refusal to renew that licence.
- 5.13 Licensees must be aware of this and be familiar with the requirements placed upon them by the legislation, the conditions of their licence and this Policy.
- 5.14 The Council can charge a fee for each of these licences. Those fees are calculated in accordance with the legislation.
- 5.15 Fees are calculated on a cost recovery basis.
- 5.16 The fees include the costs of:
- processing applications;

- issuing licences;
- providing badges and vehicle plates (as required);
- providing additional vehicle signage;
- ensuring compliance with the requirements of the licence.

5.17 If a licence is surrendered, revoked or suspended, no refund of the licence fee will be made.

Section 6: Suitability of applicants

6.1 The legislation makes it quite clear that the Council cannot grant a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire drivers' licence or a Private Hire operators' licence unless they are satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person. It is for the applicant to prove that they are a fit and proper person, and not for the Council to prove that they are not.

6.2 In relation to a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle proprietors' licence there is no statutory requirement for the Council to be satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person. However the Council has an absolute discretion as to whether or not to grant such a licence and in addition to considering the vehicle itself the Council will also take into account the suitability of the applicant.

6.3 The Institute of Licensing "*Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants & licensees - hackney & private hire trades*" suggests that the phrase "fit and proper" can be explained and be more easily understood by using the term "safe and suitable". Wherever this term is used by the Council it is synonymous with fit and proper.

6.4 That guidance also contains guidelines on suitability which are almost identical to the DfT guidance in "Statutory Standards". These have been incorporated into this Policy and form the basis of the previous convictions policy. This is contained at Appendix 2.

6.5 It is recognised that some applicants and licensees will have criminal convictions or other matters in their personal history which may affect their safety and suitability to hold a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire licence.

6.6 The previous convictions policy at Appendix 2 provides guidance. These standards will be used in relation to all licences: driver, operator and

proprietor. This is to ensure that the standards are maintained across the trades, and to reassure the public that only safe and suitable people are licensed for any role in the Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle industry.

- 6.7 Applications will be considered on their own merits. If the previous convictions policy does not cover a particular matter then a decision will be made from first principles where the question will be whether, in the light of that information the Council can be satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person to be granted that licence.
- 6.8 The Council has powers to take action against any licence that has been granted (the licence can be suspended, revoked, or the Council can refuse to renew it). It is vitally important that licensees understand that the test of safety and suitability is not simply to be met when the application is first granted. It is a continuing requirement. If at any time during the duration of the licence, the behaviour or conduct of the applicant falls below that which would be acceptable for a new applicant, the Council will consider whether or not action should be taken against that licence.
- 6.9 At all times when making these decisions the sole consideration will be public safety.

Section 7: Decision Making

- 7.1 Decisions on applications and action against licences are made by the Council. Usually that will be a decision made by an Officer acting under delegated powers but where an application is outside Policy or action needs to be taken in relation to an existing licence the matter may be referred to a Sub-committee of the Regulatory Committee.
- 7.2 There is no difference in the decision-making process between an Officer and a Regulatory Sub-committee. In both cases the applicant or licensee will be given an opportunity to make representations and those will be taken fully into account. There may be occasions when a very short timescale will be provided for representations to be made: this is likely to occur where action needs to be taken quickly in relation to a licence. In those circumstances the licensee will be contacted by all practicable means to be informed of the date and time of when the decision will be made and given an opportunity to attend. If however

the licensee cannot be contacted or does not attend, then the decision will be taken in their absence.

- 7.3 Any decision to suspend or revoke a licence will be made on the balance of probabilities. This means that the evidence indicates that the event more likely occurred, than it did not, and applicants or licensees should not be given the benefit of doubt.
- 7.4 In all cases the matter will be considered entirely on its own merits, in the light of this Policy and any guidance issued by the DfT.
- 7.5 Full and detailed reasons for all decisions will be provided to the applicant or licensee, together with details of the rights of appeal.

Section 8: Behaviour of licensees

- 8.1 All licensees (drivers, operators and vehicle proprietors) are professionals undertaking a highly responsible activity which protects and ensures the safety of their passengers, customers, other road users and the public at large.
- 8.2 The highest standards of integrity and behaviour are expected, and these must be maintained at all times, not solely when acting in the exercise of their licence. As a result, any behaviour at any time which falls short of the standards expected will lead to the Council considering whether that licensee should be allowed to retain their licence.
- 8.3 Where unacceptable behaviour occurs in connection with the use of the licence, it will be considered an aggravating feature. Behaviour which is not connected with the use of the licence will not be seen as less serious.
- 8.4 The overall aim of this Policy is to ensure that the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades continue to provide a safe and satisfactory service to the public, and actions or behaviour that affect or reduce those standards will not be tolerated by the Council.

Section 9: Enforcement

- 9.1 In any situation where there has been non-compliance with any requirement, or behaviour which falls short of the requirement to remain

a fit and proper person to hold a licence, the Council will consider enforcement action. In addition, action will be taken in respect of vehicles that do not comply with either the Council's requirements or Road Traffic laws. Any enforcement action will be guided by the Council's Enforcement Policy, and may result in one or more of the following (this is not an exhaustive list):

- (a) Take no action
- (b) Issue penalty points
- (c) Use statutory notices (suspension of a vehicle licence using section 68 of the 1976 Act)
- (d) Suspension of a licence;
- (e) Revocation of a licence;
- (f) Issue of a simple caution in respect of criminal offences;
- (g) Prosecution in respect of criminal offences;

9.2 The Council's Penalty Points Scheme, mentioned above, is detailed in Appendix 1

Section 10: Appeals

10.1 There are statutory rights of appeal contained within the legislation. These are against decisions to refuse an application, refuse to renew a licence, suspension or revocation of a licence and also against any conditions that the Council has attached to a licence. The rights will be detailed in any decision notice which is issued where there is such a right of appeal.

10.2 Generally the right of appeal is to the magistrates' court and contact should be made with that court for details on how the appeal is commenced. The one exception to that is a refusal to grant a new Hackney Carriage proprietors licence where the right of appeal is directly to the Crown Court. Again, in those circumstances contact should be made with the court for details on how the appeal is commenced.

10.3 The appeal period is 21 days from the date on which the written notice of the Council's decision was received. That period cannot be extended so anybody who is considering appealing should ensure that the appeal is lodged with the court as soon as possible.

10.4 For Mid Devon the relevant magistrates' court is presently:

North and East Devon Magistrates' Court which sits at Exeter Magistrates' Court, Southernhay Gardens, Exeter, EX1 1UH

Section 11: Equality Act and discrimination

- 11.1 The Council will treat all applicants and licensees equally and fairly. There will be no discrimination on any ground and each and every application and subsequent decision will be considered on its merits in the light of the legislation, guidance and this Policy.
- 11.2 The Council will not accept or tolerate any discriminatory behaviour on the part of any applicant or licensee. This includes any discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, but that is not an exhaustive list.
- 11.3 All licensees must at all times treat people courteously, civilly and decently.
- 11.4 All licensees must ensure that they comply with their statutory duties in relation to disabled people under the Equality Act as amended.
- 11.5 Drivers should be trained in disability awareness.
- 11.6 Drivers of vehicles designated by the Council in the list of wheelchair accessible vehicles must:
- (a) be able to carry the passenger while in the wheelchair;
 - (b) not make any additional charge for doing so;
 - (c) if the passenger chooses to sit in a passenger seat, be able to carry the wheelchair;
 - (d) take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort;
 - (e) give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required.
- 11.7 Mobility assistance is assistance:
- to enable the passenger to get into or out of the vehicle;
 - if the passenger wishes to remain in the wheelchair, to enable the passenger to get into and out of the vehicle while in the wheelchair;
 - to load the passenger's luggage into or out of the vehicle;

- if the passenger does not wish to remain in the wheelchair, to load the wheelchair into or out of the vehicle.
- 11.8 This does not apply if the driver has a certificate of exemption, and the specified notice is displayed in the vehicle at the time.
- 11.9 Drivers of all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles must carry any disabled passenger without any additional charge being made (by the driver in the case of a Hackney Carriage, or by the operator or driver in the case of a Private Hire vehicle) and:
- (a) if the passenger is in or has with them a wheelchair, to carry the wheelchair;
 - (b) if the passenger has with them any mobility aids, to carry the mobility aids (anything apart from a wheelchair the passenger uses to assist their mobility);
 - (c) to take such steps as are reasonable to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort;
 - (d) to give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required.
- 11.10 Mobility assistance means providing assistance:
- to enable the passenger to get into or out of the vehicle;
 - to load the passenger's luggage, wheelchair or mobility aids into or out of the vehicle.
- 11.11 This does not apply if the driver has a certificate of exemption, and the specified notice is displayed in the vehicle at the time.
- 11.12 Drivers of Hackney Carriages must carry an assistance dog and allow it to remain with their owner unless they have a certificate of exemption issued by the Council (and the specified notice is displayed in the vehicle at the time). They must not make any additional charge for doing so. When an assistance dog is being carried, the driver must allow it to be carried wherever the owner requires i.e. the driver cannot insist on the dog being separated from the owner or the owner and dog sitting in a particular seat (Section 168 Equality Act).
- 11.13 The same requirements apply to drivers of Private Hire vehicles when the operator has accepted a booking for a passenger with an assistance dog (whether or not the driver is aware of the existence of the dog)

unless they have a certificate of exemption issued by the Council (and the specified notice is displayed in the vehicle at the time). The operator cannot make any additional charge for the carriage of the dog.

- 11.14 Operators should identify a passengers accessibility needs prior to taking a booking to ensure an appropriate vehicle is provided.
- 11.15 In addition to those requirements, in vehicles equipped with a taxi meter, the meter must not be activated until the wheelchair bound passenger has been properly loaded and secured for the journey, all loading ramps or other equipment have been properly stowed and the vehicle is ready to commence the journey. The same applies for any disabled passenger, and the meter must not be activated until any mobility equipment has been properly stowed and the vehicle is ready to commence the journey. At the end of the journey the meter must be stopped before any unloading activity commences.

Section 12: Safeguarding

- 12.1 The Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, adults at risk, vulnerable persons and all other members of society. We take our responsibilities seriously and expect all our licensed drivers, proprietors and operators to share this commitment.
- 12.2 Licensed driver, proprietors and operators must consider the safety, security and welfare of their passengers, customers and the public generally when determining what safeguarding measures they should put in place in relation to their activities as a licensee.
- 12.3 All new applicants for Hackney Carriage driver licences, Private Hire operator licences and Hackney Carriage and Private Hire proprietors (vehicle) licences will be required to attend and successfully pass a safeguarding course and test, as required by the Council. There is no limit for the number of attempts to complete the test, to be undertaken at the applicant's own expense, however no licence will be issued until the applicant provides a valid certificate showing they have passed the safeguarding course.
- 12.4 All existing licensed drivers, proprietors and operators will be required to attend and successfully pass a safeguarding course and test, as required by the Council. A pass certificate must be produced within 1 calendar

year of adoption of this Policy or on renewal whichever is sooner. Failure to do so may result in suspension of the licence until successful completion of the test.

As part of the licence renewal application process, applicants will be required to submit a current safeguarding certificate, issued by a provider approved by the Council and renewed every 3 years.

12.5 It is the duty of the applicant to ensure that they have completed the course and passed the test in sufficient time before applying for a renewal licence. There is no limit for the number of attempts to complete the test, to be undertaken at the applicant's own expense, however no licence will be issued until a certificate is produced.

Section 13: Complaints about licensees

13.1 If any person has any complaint about the behaviour or actions of a licensee (taxi driver, private hire operator or vehicle proprietor) they should contact the licensing team at licensing@middevon.gov.uk. Complaints can be made by email, letter or via the Council's website, for more information please see our [website](#).

13.2 To enable a complaint to be investigated that person must provide their name, address and contact details to the Council but these will not necessarily be passed on to the licensee. The licensing Officers will consider all complaints. If the complaint is taken forward by the Council there will be full discussion with the complainant and agreement as to whether or not their identity can be revealed to the licensee. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, the Council may take appropriate action against the licensee. The Council will keep complainants informed of the progress of the investigation, any subsequent action taken and the outcome of any subsequent court proceedings (if taken).

13.3 Any complaints that are received by the Council that indicate that the licensee has failed to uphold the standards will be investigated thoroughly, and if substantiated will lead to action being taken against that licence.

Section 14: Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver licences

14.1 The Council issues combined driver licences. That means that the licence is issued under both section 46 of the 1847 Act to drive a

Hackney Carriage, and section 51 of the 1976 Act to drive a Private Hire Vehicle. In both cases the vehicle must be licensed by the Council.

14.2 To be licensed as a driver, the following requirements must be met by the applicant. Full details are contained in Appendix 3

- They must have held a full (not provisional) valid driver's licence for at least 1 year. This must be a UK, Northern Ireland, EU or exchangeable licence. In the case of an exchangeable driving licence this can only be used in the UK for a maximum of one year, after which it must be exchanged for a UK licence;
- They must have the right to live and work in the UK;
- They must be registered for tax with HMRC (in the case of a renewal) or acknowledge that they must register for tax with HMRC (in the case of a new application);
- They must pass the approved driver skills assessment (this applies to all new applicants and all existing drivers who on renewal cannot demonstrate that they have passed any previous test to the same standard);
- They must provide a medical certificate from their own GP;
- They must pass the Council's approved English communication skills test, which will include both written and spoken English;
- They must pass an assessment of their disability awareness;
- They must attend the Council approved child sexual exploitation and safeguarding training and pass the required test.

14.3 The applicant must obtain an enhanced DBS certificate with a check of both the adult and child barred lists. This is applied for in conjunction with the Council. The licence application must be made within one month of the date on the DBS certificate.

14.4 All new applicants and existing licence holders must subscribe to the DBS Update Service. This means they must pay the required annual fee to maintain this subscription (as set by the DBS). They must also provide the Council with written authorisation to conduct a status check, along with providing, when required, any relevant information the Council may require to carry out a status check.

14.5 In addition to the requirements listed at 14.2, the applicant must be able to demonstrate that they are a fit and proper person (as required by sections 51(1)(a)(i) and 59(1)(a)(i) of the 1976 Act.

- 14.6 As part of that process the Council will check the NR3S and undertake checks with DVLA.
- 14.7 In addition, information may be shared with other departments of the Council, other local authorities, HMRC, the police and immigration services. As a user of the NR3S, the Council will check the name of every applicant for a driver's licence against the database, and will add the details to the database of any driver whose licence application is refused, suspended or whose licence is revoked.
- 14.8 Applicants can complete the application form, satisfy the immigration checks and provide the DBS certificate without undertaking the driving test, safeguarding training or medical if they wish. This is referred to as a provisional application.
- 14.9 A provisional application will enable them to be satisfied that the Council will regard them as being a fit and proper person, subject to the additional requirements. This will save expenditure on the part of the applicant in situations where there is doubt as to whether or not a licence will be granted based upon their previous convictions.
- 14.10 Full details of the policy including the application process and Code of Conduct can be found at Appendix 3.
- 14.11 The legislation allows conditions to be attached to a Private Hire driver's licence, but they cannot be attached to a Hackney Carriage driver's licence. To ensure that the standards of behaviour are the same when drivers are driving either type of vehicle, the Council issues dual Licences and has decided to adopt a Code of Conduct, see Appendix 3. These are not conditions attached to the licence: rather this is the standard of behaviour expected from all taxi drivers.
- 14.12 If there is any non-compliance with this Code of Conduct, or the driver's behaviour falls short of these requirements, the Council will then consider whether or not that person remains a fit and proper person to hold a licence. The consequences of not complying with the Code of Conduct include penalty points being awarded; suspension of the licence; revocation of the licence or non-renewal of the licence.

Section 15: Hackney Carriage vehicle (proprietor) licences

- 15.1 Once a vehicle has been licensed as a Hackney Carriage, it retains that status all day every day for the duration of that proprietors (vehicle) licence. That means that it can only be driven by a person who holds a dual driver's licence entitling them to drive a Hackney Carriage licensed by the Council. The exception to this is when the vehicle is being tested.
- 15.2 Full details of the policy including the application process and vehicle conditions can be found at Appendix 4.
- 15.3 Applicants for a Hackney Carriage proprietor's licence must provide a basic DBS at the time of first application and on every renewal (subject to the DBS update service).
- 15.4 The Council sets fares for Hackney Carriages. The mechanism for doing so is contained in section 65 of the 1976 Act.
- 15.5 A fare review/increase can be initiated by the Council or by the Hackney Carriage trade. A fare review may be initiated following significant changes in licensing fees and other major costs such as fuel.

Section 16: Private Hire Vehicle (proprietor) licences

- 16.1 Once a vehicle has been licensed as a Private Hire vehicle, it retains that status all day every day for the duration of that proprietor's (vehicle) licence. That means that it can only be driven by a person who holds a dual driver's licence entitling them to drive a Private Hire vehicle licensed by the Council. There is no exception to this, even when the vehicle is being tested.
- 16.2 Full details of the policy including the application process can be found at Appendix 4.
- 16.3 Applicants for a Private Hire proprietor's licence must provide a basic DBS at the time of first application and on every renewal (subject to the DBS update service).

Section 17: Executive hire vehicles

- 17.1 An executive hire vehicle is a private hire vehicle and all other interpretations, policies and conditions relevant to licensed private hire vehicles still apply, except where described below.
- 17.2 The licensing authority has the power to disapply the general requirement to display a licence plate where the circumstances justify it. Accordingly, an exemption notice may be issued to the proprietor of an executive vehicle. In these instances, the notice must be kept inside the vehicle and the internal vehicle plate must be in the front windscreen.
- 17.3 Whilst driving an executive vehicle the driver of the vehicle will be exempt from the general requirement to wear his/her driver badge. In these instances, the badge must be kept inside the vehicle at all times whilst the driver is using the vehicle for private hire purposes and it must be made available for inspection to any passenger, police officer or authorised officer of the council upon request.
- 17.4 The Council does not provide a definitive list of vehicles it considers to be suitable for licensing as executive hire, although it is expected that the vehicle will be a 'high value' executive model, in pristine condition, that provides an elevated level of comfort that would not reasonably be expected of a standard private hire vehicle.
- 17.5 For the purposes of this policy, 'executive hire' applies to a licensed vehicle where the overt display of licence plates may identify or otherwise compromise the anonymity of the travelling passenger(s) for specific personal or commercial reasons. It is for the applicant or licensee to demonstrate to the Licensing team that there is a good case for exemption. For example, stating that the vehicle is used for 'account work' is not sufficient and the Licensing team may request evidence and testimonials to support claims for exemption.
- 17.6 Proprietors wishing to licence executive vehicles would normally be offering chauffeur driven contracts, cooperate account work and other similar services where the driver would be expected to observe a strict dress code. It would be expected that a contract for the hire of an executive vehicle would normally be in place no less than 24 hours prior to the commencement of the journey.

- 17.7 Exemptions will not be granted for vehicles that are made available for work such as day to day private hire bookings and home to school passenger transport.
- 17.8 Each application for 'executive hire' will be assessed on its own merits. The vehicle may be inspected by an authorised council officer, over and above a vehicle compliance test, to ensure compliance with these requirements.

Section 18: Private Hire operator licences

- 18.1 A Private Hire vehicle must be booked via a Private Hire operator before the journey carrying passengers (the hiring) commences. A Mid Devon Private Hire operator can only operate (i.e. dispatch) a Private Hire vehicle driven by a Private Hire driver, both of which have been licensed by the Council.
- 17.1 A Mid Devon licensed Private Hire operator can subcontract to another operator licensed anywhere in England (including Greater London but excluding Plymouth), Wales or Scotland, and can also accept a subcontract from any other operator. When discharging a subcontract, the vehicle and driver used must be licensed by the Council.
- 17.2 A Mid Devon licensed Private Hire operator can advertise their services anywhere, not only within the area of the District.
- 17.3 Full details of the policy including the application process can be found at Appendix 5.
- 17.4 Applicants for a Private Hire operator's licence must provide a basic DBS at the time of first application annually thereafter (subject to the DBS update service).

Appendix 1 Penalty Points Scheme

Index

1. Penalty Points Scheme ('the Scheme')
2. List of Offences/Breach of Vehicle Licence Conditions
3. List of Offences/Breach of Driver Code of Conduct
4. List of Offences/Breach of Operator Licence Conditions

1. Penalty Points Scheme

- 1.1 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire operators, drivers and vehicles are principally governed by the 1847 Act and the 1976 Act, and the Policy and conditions set by the Council.
- 1.2 The primary objective of the Scheme is to improve the levels of compliance and to help improve the standards, safety and protection of the travelling public.
- 1.3 Points issued through the scheme are separate to and not connected with the 'penalty points' (endorsements) that the courts can put on a motorist's licence.
- 1.4 The Scheme works in conjunction with other enforcement options. It provides a formalised stepped enforcement plan. The purpose of the Scheme is to record misdemeanours and to act as a record of licensees' behaviour and conduct so as to ascertain whether they remain a fit and proper person to be a vehicle driver or operator and/or suitable to hold a vehicle licence. It does not prejudice the Council's ability to take other action.
- 1.5 The Scheme will be used where operators, drivers or proprietors of vehicles fail to comply with any legislative requirement, commit a criminal offence (under legislation) or fail to adhere to the Code of Conduct, or following complaints from the public.
- 1.6 Licensees involved will be asked to make representations, either in writing or in person. Once the investigation is completed, letters will be sent out detailing the outcome and a permanent record will be kept on the licensee's file. The outcome of the investigation may result in Officers determining that: no further action be taken; penalty points be imposed; a formal warning be issued, and/or prosecution.
- 1.7 If a licensee wishes to challenge the imposition of penalty points, can submit an appeal. Licensees must appeal any points issued by the Council, to the Lead Officer or above within 21 days of the points being

issued. Details of the appeal mechanism will be contained in the letter confirming the imposition of points.

- 1.8 For driver and proprietor licences, penalty points remain live or current for 36 months from the date the penalty points were imposed.
- 1.9 For operator licences, penalty points remain live or current for 60 months from the date the penalty points were imposed.
- 1.10 If the decision was appealed and points uphold, those points will remain live for 36 months from the date of the decision. The 36 month period is on a roll forward basis, so as to allow any older points to be considered as spent and therefore excluded from the running total recorded against any individual licensee.
- 1.9 Where a licensee accumulates more than 12 penalty points in any rolling 36 month period, or 60 month period for operators, the matter will be referred to a Regulatory Sub-committee to consider whether the driver or operator remains a fit and proper person. The Regulatory Sub-committee will identify if further action is necessary to address concerns. Such action may be a requirement to undertake additional training, or the sub-committee may suspend or revoke a licence, or issue a warning to the licensee, depending upon the circumstances. Periods of suspension of a licence by a Sub-committee will be dependent on the nature of the breaches of the legislation, conditions, behaviour and the compliance history of the individual. Suspension periods will normally range between 7 to 31 days.
- 1.10 Where a licensee holds multiple licences from the Council, points can accumulate across those licences as they are against the holder of the licence. This is necessary to ensure that the scheme is effective in identifying behaviour that brings into question a Licensees fitness and propriety.
- 1.11 The system will operate without prejudice to the Council's ability to take other action that it is entitled to take under legislation and conditions.
- 1.12 If points are issued to a proprietor or driver for a matter which is also a criminal offence which the Council could prosecute for e.g. not wearing a driver's badge, failure to maintain operator records, those person(s) will not then be the subject of a prosecution by the Council.

2. List of Offences / Breach of Vehicle Licence Conditions

<u>Offence / Breach</u>	Code	Points
Failure to supply vehicle inspection test when vehicle is over 3 years of age	V1	4
Failure to have/maintain grab handles	V2	2
Failure to have a means of loading wheelchairs into the vehicle available at all times	V3	2
Failure to supply a current mechanical tail lift safety certificate to the Licensing Authority	V4	4
Failure to provide an annual LPG safety compliance Certificate	V5	4
Failure to maintain seat belts in a safe condition	V6	4
Undertaking alterations to equipment, dimensions or other specification to a licensed vehicle without consent	V7	4
Failure to display approved roof sign	V8	2
Failure to maintain roof sign in working order	V9	2
Private Hire vehicles advertising incorrectly	V13	4
Display sign that does not comply	V14	4
Failure to display "no smoking" signs in the vehicle	V15	4
Private Hire displaying the word "taxi"	V16	4
Incorrectly displaying licence plate	V17	4
Failure to return plate on expiry of licence if requested to do so by licensing team	V18	4
Failure to report loss or damage of a vehicle plate, following discovery of loss or damage	V19	2
Failure to surrender vehicle licence and plate if proprietor does not wish to retain vehicle licence	V20	2
Advertising on vehicle without written authorisation from the Licensing Authority	V21	4

Failure to submit taximeter for testing when requested to do so by Licensing Authority	V22	2
Tampering or allowing an unauthorised person to tamper with taximeter	V23	4
Failure to display a statement of fares inside the Hackney Carriage	V24	2
Wilfully or neglectfully causing letters or figures in the statement of fares to be obscured	V25	2
Displaying a statement of fares which differ from the approved fares	V26	2
Failure to notify licensing team of accidents or damage affecting the safety, performance or appearance of the vehicle	V27	2
Failure to get authorisation for a temporary transfer vehicle or leaving the vehicle on for more than two weeks	V28	2
Failure to have insurance for the licensed vehicle	V29	12
Failure to provide evidence of insurance prior to expiry	V30	6
Failure to keep copy of insurance/cover note in the vehicle	V31	2
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of change of insurer or particulars within 2 working days	V32	2
Failure to produce details to the Licensing Authority of drivers permitted to drive	V33	2
Failure to notify change of drivers	V34	2
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of change of address or other contact details	V35	2
Failure to obtain written permission to use trailers on licensed vehicles	V37	12
Failure to present vehicle and trailer for inspection	V38	4
Using a driver without the appropriate DVLA category code to tow a trailer	V39	6
Failure to maintain a reasonable standard of behaviour	V40	2
Failure to provide information requested by an authorised officer	V41	4

Failure to provide assistance to an authorised officer	V42	4
Failure to provide evidence of insurance or vehicle compliance test prior to expiry (1 st instance)	V43	6
Failure to provide evidence of insurance or vehicle compliance test prior to expiry (2 nd instance)	V44	12
Failure to show evidence of continuous MOT, vehicle test or insurance	V45	12

3. List of Offences/Breaches of Driver Code of Conduct

<u>Offence / Breach</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Points</u>
Driver not complying with the Driver Dress Code	D1	2
Driver not behaving in a civil and orderly manner	D2	3
Driver allowing noise from radio or other similar equipment to be a source of nuisance or annoyance to any person inside or outside the vehicle	D3	2
Driver smoking/vaping/similar whilst in the vehicle	D4	4
Private Hire driver parking in a position or location which gives the appearance of being for hire, whilst not on a pre booking	D5	3
Driver of Private Hire vehicle plying for hire	D6	6
Driver of a Private Hire vehicle calling out or influencing person to travel in the vehicle for gain without a prior appointment	D7	3
Failure to have in possession driver badge whilst driving a licensed vehicle	D8	2
Driver badge not visible to passengers being conveyed in the vehicle	D9	2
Drivers failure to wear the driver badge around their neck	D10	2
Failure to surrender driver badge to the Licensing Authority upon expiry, revocation or suspension of their licence when requested by licensing team	D11	2
Failure to carry evidence of insurance cover, this can be a cover note, in the vehicle whilst on duty	D12	2
Failure of driver to check vehicle proprietor has insurance on the vehicle	D13	2

Driver carrying greater number of persons than the number specified on the licence	D14	12
Carrying other persons in the vehicle without the consent of the hirer	D15	2
Carry a member of family/friend in a licensed vehicle when it is for hire/hired	D16	2
Failing to carry or ensure safety of passenger luggage	D17	4
Failing to offer reasonable assistance with luggage	D18	2
Failing to take steps to ensure passenger safety	D19	6
Failing to ensure passengers are dropped off safely, at the correct destination	D20	2
Fail to operate taxi meter correctly	D21	4
Charging more than the metered fare	D22	4
Tampering or allowing tampering of a taximeter	D23	4
Cancelling the fare or concealing the fare on meter before the hirer has agreed the fare	D24	2
Demanding more than the previously agreed fare	D25	4
Demanding more than the fare shown on the taxi meter or scale of charges on the tariff sheet	D26	4
Starting the fare before the hirer enters the vehicle unless specified in the tariff sheet	D27	4
Failure to notify proprietor of complaints made by the passengers	D28	2
Failure to notify passengers of their right to refer their complaint to the Licensing Authority	D29	2
Failure to attend at appointed time or place without sufficient cause	D30	2
Unnecessarily prolonging journey in distance or time	D31	4
Failure to ensure insurance cover for them to drive vehicle	D32	4
Failure to ensure vehicle is licensed by Licensing Authority for the purpose used	D33	2

Failure to notify Licensing Authority of change of address/telephone number within 7 days	D34	4
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of motoring offences over 3 penalty points or criminal convictions during the period of licence	D35	12
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of motoring convictions up to 3 penalty points during the period of licence	D36	6
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of involvement in incidents which the Police are involved and may lead to a caution/conviction	D37	12
Failure to notify Licensing Authority in writing within 7 days of serious injury or illness	D38	12
Failure to notify the Licensing Authority of a DVLA notifiable condition	D39	12
Failure to carry assistance dog and allow it to remain with the owner without exemption This is also a legal requirement	D40	4
Failure to provide mobility assistance to any passenger in a wheelchair when driving a Hackney Carriage designated as a wheelchair accessible vehicle This is also a legal requirement	D41	4
Failure to provide mobility assistance to any disabled passenger This is also a legal requirement	D42	4
Making additional charge for carrying assistance dog	D43	4
Failure to apply for or provide an exemption certificate on medical grounds for not being medically fit to carry an assistance dog	D44	4
Not using mobile phone in accordance with The Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No.4) Regulations 2003	D45	2
Failure to notify Licensing Authority of vehicle damage within 72 hours or present vehicle if requested to do so	D46	4
Failure to provide a written receipt for the fare paid if requested to do so by the passenger	D47	2
Failure to co-operate with any authorised officer of the Licensing Authority, Constable or any other clearly identifiable person nominated by the Licensing Authority	D48	4

Failure to comply with the regulations governing the wearing of seat belts	D49	4
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4. Offences / Breaches of Operator Licence Conditions - Private Hire

<u>Offence</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Points</u>
Operating more vehicles than stated on licence	O1	2
Failure to obtain and maintain insurance on vehicle	O2	12
Failure to produce evidence of insurance cover to the Licensing Authority	O3	6
Fail to provide valid insurance on expiry for any premises where the public have access	O4	6
Failure to notify the Licensing Authority of change of insurer within 2 days	O5	2
Fail to provide evidence of public liability insurance for premises	O6	2
Failure to operate the business in a manner which does not cause nuisance to the public or to persons in nearby premises	O7	2
Failure to attend a booking at appointed time or place without sufficient cause	O8	2
Knowingly allowing a greater number of persons in the licensed vehicle than is prescribed on the licence	O9	12
Fail to have necessary documents and equipment	O10	2
Operating the business from a premises outside the District	O11	12
Failure to keep booking or waiting areas which the public have access, clean, adequately heated, ventilated and lit	O12	2
Failure to provide seating facilities in waiting areas	O13	2
Failure to have in place planning permission if required at operator's address	O14	2
Failure to comply with planning permission or licence conditions for number of vehicles permitted	O15	2
Failure to supply written confirmation within 7 days of changes to the particulars shown on the application form relating to the licence	O16	4

Fail to notify Licensing Authority of change of address	O17	2
Failure to notify the Licensing Authority within 7 days of any convictions imposed on them, during the period of the licence	O18	6
Failure to keep proper records for a period of not less than 6 months	O19	3
Failure to keep proper records	O20	2
Fail to keep entries correctly	O21	2
Fail to notify details of security arrangements	O22	2
Fail to keep records of Private Hire vehicles operated	O23	2
Displaying the word Taxi or Cab on a Private Hire vehicle	O24	2
Failure to keep records of all drivers employed or failure to produce details of the drivers	O25	2
Failure to notify Licensing Authority within 7 days of the particulars of any driver who is no longer employed by the operator	O26	2
Failure to maintain telephone or radio equipment in sound condition or failure to repair defects promptly	O27	2
Failure to have or produce evidence of a Licence issued by the Department of Trade and Industry licence for all radio equipment	O28	2
Using unlicensed drivers to drive a Mid Devon Licensing Authority licensed vehicle	O29	12
Failure to keep a written record of all complaints or failure to make available to the Licensing Authority	O30	2
Late to provide evidence of insurance or vehicle test (1 st Occasion)	O31	6
Late to provide evidence of insurance or vehicle test (2 nd Occasion)	O32	12
Failure to carry out or provide the required DBS checks on dispatch staff	O33	12
Failure to record, maintain or provide details of checks on dispatch staff in a register	O34	12
Failure to make appropriate checks of any operator for which work is outsourced	O35	12

Failure to establish, maintain or provide a policy on employing ex-offenders to the licensing authority	O36	12
Failure to require notification of convictions as part of the contract of employment	O37	12
Failure to notify licensing authority of any conviction information relating to booking and dispatch staff in accordance with condition	O38	12

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Appendix 2 Previous convictions policy

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 The sole purpose of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing is to protect the public. That is the only consideration the Council can take into account when determining application for a licence, or whether to take action against an existing licence (suspend, revoke or refuse to renew).
- 1.2 Ideally, all those involved in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades (Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers, Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle owners and Private Hire operators) would be persons of the highest integrity. In many cases that is true, and the vast majority of those involved in these trades are decent, upstanding, honest and hard-working individuals. Unfortunately, as in any occupation or trade, there are those who fail to conform to those standards.
- 1.3 The purpose of this this Policy is to lay down guidelines as to what the Council regards as unacceptable previous conduct on the part of an applicant or licensee. This will then assist the Council in determining whether a particular person is fit and proper either to be granted a licence in the first place or to retain such a licence.
- 1.4 Drivers and operators cannot be granted a licence unless the Council is satisfied that they are a fit and proper person to hold that licence (see s 51 and 59 in respect of drivers; s55 in respect of operators of the 1976 Act).
- 1.5 There are no statutory criteria for vehicle licences, therefore the Council has an absolute discretion over whether to grant either a Hackney Carriage or Private hire proprietor's licence.
- 1.6 In determining fit and proper, the Council is entitled to take into account all matters concerning that applicant or licensee. They are not simply concerned with that person's behaviour whilst working in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade. This consideration is far wider than simply criminal convictions or other evidence of unacceptable behaviour, and the entire character of the individual will be considered. This can include, but is not limited to, the individual's attitude and temperament.

- 1.7 Convictions for attempt or conspiracy will be regarded as convictions for the substantive crime. A caution is regarded in exactly the same way as a conviction⁵. Fixed penalties and community resolutions will also be considered in the same way as a conviction⁶.
- 1.8 It is important to recognise that matters which have not resulted in a criminal conviction (whether that is the result of an acquittal, a conviction being quashed, decision not to prosecute or an investigation which is continuing where the individual has been bailed) can and will be taken into account by the Council. In addition, complaints where there was no police involvement will also be considered. Within this document, any reference to "conviction" will also include matters that amount to criminal behaviour, but which have not resulted in a conviction.
- 1.9 In the case of any new applicant who has been charged with any offence and is awaiting trial, the determination will be deferred until the trial has been completed or the charges withdrawn. Where an existing licensee is charged, it will be for the Council to decide what action to take in the light of these guidelines.
- 1.10 In all cases, the Council will consider the conviction or behaviour in question and what weight should be attached to it, and each and every case will be determined on its own merits, and in the light of this policy.
- 1.11 Any offences committed, or unacceptable behaviour reported whilst driving a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle, concerning the use of a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle, or in connection with an operator of a Private Hire vehicle will be viewed as an aggravating feature, and the fact that any other offences were not connected with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades will not be seen as mitigating factors.
- 1.12 As the Council will be looking at the entirety of the individual, in many cases fitness and propriety will not be determined by a specified period of time having elapsed following a conviction or the

⁵ This is because a caution can only be imposed following an admission of guilt, which is equivalent to a guilty plea on prosecution.

⁶ This is because payment of a fixed penalty indicates acceptance of guilt, and a community resolution can only be imposed following an admission of guilt.

completion of a sentence. Time periods are relevant and weighty considerations, but they are not the only determining factor.

- 1.13 In addition to the nature of the offence or other behaviour, the quantity of matters and the period over which they were committed will also be considered. Patterns of repeated unacceptable or criminal behaviour are likely to cause greater concern than isolated occurrences as such patterns can demonstrate a propensity for such behaviour or offending.
- 1.14 Most applicants or licensees will have no convictions and that is clearly the ideal situation. In relation to other people, it is accepted that human beings do make mistakes and lapse in their conduct for a variety of reasons, and it is further accepted that many learn from experience and do not go on to commit further offences. Accordingly, in many cases an isolated conviction, especially if committed some time ago, may not prevent the grant or renewal of a licence.
- 1.15 It is also important to recognise that once a licence has been granted, there is a continuing requirement on the part of the licensee to remain fit and proper. The Council has powers to take action against the holder of all types of licence (driver, vehicle and operator) and it must be understood that any convictions or other actions on the part of the licensee which would have prevented them being granted a licence on initial application will lead to that licence being revoked.
- 1.16 Any dishonesty by any applicant or other person on the applicant's behalf which is discovered to have occurred in any part of any application process (e.g. failure to declare convictions, false names or addresses, falsified references) will result in a licence being refused, or if already granted, revoked and may result in prosecution.
- 1.17 As the direct impact on the public varies depending upon the type of licence applied for or held, it is necessary to consider the impact of particular offences on those licences separately. However, there are some overriding considerations which will apply in all circumstances.
- 1.18 Generally, where a person has more than one conviction, this will raise serious questions about their safety and suitability, and therefore whether or not they are fit and proper. The Council is looking for fit

and proper individuals, and once a pattern or trend of repeated offending is apparent, a licence will not be granted or renewed.

- 1.19 Where an applicant/licensee is convicted of an offence which is not detailed in this guidance, the Council will take that conviction into account and use these guidelines as an indication of the approach that should be taken.
- 1.20 These guidelines do not replace the duty of the licensing authority to refuse to grant a licence where they are not satisfied that the applicant or licensee is a fit and proper person. Where a situation is not covered by this policy, the Council must consider the matter from first principles and determine the fitness and propriety of the individual.

Section 2.0: Considering previous convictions

- 2.0.1 As the Council issues dual licences and the criteria for determining whether an individual should be granted or retain a Hackney Carriage driver's licence are identical to the criteria for a Private Hire driver's licence, the two are considered together.
- 2.0.2 A driver has direct responsibility for the safety of their passengers, direct responsibility for the safety of other road users and significant control over passengers who are in the vehicle. As those passengers may be alone, and may also be vulnerable, any previous convictions or unacceptable behaviour will weigh heavily against a licence being granted or retained.
- 2.0.3 As stated above, where an applicant has more than one conviction showing a pattern or tendency irrespective of time since the convictions, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they fit and proper.
- 2.0.4 In relation to single convictions, before a licence will be granted the following time periods should elapse following completion of the sentence. "Sentence" means the period of imprisonment imposed (not simply the time served), or the date of conviction if a fine was imposed, completion of any disqualification from driving, or the end of whichever lasts longer if more than one penalty was imposed.

2.1 Crimes resulting in death

2.1.1 Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime which resulted in the death of another person or was intended to cause the death or serious injury of another person they will not be licensed.

2.2 Exploitation

2.2.1 Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime involving, related to, or has any connection with abuse, exploitation, use or treatment of another individual irrespective of whether the victim or victims were adults or children, they will not be licensed. This includes slavery, child sexual exploitation, grooming, psychological, emotional or financial abuse, but this is not an exhaustive list.

2.3 Offences involving violence

2.3.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for an offence of violence, or connected with any offence of violence, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

2.4 Possession of a weapon

2.4.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of a weapon or any other weapon related offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

2.5 Sex and indecency offences

2.5.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence involving or connected with illegal sexual activity or any form of indecency, a licence will not be granted.

2.5.2 In addition to the above, the licensing authority will not grant a licence to any applicant who is currently on the Sex Offenders Register or on any 'barred' list.

2.6 Dishonesty

2.6.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence of dishonesty, or any offence where dishonesty is an element of the offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

2.7 Drugs

2.7.1 Where an applicant has any conviction for, or related to, the supply of drugs, or possession with intent to supply or connected with possession with intent to supply, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

2.7.2 Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of drugs, or related to the possession of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

2.8 Discrimination

2.8.1 Where an applicant has a conviction involving or connected with discrimination in any form, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

2.9 Motoring convictions

2.9.1 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers are professional drivers charged with the responsibility of carrying the public. Any motoring conviction demonstrates a lack of professionalism and will be considered seriously. It is accepted that offences can be committed unintentionally, and a single occurrence of a minor traffic offence would not prohibit the grant of a licence or may not result in action against an existing licence. Subsequent convictions reinforce the fact that the licensee does not take their professional responsibilities seriously and is therefore not a safe and suitable person to be granted or retain a licence.

2.10 Drink driving/driving under the influence of drugs/using a hand-held telephone or hand-held device whilst driving

2.10.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for drink driving or driving under the influence of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed.

2.10.2 Where an applicant has a conviction for using a held-hand mobile telephone or a hand-held device whilst driving, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the conviction or completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed, whichever is the later.

2.11 Other motoring offences

2.11.1 A minor traffic or vehicle related offence is one which does not involve loss of life, driving under the influence of drink or drugs, driving whilst using a mobile phone, and has not resulted in injury to any person or damage to any property (including vehicles). Where an applicant has 7 or more points on their DVLA licence for minor traffic or similar offences, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed or the date of conviction resulting in the 7th point.

2.11.2 A major traffic or vehicle related offence is one which is not covered above and also any offence which resulted in injury to any person or damage to any property (including vehicles). It also includes driving without insurance or any offence connected with motor insurance. Where an applicant has a conviction for a major traffic offence or similar offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

2.12 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire offences

2.12.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for an offence concerned with or connected to Hackney Carriage or Private Hire activity (excluding vehicle use), a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

2.13 Vehicle use offences

2.13.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence which involved the use of a vehicle (including Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles), a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

Section 3: Private Hire Operators

3.1 As public trust and confidence in the overall safety and integrity of the Private Hire system is vital, the same standards will be applied to operators as those applied to drivers, which are outlined below.

3.2 A Private Hire operator does not have direct responsibility for the safety of passengers, other road users or direct contact with passengers who are in the Private Hire vehicle (except where they are also licensed as a Private Hire driver). However, in performing their duties they obtain and hold considerable amounts of personal and private information about

their passengers which must be treated in confidence and not revealed to others, or used by the operator or their staff for criminal or other unacceptable purposes.

- 3.3 As stated above, where an applicant has more than one conviction, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are a fit and proper person.
- 3.4 Operators must ensure that any staff that are used within the business (whether employees or independent contractors) and who are able to access any information as described above are subject to the same standards as the operator themselves. This can be effected by means of the individual staff member being required by the operator to obtain a basic DBS certificate. If an operator is found not to be applying the required standards and using staff that do not meet the Council's overall criteria, that will lead to the operator's licence being revoked.

Section 4: Vehicle Proprietors

- 4.1 Vehicle proprietors (both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire) have two principal responsibilities. Firstly, they must ensure that the vehicle is maintained to an acceptable standard at all times. Secondly, they must ensure that the vehicle is not used for illegal or illicit purposes.
- 4.2 As stated above, where an applicant has more than one conviction, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are a fit and proper person to be granted or retain a vehicle licence.
- 4.3 As public trust and confidence in the overall safety and integrity of the Private Hire system is vital, the same standards will be applied to proprietors as those applied to drivers, which are outlined above.

Appendix 3 Driver licence policy and Driver Code of Conduct (Hackney Carriage and Private Hire)

The Council issues dual driver's licences. That means that once you hold a driver's licence, you can drive any Council licensed Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle.

This reduces the burden on drivers who may wish to drive either type of vehicle, reduces the costs to the drivers and the Council, and as the criteria for issue and retention of both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers' licences are identical, there is no practical or legal reason not to do so.

This document contains the policy, Code of Conduct and legislation relating to a driver licence.

There is a power to attach conditions to Private Hire drivers' licences, but the Council has decided not to attach standard conditions to these licences.

As it issues dual licences, it has a Code of Conduct for drivers which applies to both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire activity.

This Code is not a condition: it is a standard of behaviour which the Council expects drivers to maintain. Any failure to comply with the Code will lead to the Council questioning whether you remain a fit and proper person to drive a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle.

A dual driver's licence is referred to as a "taxi driver's licence" and drivers are referred to as "taxi drivers" within the Council and for the remainder of this document.

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of licensing taxi drivers is to protect the public, including passengers and others who may otherwise be placed at risk from unlicensed and potentially dangerous drivers.
- 1.2 It is a privilege to hold a taxi driver's licence and licensees have responsibilities to their passengers and customers, other road users and the public generally. The Council has been satisfied that when you applied for your licence you were a fit and proper person to have that licence granted. In assessing that, the Council took into account your

entire character and behaviour. This not only includes times when you are working as a taxi driver, but at all other times as well. This can include your use of social media as well as other forms of communication.

- 1.3 The requirement to satisfy the Council that you are a fit and proper person continues throughout the duration of the licence. If at any time you as a licensee fall below the standards expected of a new applicant, the Council will consider taking action against that licence. This could be suspension, revocation or refusal to renew that licence. It is no defence to argue that your actions took place when you are not working as a taxi driver. You should appreciate that under the previous convictions policy (available at Appendix 2), if the unacceptable or criminal behaviour took place whilst you were driving as a taxi driver that will be viewed as an aggravating feature by the Council.
- 1.4 In many cases a taxi driver is the first person that a visitor to the District will encounter following arrival at an airport, railway station or bus station. Taxi drivers are ambassadors for the District and that first impression can affect a person for their entire visit. Taxi drivers should be aware of this and act accordingly at all times.
- 1.5 Taxi drivers can also be the eyes and ears of their communities. In addition to travelling far and wide around the District they also have close contact with people from every part of society. This means they can quickly establish when situations are not normal. That could be that a person has not made a booking that is expected which may be as a result of them falling ill. If they live alone the taxi driver may be the only person to have realised that there is a problem. Taxi drivers are also very aware of the movements of people. They are in a position to recognise where children may be being used for criminal purposes (for example County lines drug trafficking) or being moved for the purposes of abuse or exploitation. They may also recognise similar movements of adults in relation to modern slavery and other forms of abuse.
- 1.6 By working closely with the Council and other agencies the role of the taxi driver can be vital in protecting vulnerable people within the community.
- 1.7 You must understand and comply with the legal requirements relating to your taxi driver licence and the legal requirements and any conditions attached to the Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle licence of the

vehicle you drive. Failure to comply with the requirements may result in your taxi driver licence being suspended or revoked.

- 1.8 The Council office for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing purposes is: Mid Devon District Council, **Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton, Devon**
Telephone: **01884 255255** Email: **licensing@middevon.gov.uk**

Section 2: Power to take action against a taxi driver's licence

- 2.1 Under section 61 of the 1976 Act, the Council may suspend or revoke or refuse to renew a taxi driver's licence on the following grounds –
- 2.2 that the licensee has, since the date of the grant of the licence –
- (a) been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty, indecency or violence; or
 - (b) been convicted of an offence under or has failed to comply with the provisions of the Act of 1847;
 - (c) (aa) been convicted of an immigration offence or required to pay an immigration penalty; or
 - (d) any other reasonable cause.
- 2.3 The Council may suspend or revoke your licence with immediate effect where it is of the opinion that the interests of public safety require such a course of action under section 61(2A) of the 1976 Act. As this is likely to be an urgent situation, you will be contacted by telephone, text and email and notified of the time the decision will be made and your opportunity to make representations. If you do not avail yourself of that opportunity, the decision will be taken in your absence.
- 2.4 Failure to comply with any Hackney Carriage or Private Hire legislation, or other Road Traffic legislation is an offence, and you may be liable to prosecution. In addition (irrespective of whether you were prosecuted or convicted of the offence(s)), the Council may take action against your licence which may also result in your taxi driver's licence being suspended or revoked.
- 2.5 If any information given by you on the application form for this licence proves to be false, or you fail to disclose any relevant information on your

application form, the licence may be revoked, and you may be prosecuted under s57(3) of the 1976 Act.

- 2.6 The taxi drivers' licence and badge remain the property of the Council.
- 2.7 In the event that you lose your licence, or badge or they are damaged or defaced, you must get a replacement on payment of a fee determined by the Council, and you cannot drive a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle until such a replacement is obtained.

Section 3: Policy

3.1 Duration of licence

- 3.1.1 The drivers' licence expires 3 years (36 months) from the date of issue, unless an application was made for a licence for 1 year.

3.2 Renewal of licence

- 3.2.1 Any application for renewal must be made at least 14 days before the licence expires. If you do not apply to renew your licence in time there may be a period when you will be unable to drive a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle. If the renewal application is not received before the expiry of your current licence, it will be treated as a new application rather than a renewal and you will have to provide all the information that is required for a new application (e.g. a new DBS check, up-to-date medical etc.).

- 3.2.2 Renewals are generally dealt with by Council Officers under delegated powers, and can be processed quite quickly. However, if there have been any changes since the last grant of the licence (for example if you have been convicted or cautioned for any offence, received a fixed penalty notice, Community Protection Notice, Criminal Behaviour Order, been required to attend a speed awareness course or there have been a complaint or concerns about your behaviour, but this is not an exhaustive list) the renewal application may need to be considered by the Regulatory Sub-committee. If this is the case, then a 2 month temporary licence may be issued, without prejudice to any decision the Sub-committee might make.

- 3.2.3 The renewal of the licence will be at the Council's discretion.

3.3 Applications and fees

- 3.3.1 An application will not be processed until it is complete. The fee will be due prior to grant of the licence.
- 3.3.2 All applications must be accompanied by passport standard and sized photograph of the applicant with the applicant's full name written in block capitals on the reverse.
- 3.3.3 The fees payable for the grant and renewal of hackney carriage and private hire licences are available to see on the Councils website: [Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees - MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](https://www.middevon.gov.uk/hackney-carriage-and-private-hire-fees)

3.4 Driving Licence

- 3.4.1 Applicants must have held a full DVLA driving licence for a Category B vehicle for a period of at least 12 months. Where an applicant (or an existing licensed driver) has been disqualified from driving for any period, as a result of a conviction, a taxi drivers' licence will not be granted to that applicant until at least 1 year has elapsed following the end of the period of disqualification.
- 3.4.2 If an applicant does not hold a UK driving licence, an application can be made provided the applicant holds a Northern Ireland, European Economic Areas or a driving licence issued by a country which is defined as an exchangeable driving licence, and has held that licence for at least 1 year at the date of application. Countries which issue licences recognised as exchangeable are currently Gibraltar, Jersey, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Australia, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Falkland Islands, Faroe Islands, Hong Kong, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Zimbabwe (This list may alter as a result of changes to the legislation.).
- 3.4.3 The driving licence must be produced at the assessment interview and consent to access DVLA records must be given. A copy will be taken of the licence and retained together with the application form and all other supporting documents.

3.5 Immigration requirements

- 3.5.1 An applicant for a driver's licence must have the right to remain and work in the UK. This will be evidenced on application by the driver providing documentation or immigration check code which complies with the Home Office guidelines⁷. The list of acceptable documents is also detailed on the Council's website.
- 3.5.2 The original documents must be provided and brought to the Council offices by the applicant in person. They will then be inspected, verified and copied.
- 3.5.3 Where an applicant has an unqualified right to remain and work, that will be noted and this process will not be repeated on renewal.
- 3.5.4 However where there is a qualification to either of the rights, the required documentation must be provided each time the licence is renewed. In those cases a licence for a shorter period than the usual 3 years may be granted.
- 3.5.5 If at any time during the currency of a licence, the right to remain or work is lost, that licence will cease to have effect and the licensee must immediately notify the Council and return the licence and badge.

3.6 Tax Conditionality

- 3.6.1 Existing licensees applying for the renewal of a licence must obtain their unique 9 character code from HMRC and provide this to the Council. If this cannot be provided the application cannot proceed.
- 3.6.2 The Council will advise new applicants of the need to register with HMRC for tax and applicants must sign an acknowledgement that they have received this information.

⁷ At the time this policy was adopted those are detailed in Appendix 1 to the Home Office document "Guidance for Licensing Authorities to prevent Illegal Working in the Taxi and Private Hire Sector in England and Wales" (available at [Guidance for licensing authorities to prevent illegal working in the taxi and private hire sector in the UK \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-licensing-authorities-to-prevent-illegal-working-in-the-taxi-and-private-hire-sector-in-the-uk))

3.7 Criminal Record Checks

- 3.7.1 All applicants (new and on renewal) will be required to provide an Enhanced DBS check with a check of both the adult and children barred lists, at their own expense, as part of the application process. This is conducted via the Council, but the DBS certificate is sent to the applicant's home address.
- 3.7.2 Once a licence has been granted, all licensees will be required to subscribe to the DBS Update Service.
- 3.7.3 The application will then be considered in the light of the Council's previous convictions policy (see Appendix 2).
- 3.7.4 As DBS checks do not cover convictions in countries outside the United Kingdom, any applicant who has lived abroad for any period of more than 6 months from the age of 18 must also provide a Certificate of Good Conduct from the appropriate Embassy or High Commission and it must be in English. The Council may undertake checks to ensure the authenticity of any such documentation. If this cannot be provided then the application will be refused.

3.8 Driving Standards

- 3.8.1 In order to establish that an applicant reaches an acceptable driving standard, new applicants will be required to successfully undertake and pass an approved driver skills assessment before a licence will be granted. Applicants must arrange and pay for this test themselves.
- 3.8.2 Any existing driver that cannot prove that they have completed a test to the same standard within the last 10 years must also successfully undertake such a test at their own expense before a licence will be renewed.
- 3.8.3 The driver skills assessment will assess the following:
- driving skills;
 - geographic knowledge and navigational skills;
 - English communication skills;
 - Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licence conditions knowledge;
 - child sexual exploitation awareness

- safeguarding awareness
- disability awareness and wheelchair assessment

3.9 Medical Requirements

- 3.9.1 Applicants are required to pass a medical examination, to include a vision assessment (at their own expense) and provide a Council issued medical certificate completed by their own GP, or any suitably qualified medical practitioner who must have full access to all of their medical records to meet PSV/HGV Group 2 (vocational licence) medical standards of fitness, as defined and updated by the DVLA.
- 3.9.2 An applicant can also provide a PSV/HGV Group 2 medical certificate which has been completed by their own GP within the previous four months.
- 3.9.3 Medical certificates are required at the initial application; and valid until the age of 45, thereafter every five years until the age of 65; and every year from the age of 65.
- 3.9.4 The Council reserves the right to seek a second opinion (at the expense of the applicant) in any case where it has any concerns about the medical fitness of an applicant, both on application and at any time during the duration of the licence. The Council may suspend a licence if the requested information is not submitted within 4 weeks of the request, and also where the information provided raises further concerns as to the applicant's fitness to carry out their duties as a licensed driver.

3.10 Driver's Licence and Badges

- 3.10.1 Successful applicants will be issued with their licence and 2 badges on receipt of the appropriate fee.
- 3.10.2 Badges must be worn and lodged with the operator or Hackney Carriage proprietor (as applicable) in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

3.11 Equality Act Exemption Certificates

- 3.11.1 Taxi drivers must carry assistance dogs, carry disabled people and provide mobility assistance to them, and, when driving a listed

wheelchair accessible vehicle, provide mobility assistance to wheelchair-bound passengers (detailed below).

3.11.2 Applications can be made to the Council for exemption from the assistance dogs' requirements under sections 169 and 171 of the Equality Act. Similar applications for exemptions from the requirement to provide mobility assistance can be made under section 166 of the Equality Act.

3.11.3 Application forms are available on the Council's website together with details of the criteria that will be used to determine whether or not any such exemption certificate should be issued and if so, on what terms.

3.11.4 Exemption certificates will only last until the driver is required to provide their next general medical certificate. This means that an exemption certificate will last for a maximum of 5 years, but if it is being granted subsequent to the last medical, it will not run beyond the renewal date for the general medical certificate.

3.12 Seat belts

3.12.1 The law relating to seat belts as it applies to drivers and passengers in Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles is different from non-licensed passenger vehicles.

3.12.2 When driving a Hackney Carriage, the driver does not need to wear a seatbelt when seeking hire (plying), answering a call for hire (travelling to a pre-booked hiring) or when a commercial or fare paying passenger is being carried (this does not apply to the vehicle if being used for private/domestic use). However the Council strongly advises that a seatbelt should be worn by drivers of Hackney Carriages at all times.

3.12.3 When driving a Private Hire vehicle, the driver does not need to wear a seatbelt when a commercial or fare paying passenger is being carried (this does not apply to the vehicle if being used for private/domestic use). However the Council strongly advises that a seatbelt should be worn by drivers of Private Hire vehicles at all times.

3.12.4 In relation to commercial or fare paying passengers in Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles (except when the vehicle is being used to private/domestic use) the rules relating to seat belts are as follows:

Commercial or fare paying passengers		Front seat	Rear seat	Who is responsible?
Children under three years' old		Correct child restraint MUST be used.	Correct child restraint MUST be used If one is not available in a licensed Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle, the child may travel unrestrained.	Driver
Child Aged 3–11 and under 135cms in height (about 4.5 Feet)		Correct child restraint MUST be used	Correct child restraint must be used if seat belts are fitted. If a child seat is not available, a child may travel using just the seat belt in these situations : - In a licensed Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle - For a short distance if	Driver

			the journey is unexpected and necessary - There isn't room to fit a third child seat	
Child Aged 12 or 13 years or younger child 135 cm or more in height		Adult seat belt must be worn if fitted	Adult seat belt must be worn if fitted	Driver
Passengers aged 14 years and over		Must be worn if fitted	Must be worn if fitted	Passenger

3.12.5 If you are carrying children under the age of 14 you must make any adult with responsibility for the child aware that the correct restraints may not be available and the carriage of the child in those circumstances is at the adults own risk.

3.12.6 Children can be carried lawfully in Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles without the correctly sized child restraints. In these circumstances, the driver must make the parent's, carer's or other responsible adult's accompanying the children aware of the potential dangers of carrying children who are not correctly restrained in motor vehicles. It will remain the parent's, carer's or other responsible adult's decision as to whether they are prepared to accept those risks.

Section 4: Sanctions against breaches of the Code of Conduct and for acquiring driver licence points

4.1 Where a driver acquires 6 or more penalty points on their DVLA licence, or who breaches any legislation or requirement of the Code of Conduct, they may be referred to the Regulatory Sub-committee.

4.2 The Council also runs its own Penalty Points Scheme as a method of enforcing the requirements for taxi drivers (see Appendix 2 for full details).

- 4.3 When a driver is brought before the Regulatory Sub-committee for whatever reason, the Regulatory Sub-committee will decide each case on its merits, after hearing the facts.
- 4.4 The Regulatory Sub-committee may also suspend or revoke the taxi driver's licence or impose further penalty points. Suspension or revocation of your licence can be with immediate effect where the Council is of the opinion that the interests of public safety require such a course of action. (Section 61 (2A) of the 1976 Act).
- 4.5 It must be understood that a decision to grant you a licence was made on the basis that you were a fit and proper person to drive a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle on the particular facts of the case on the day of the decision. That status can be lost at any time in the future and you must ensure that your behaviour remains of the highest standard to protect your drivers' licence and therefore your livelihood.
- 4.6 Licences cannot be surrendered if the licence holder is involved in any investigation by the Council for non-compliance against said licence. This is to ensure public safety, as it will be necessary to conclude the investigation, take appropriate action against the licence, such as revocation or suspension and where relevant share on NR3s.

Section 5.0: Taxi Drivers' Code of Conduct

- 5.0.1 This Code of Conduct relates to you as a licensed taxi driver. It outlines the standards of behaviour which are expected of you whilst you hold a taxi driver's licence. Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to enforcement action being taken. This could be by way of penalty points attached to your taxi driver's licence, suspension, revocation or refusal to renew your licence.
- 5.0.1 You are a licensed taxi driver for the duration of the licence, and at all times you should ensure that your conduct and behaviour is that of a fit and proper person. The Council will consider all your behaviour, and that is not limited to the times when you are driving a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle.
- 5.0.2 When you are driving a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle, that remains a Council licensed vehicle and you remain a Council licensed taxi driver wherever you may be located, and for whatever purpose you

are using the vehicle (this includes social and domestic use). This Code of Conduct applies across the whole of the United Kingdom.

5.1 Your taxi driver's licence and badge

5.1.1 You have been issued with 2 copies of your driver's badge. You must wear one driver's badge at all times when you are driving or working with a Private Hire vehicle or Hackney Carriage and failure to do so is a criminal offence. **(This is also a legal requirement)**

5.1.2 You must display the second copy of your badge in a position which is plainly and clearly visible to your passengers at all times whilst you are working as a taxi driver.

5.1.3 You must return your licence and badge to the licensing team of the Council **within 72 hours** if:

- (a) You change your home or business address
- (b) The licence expires, or
- (c) Is suspended or revoked (from the date the decision takes effect);
- (d) You lose the right to work in the UK, or the right to remain in the UK
- (e) You wish to surrender your taxi driver licence
- (f) Required to do so by an "Authorised Officer" of the Council.

5.1.4 In the event of the loss of your licence or badge you must report the loss to the Council's licensing team as soon as reasonably practicable.

5.2 Production of Documents

5.2.1 If an Authorised Officer of the Council, or a police constable or PCSO asks you, you must produce:

- Your DVLA driving licence
- Your taxi driver licence
- The vehicle registration document
- A valid certificate of insurance

within **5 days** of the request being made at the location that they specify.

5.3 Medical condition

5.3.1 You must notify the Council, in writing within **72 hours** of any change in your medical condition that may adversely affect your ability to drive Private Hire or Hackney Carriage vehicles.

5.3.2 When working as a taxi driver, you must be sober and not under the influence of any illegal drugs. If you are taking any prescription medication, you must ensure that it does not impair your driving ability.

5.4 Declaration of conviction / caution / penalty

5.4.1 You must declare all convictions, cautions, fixed penalty notices, Criminal Behaviour Orders, Community Protection Notices, requirements to attend a speed awareness course, injunctions, restraining orders to the Council on your initial application form.

5.4.2 If you are convicted of any offence, or accept a formal caution for an offence, or receive a fixed penalty notice for any offence or receive and accept an endorsable fixed penalty notice, or are made the subject of a Criminal Behaviour Orders or Community Protection Notice, are required to attend a speed awareness course, are made the subject on any injunction or restraining order, or you are arrested for any matter, you must give the Council details within **72 hours** of the event.

5.5 Driving

5.5.1 You must comply with all road traffic regulations at all times.

5.5.2 You must comply with all legislation and conditions relating to the Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle that you are driving at all times. Those conditions are available within section 5 of Appendix 4 and on the Council's website.

5.5.3 You must not use a hand-held mobile telephone or any other handheld device whilst driving. In addition, you must not use any non-handheld device whilst driving, unless it is entirely voice activated. In addition this will be regarded as a serious breach of the Code of Conduct

5.5.4 You must not sound your vehicle horn –

- (a) unnecessarily, i.e. unless in an emergency or to let other road users or pedestrians know you are there;
- (b) when your vehicle is stationary on a road, at any time, other than at times of danger due to another moving vehicle on or near the road;
- (c) on any road in a built up area between 11.30 p.m. and 7.00 am.

5.5.5 Your vehicle horn must not be used to signal your arrival to collect any pre-booked passenger.

5.5.6 You must not drive any Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle in a dangerous or inconsiderate manner and in addition to complying with all road traffic regulations you must ensure that your driving and behaviour on the road is of the highest standard.

5.5.7 When parking, or otherwise waiting for either a hiring, a booking to be communicated to you or attending for a pre-booked hiring, you must ensure that you do not obstruct other road users including pedestrians on pavements and in pedestrianised streets. You must also ensure that you do not block vehicle entrances or any emergency exits for buildings. You must also comply with parking and waiting restrictions (if any).

5.5.8 When stopping to set passengers down you must do so in a manner which minimises the risk to those passengers as they alight from the vehicle. You must warn passengers clearly of any unusual or unexpected dangers within the vicinity.

5.5.9 When driving a Hackney Carriage, you must not demand a fare greater than that shown on the meter for a journey within the Council's area.

5.5.10 Where a journey ends outside the Council's area, you must not demand a fare greater than that shown on the meter unless an agreement was made between yourself and the hirer before the hiring commenced.

5.5.11 When driving a Private Hire vehicle you must not demand a fare greater than that shown on the meter (if that is how your operator calculates fares) or as agreed between the hirer and the operator.

5.6 Data protection

5.6.1 You must ensure that you have the correct safeguards for storing personal data that comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General

Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). This will include details of hirers (pre-booked Hackney Carriages) and also any dash cam footage.

5.7 Conduct and Behaviour

- 5.7.1 You must be honest and trustworthy at all times.
- 5.7.2 You must be polite and courteous to your passengers, other road users and the public generally. You must not use abusive or foul language, spit or smoke in or near the vicinity of your vehicle.
- 5.7.3 You must not use aggressive language or behaviour, or engage in any violent conduct.
- 5.7.4 You must not carry any form of weapon on your person or in your vehicle at any time and under no circumstances must you ever take the law into your own hands.
- 5.7.5 If the hirer requests, you must provide a written receipt for the fare paid for the hiring, including the amount of VAT (if applicable) shown separately if so requested. If requested you must provide details of the journey including the date, pick up point and destination, vehicle licence number, operator's name and driver name or licence number. You must then sign the receipt.
- 5.7.6 You must not cause or allow noise emitted by any radio or sound equipment in the vehicle which you are driving to be a source of nuisance or annoyance to any person or persons, whether inside or outside the vehicle.
- 5.7.7 If a passenger objects, you must not play any radio or sound reproducing instrument or equipment in the vehicle.
- 5.7.8 You must treat everybody decently, equally and fairly.
- 5.7.9 You must not discriminate against any person because of their race, colour, religious beliefs, age, gender, sexuality, or disability.
- 5.7.10 You must not use abusive, racist, sexist, or any other offensive language or terms with passengers or other members of the public (remember that not everybody shares your sense of humour, or views).

- 5.7.11 You must protect passengers and yourself. Be wary about entering any premises, especially domestic premises unless you know the person as an established customer. Even then make sure that you take all steps to minimise any risk to yourself or your reputation.
- 5.7.12 You must not obtain the telephone numbers of, or engage on any form of social media with anybody under the age of 18.
- 5.7.13 You must behave in a civil and reasonable manner at all times and must comply with any reasonable request made by the hirer.
- 5.7.14 You must always pick up your passengers on time unless unavoidably delayed.
- 5.7.15 You must always assist your passengers with their luggage. If they do not request this, you must ask whether they need help. This includes picking it up from the point of booking, removing it from your vehicle at the end of the journey and setting it down.
- 5.7.16 It is recommended that you maintain a logbook in which to record any incidents that you feel are of concern (including but not limited to concerns about child abuse, abuse of any other person, people trafficking, drug carrying, violence or criminal behaviour) or which may result in a complaint being made about you. Such incidents must be recorded promptly with as much detail as possible (date, time, location, nature of the incident, names of the parties (if known) and identifying features). This logbook must be kept securely in the vehicle and the details must be transferred to a storage medium which is not contained within the vehicle (i.e. a copy of the pages stored on a computer) as soon as possible.
- 5.7.17 When you are driving a Private Hire vehicle all such incidents must be reported to your operator as soon as possible. If you are driving a Hackney Carriage that has been booked via a booking agent, all such incidents must be reported to that agent as soon as possible.
- 5.7.18 Where you suspect that an incident involves criminal behaviour you must report this to the Police and Council immediately.

5.7.19 You must maintain a logbook of any complaints that are made to you as a driver. All complaints must be recorded promptly with as much detail as possible (date, time, location, nature of the complaint, names of the parties (if known) and identifying features).

5.7.20 When you are driving a Private Hire vehicle all such complaints must be reported to your operator as soon as possible. If you are driving a Hackney Carriage that has been booked via a booking agent, all such complaints must be reported to that agent as soon as possible.

5.7.21 Such complaints should also be reported to the licensing team.

5.8 Personal appearance and dress code

5.8.1 You must maintain good standards of personal hygiene at all times.

5.8.2 You must always be clean and respectable in your dress and present a professional image. To achieve this you must comply with the following dress code which will also ensure that public and driver safety is not compromised.

5.8.3 Acceptable standards of dress

(a) Collared shirts, blouses, polo shirts, or sweatshirts must cover the shoulders and be capable of being worn tucked inside trousers, shorts or skirts.

(b) All clothing must be clean, of smart appearance and in good condition.

(c) Trousers can be either full length or shorts.

(d) Any clothing must not impede the safe operation of the pedals.

(e) Footwear for all drivers must fit around the heel of the foot. Wooden soled footwear is not permitted.

5.8.4 Unacceptable standards of dress

(a) Anything not conforming to the above, including:

(b) Clothing not being kept in a clean and fresh condition or any items which have holes or rips.

(c) Words or graphics on any clothing that is of an offensive or suggestive nature.

(d) Sportswear e.g. football or rugby kits, track suits, beach wear, etc.

(e) Sandals with no heel straps, flip flops or any other form of footwear not secured around the heel.

- (f) Not having either the top or bottom half of their bodies suitably clothed.
- (g) No baseball caps or hoods worn up whilst in the vehicle.

5.9 Use of the Vehicle

- 5.9.1 Private Hire vehicles and Hackney Carriages are smoke free vehicles at all times under the Health Act 2006. It is a criminal offence to smoke in a Private Hire vehicle at any time (section 7) or to allow a person to smoke in a Private Hire vehicle (section 8) and you can be prosecuted for either or both offences. In addition this will be regarded as a serious breach of the Code of Conduct.
- 5.9.2 Under normal circumstances, must not eat in the vehicle at any time. Discretion should be applied in the event of a person requiring food due to a medical condition.
- 5.9.3 Animals must not be carried in Private Hire vehicles or Hackney Carriages other than those belonging to or in the care of passengers.
- 5.9.4 You may refuse to carry a hirer's animal at your discretion. However, you must not refuse to carry an assistance dog, unless you have a valid exemption certificate issued by the Council (and the specified notice is displayed in the vehicle at the time). Any animal must be kept under the hirer's control, and must be carried in the rear of the vehicle (except assistance dogs). No animals can be carried in the luggage compartment of a vehicle unless the vehicle is an estate car or hatchback and the animal can be seen from outside the vehicle through a window.
- 5.9.5 You must not carry more passengers than the maximum number prescribed by the conditions attached to the Hackney Carriage, your Private Hire vehicle licence and displayed on the vehicle plate.
- 5.9.6 You must accept a reasonable amount of luggage for any hirer and assist them in loading it and unloading it from the vehicle.
- 5.9.7 You must not carry any additional passengers not already accompanying the hirer in the vehicle without the hirer's permission.

5.9.8 You must not carry more than one person in the front seat unless the vehicle is furnished with manufacturer fitted seats for more than one passenger in the front of the vehicle and provided with seat belts for all front seat passengers. In this case no more than 2 passengers may be carried.

5.9.9 You must not carry any child below the age of ten years in the front of the vehicle.

5.10 Vehicle Checks

5.10.1 It is your responsibility to ensure that the correct policy of insurance is in force for any Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle that you are driving.

5.10.2 Before using a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle for the first time each day, you must undertake a “walk around check”. This requires that you ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and fit for use as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle. The check must include the tyres (pressure and tread depth), checking the lights are functioning (so far as is possible with one person – all lights except brake lights), checking all glass (lights and windows) is intact and ensuring there is no obvious damage to the vehicle. Any defects that are detected must be rectified before the vehicle is used to carry passengers.

5.10.3 Every time you commence driving the vehicle you must ensure that the rear identification plate, supplied by the Council, is securely fixed to the outermost rear of the vehicle, so that it can be clearly read by pedestrians and other road users. You must also ensure that any other identifying information (whether supplied by the Council or not) is correctly and securely attached to the vehicle.

5.10.4 If you have been issued a certificate of exemption from carrying assistance dogs or providing wheelchair assistance you must ensure that that notice is correctly placed on the nearside of the front windscreen.

5.10.5 You must not offer or accept any hire of the vehicle except where the hiring has been pre-booked via your Private Hire operator [does not apply to Hackney Carriages].

5.11 Taximeters in Private Hire Vehicles

- 5.11.1 You may use a meter in the Private Hire vehicle only if it is constructed, attached and maintained in compliance with the Private Hire Vehicle licence conditions.
- 5.11.2 Unless the fare is agreed in advance, you must switch the meter on at the point the hirer's journey commences and keep the meter working until the termination of the hiring.
- 5.11.3 You must not cancel or conceal the fare recorded until the hirer has had a reasonable opportunity of examining it and has paid the fare (unless a lesser fare has been agreed).
- 5.11.4 You must ensure that the fare charged does not exceed the fare displayed on the meter at the end of the journey.
- 5.11.5 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.
- 5.11.6 You must ensure that the meter is sufficiently illuminated when in use and is visible to passengers.
- 5.11.7 You must not (nor may you allow anyone else) to tamper with the meter or any seal on the meter without lawful excuse, or alter any meter with the intent to mislead.

5.12 Plying for hire when driving a Private hire Vehicle (does not apply when driving a Hackney Carriage)

- 5.12.1 You must not pick up passengers who have not pre-booked with your operator.
- 5.12.2 You must not offer or accept an offer for the immediate hire of a vehicle while it is being used in a public place.

5.12.3 You must not park or wait on or near any Hackney Carriage rank, or drop passengers off on a Hackney Carriage rank.

5.13 Fares when a Hackney Carriage is used for pre-booked work

5.13.1 A Hackney Carriage can be used for pre-booked work both within the District of Mid Devon and elsewhere. When the journey is wholly within the District, or commences or ends in Mid Devon District, the fare charged cannot be greater than that displayed on the meter or in accordance with the table of fares.

5.13.2 Where a pre-booked journey commences and ends outside the Mid Devon District the table of fares and the meter do not control the maximum fare that can be charged. In these circumstances the fare to be charged must be negotiated between the hirer and the driver or booking agent.

Section 6: Legal requirements (contained in national legislation) when driving a Hackney Carriage

6.1 Disability Discrimination

6.1.1 All drivers must comply with statutory duties in relation to disabled persons. These are set out in Section 11 (above) of the Policy.

6.2 Conduct

6.2.1 You must not drive a Hackney Carriage at any time if you do not hold a taxi driver's licence, or if your licence has been suspended (section 47 of the 1847 Act).

6.2.2 You must not lend your taxi drivers licence to anybody else (section 47 of the 1847 Act).

6.2.3 When driving a Hackney Carriage you must accept a hiring from a Hackney Carriage rank (taxi rank) or when you are stationary on the highway for a journey within the Council's area unless you have a "reasonable excuse" to refuse (section 53 of the 1847 Act).

6.2.4 When driving a Hackney Carriage if you agree to charge a fare lower than that shown on the meter for a journey in a Hackney Carriage then

you cannot charge more than that agreed fare (section 54 of the 1847 Act).

- 6.2.5 When driving a Hackney Carriage you must not charge more than the fare shown on the meter of a Hackney Carriage for a journey wholly within the Council's area, irrespective of how the journey was arranged (section 55 of the 1847 Act).
- 6.2.6 When driving a Hackney Carriage if you have agreed to accept a fixed amount of money for a journey, you must ensure that the journey lasts until that amount is shown on the meter (section 56 of the 1847).
- 6.2.7 When driving a Hackney Carriage if you have been hired and asked to wait, and either a deposit has been paid or the meter is running, you must wait until the hirer returns to your Hackney Carriage (section 57 of the 1847).
- 6.2.8 When driving a Hackney Carriage you must not charge more than the fare shown on the meter for a journey within the District (section 58 of the 1847).
- 6.2.9 When driving a Hackney Carriage you must not carry anyone apart from the hirer and their companions without the express consent of that hirer (section 59 of the 1847).
- 6.2.10 You must not drive any Hackney Carriage without the consent of the Hackney Carriage proprietor (if that is not yourself) (section 60 of the 1847 Act).
- 6.2.11 You must not leave a Hackney Carriage unattended at a Hackney Carriage rank (section 62 of the 1847 Act).
- 6.2.12 You must not prevent any other driver of a Hackney Carriage from taking a fare, or obstruct them in picking up or sitting down passengers (section 62 of the 1847 Act).
- 6.2.13 When driving a Hackney Carriage you must produce your taxi driver's licence if requested to do so by an Authorised Officer of the Council or any police constable (section 53(3) of the 1976 Act).

- 6.2.14 You must return your driver's licence to the Council within 7 days if you lose the right to remain or work in the UK (section 53A(9) of the 1976 Act).
- 6.2.15 You must not make any false statement or withhold any information when applying to renew your taxi driver's licence (section 57(3) of the 1976 Act).
- 6.2.16 You must return your licence, driver's badge(s) and armband to the Council within 14 days of any suspension, revocation or refusal to renew your licence (section 61(3) of the 1976 Act).
- 6.2.17 When driving a Hackney Carriage you must not charge more than the fare shown on the meter of a Hackney Carriage for a journey that ends outside the Council's area unless a different fare was agreed in advance (section 66 of the 1976 Act).
- 6.2.18 When driving a Hackney Carriage you must not charge more than the metered fare for a pre-booked journey which is wholly within, or starts or finishes within the Council's area. (section 66 of the 1976 Act).
- 6.2.19 You must use the shortest available reasonable route for all journeys by Hackney Carriage, subject to any directions given by the hirer. (section 69 of the 1976 Act).
- 6.2.20 You must not tamper with any seal on a taximeter, or alter the taximeter with any intent to mislead (section 71 of the 1976 Act).
- 6.2.21 You must not obstruct, fail to comply with any requirement made by, or fail to give any information to, an Authorised Officer of the Council, or a police constable (section 73 of the 1976 Act).

Section 7: Legal requirements (contained in national legislation) when driving a Private Hire vehicle

7.1 Disability Discrimination

- 7.1.1 All drivers must comply with statutory duties in relation to disabled persons. These are set out in Section 11 (above) of the Policy.

7.2 Conduct

- 7.2.1 You must not drive a Private Hire vehicle at any time when your taxi drivers' licence has been suspended. (section 46(1)(b) of the 1976 Act).
- 7.2.2 When driving a private hire vehicle you must produce your taxi driver's licence if requested to do so by an Authorised Officer of the Council or any police constable. (section 53(3) of the 1976 Act).
- 7.2.3 You must return your driver's licence to the Council within 7 days if you lose the right to remain or work in the UK. (section 53A(9) of the 1976 Act).
- 7.2.4 You must not make any false statement or withhold any information when applying to renew your taxi drivers licence. (section 57(3) of the 1976 Act).
- 7.2.5 You must return your licence and drivers badge to the Council within 14 days of any suspension, revocation or refusal to renew your licence. (section 61(3) of the 1976 Act).
- 7.2.6 When driving a Private Hire vehicle you must use the shortest available reasonable route for all journeys by Private Hire vehicle, subject to any directions given by the hirer. (section 69 of the 1976 Act).
- 7.2.7 You must not tamper with any seal on a taximeter also the taximeter with any intent to mislead. (section 71 of the 1976 Act).
- 7.2.8 You must not obstruct, fail to comply with any requirement made by, or fail to give any information to, an authorised officer of the Council, , or a police constable. (section 73 of the 1976 Act)
- 7.2.9 You must not drive any private hire vehicle with any roof sign which includes the words "taxi", "cab" or "hire", any similar words or anything which would indicate the vehicle is a Hackney Carriage. (section 64 Transport Act 1980).

Section 8: Penalty Points Scheme

- 8.1 Details of the Driver's Penalty Points Scheme (Appendix 1).

Appendix 4 Hackney Carriage & Private Hire proprietors (vehicle) licence policy and conditions

This document contains the policy, conditions and legislation relating to your Hackney Carriage and Private Hire proprietors (vehicle) licences. The legislation refers to Hackney Carriage proprietors' licences, but as these are often referred to as Hackney Carriage vehicle licences, for the avoidance of doubt the term "Hackney Carriage vehicle" will be used throughout this policy.

The legislation uses both of the terms “vehicle” and “proprietor” in relation to Private Hire vehicle licences, but as these are often referred to as Private Hire vehicle licences, for the avoidance of doubt the term “Private Hire Vehicle” will be used throughout this policy.

As Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences can be held by limited companies and partnerships as well as individuals, this policy must be read to give effect to that. Any reference to a “person”, “you”, “licensee” or “proprietor” is taken to mean the proprietor of the Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle.

The Council has a power to attach conditions to Hackney Carriage vehicle licences, and the Council has standard conditions which attach to these licences and are contained within this document.

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles is to protect the public, including passengers and others who may otherwise be placed at risk from unlicensed and potentially dangerous vehicles.
- 1.2 It is a privilege to hold a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence and licensees have responsibilities to their drivers, passengers and customers, other road users and the public generally. The Council has been satisfied that when you applied for your licence, your vehicle was safe and suitable for use as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle and that you were a fit and proper person to have that licence granted (see Appendix 2 for the Council’s previous convictions policy). In assessing that, the Council took into account the type of the vehicle, the condition of the vehicle and your character and behaviour.
- 1.3 As a vehicle proprietor this assessment of your character not only includes times when you are working within the Hackney Carriage trade, but at all other times as well. The requirement to satisfy the Council that you are a fit and proper person continues throughout the duration of the licence. If at any time the standard of the vehicle or your behaviour falls below the standards expected for new applications, the Council will consider taking action against that licence. This could be suspension, revocation or refusal to renew that licence. In relation to your personal actions, it is no defence to argue that your actions took place when you were not working within the Hackney Carriage trade. You should appreciate that under the previous convictions policy (available at Appendix 2), if the unacceptable or criminal behaviour took place whilst

you were working within the Hackney Carriage trade, that will be viewed as an aggravating feature by the Council.

- 1.4 The Council has decided to attach conditions to Hackney Carriage vehicle licences that it considers reasonably necessary under the powers contained in section 47(1) of the 1976 Act. The conditions are in addition to the statutory requirements of the legislation and are summarised in Appendix 4. Section 47(3) of the 1976 Act gives the right of appeal to the magistrates' court to any person aggrieved by any of the conditions attached to their licence within 21 days of receipt of the licence.
- 1.5 You must understand and comply with the legal requirements relating to the Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licensed in your name, a limited company in which you are a director or secretary, or in joint names when you are one of the named individuals. Failure to comply with the requirements may result in your Hackney Carriage or PH? vehicle licence being suspended or revoked.

Section 2: Sanctions against the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licence

- 2.1 Where a proprietor breaches any legislation or condition of the licence, they may be referred to the Regulatory Sub-committee.
- 2.2 The Council also runs its own Penalty Points Scheme as a method of enforcing the requirements for taxi licensees (see Appendix 1).
- 2.3 Whenever, and in what circumstances a proprietor is brought before the Regulatory Sub-committee, the Sub-committee will decide each case on its merits, after hearing the facts.
- 2.4 Licences cannot be surrendered if the licence holder is involved in any investigation by the Council for non-compliance against said licence. This is to ensure public safety, as it will be necessary to conclude the investigation, take appropriate action against the licence, such as revocation or suspension and where relevant share on NR3s.

Section 3: Power to take action against a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence

- 3.1 Under section 60 of the 1976 Act, the Council may suspend, revoke or refuse to renew a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence on the following grounds –

- 3.2 that the Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle is unfit for the stated use;
- 3.3 any offence under, or non-compliance with, the provisions of the Act of 1847 or of this Part of this Act by the operator or driver; or
- 3.4 any other reasonable cause.
- 3.5 An authorised officer of the Council or a police constable can immediately suspend a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence under S68 of the 1976 Act on the grounds of:
 - (a) the vehicle is unfit;
 - (b) the taximeter is inaccurate.
- 3.6 Failure to comply with any Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle legislation, or other road traffic legislation is an offence and you may be liable to prosecution. In addition (irrespective of whether you were prosecuted or convicted of the offence(s)), the Council may take action against your licence which could lead to your Hackney Carriage or PH? vehicle licence being suspended revoked or the renewal refused.
- 3.7 Failure to comply with the Council's conditions may result in your Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence being suspended, revoked or the renewal refused.
- 3.8 If any information given by you on the application form for this licence proves to be false, or you fail to disclose any relevant information on your application form, the licence may be revoked, and you may also be prosecuted under s57(3) of the 1976 Act.
- 3.9 The vehicle licence remains the property of the Council.
- 3.10 In the event that you lose your vehicle licence, vehicle licence plates or additional signage, or if they are damaged or defaced, you must get a replacement licence or plates on payment of a fee determined by the Council, and you cannot use the Hackney Carriage of Private Hire vehicle until such replacements are obtained and fitted.
- 3.11 It must be understood that a decision to grant a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence is made on the basis of the condition and suitability of the vehicle and the suitability of the proprietor(s) on the particular facts of the case on the day of the decision. That suitability can be lost at any time in the future and you must ensure that the condition of your vehicle and your behaviour remains of the highest standard to protect your vehicle licence and therefore your livelihood.

Section 4: Policy

4.1 Applicants

- 4.1.1 In all cases the applicant(s) must demonstrate that they have ownership of the vehicle, a financial interest in the vehicle or permission to use the vehicle on an extended basis (in the case of a lease or hire). A V5 registration document is not proof of ownership and other documentation will be required. This can include, but is not limited to:
- (a) Receipt for the purchase of the vehicle
 - (b) Lease/hire contract
 - (c) Partnership agreement between 2 or more individuals

4.2 Character of the applicant

- 4.2.1 The licensee of a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle can exert control over those who drive that vehicle, and as a consequence it is essential that they satisfy the Council that they are a suitable person to hold a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence.
- 4.2.2 All applicants (new and on renewal) will be required to provide a Basic DBS check at their own expense, as part of the application process.
- 4.2.3 Where you hold a dual driver licence you are not required to submit a yearly basic disclosure, but the requirement will continue to apply to any partners or directors of a company who do not hold a driver's licence.
- 4.2.4 The application will then be considered in the light of the Council's previous convictions policy (see Appendix 2).
- 4.2.5 In addition, the Council will take into account the compliance and maintenance history of previous and existing vehicles licensed by the applicant. The Council does not regard licensees whose vehicles fail regular tests as being a fit and proper person to have responsibility for Hackney Carriages and PH vehicles. All vehicles must be maintained to a satisfactory standard at all times and should pass any test required under this policy at any time.

4.3 Convictions

- 4.3.1 If you or anybody else with an interest in the vehicle or who is named on the licence is convicted of any offence, or accept a formal caution for an offence, or receive a fixed penalty notice for any offence or receive and accept an endorsable fixed penalty notice, or are made the

subject of a Criminal Behaviour Orders or Community Protection Notice, are required to attend a speed awareness course, are made the subject on any injunction or restraining order, or you are arrested for any matter, you must give the Council details within **72 hours** of the event.

4.4 Vehicles

4.4.1 It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any vehicle presented for licensing as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle meets the Council's criteria which are detailed below.

4.4.2 As the Council will not be liable for any loss as a result of a vehicle not being licensed, it is vital that applicants ensure that any vehicle that they are considering purchasing meets these criteria.

4.5 Licensed Vehicle Age and Emissions Policy

4.5.1 Vehicles are constantly being improved by manufacturers, and improved standards are imposed by the Government. Newer vehicles are often safer, less environmentally damaging and less likely to break down. Vehicles deteriorate due to a combination of age, use and maintenance.

4.5.2 In order to reduce emissions it is important to set standards that are common to all within the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle fleet, to ensure consistency and a level playing field for proprietors. The age of vehicles and the exhaust emissions are critical to the level of pollutants emitted. Consequently, to improve air quality and reduce emissions from the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire fleet, the following standard will apply:

	Standard from September 2024	Standard from September 2027	Standard from September 2030
Vehicles on new application	ULEZ compliant	ULEZ compliant	Zero emissions
Vehicles on renewal application	Acquired rights apply until September 2027	ULEZ complaint	ULEZ complaint

ULEZ compliance can be checked on the Transport for London website [Ultra Low Emission Zone - Transport for London \(tfl.gov.uk\)](https://www.tfl.gov.uk/ultra-low-emission-zone)

- 4.5.3 In the case of non-standard vehicles, for example, wheelchair access vehicles and classic cars, these will be considered on a case by case basis and the emissions standard may not necessarily apply. Licences may be issued if all other requirements, vehicle tests and inspections are passed.

4.6 Duration and renewal of the licence

- 4.6.1 The licence expires 12 months from the date of issue. Any application for renewal must be made at least 14 days before the licence expires. If you do not apply to renew the vehicle licence in time there may be a period when you will be unable to use the vehicle for licensed activities. If the renewal application is not received before the expiry of the current Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence, it will be treated as a new application rather than a renewal and you will have to provide all the information that is required for a new application. In that case any grandfather rights will be lost.
- 4.6.2 Renewals are generally dealt with by Officers under delegated powers, and can be processed quite quickly. However, if there have been any changes since the last grant of the licence (e.g. if you or any of your joint proprietors (or directors or secretary in the case of a limited company) have been convicted of any offence, or there have been complaints or causes for concern about your behaviour) the renewal application may need to be considered by the Regulatory Sub-committee. If this is the case, then a 2 month temporary licence may be issued, without prejudice to any decision the Sub-committee might make.
- 4.6.3 The licence is issued to you but it can be transferred to another individual, partnership or limited company. Notification of any transfer must be made in writing and indicate the consent of all interested parties. The Council will then issue a revised licence identifying the new licensee(s).

4.7 Vehicle specification

The following specifications detail the minimum requirements for all Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles.

- 4.7.1 Be a right-hand drive vehicle.
- 4.7.2 Have at least 4 doors that can be opened from both inside and outside the vehicle. Each door (except the driver's door) must be capable of being opened by passengers.
- 4.7.3 For Hackney Carriages, have a minimum seating capacity for at least 4 adult passengers based on a width of not less than 400 mm per person across the rear seat.
- 4.7.4 For Private Hire vehicles, have a minimum seating capacity for one adult passenger, and vehicles that seat more passengers must provide at least 4 adult passengers based on a width of not less than 410 mm per person across the rear seat.
- 4.7.5 In any vehicle all exits must be easily accessible and not obstructed by another seat. Access to all doors must be free from obstruction. Any seats that require passengers to move any part of another seat to gain access or egress will not be licensed for carrying passengers. The seating configuration and number of passengers that can be carried is subject to assessment by the Council.
- 4.7.6 Must be so constructed as to provide adequate space within its structure for the safe carriage of each passenger's luggage or any equipment. If that is not possible or practical then 4.6.7 below will apply.
- 4.7.7 Roof racks, towbars and trailers will be permitted. Any luggage carried on the roof rack must be protected from the elements by a waterproof cover and properly secured. A properly fitted roof box is an acceptable alternative.
- 4.7.8 Any Hackney Carriage vehicle using a roof rack must be fitted with a second roof sign, with one sign in front of the roof rack, and one behind, allowing the signs to be seen in the same way as a vehicle without a roof rack.
- 4.7.9 Passengers must be able to communicate with the driver.
- 4.7.10 The vehicle must be wind and water-tight.
- 4.7.11 The vehicle must have a floor properly covered with carpet or other suitable covering.

- 4.7.12 The vehicle must have an adequate internal light to enable passengers to enter and leave the vehicle safely.
- 4.7.13 The vehicle's bodywork and paintwork must be in good condition, free from dents or other damage or rust.
- 4.7.14 The vehicle must carry a spare wheel and tyre of the correct size to fit the vehicle, together with equipment to change the wheel including a spare wheel and tyre, jack and wheel brace, all of which must be securely stored. If the manufacturer's specification when the vehicle was new did not include a spare wheel, the manufacturer's alternative (e.g. spray can) will be acceptable.
- 4.7.15 The vehicle must be fitted with tyres which meet the specifications detailed by the manufacturer in terms of size and speed rating. They must have at least 2 mm of tread across the entire contact surface.
- 4.7.16 The vehicle must be fitted with nearside and offside exterior rear view mirrors.
- 4.7.17 The vehicle must have at least one window on each side of the passenger compartment which is capable of being opened and closed.
- 4.7.18 All seats must be permanently fixed to the vehicle and must be factory fitted with a 3-point seat belt or, where that was not a manufacturer's option when the vehicle was manufactured, a factory fitted lap belt. Any retrospectively fitted seat belts must be approved by the Council.
- 4.7.19 The vehicle must be fitted with glass which complies with current Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations. These Regulations require that the front windscreen allows 75% of light to be transmitted and the front door windows allow 70% of light to be transmitted. In addition the remaining glass within the vehicle must have a minimum light transmittance of not less than 70%. The rear of the vehicle must be fitted with at least one window (or one window per rear door fitted), the light transmission capacity of which must be a minimum of 70%.
- 4.7.20 No self-adhesive material (tinted or clear) can be affixed to any part of the glass without the approval of the Council.
- 4.7.21 The vehicle must not be fitted with any additional lights other than those originally fitted by the manufacturer unless they have been approved by the Council.

- 4.7.22 The minimum unobstructed distance between the uncompressed seat cushion and the roof must be 0.9 metres (measured 0.25 metres from and parallel with the seat back) in relation to the front passenger and driver seats, and 0.84 metres in relation to any other passenger seats.
- 4.7.23 The minimum unobstructed distance between the seat back and the foot well bulkhead/facing seat back must be 0.95 metres in relation to the front passenger and driver seats, and 0.6 metres in relation to any other passenger seats.
- 4.7.24 The minimum unobstructed interior width of the vehicle must be 1.3 metres (excluding any armrests).
- 4.7.25 Any vehicle that has been converted to run on liquid petroleum gas (LPG) must be accompanied by a certificate stating that the conversion was undertaken in accordance with the LPG gas Association's code of practice, and if the conversion was undertaken more than one month before the application for the licence, an annual installation check which is not more than one month old.

4.8 Documents

- 4.8.1 A new vehicle licence will only be issued where the vehicle has evidence of:
- (a) A valid vehicle insurance certificate specifically stating that the vehicle is to be used for public hire/hackney carriage use.
 - (b) A certificate issued by a garage approved by the Council showing the vehicle has passed the relevant test which is less than 4 weeks old.
 - (c) A V5 vehicle registration document. In case of a new vehicle the sales invoice which must show engine and chassis numbers, shall be produced at the time of application and the registration document when it is received from DVLA. The registration document must in all cases be produced within 6 weeks of the licence being issued.
 - (d) The service history for the vehicle.
 - (e) For vehicles over 3 years old, a valid MOT certificate, which is checked online.
- 4.8.2 Before or on the date of expiry of any certificate, the certificate about to expire must be produced together with the relevant renewal certificate to the Council.

4.8.3 All driver licence documentation must be originals.

4.8.4 The Council provides an online platform for vehicle proprietors to upload details of their vehicles and associated documents. Instructions on how to access the system are provided to Licensees on grant of licence. The following documentation can be submitted through the Davis platform:

- (a) MOT certificate
- (b) Insurance certificate
- (c) Confirmation of vehicle tax

4.9 Engine/Chassis Numbers

4.9.1 The Chassis/Vehicle Identification Number Plates and engine numbers must match the numbers recorded with the DVLA as detailed on the V5 Document. Vehicle applications cannot be accepted without a copy of the vehicle registration document, or in the case of new vehicle purchase, the sales documentation indicating the engine and chassis numbers. In the event of a vehicle being presented with numbers that do not correspond to the paperwork the Council will inform the Police Vehicle Identification Section who may undertake checks to ensure the vehicle is not stolen. If the engine is changed at any time whilst the vehicle is a licensed Hackney Carriage or PH vehicle, the Council must be notified within **72 hours** of that change and the updated V5 must be produced as soon as it is received from DVLA.

4.10 Maintenance and servicing

4.10.1 Vehicles must be maintained correctly and serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. The service history of the vehicle will be inspected at first application and on every renewal of the licence.

4.11 Additional requirements for minibus and MPV type vehicles

4.11.1 In order to be licensed as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle, any Minibus/MPV-type vehicles must be fitted, in addition to the front driver and passenger doors, with at least: one other side loading door plus a rear door/doors or tailgate that can be opened from inside the vehicle OR 2 side loading doors that can be opened from the inside.

4.12 Stretched Limousines

4.12.1 The term “stretched limousine” in this policy will be taken to mean any vehicle that has been modified after manufacture with an additional body section, extending the vehicle length.

4.12.2 Any vehicle, before it can be considered to be licensed as a stretched limousine, must have European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA), or Individual Vehicle Type Approval, including an inspection certificate issued by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) as a minimum standard⁸.

4.12.3 Applications for a Licence for stretched limousines will be considered on a case by case basis, as it is recognised that Council approved garages may not be equipped to conduct tests on these vehicles. Specialist garages may be utilised to provide evidence of suitability at the cost of the applicant.

4.12.4 Stretched limousines will only be licensed to carry a maximum of 8 passengers.

4.12.5 All passenger seats must be equipped with a 3 point seat belt.

4.13 Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV)

4.13.1 For Hackney Carriage vehicles capable of carrying a wheelchair bound passenger, the vehicle must be purpose built and comply with the current Transport for London “Conditions of Fitness” or it meets the following specification.

4.13.2 For Private Hire wheelchair accessible vehicles, the vehicle must be capable of carrying a wheelchair bound passenger which meets the following specification. It cannot look like a Hackney Carriage.

4.13.3 Any vehicle, before it can be considered to be licensed as a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle, must have, European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA), or Individual Vehicle Type Approval, including an inspection certificate issued by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) as **a minimum standard**.

(a) The interior of the vehicle must be able to accommodate a wheelchair and its user riding seated within the wheelchair itself.

- (b) The passenger compartment must have a minimum unobstructed available width of 0.74 metres (including at the point of entry).
- (c) The passenger compartment must have a minimum unobstructed available length of 1.2 metres for a wheelchair and user.
- (d) The passenger compartment must have a minimum unobstructed available height for a wheelchair and user of 1.3 metres at the point of entry and 1.4 metres when in the travelling position.
- (e) The passenger compartment must be fitted with suitable wheelchair anchorages, either chassis or floor linked.
- (f) The passenger compartment must be fitted with a suitable 3-point belt or harness, either chassis or floor linked, for a wheelchair and its user. The belt/harness must be independent of the wheelchair anchorages.
- (g) The vehicle must have suitable ramps for a wheelchair user. The vehicle must have a secure and safe place for the ramps to be stored when they are not being used. Alternatively, the vehicle may be fitted with a tail lift or some other mechanical means of access, approved by the Council.
- (h) Where the vehicle is a rear loading wheelchair accessible vehicle a suitable ramp will be carried in the vehicle to be used at the commencement and end of a journey to ensure that the passenger is delivered safely onto the pavement.
- (i) At least one door entrance must be designed and constructed to help elderly and disabled passengers get in and out of the vehicle. The door entrance and any steps must be conspicuously marked where appropriate, to help visually impaired passengers.
- (j) All passenger door entrances must have grab handles or rails suitably located to help elderly and disabled passengers. All handles/rails must be conspicuously marked to help visually impaired passengers.

4.14 Navigational devices

4.14.1 Any electronic navigational device which is being used must be securely located within the vehicle and must not be operated by the driver while the vehicle is moving. No handheld devices can be used unless they are securely located in a suitable cradle or other mounting device.

4.15 Radios and other equipment

4.15.1 Any radio, booking systems/data heads and/or GPS equipment provided must be maintained in a safe condition and any defects must

be repaired promptly. The licensed operator/booking agent must ensure that the licence issued by Ofcom for all radio equipment used is current and valid. All equipment must only be used on the frequencies stipulated in the Ofcom licence and the licensed operator/booking agent must allow the Council access to inspect all equipment and Ofcom licenses.

4.15.2 Any radio, booking systems/data heads and/or GPS equipment provided must not interfere with any other radio or telecommunication equipment.

4.15.3 Where apparatus for the operation of a two-way radio, booking system/data heads and/or GPS systems are fitted, no part of the apparatus can be situated in a way which could cause accident or injury to a passenger, nor can it be placed in the rear boot compartment if LPG tanks are situated in there.

4.16 Vehicle tests

4.16.1 A licence will be granted or renewed only if the vehicle is considered by the Council to be roadworthy, fit for purpose and meets the criteria specified.

4.16.2 With the exception of brand new vehicles (factory mileage), vehicles will be tested before the licence is initially granted, then at every renewal for vehicles up to 3 years old, then every 6 months for vehicles older than 3 years.

4.16.3 Vehicle tests, other than MOTs, should be carried out at a Council approved garage, a list of which can be found on our website.

4.17 “Dual Plating”

4.17.1 Once a vehicle has been licensed as a Hackney Carriage by the Council, it cannot be licensed as a Hackney Carriage (or Private Hire vehicle) by any other local authority or Transport for London during the duration of the Mid Devon licence.

4.17.2 The Council will not licence a vehicle that is licensed as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle by another local authority or Transport for London.

4.18 Insurance “write-offs”

4.18.1 The Council will not licence any vehicle as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle that has been written off by an insurance company.

4.19 Vehicle Use

4.19.1 You must maintain insurance for your licensed vehicle in accordance with Section 143 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

4.19.2 If your vehicle has an accident which results in damage which may affect its safety, performance, appearance or the comfort or convenience of your passengers, you must report this to the Council within **72 hours**. (section 50)(3) of the 1976 Act).

4.19.3 You must not obstruct any Council Authorised Officer or Police Officer. You must provide any assistance or information they may reasonably require. (section 73) of the 1976 Act).

4.19.4 Any person driving a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle at any time, for any purpose and anywhere in the UK, must be licensed to drive the vehicle under section 46 of the 1847 Act, and section 51 of the 1976 Act respectively, even if the vehicle is not being used for Hackney Carriage or pre-booked purposes.

4.19.5 Any person driving a Hackney Carriage without the required licence will be committing an offence under section 47 of the 1847 Act, and section 51 of the 1976 Act respectively. The only exceptions to this are when the vehicle is being tested by the Council or a mechanic in connection with vehicle maintenance, and driving the vehicle to and from any such test.

4.19.6 If any Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle proprietor permits a person who does not hold a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire driver's licence to drive the vehicle at any time (other than in accordance with the exceptions detailed above) the proprietor commits an offence and the Council will consider this a serious matter and action may be taken against the Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence (whether or not a criminal prosecution or conviction ensued).

4.19.7 Once a vehicle has been licensed as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle by the Council, it retains that status at all times for the duration of the licence (24 hours a day, 7 days a week). In addition to the requirement that it is only driven by a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire driver licensed by the Council (see above) the proprietor must ensure that at all times and wherever it may be located it complies with all requirements contained within the legislation and conditions. This

includes the cleanliness of the vehicle, display of licence plates and additional signage.

4.19.8 If the vehicle licence is suspended, revoked or not renewed, the proprietor must return the licence plates to the Council. This must be done as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the appeal period (21 days from the written notification of the decision, or after any such appeal is determined or abandoned). If the suspension is immediate (under section 68 of the 1976 Act) this requirement must be complied with immediately.

4.19.9 If you refuse to surrender the vehicle plates and additional signage, tamperproof "Vehicle Licence Suspended" stickers will be affixed to the vehicle plates. These will destroy the plates, and replacements. Replacements must be purchased from the Council, at the proprietor's own expense, if and when the suspension is lifted.

4.20 Warning notice

4.20.1 If there is anything in the design, construction, form or working appearance of a vehicle which, in the opinion of the Council or its authorised officers or testers renders the vehicle unfit for Hackney Carriage or Private Hire use (which includes pre-booked work), then the Council will not licence that vehicle.

4.20.2 The Council is not liable for any expense incurred in preparing or testing a vehicle, which cannot be licensed for whatever reason.

4.20.3 Any unauthorised modifications made since a previous licence was issued may lead to the suspension, revocation or refusal to renew a licence.

4.21 Vehicle substitution

4.21.1 If you wish to change the vehicle that is licensed the following procedures must be followed:

(a) You must complete an application form for the "replacement" vehicle.

(b) You must surrender the original licence. Any refund against a licence will be calculated by the Council, taking into account the period of time for which the licence has been held and the administration costs incurred, and will be subject to a minimum level of £50, below which no refund will be made.

- (c) You must pay the stated fee for a 12-month period, minus any refund due for your surrendered licence.
- (d) Your replacement vehicle must be presented for test and subsequently pass.
- (e) Written proof of consent to the change of vehicle must be provided from all interested parties where relevant.
- (f) You must maintain and produce evidence of a continuous policy of insurance, which clearly states that the vehicle is to be used for public hire/as a Hackney Carriage. All such policies must be in the name of the licensee of the vehicle.

4.22 Letting/leasing of vehicles

- 4.22.1 You must not lease or let or hire a licensed Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle to any other person, other than a fare paying passenger, without first notifying the Council in writing. If you do enter into a leasing arrangement you will remain the licensee and will still be responsible for the vehicle.
- 4.22.2 You must notify the Council in writing of anyone no longer having an interest in the vehicle within **72 hours** of the event.

4.23 The taximeter and table of fares (Hackney Carriage vehicles only)

- 4.23.1 The vehicle must be fitted with a taximeter. It must be mounted in such a way as to avoid injury to the driver or passengers in the case of any collision and where it is visible to passengers. This must be in a safe and practical position in the vehicle where all letters and figures displayed on the meter are clearly visible to any passenger. The letters and figures must therefore be illuminated when in use.
- 4.23.2 The Council may approve the location and fixing of, and test the meter before the vehicle can be used as a Hackney Carriage.
- 4.23.3 The meter must be set to ensure that the charge will never exceed the amount specified in the Council's Hackney Carriage Table of Fares.
- 4.23.4 The meter must be accurate, be capable of showing that the vehicle is or is not hired, it must be fitted with a key or other device that, when turned, will operate the meter and display the word "HIRED". This key or device must be capable of locking the meter so it does not work and no fare is recorded on it.

4.23.5 When the meter is in use, the fare must be clearly legible on the face of the meter. This fare must be unambiguous and must not exceed the fare permitted by the Council's Hackney Carriage Table of Fares.

4.23.6 The word "FARE" must be clearly printed on the meter so it clearly indicates the fare displayed.

4.23.7 A notice showing the current Table of Fares must be displayed inside the vehicle in a position where any passengers can easily read it.

4.23.8 There is no requirement for a Private Hire vehicle to be fitted with a taximeter. As there is equally no prohibition on meters being fitted to Private Hire vehicles, any meter that is fitted must be approved and tested by the Council.

4.24 Plates

4.24.1 The licence plates and other additional signage required by the Council must be displayed on the vehicle at all times.

4.24.2 If you lose or damage the plates, replacements must be purchased from the Council.

4.25 Signs and advertisements on Hackney Carriages

4.25.1 No sign or advertisement is permitted on the vehicle unless required by law, or has been agreed by the Council in writing.

4.25.2 For Hackney Carriage vehicles only, the vehicle must be fitted with a sign with the word "TAXI" (minimum size 35 cm wide and 10 cm high) on its roof. This can be combined with a "For Hire" sign, but that can be a separate sign, in a conspicuous position on the vehicle. The sign(s) must be illuminated when the vehicle is available for hire and switch off automatically when the meter is operating.

4.25.3 You may display the name and telephone number of the company operating your vehicle in its front and rear windows. However, the display must be no more than 10 cm high, must not contravene the current Road Traffic (Construction and Use) Regulations, and must not be illuminated.

4.26 Signs and advertisements on Private Hire vehicles

4.26.1 No sign or advertisement is permitted on the vehicle, and no flag or other emblem can be flown from the vehicle, except as detailed below, unless required by law, or has been agreed by the Council in writing.

4.26.2 The vehicle must not be fitted with any sign on the roof of the vehicle.

4.26.3 You may display the name and telephone number of the company operating your vehicle in its front and rear windows. However, the display must be no more than 10 cm high, must not contravene the Road Traffic (Construction and Use) Regulations, and must not be illuminated.

Section 5: Conditions

5.0.1 The following conditions are attached to your Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licence and must be complied with at all times. Failure to comply with conditions may lead to penalty points being imposed on your proprietors and/or drivers licence, suspension, revocation or refusal to renew the proprietors (vehicle) licence.

5.0.2 You must return your licence (and the plates if requested by the Council) to the Council as soon as reasonably practicable if;

- (a) You change your home or business address
- (b) If the licence expires, or is suspended or revoked
- (c) You wish to surrender your Hackney Carriage licence
- (d) When required to do so by an Authorised Officer of the Council.

5.0.3 If you are convicted of any offence, or accept a formal caution for an offence, or receive a fixed penalty notice for any offence or receive and accept an endorsable fixed penalty notice, or are made the subject of a Criminal Behaviour Orders or Community Protection Notice, are required to attend a speed awareness course, are made the subject on any injunction or restraining order, or you are arrested for any matter, you must give the Council details within **72 hours** of the event.

5.0.4 If your vehicle has an accident which results in damage which may affect its safety, performance or appearance or the comfort or convenience of your passengers, you must report this to the Council within **72 hours** (including weekends and bank holidays). If you are in doubt as to whether the vehicle is affected you must notify the Council.

5.0.5 Your vehicle must comply with the specification detailed within section 4.7 through 4.15 inclusive of this policy. These standards must be maintained during the currency of a licence for a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle.

5.1 Conditions relating to Drivers

5.1.1 Before you allow anyone to drive your Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle you must ask that person for their Hackney Carriage or Private Hire driver licence and keep it in your possession whilst that person is permitted to drive your vehicle. You must ensure that they understand and will observe the law that regulate their conduct and the conditions attached to the vehicle licence.

5.1.2 No person may drive a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle unless they hold a driver licence issued by the Council. Anyone found driving a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle without a driver licence, may be prosecuted.

5.1.3 You must ensure that a valid policy of comprehensive insurance for Hackney Carriage work/public hire is in place for the vehicle and covers anyone who drives your Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle.

5.1.4 You must not obstruct any Authorised Officer or Police Officer. You must provide any assistance or information they may reasonably require.

5.2 Production of Documents

5.2.1 You must not obstruct any Authorised Officer of the Council or Police Officer. You must provide any assistance or information they may reasonably require.

5.2.2 If an Authorised Officer of the Council (or a Police Officer asks you, you must produce:

- (a) Your licence;
- (b) The taxi driver licence of any person authorised to drive your Private Hire vehicle;
- (c) The vehicle registration document;
- (d) A valid certificate of insurance;

within 5 days of the request being made.

5.3 Licence Plates

- 5.3.1 The licence plates remain the property of the Council and must be returned to the Council whenever the vehicle is not licensed as a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle.
- 5.3.2 You must secure and display the exterior licence plate permanently to the outmost rear part of the vehicle. The method of fixing must prevent the plate being removed without the need for tools. The internal plate must be securely fixed inside the vehicle in the top left hand corner of the front windscreen. Both plates must at all times be displayed so that they can be clearly read by pedestrians and road users.
- 5.3.3 You must report the theft or loss of the licence plates or additional signage to the Police immediately and as soon as possible, and in any event within **24 hours** of becoming aware of the theft or loss, to the Council by email. You must also obtain a crime or lost property number from the Police and present this to the Council. You must then obtain duplicate licence plates and/or additional signage for which a charge will be made.
- 5.3.4 You must not wilfully or negligently cause or suffer any plates or additional signage on your vehicle to be concealed from public view at any time.
- 5.3.5 You must return the licence plates to the Council if the Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle licence is suspended, revoked or not renewed.

5.4 Vehicle inspection

- 5.4.1 You must allow an Authorised Officer of the Council, or Police Officer, to inspect your vehicle at any reasonable time.
- 5.4.2 You must ensure the vehicle is presented for test in accordance with instructions from the Council.
- 5.4.3 You must produce the vehicle registration document and last MOT, and certificate of insurance to the Council Officer at the test. These can also be provided or checked online prior to the inspection.

5.5 No Smoking

- 5.5.1 The vehicle must have “no smoking” signs displayed inside the vehicle clearly visible to passengers.

Appendix 5 Private Hire Operator licence policy and conditions

This document contains the policy, conditions and legislation relating to your Private Hire Operator licence.

As Private Hire Operator licences can be held by limited companies, limited liability partnerships (LLP) and conventional partnerships as well as individuals, this policy must be read to give effect to that. Any reference to a “person”, “you”, “licensee” or “operator” is taken to mean the Private Hire Operator.

There is a power to attach conditions to Private Hire Operator licences, and the Council has standard conditions which are attached to these licences. These are contained within this document.

There is also a list of the main legislation that applies to Private Hire Operators.

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of licensing Private Hire Operators is to protect the public, ensuring that passengers are not exploited, abused or otherwise affected by unlicensed and potentially unscrupulous or dangerous booking agents.
- 1.2 It is a privilege to hold a Private Hire Operator licence and licensees have responsibilities to their passengers and customers, drivers, vehicle proprietors and the public generally. The Council has been satisfied that when you applied for your Private Hire Operator licence you were a fit and proper person to have that licence granted. In assessing that, the Council took into account your character and behaviour.
- 1.3 As a Private Hire Operator, this assessment of your character not only includes times when you are working within the Private Hire trade, but at all other times as well. The requirement to satisfy the Council that you are a fit and proper person continues throughout the duration of the licence. If at any time your behaviour falls below the standards expected for new applications, the Council will consider taking action against your licence. This could be suspension, revocation or refusal to renew that licence.

- 1.4 In relation to your personal actions, it is no defence to argue that your actions took place when you were not working within the Private Hire trade. You should appreciate that under the Council's previous convictions policy (see appendix 2), if the unacceptable or criminal behaviour took place whilst you were working within the Private Hire trade that will be viewed as an aggravating feature by the Council.
- 1.5 The Council has decided to attach conditions to Private Hire Operator licences that it considers reasonably necessary under the powers contained in section 55(3) of 1976 Act. The conditions are in addition to the statutory requirements of the legislation. Section 55(4) of the 1976 Act gives the right of appeal to the Magistrates' Court to any person aggrieved by any of the conditions attached to their licence within 21 days of receipt of the licence.
- 1.6 You must understand and comply with the legal requirements relating to the Private Hire Operator licence in your name, a limited company in which you are a director or secretary, a limited liability partnership in which you are a partner, or in joint names when you are one of the named individuals. Failure to comply with the requirements may result in your Private Hire Operator licence being suspended or revoked.
- 1.7 The Council office for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage licensing purposes is: Mid Devon District Council, **Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton, Devon**

Telephone: **01884 255255** Email: **licensing@middevon.gov.uk**

This is the address to which all applications, notices, reports of incidents and any other communications with the Council must be sent.

Section 2: Sanctions against the Private Hire Operator Licence

- 2.1 Where a Private Hire Operator breaches any legislation or condition of the licence, they may be referred to the Regulatory Sub-Committee.
- 2.2 The Council also runs its own Penalty Points Scheme as a method of enforcing the requirements for Private Hire Operators see - Appendix 1 for full details.
- 2.3 Whenever, and in what circumstances a Private Hire Operator is brought before the Regulatory Sub-committee, the Sub-committee will decide each case on its merits, after hearing the facts.

- 2.4 The Sub-committee may also suspend or revoke the Private Hire Operator licence (see below) or impose further penalty points.
- 2.5 Licences cannot be surrendered if the licence holder is involved in any investigation by the Council for non-compliance against said licence. This is to ensure public safety, as it will be necessary to conclude the investigation, take appropriate action against the licence, such as revocation or suspension and where relevant share on NR3s.

Section 3: Power to take action against a Private Hire Operator licence

- 3.1 Under section 62 of the 1976 Act, the Council may suspend, revoke or refuse to renew a Private Hire Operator licence on the following grounds:
- a) any offence under, or non-compliance with, the provisions of this Part of this Act;
 - b) any conduct on the part of the operator which appears to the district council to render him unfit to hold an operator's licence;
 - c) any material change since the licence was granted in any of the circumstances of the operator on the basis of which the licence was granted;
 - d) that the operator has since the grant of the licence been convicted of an immigration offence or required to pay an immigration penalty; or
 - e) any other reasonable cause.
- 3.2 Failure to comply with most Private Hire Operator legislation is an offence and you may be liable to prosecution. In addition (irrespective of whether you were prosecuted or convicted of the offence(s)), the Council may take action against your licence which could lead to your Private Hire Operator licence being suspended, revoked or the renewal refused.
- 3.3 Failure to comply with the Council's conditions may result in your Private Hire Operator licence being suspended, revoked or the renewal refused.
- 3.4 If any information given by you on the application form for a Private Hire Operator licence proves to be false, or you fail to disclose any relevant information on your application form, the licence may be revoked, and you may also be prosecuted under section 57(3) of the 1976 Act.
- 3.5 The Private Hire Operator licence remains the property of the Council.
- 3.6 It must be understood that a decision to grant a Private Hire Operator licence is made on the basis of the suitability of the proprietor(s) on the

particular facts of the case on the day of the decision. That suitability can be lost at any time in the future and you must ensure that your behaviour remains of the highest standard to protect your Private Hire Operator licence and therefore your livelihood.

Section 4: Policy

4.1 Applicants

4.1.1 Private Hire Operator licences can be held by individuals, limited liability partnerships (LLP), conventional partnerships (two or more people in business together) or limited companies.

4.2 Character of the applicant

4.2.1 A Private Hire Operator will receive personal information from those who book a private hire vehicle through that operator. That information may be sensitive or relate to people's movements or activities and as a consequence it is essential that a Private Hire Operator satisfies the Council that they are a suitable person to hold a Private Hire Operator licence.

4.2.2 All applicants (new and on renewal) will be required to provide a Basic DBS check at their own expense, as part of the application process. The check must be dated within 1 month of the date of application. The same will be required of all partners in a limited liability or conventional partnership and all directors and the secretary of a limited company when the application is made, or the licence is held, by a limited liability or conventional partnership or limited company.

4.2.3 If any new or replacement partner, director or secretary or is appointed or joins, you must notify the Council within 7 days, and that notification must be accompanied by a Basic DBS certificate in relation to that person dated within 2 months of the date of notification.

4.2.4 The application will then be considered with reference to the Council's previous convictions policy at Appendix 2.

4.2.5 In addition, the Council will take into account the compliance history in relation to previous hackney carriage or private hire licences held by the applicant or any partners in a partnership, all directors and secretary of a limited company and any limited company itself.

4.2.6 Subject to the DBS update service; every year for the duration of your licence, you must provide a new Basic DBS certificate, not more than 1 month old, for yourself (if a sole operator) or all partners in a limited liability or conventional partnership and all directors and the secretary of a limited company if the licence is held, by a limited liability or conventional partnership or limited company. This/These must be provided to the Council within 2 weeks of the anniversary of the grant of your licence. Failure to do so may lead to action being taken against your licence.

4.3 Certificate of Good Conduct

4.3.1 As DBS checks do not cover convictions in countries outside the United Kingdom, any applicant who has lived abroad for any period of more than 6 months from the age of 18 must also provide a Certificate of Good Conduct from the appropriate Embassy or High Commission and it must be in English. The Council may undertake checks to ensure the authenticity of any such documentation. If this cannot be provided then the application will be refused.

4.3.2 Note - Nothing in this policy precludes a licence holder from being required to undergo a further DBS check at any time as directed by the Council.

4.4 Notification of conviction, caution, penalty

4.4.1 If you, any partner in a limited liability partnership or conventional partnership, or any director or secretary of a limited company is arrested in connection with, charged with, investigated in connection with or convicted of any criminal offence, which must be reported to the Council within **72 hours**.

4.5 Maintenance of the Licence and Renewals

4.5.1 Once the licence has been granted, you (including all partners in any form of partnership and all directors and secretary of a limited company) will be required to provide a basic DBS certificate annually.

4.5.2 A valid application for the renewal of a licence, including all the required original documentation, must be made at least 14 days prior to the expiry of the current licence. A valid application is one which is complete in all respects and can be processed immediately. Photocopies of documents will not be accepted. If the application is not made in time to enable all the relevant processes to be completed before the expiry of the current Private Hire Operator licence, there will be a period of time during which you will be unlicensed and cannot make a provision for the invitation of bookings for a private hire vehicle.

If the application is not made before the expiry of the current Private Hire Operator licence, but is made within 5 working days after the expiry, the licence will only be renewed in exceptional circumstances. Note - operating Private Hire drivers and vehicles without a valid licence is a criminal offence.

4.5.3 Where a Private Hire Operator licence is found to have been obtained using false or incomplete information enforcement action may be taken.

4.6 Identity

4.6.1 To prove their identity, all applicants (including all partners in a partnership and all directors and secretary of a limited company) must provide an authenticated form of photographic identification (for example photographic driving licence or national identification card).

4.6.2 Applicants from outside the UK must provide:

- (a) a passport with a valid stamp from the Home Office to say that they have leave to remain in the UK indefinitely; or
- (b) a passport with a valid UK visa, which allows the holder to work as a Private Hire Operator (student visas will not be accepted) and which has at least 6 calendar months remaining at the time of application.

4.6.3 A Private Hire Operator licence will only be granted until the expiry of the visa and will only be renewed or extended with the production of the passport and another valid visa issued by the Home Office. The Council reserves the right to verify, at any time, a licensee's entitlement to remain in the UK. The Council will not accept letters issued by the Home Office when a visa application is pending.

4.6.4 To comply with the Immigration Act 2016, the Council is required to check eligibility to live and work in the UK for all applicants for driver and operator licences. This will be evidenced on application by the operator providing documentation or immigration check code which complies with the Home Office guidelines⁹. The list of acceptable documents is also detailed on the Council's website.

⁹ At the time this policy was adopted those are detailed in Appendix 1 to the Home Office document "*Guidance for Licensing Authorities to prevent Illegal Working in the Taxi and Private Hire Sector in England and Wales*" (available at <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads>

- 4.6.5 For applicants with a limited time to remain in the UK, the Private Hire Operator's licence will only be granted for the period of permission to remain, and may only be granted for a shorter period. The Private Hire Operator licence may be extended should the applicant's right to remain in the UK be made permanent.
- 4.6.6 If an applicant has extended leave to remain (pending a decision) the Private Hire Operator licence cannot be granted for more than 6 months, and again may only be granted for a shorter period. The Private Hire Operator licence may be extended should the applicant's right to remain in the UK be made permanent.
- 4.6.7 If a Private Hire Operator licence holder loses the right to remain in the UK during the currency of a licence, the Private Hire Operator licence ceases to have effect and the Private Hire Operator licence (and badge for drivers) must be returned within 7 days.

4.7 Tax Conditionality

- 4.7.1 Existing licensees applying for the renewal of a licence must obtain their unique 9 character code from HMRC and provide this to the Council. If this cannot be provided the application cannot proceed.
- 4.7.2 The council will advise new applicants of the need to register with HMRC for tax and must sign an acknowledgement that they have received this information.

4.8 Operator's Base

- 4.8.1 Your Private Hire Operator licence relates to one or more addresses (bases) within the Council area. Every address that is being used will be detailed on the Private Hire Operator licence, and if a Private Hire Operator licence does not relate to the address or addresses being used, that licence is void. Continued use of that Private Hire Operator licence will be a criminal offence.
- 4.8.2 If you have more than one operating office or base within the District that does not mean that you require a separate Private Hire Operator licence for each premises, but you must submit a list to the Council

[/attachment data/file/675533/A Licensing Authority guide to right to work checks - England and Wales.pdf](#)

containing all the addresses from which you run your business, and all addresses will be detailed on the Private Hire Operator licence.

- 4.8.3 You must inform the Council within **24 hours** of any change of any address (ceasing to use an address, moving to a new address or adding an additional address).
- 4.8.4 Planning permission or a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development for the use or change of use of premises, whether home or commercial, is not required before an application can be made for a Private Hire Operator licence. However it may be unlawful to use those premises as an Operator's base and advice should be sought from the Council's Planning Department if required.
- 4.8.5 Anyone who is making a provision for the invitation of bookings (evidenced by a Private Hire office or base) in more than one local authority area will be required to hold a Private Hire Operator licence with the local authority in each of those areas.
- 4.8.6 The Council has produced a guidance leaflet for customers explaining the complaints procedure. These leaflets must be displayed, and be available in all of your premises that are open to the public.

4.9 Manager

- 4.9.1 As a Private Hire Operator, you (unless you are an individual) must identify a person as the manager who has day-to-day responsibility for the Private Hire operation. There must also be a nominated deputy to act as holiday cover etc. You will have to ensure that one individual is responsible at any particular time.

4.10 Drivers and Vehicles

- 4.10.1 As a Private Hire Operator, you must ensure that any private hire driver or Private Hire vehicle operated, employed or used by you holds a current Private Hire driver or vehicle licence issued by the Council. You must hold the Private Hire Operator licence for the duration of the time that you operate that driver or vehicle.
- 4.10.2 If at any stage you propose dispatching a public service vehicle (PSV) to fulfil a booking, you must make the customer aware that the driver of that vehicle may only hold a PCV driver's licence and therefore not have been subjected to the same checks (criminal records and character) as a Private Hire driver.

4.11 Staff

- 4.11.1 As a Private Hire Operator, you must maintain a record of all staff (employees, independent contractors and others) engaged by or utilised by you as a Private Hire Operator.
- 4.11.2 You must create, maintain and apply a policy in relation to previous convictions of your staff. This should be the same as the Council's previous convictions Policy. You should apply this policy to all staff who are involved in making bookings for or dispatching Private Hire vehicles, or who have access to your Operator's records, and you should not engage any person in contravention of that policy unless there are truly exceptional circumstances. The reasons for such a decision must be recorded in your staff records.
- 4.11.3 You must require all staff to notify you within **48 hours** (including weekends and bank holidays) if they are arrested in connection with, being investigated for, charged with or convicted of any criminal offence. You must then determine what action to take in relation to that staff member. You must also notify the Council of the event and the action that you have taken within **72 hours** of your decision and record that in the staff records.
- 4.11.4 All such records of staff must be available for inspection by an Authorised Officer of the Council or Police Officer at any reasonable time.

4.12 Booking Records

- 4.12.1 You must create and maintain records of all bookings received for Private Hire vehicles as detailed in the conditions of licence. These records must be maintained for the 6 months and must be available for inspection by an Authorised Officer or Police Officer at any reasonable time.
- 4.12.2 You must inform the Council of the method that you intend to use to record this information. Depending on the scale of your operation this could be handwritten records (in a bound book with sequentially numbered pages) or a computerised system. In either case the records must not be capable of being altered after they have been compiled.

4.13 Standards of service and complaints

- 4.13.1 You must provide a professional and reliable service to customers' at all reasonable times.
- 4.13.2 You must maintain and utilise a comprehensive complaints process.

4.14 Insurance

4.14.1 You must maintain public liability insurance for all premises that are open to the public.

Section 5: Conditions

5.0.1 The following Conditions are attached to your Private Hire Operator licence and must be complied with at all times. Failure to comply with conditions may lead to penalty points being imposed on your Private Hire Operator licence, suspension, revocation or refusal to renew the Private Hire Operator licence.

5.0.2 You must return your Private Hire Operator licence to the Council immediately if:

- (a) You change your home or business address.
- (b) You add or alter any addresses detailed on the Private Hire Operator licence.
- (c) If the Private Hire Operator licence expires, or is suspended or revoked.
- (d) You wish to surrender your licence.
- (e) When required to do so by an Authorised Officer of the Council.

5.0.3 You must notify the Council within **72 hours** of the event (including weekends and bank holidays) if you (or any partner in the case of a partnership or director or secretary of a limited company) is arrested in connection with, charged with/reported, investigated in connection with or convicted of any criminal offence. The same requirement applies in relation to any fixed penalty notices, speed awareness courses, community protection notices, criminal behaviour orders, civil injunctions that you receive or have to attend.

5.1 General

5.1.1 You (unless you are a single person operator) must identify a person as the individual with day-to-day managerial responsibility (referred to in these conditions as "the manager"), and notify the Council of their identity and contact details, including a mobile telephone number.

5.1.2 The manager will be the first point of contact between the Council and the Private Hire Operator. You must identify another person as a deputy for holiday and sickness cover and the identity of the deputy, together with their contact details including a mobile telephone number must also be provided to the Council.

5.1.3 You must ensure that it is clear to all managers and deputies who is responsible for discharging that responsibility at any particular time. All

references to the manager include references to the deputy when they are acting in that capacity.

5.2 DBS Checks

- 5.2.1 You (where the operator is a partnership or limited company, all partners or directors and secretary of the company) must submit a Basic DBS certificate (dated within one month of the submission) on or before the anniversary of the granting of the Private Hire Operator licence. Failure to do so will result in the Private Hire Operator licence being suspended until such time as the DBS certificate is provided.
- 5.2.2 The cost of these checks will be covered by you.
- 5.2.3 Where you (or any partners or directors and secretary of the company where the operator is a partnership or limited company) hold a dual driver licence you are not required to submit a yearly basic disclosure, but the requirement will continue to apply to any partners or directors of a company who do not hold a driver's licence.

5.3 Staff Policy

- 5.3.0 Where you employ or intend to employ persons involved in taking bookings or the dispatch of vehicles, you must produce and apply a policy on the employment of ex-offenders in those roles. This policy must be based on the Council's previous convictions policy in Appendix 2. The policy must be available for inspection on request of an Authorised Officer of the Council. Failure to act in accordance with this requirement, and any subsequent engagement of a person who falls outside the Council's previous convictions policy standards will lead to consideration by the Council as to whether you as operator remain a fit and proper person.
- 5.3.1 You must view a Basic DBS certificate (dated within one month of the check) of any staff that have access to booking records or dispatch vehicles.
- 5.3.2 You must maintain a register of all such staff which must include a record of when each DBS check has been undertaken. This register must be available for inspection by an Authorised Officer of the Council upon request. The register should include the following:
 - (a) the date that person's employment in that role commenced.
 - (b) the date the Private Hire Operator checked the DBS certificate.
 - (c) the name of the person that checked the DBS certificate.
 - (d) the date the person ceased to perform that role.

- 5.3.3 The register must be retained for 6 months in line with the booking records.
- 5.3.4 Should an employee cease to be on the register and later re-enter the register, a new basic DBS certificate (or use of the Update Service) must be provided to the Private Hire Operator.
- 5.3.5 You must require all staff to notify you within **48 hours** (including weekends and bank holidays) of any situation as detailed at 5.0.3 above.
- 5.3.6 You must ensure that any outsourced booking and dispatch functions have adequate safeguarding measures in place for the protection of children and vulnerable adults. You must have obtained evidence of this from the outsourced firm/company before outsourcing these functions.

5.4 Vehicle and driver licences

- 5.4.1 You must inspect and retain all the Private Hire vehicle licences and driver licences for vehicles and drivers operated, engaged or otherwise utilised by you.
- 5.4.2 Those licences must be stored securely and retained for as long as you operate the vehicle or driver. At the end of that, they must be returned to the vehicle proprietor or driver as appropriate.

5.5 Records

- 5.5.1 You are required to keep records of bookings received and journeys undertaken under section 56(2) of the 1976 Act (referred to hereafter as the "booking records") and the following are the conditions relating to those records.
- 5.5.2 Booking records must be recorded in English and kept in a suitable book or in any other manner as approved by the Council.
- 5.5.3 You must ensure that, the following details of every private hire booking that you invite or accept are recorded before the commencement of each journey:
- (a) the name of the passenger or other identifying features; e.g. hotel room number
 - (b) the time of the request
 - (c) the time the vehicle is required
 - (d) the pick-up point

- (e) the destination (if known at that time)
- (f) the name of the driver
- (g) the driver's licence number
- (h) the vehicle registration number of the vehicle
- (i) the vehicle licence number
- (j) the name of any individual that responded to the booking request
- (k) the name of any individual that dispatched the vehicle.

5.5.4 You must keep these records for a period of not less than 6 calendar months from the date of the entry.

5.5.5 You must also keep records of all vehicles that you operate. These details must include:

- (a) details of the proprietor(s)/licensee.
- (b) registration number.
- (c) any radio call sign used.
- (d) maintenance history of the vehicle.

5.5.6 You must keep these records for a period of not less than 6 calendar months from the date that you cease operating that vehicle.

5.5.7 You must also keep records of the names and addresses of all licensed drivers that you use. You must notify the Council of the following:

- (a) when any driver begins working for, or being available to be operated by you.
- (b) when any driver's activity above detailed ceases.
- (c) any change of address of any driver in service.
- (d) if you become aware that any driver is suffering from any illness, disability or condition which may affect the driver's ability to safely carry out their duties.

5.5.8 If at any time you become aware of any reason which would or may prevent a driver from safely carrying out their duties (including but not limited to illness or disability) you must immediately cease using that driver until such time as the driver can demonstrate that they can drive a Private Hire vehicle without risk to the public.

5.5.9 You must keep these records for a period of not less than 6 calendar months from the date when you cease to be engaged or otherwise use the driver to drive Private Hire vehicles.

5.5.10 All records and retained licences must be available for inspection at any reasonable time by an Authorised Officer of the Council or a Police Officer.

5.6 Standards of Service

5.6.1 You must provide a prompt, efficient and reliable service to members of the public at all reasonable times.

5.6.2 In particular you must (but this is not an exhaustive list):

- (a) Ensure that all Private Hire vehicles that have been booked, attend at the appointed time and place unless delayed or prevented by reasonable cause.
- (b) Ensure the vehicle dispatched is a Council licensed private hire vehicle and the driver of the vehicle is a Council licensed Private Hire driver.
- (c) Keep any premises which you control and which are open to the public clean, adequately heated, ventilated and lit.
- (d) Ensure that any telephone facilities and radio equipment provided are maintained in a sound condition and that any defects are repaired promptly.
- (e) Ensure that the correct licences are in place for any radio equipment.
- (f) Ensure that it is established at the time of booking how many passengers are to be carried and that the vehicle dispatched to fulfil the booking has an adequate number of passenger seats.

5.7 Ride Sharing/Car-pooling

5.7.1 If the journey is to be part of a ride sharing/carpooling journey, that must be made clear to the hirer before the booking is accepted, and you must ensure that individual hirers explicitly consent to that ridesharing/carpooling arrangement.

5.8 Public Service Vehicles

5.8.1 Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) may not be used to undertake a Private Hire vehicle booking, unless with the informed consent of the hirer. To obtain such informed consent you must make the customer aware that the driver of that vehicle may only hold a PCV driver's licence and therefore not have been subjected to the same checks (criminal records and character) as a Private Hire driver.

5.9 Complaints

5.9.1 You or the manager must initiate an investigation into any complaint received from the public within **48 hours** from receipt of the complaint.

- 5.9.2 You must maintain a register of complaints (digital or hard copy), which must include the following information:
- (a) Complainant's name, address/email address
 - (b) Details of the complaint
 - (c) Time and date of the alleged incident
 - (d) Time and date the complaint was received by you or the manager
 - (e) How the complaint was received e.g. phone, email, etc.
 - (f) Name of person that received the complaint
 - (g) Name of the alleged perpetrator
 - (h) If the complaint was referred to the Council – time and date of when it was referred and by whom
 - (i) Details of the action taken to resolve the complaint and by whom
 - (j) Date the complaint was resolved.
- 5.9.3 A copy of the complaints register must be available for inspection upon request of an Authorised Officer of the Council. The records must be retained for a period of 6 months.
- 5.9.4 You must, on receipt of a complaint concerning a licensed driver, immediately notify the complainant of their right to direct their complaint to the Council.
- 5.9.5 You must ensure that details of how a customer can contact yourself as the Private Hire Operator in the event of any complaint relating to a booking or other contract, are displayed on your website, booking app and (in the absence of online booking platform), at any booking office.
- 5.9.6 Where a complaint is received by the Council, you must comply with any reasonable request for information and/or follow any reasonable directions/instructions made by an Authorised Officer or police officer in respect of the complaint.
- 5.9.7 You must notify the Council within **72 hours** if you receive a complaint about a driver operated by you when it has been identified that the complaint relates to any of the following:
- (a) allegations of sexual misconduct (including the use of sexualised language).
 - (b) racist behaviour.
 - (c) violence (including verbal aggression).
 - (d) dishonesty including theft.
 - (e) Equality breaches.
 - (f) any other serious misconduct (including motoring related for example dangerous driving or drink driving).

5.10 Change of Address

5.10.1 You must notify the Council in writing of any change of address (including any address or addresses from you operate or otherwise conduct your business as a Private Hire Operator) within 7 days of such change taking place.

5.11 Notification of conviction, caution, penalty

5.11.1 You must notify the Council in writing if you have been convicted or cautioned for any offence, been arrested charged with/reported or are under investigation for any offence, received a fixed penalty notice, community protection notice (CPN), criminal behaviour order (CBO), been required to attend a speed awareness course or there have been a complaint or concerns about your behaviour or other matter imposed on you, which might affect your continuing safety within 7 days.

5.11.2 The same requirement applies to any partners in the case of a partnership holding an operator's licence and to any directors and secretary of any limited company in the case of a limited company holding a Private Hire Operator licence. The same requirement applies to any manager or deputy manager.

5.12 Advertising

5.12.1 You must not display or permit to be displayed on or from your premises or from any other place, any sign or notice which consists of or includes the word "Taxi" or "CAB" whether in the singular or plural or any word of a similar meaning unless you also take bookings for Hackney Carriages.

5.13 Insurance

5.13.1 Any premises that you control and are open to the public must be covered by Public Liability Insurance.

5.13.2 This insurance policy (or a summary) must be clearly displayed at the premises where it can be seen by the public.

5.13.3 You must ensure that at all times there is in force a policy of insurance covering Private Hire use or such security as complies with the requirements of Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1988 for all Private Hire vehicles operated.

5.13.4 You must ensure that where a vehicle is covered under a fleet insurance policy, drivers are aware of the content of the policy, including its limitations and exclusions. You must keep a record, signed by the driver, within each individual's record file when this has been completed. A copy of any individual's records must be produced, on request, to any Authorised Officer of the Council.

5.14 Personal data

- 5.14.1 You must be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office as you will be holding personal data for customers and any staff that you engage.
- 5.14.2 You must report any loss of personal data, whether by theft or otherwise, to the Council in writing within **24 hours** of the loss or discovery of the loss (whichever is sooner), and also immediately to the Police in the event of suspected theft. You may also need to report any such incident to the Information Commissioner's Office, for more information see [here](#).

5.15 Working hours

- 5.15.1 You must take steps to ensure that drivers do not work excessively long hours. You must not permit drivers to drive for more than 10 hours per day and must have a break lasting at least 30 minutes after driving for 5½ hours. The driver must also have a break at the end of this period, unless it is the end of the working day.

5.16 Display of Conditions

- 5.16.1 You must make available a copy of these conditions in any premises which you control and are open to the public. In addition, copy of the conditions attached to vehicle and driver licences must be available for inspection on request by a member of the public.

5.17 Subcontracting

- 5.17.1 If you subcontract any booking to another Private Hire Operator licensed in England (including Greater London, but excluding Plymouth), Wales or Scotland, you, as the Operator who initially accepted the booking, remain liable under the contract.
- 5.17.2 If you do subcontract any booking, you must inform the hirer of the subcontract before the hiring commences.

5.18 Information

- 5.18.1 You must understand that a booking that has been accepted by whatever means, is a contract and failure to uphold that (whether by non-attendance by the vehicle, late attendance or any other shortfall in performance) may lead to a claim for breach of contract. The accurate recording of booking details is a means of protecting you if such circumstances arise.

Section 6: Legal Requirements (contained in national legislation) relating to a Private Hire Operator

- 6.1 A Private Hire Operator must only operate Private Hire vehicles and private hire drivers licensed by the same council as the operator (section 46(1) (e) of the 1976 Act).
- 6.2 A Private Hire Operator can subcontract a booking to another Private Hire Operator licensed in England (including Greater London but excluding Plymouth), Wales or Scotland but remains liable to the hirer under the contract (section 55A of the 1976 Act).
- 6.3 A Private Hire Operator who initially accepted booking from a hirer remains liable under that contract even if they do not ultimately fulfil that contract as a result of a subcontract (section 56(1) of the 1976 Act).
- 6.4 A Private Hire Operator who accepted a booking must maintain records of that booking in accordance with the conditions attached to the Private Hire Operator's licence and must produce those records if requested to do so by an Authorised Officer of the Council or Police Officer (section 56(2) of the 1976 Act).
- 6.5 A Private Hire Operator must maintain a record of all vehicles operated by him and must produce those records if requested to do so by an Authorised Officer of the Council or Police Officer (section 56(3) of the 1976 Act).
- 6.6 A Private Hire Operator must produce their Private Hire Operator licence if requested to do so by an Authorised Officer of the Council or Police Officer (section 56(4) of the 1976 Act).
- 6.7 A Private Hire Operator must not refuse to accept a booking for a Private Hire vehicle because the passenger will be accompanied by an assistance dog and no additional charge can be made for any such booking (section 170 (1) & (2) of the Equality Act).

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Taxi Policy Survey

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

22 May 2023 - 15 April 2024

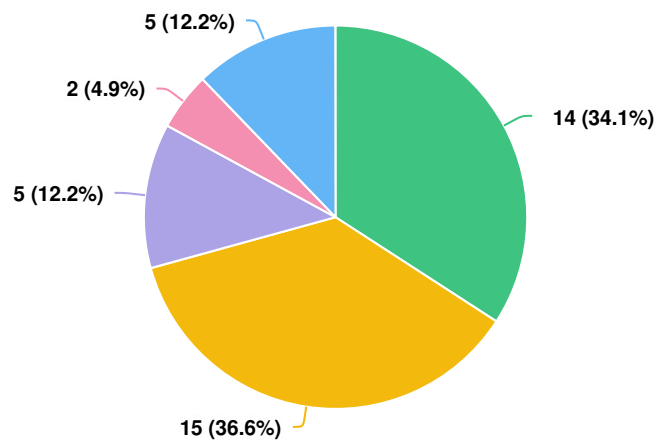
PROJECT NAME:

Taxi Policy Changes



SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1 | Safeguarding TrainingAn increased frequency of safeguarding training of every 3 years for licenced drivers and every 5 year...



Question options

● Strongly Agree ● Agree ● Neither Agree Nor Disagree ● Disagree ● Strongly Disagree

Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

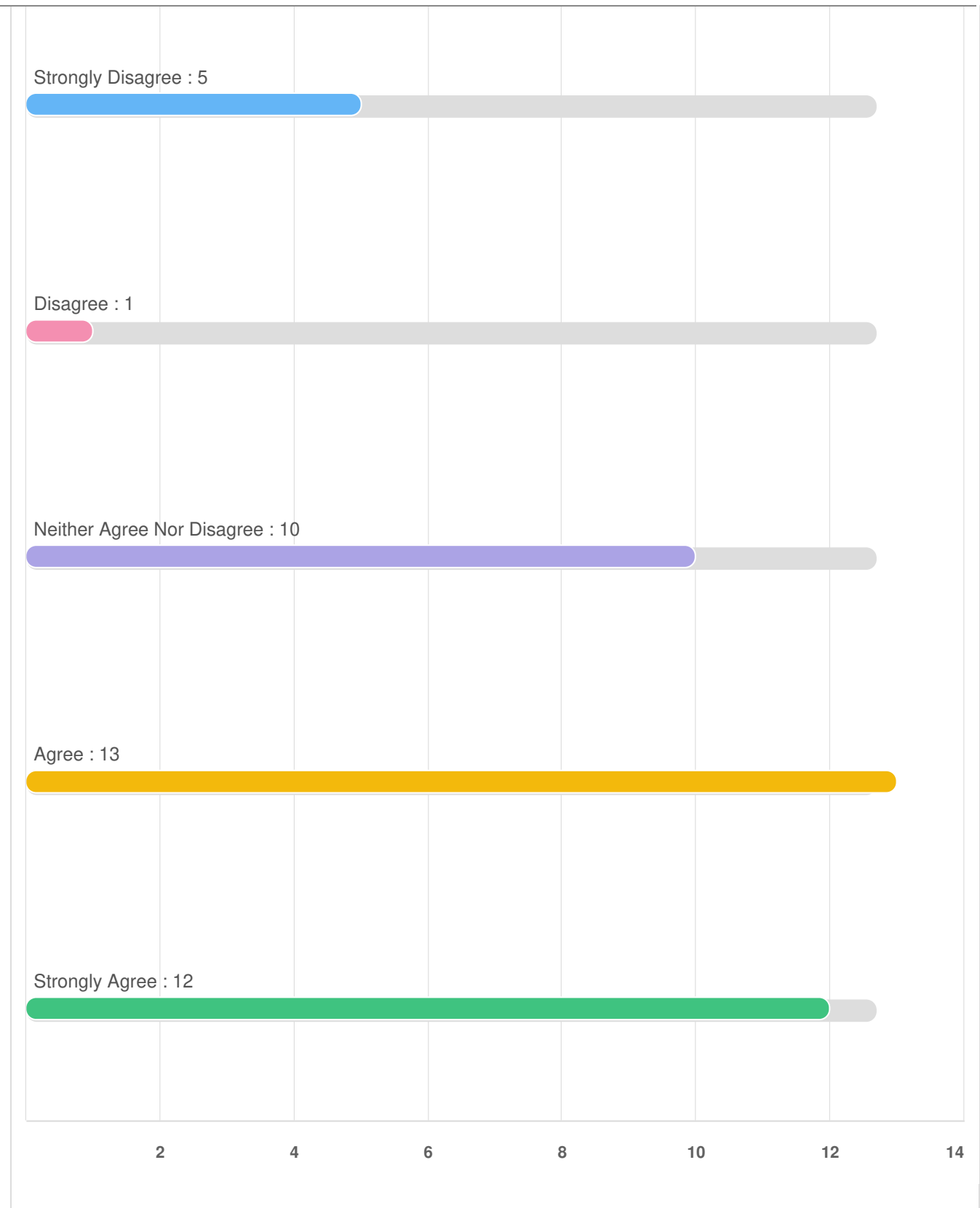
Q2 | Penalty Points Scheme The penalty point scheme will see points issued to licence holders for failing to comply with their licence conditions, or requirements of Licencing laws. If they accumulate 12 or more points within a specified period, they wil...



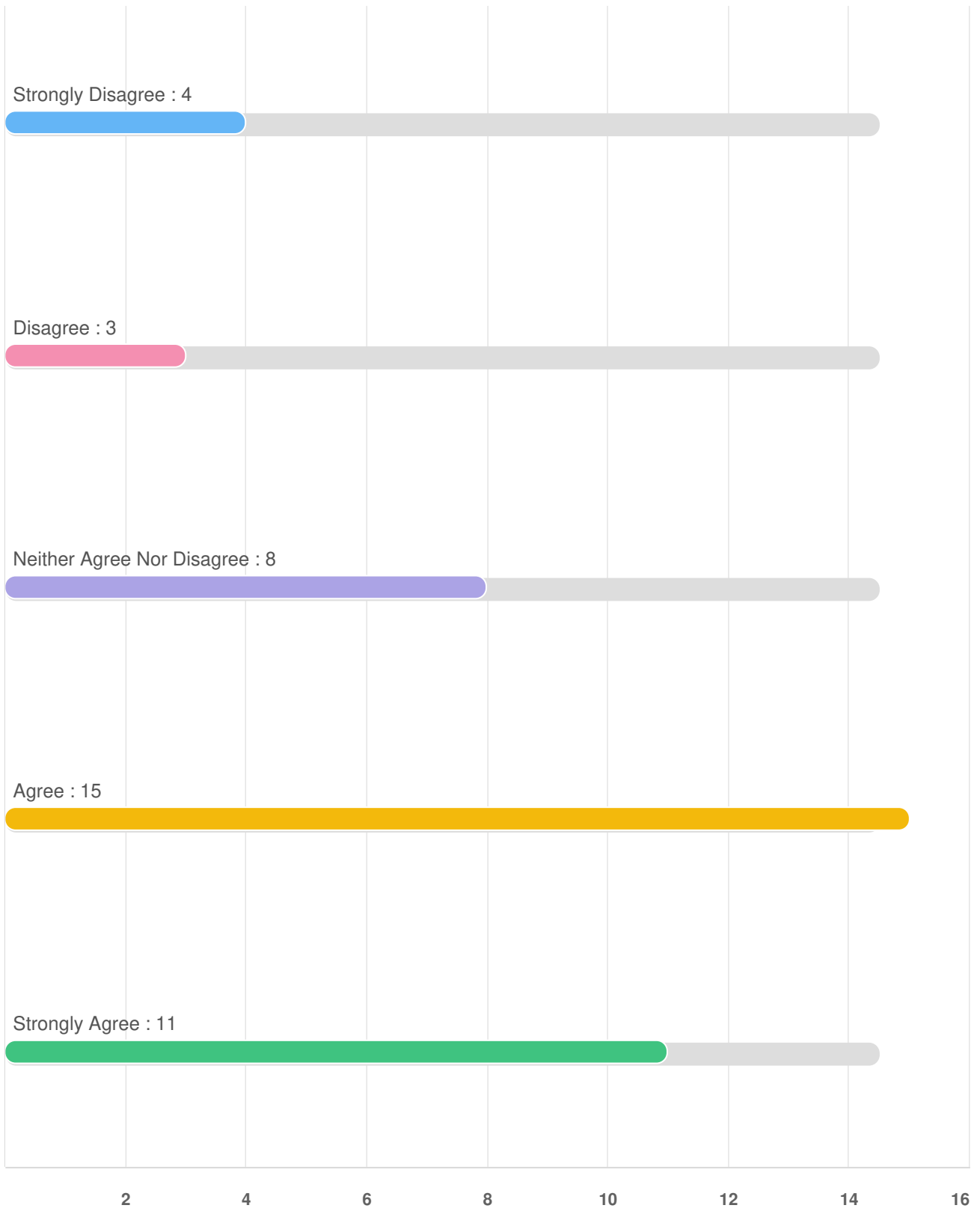
Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Likert Question

Q2 | Penalty Points Scheme The penalty point scheme will see points issued to licence holders for failing to comply with their licence conditions, or requirements of Licencing laws. If they accumulate 12 or more points within a specified period, they wil...

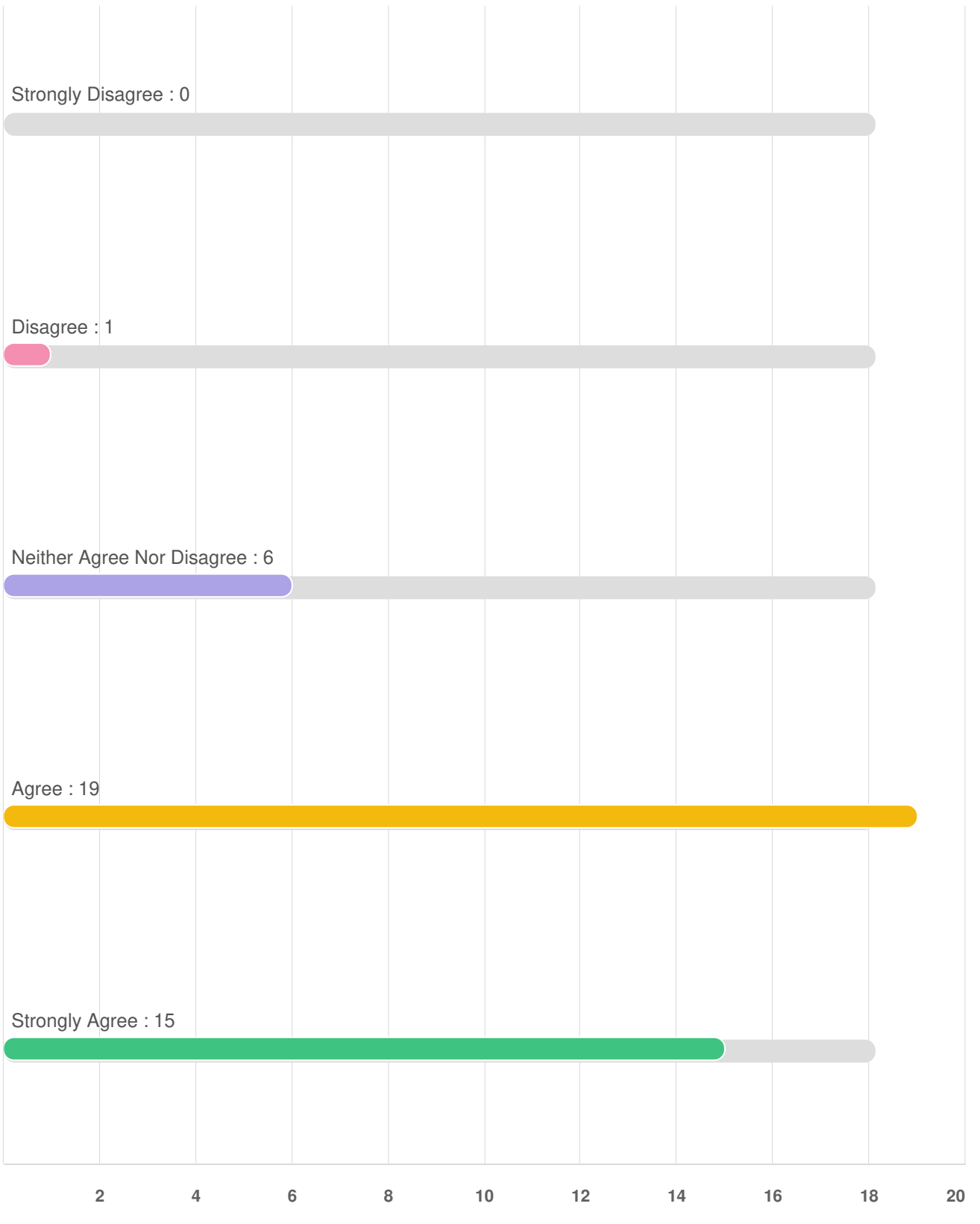
The introduction of a penalty points scheme will help protect the public.



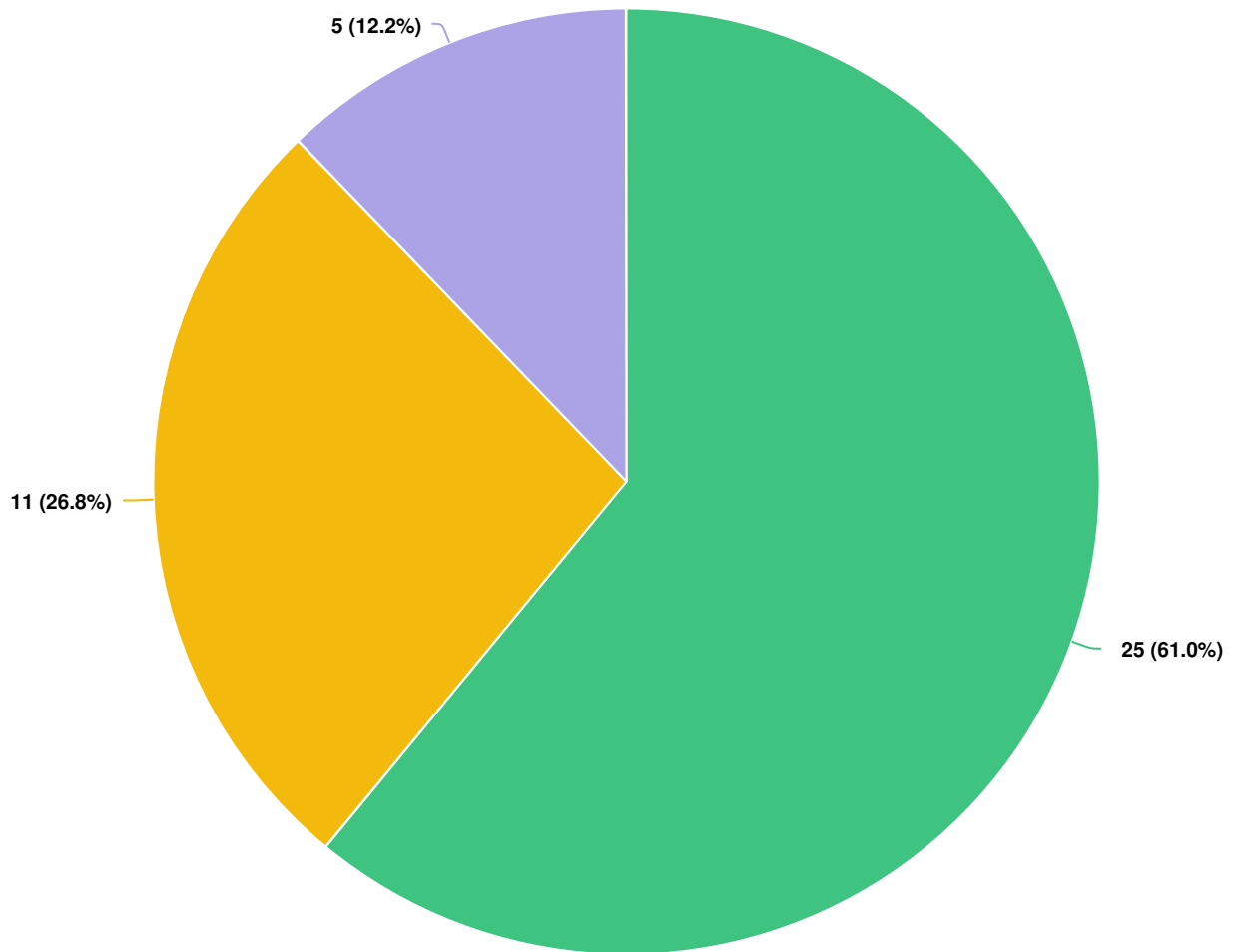
A penalty points scheme will help to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Council Tax and Private Hire vehicle policy.



Licensees should be able to appeal the issue of penalty points to the Team Leader.



Q3 Driver Training/Assessment Guidance states that Licensing authorities should require taxi and private hire vehicle drivers to undertake training and/or assessment focussed on attitudes and behaviours, such as those provided by IAM Roadsmart and the ...



Question options

- Driver training should be at another frequency.
- Driver training should be renewed on renewal of licence (normally every 3 years) as stated in the guidance.
- Driver training should be renewed every 10 years .

Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q4 Please specify.

Anonymous

1/16/2024 06:58 AM

Driver training at application and depending on number of points on the above points system and the 'attitude test' at a Council interview coupled with genuine verified complaints about driving standards. It should not be a one size fits all extra expense

Anonymous

1/16/2024 06:47 PM

No

Anonymous

1/19/2024 08:02 PM

Every 5 years ,on age 50 onwards. Compulsory retirement age 75.

Anonymous

1/26/2024 10:55 AM

Same frequency as all pcV drivers

Anonymous

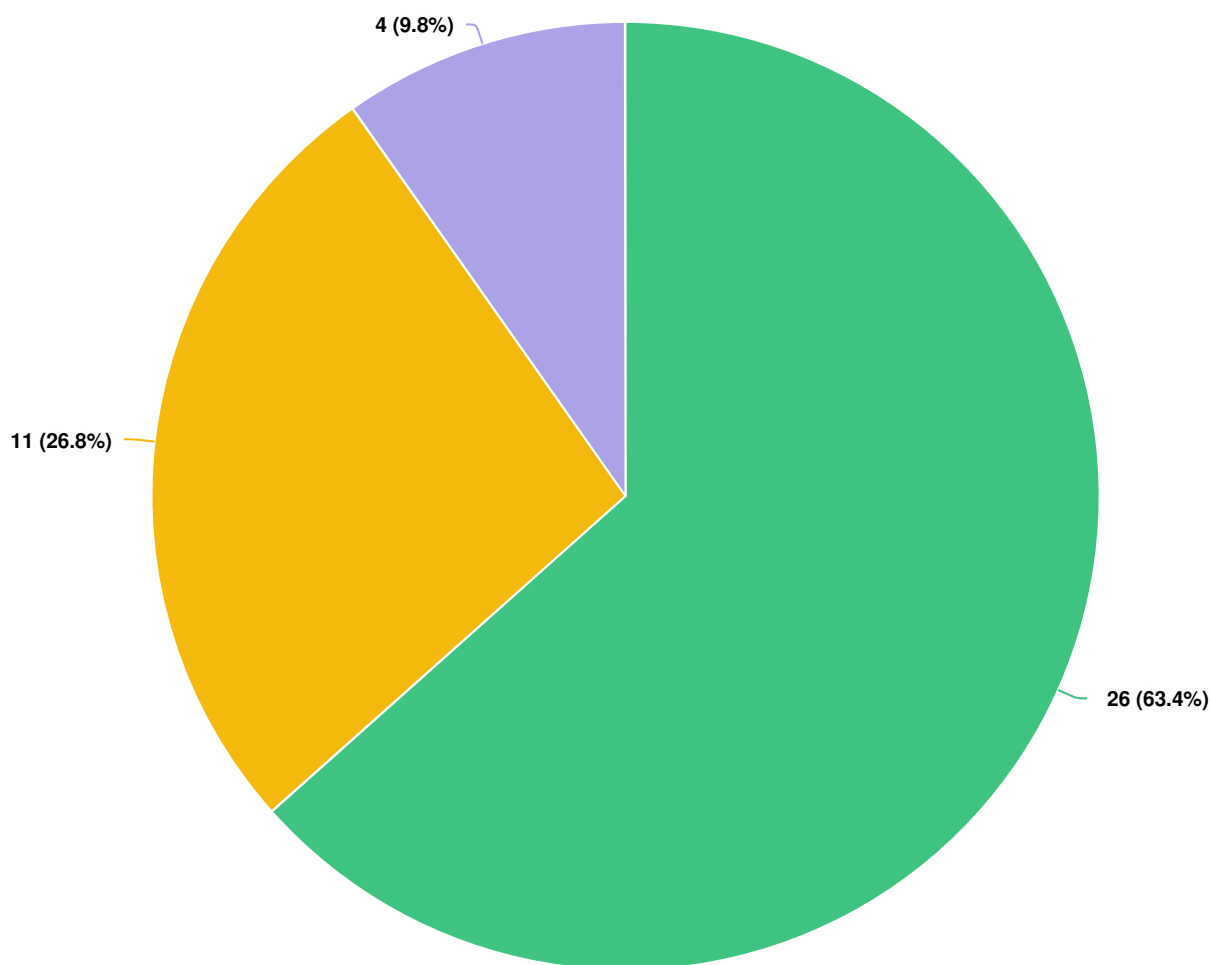
2/12/2024 08:20 PM

I THINK YOU SHOULD ONLY NEED TO TAKE ANOTHER TEST BECAUSE OF A MEDICAL CONDITION OR OVER 65 YEARS OLD

Mandatory Question (5 response(s))

Question type: Single Line Question

Q5 | Driver Training/Assessment Currently new drivers are required to pass a spoken English test or provide evidence of a relevant English language qualification at a suitable level, as part of the application process. New guidance suggests that such a te...

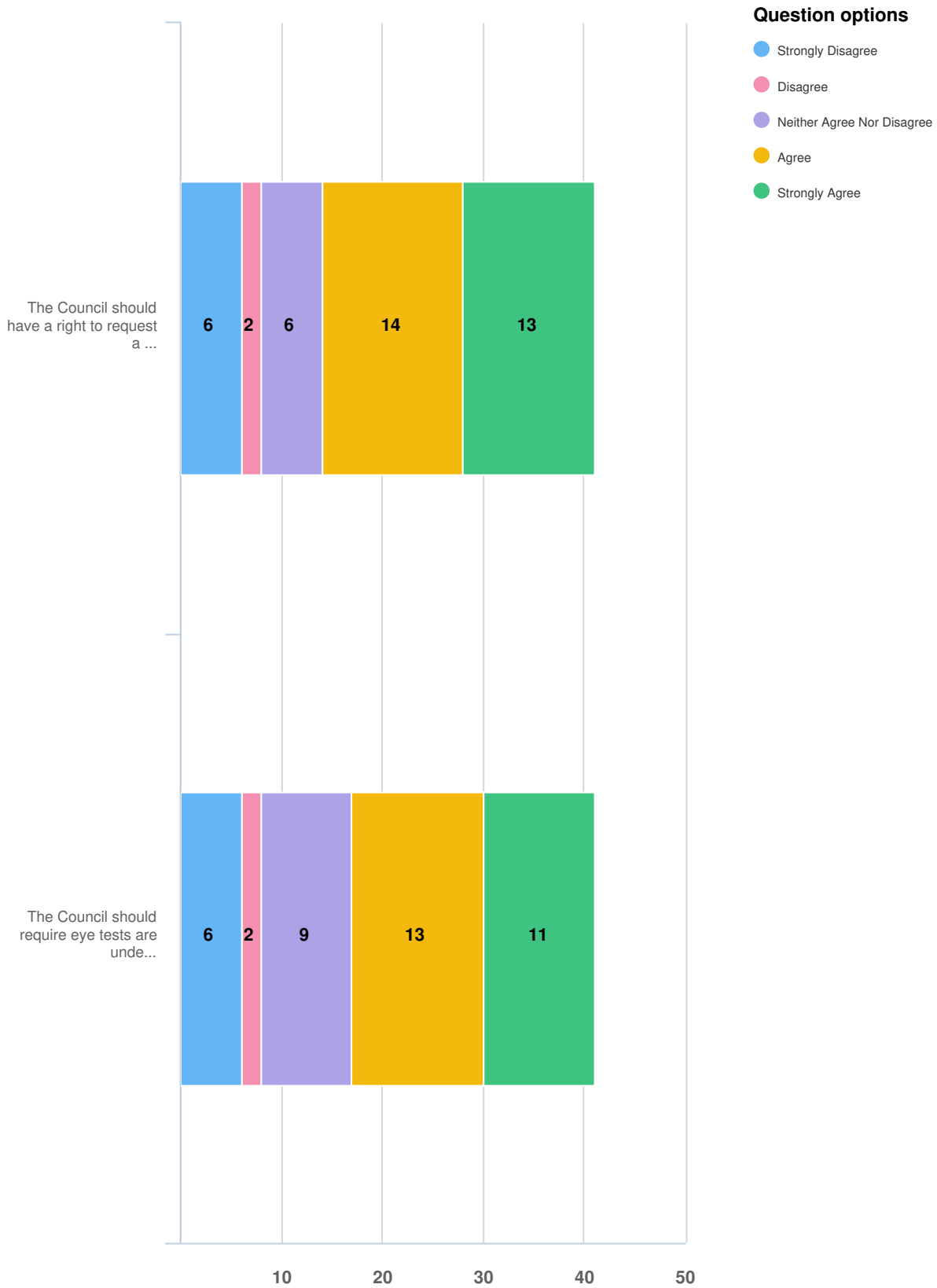


Question options

- Other (please specify)
- English language assessment should be oral only.
- English language assessment should be written and oral.

Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Radio Button Question

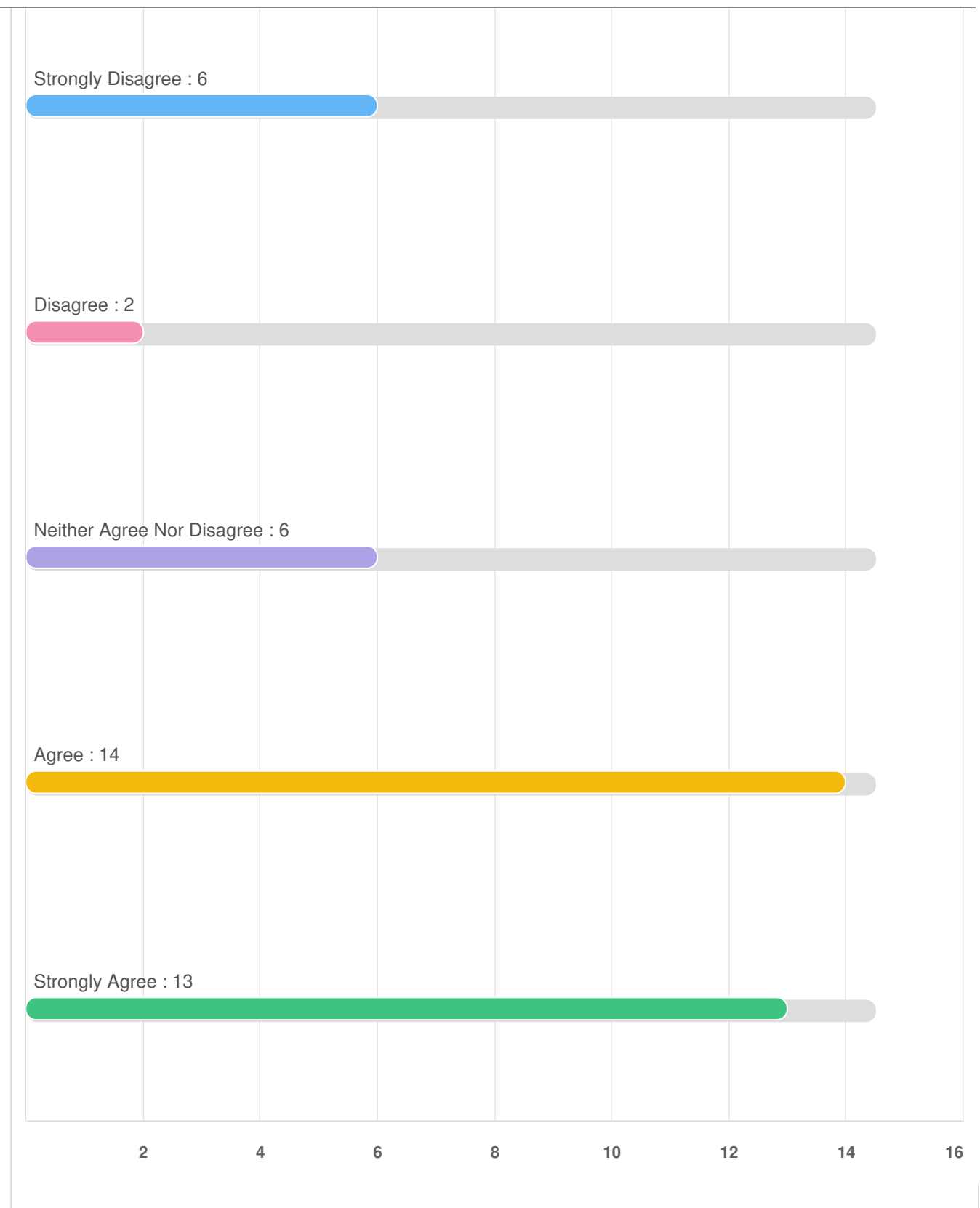
Q6 Medical Assessment Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below:



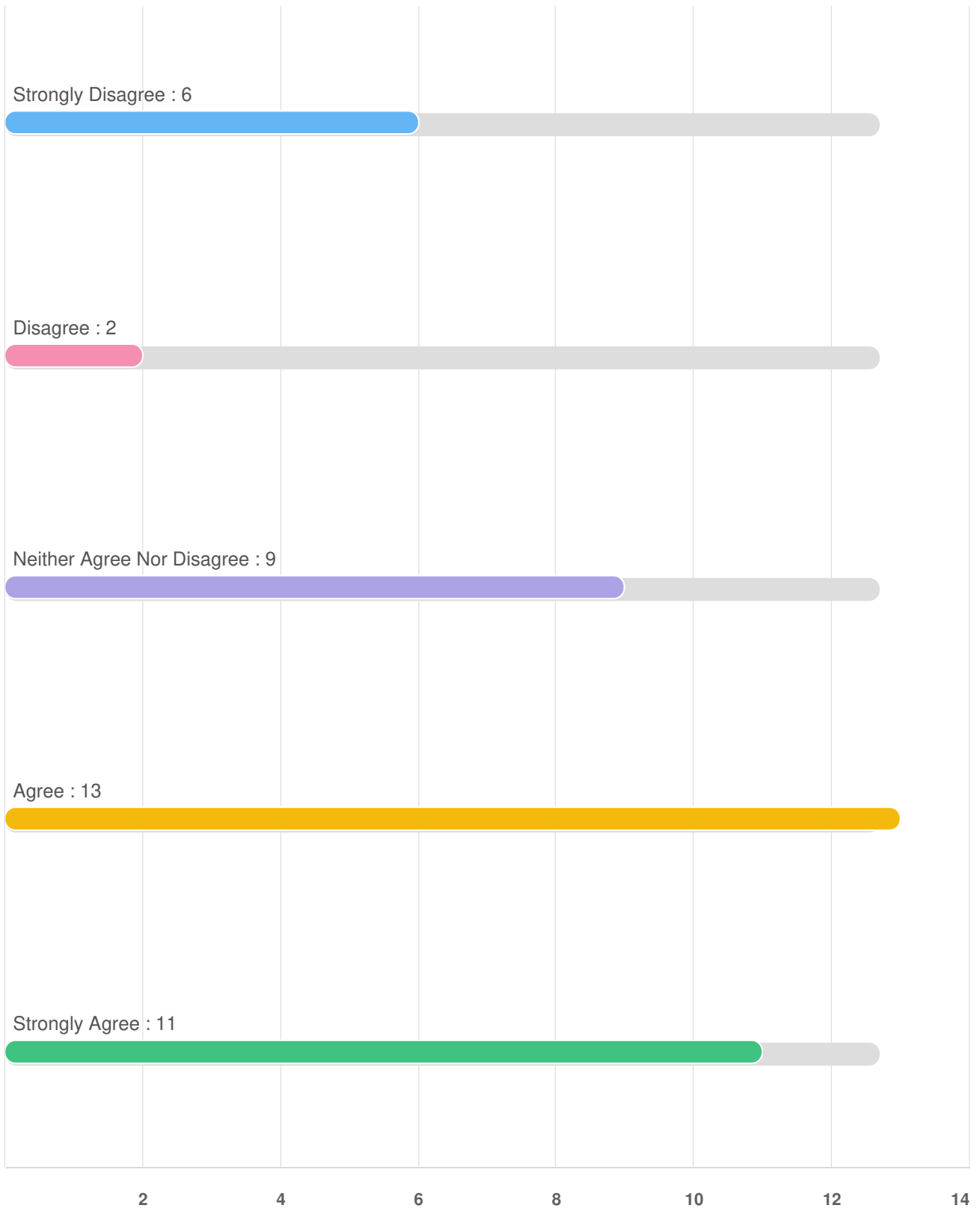
Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Likert Question

Q6 | Medical Assessment Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below:

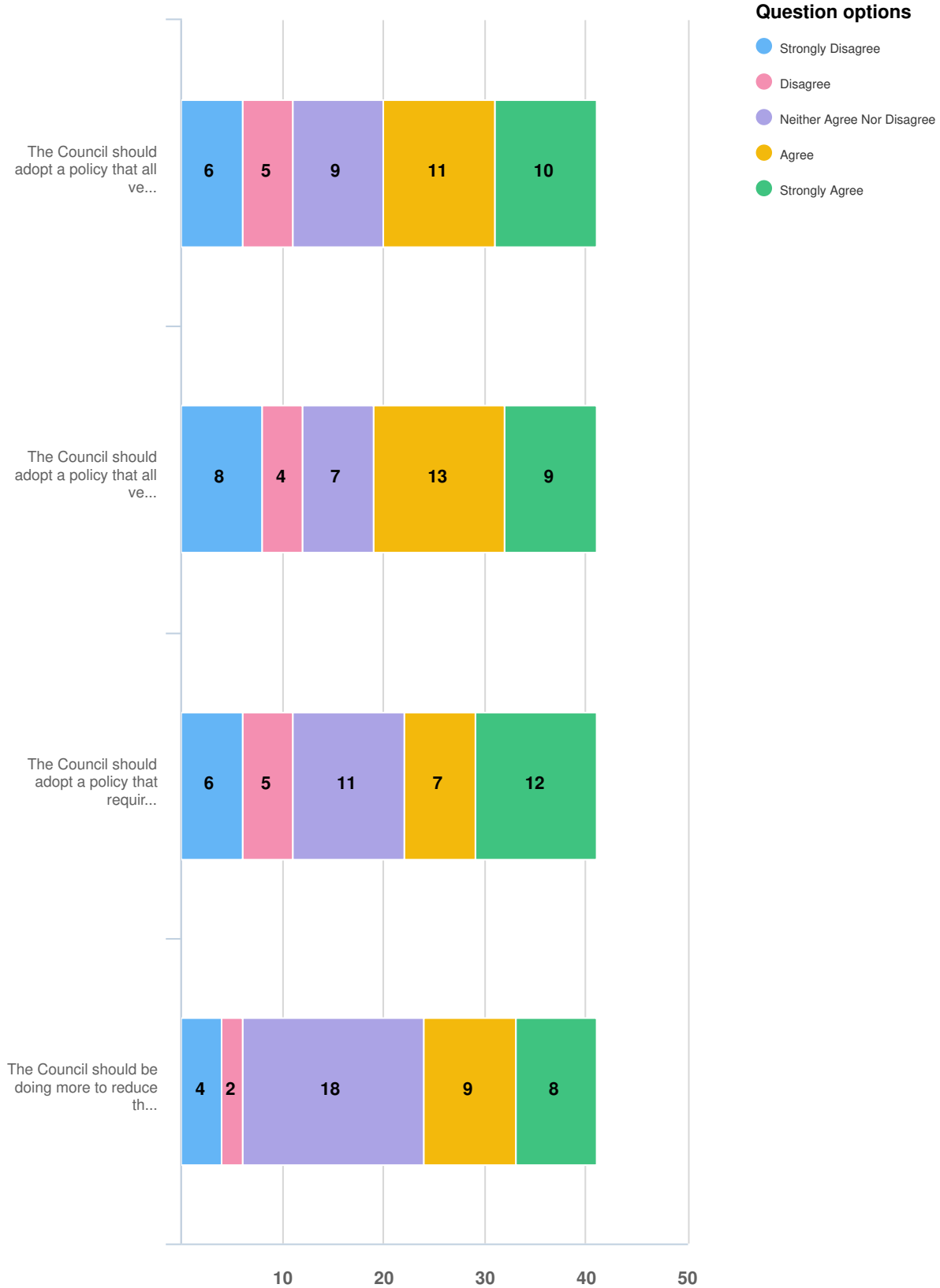
The Council should have a right to request a second opinion where concerns about a drivers medical fitness.



The Council should require eye tests are undertaken and request evidence of this at issue and renewal of licence.



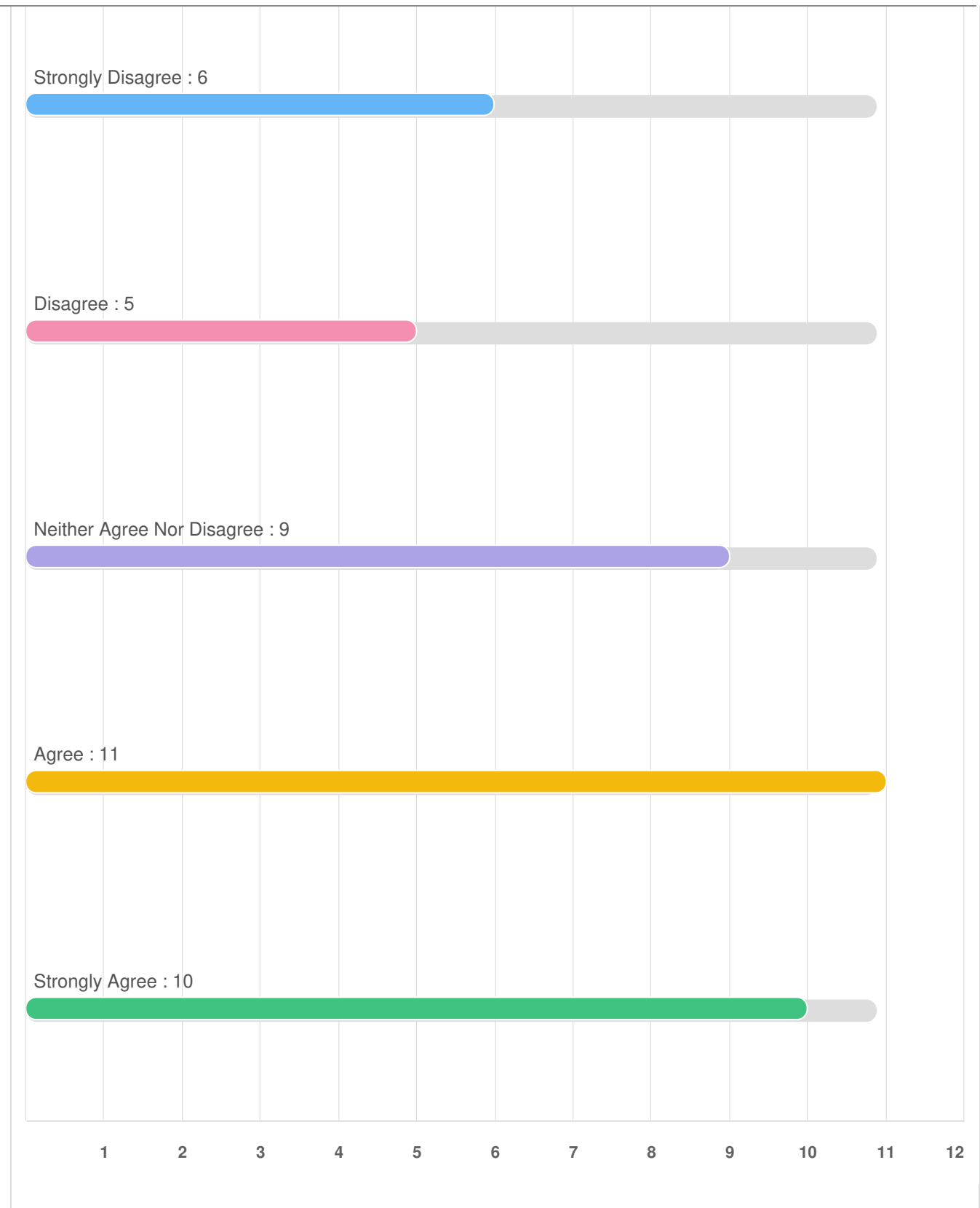
Q7 | Reducing Emissions From The Mid Devon Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Fleet Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below:



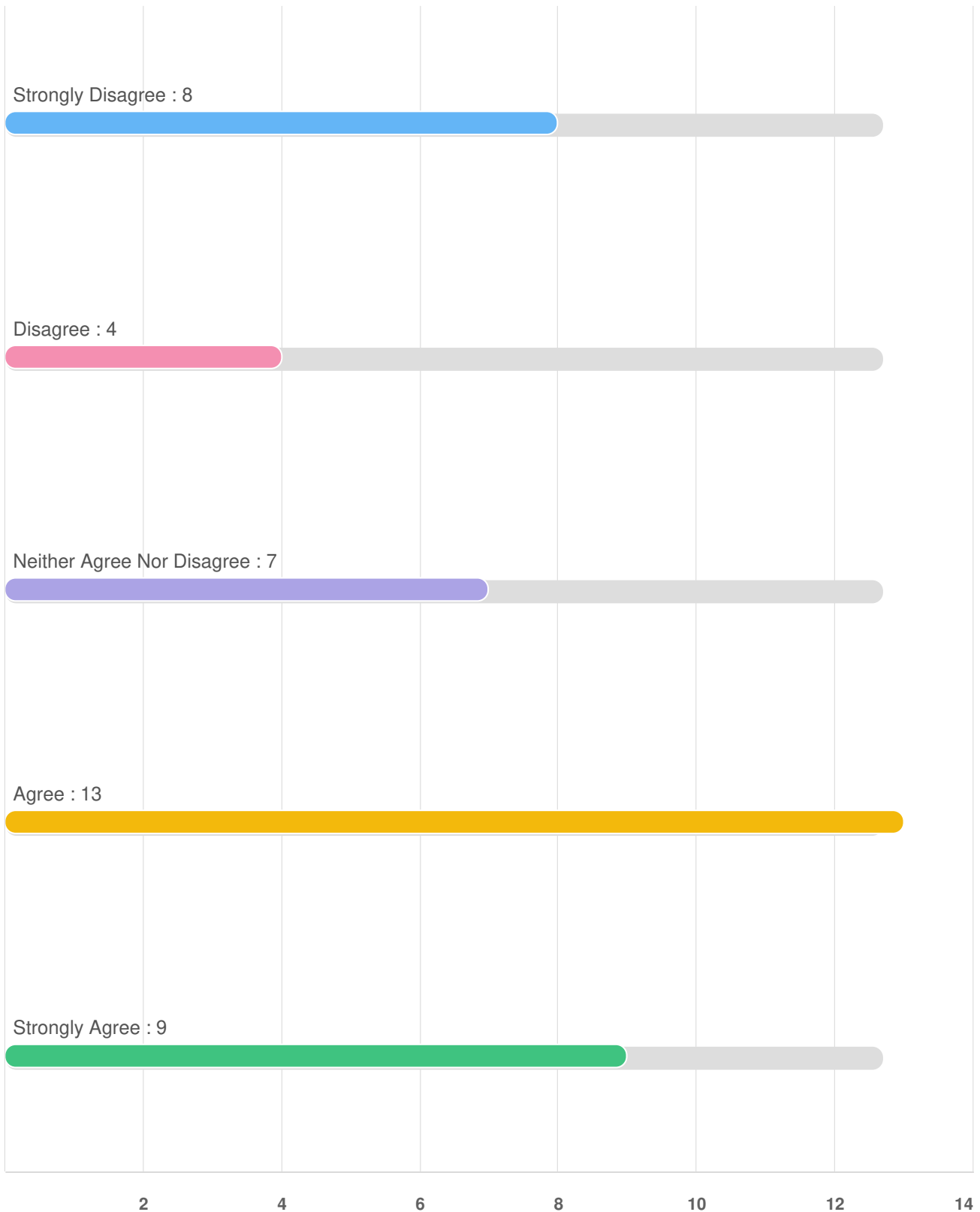
Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Likert Question

Q7 | Reducing Emissions From The Mid Devon Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Fleet
Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below:

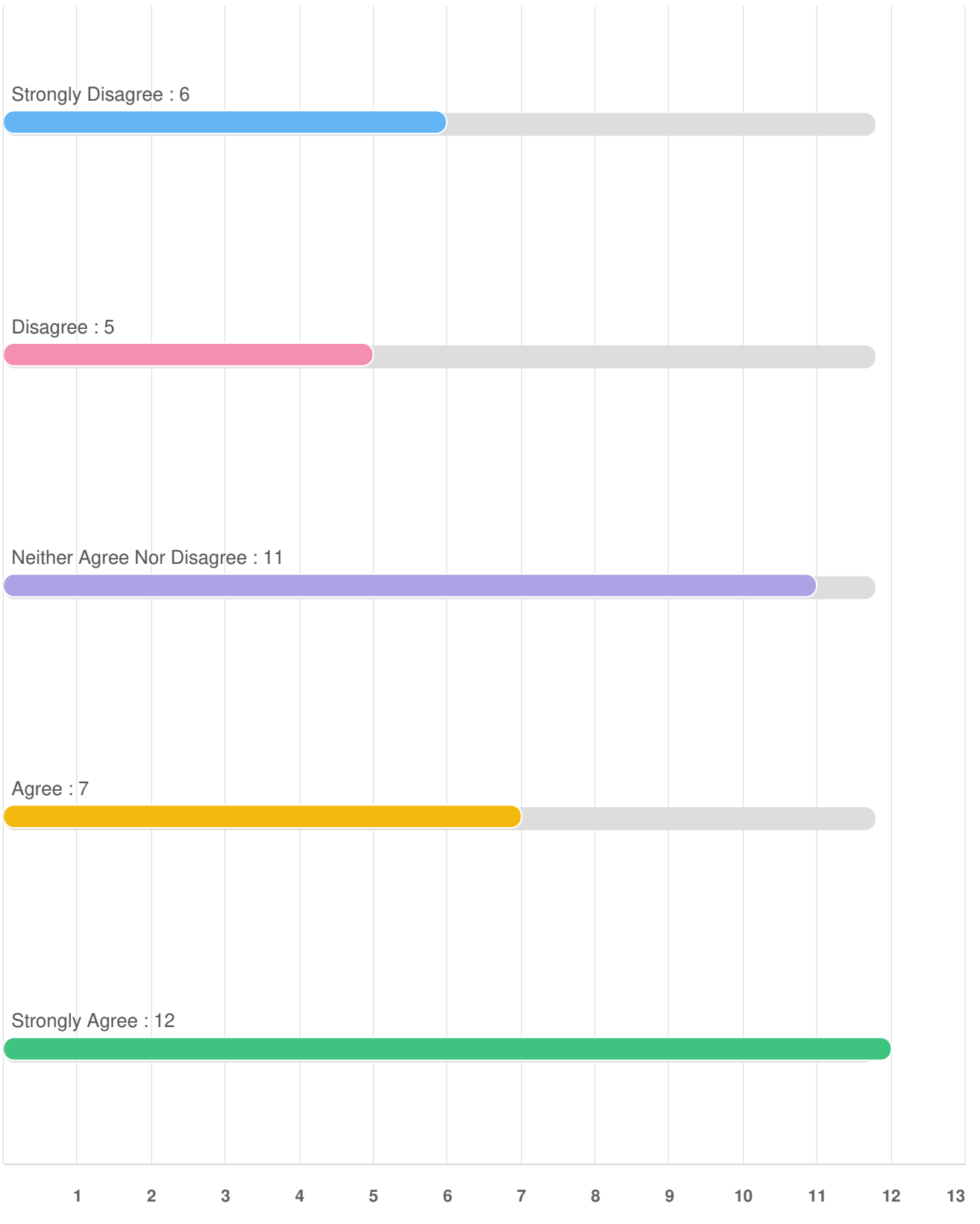
The Council should adopt a policy that all vehicles granted a new licence meet Euro 6 standards from 1 July 2024 (this does not include vehicles at renewal)



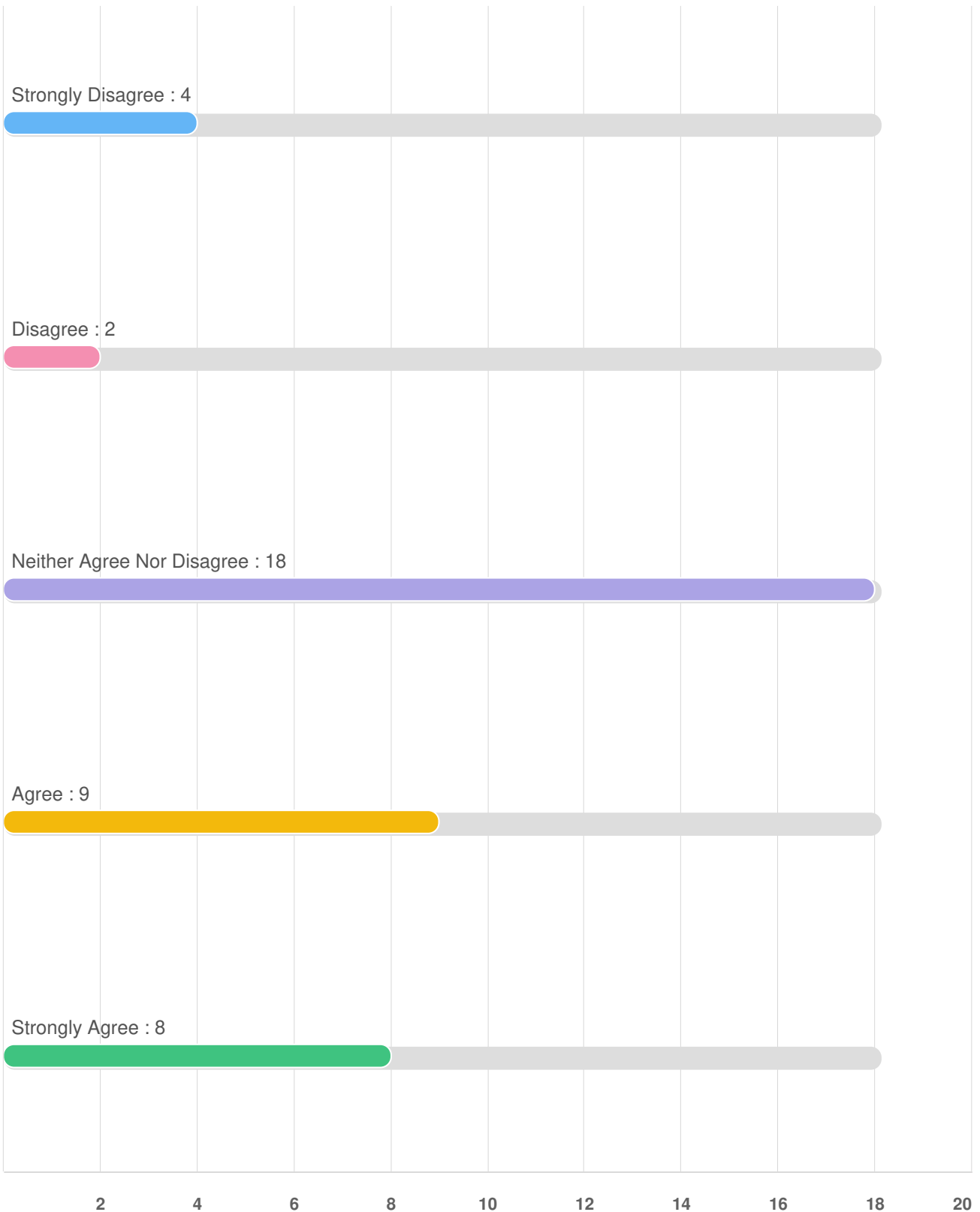
The Council should adopt a policy that all vehicles meet Euro 5 emissions at renewal of licence from 1 July 2024.



The Council should adopt a policy that requires all vehicles meet Euro 6 standards from 1 January 2026 at issue of first licence and renewal.



The Council should be doing more to reduce the impact from emissions associated with licenced Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles.



Q8 | If you wish, please provide more detail.

Anonymous

1/15/2024 04:42 PM

Electric vehicles would not currently suit our line of work. We would not be able to purchase a vehicle with a big enough mileage scope to cover our long distance work. We are however keen to move with the times if a solution occurs. Hybrids would be a much better mid term transition for the taxi trade in Devon. Charging facilities will also need assessing in such a rural county.

Anonymous

1/16/2024 06:58 AM

There is nothing wrong with the existing rolling five year system. It ensures vehicles meet current Euro 6. Introduce a non renewal date of 10 years or 200k miles whichever occurs LAST. This ensures old vehicles are off the road, but classics and lightly used vehicles continue. It removes those most polluting vehicles that are being run on a 'just about legal' basis.

Anonymous

1/17/2024 01:33 PM

As a resident I dont want to see Taxi drivers forced out of business through additional layers of bureaucracy . Uber and other ride services should be the benchmark of entry level adn retention of drivers

Anonymous

1/17/2024 05:10 PM

Correct me if I am wrong, but Britain is not part of Europe, and yet taxis have to follow their law for emission standards? Are the lorries, buses, delivery vans following meeting the Euro 5 or 6 standards? NO. The council is just making the lives of taxi's drivers very difficult and bureaucratic, but drivers have family to support, and a decent job to carry on. They come in handy when an ambulance takes 3 hours to collect a sick patient. The council makes their lives difficult, no one will be able to carry this job. And the SEN students will need transport to schools, WHO IS GOING TO DO IT?

Anonymous

1/17/2024 06:44 PM

nothing is discussed about autonomous vehicles

Anonymous

1/18/2024 04:34 PM

I strongly disagree with the second statement because I believe there should be no Euro 5 emissions standard vehicles being used in The Mid Devon Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Fleet. Vehicles that operate under The Mid Devon Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Fleet flag should be a minimum of Euro 6.

Anonymous

1/18/2024 08:47 PM

It is very important that Licencing departments understand the impact of draconian conditions imposed in the licenced vehicle fleet in their area The law is quite specific on this that any operator can work in their area with cars registered in areas that have less draconian

conditions . It is very important that all areas adopt the dft consultation on this . Failure to do so will mean that cars registered on other areas would work in your areas These cheaper to run cars will ruin your local companies by offering lower prices

Anonymous

1/19/2024 08:02 PM

The word fair is key as per the lead statement. If the Council wants the Council should pay and take less heed from from views with no skin in the game.

Anonymous

1/26/2024 10:55 AM

Taxis should meet the same conditions as all other PCV.

Anonymous

1/29/2024 02:19 PM

The most vulnerable residents in Devon use taxis . Any thing that decreases a fleet size or the accessibility of taxis only makes them suffer . Cross border hiring occurs because councils put higher levels on their cars / drivers . Making in harder for new people to come in the trade . Meaning drivers in laxer areas can under cut the prices

Anonymous

2/15/2024 12:29 PM

How about the following sequence of requirements for licensed vehicles, with regard to emissions? 2024 - ULEZ standards for NEW registrations; 2027 - ULEZ standards for all (renewals and new); 2030 - Zero Emissions Vehicles for NEW registrations and ULEZ standards for renewals.

Anonymous

3/27/2024 11:27 AM

i thought we had left Europe. Other priorities

Optional question (12 response(s), 29 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

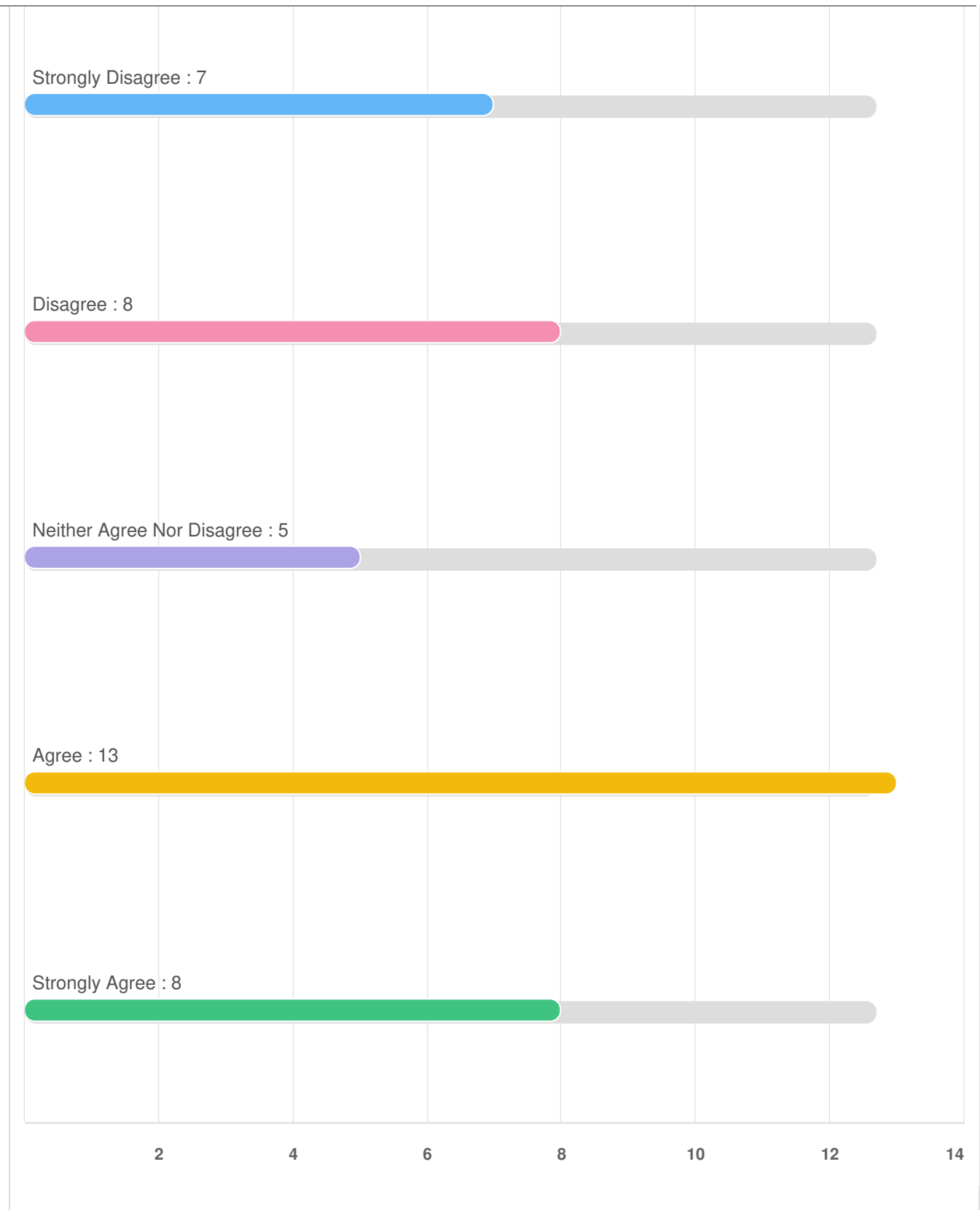
Q9 Testing Frequency Please indicate your level of agreement with the statement below:



Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Likert Question

Q9 | Testing Frequency Please indicate your level of agreement with the statement below:

An increased frequency of testing for vehicles over 5 years of age is realistic and ensures that the vehicle is safe and suitable to be used as a licenced taxi or Private Hire vehicle.



Q10 | If you wish, please provide more detail.

Anonymous
1/15/2024 01:49 PM

I think the 6 monthly checks are more than enough aswell as a mot every year

Anonymous

1/15/2024 02:05 PM

I Think should be left to every 6 months.

Anonymous

1/16/2024 06:58 AM

Six monthly testing is fine if the upper age limit suggested of 10 years/200k (whichever occurs last) is introduced. Don't fix what isn't broken.

Anonymous

1/16/2024 06:47 PM

Testing should be done on a mileage basis, the higher the mileage the more frequent the test!

Anonymous

1/17/2024 01:33 PM

The MOT system and reliance on the drivers to maintain their vehicles should be suitable, with severe penalties or expulsion as a Mid devon driver if the vehicle is found to have defects between MOTS as provided by the Road Traffic Acts in law

Anonymous

1/17/2024 05:10 PM

Do the Council provides these tests for their local buses? What about logistics lorries? I live on a main road in Devon, and the level of pollution and noise are not regulated by nobody. The council has to impose these regulations to everyone, or no one.

Anonymous

1/18/2024 08:47 PM

A vehicle is only safe at the time of inspection . By offering to check the road worthiness of the vehicle you're pushing the onus on yourselves for the safety of the fleet . I understand that the council will do these checks at an obvious cost to your licenced trade . Whilst some people think this is a good idea . An operator can get an operators licence in a different district like Wolverhampton , Eastleigh or uttlesford and operate older vehicles witj less stringent checks than you propose . Which in turn will make the business more profitable than a business registered solely in you area This is perfectly legal and in fact encourages competition in other areas .

Anonymous

1/19/2024 08:02 PM

A bald tyre is already 3 points on the EXISTING system. Bigger investment in pot hole repair will assist all taxis wear & tear driving heavily laden in the dark on rural and flooded roads. Evaluate the distinction between rural and urban needs carefully

Anonymous

1/26/2024 10:55 AM

Taxis should be tested with the same frequency as all others PCV

Anonymous

2/09/2024 09:20 AM

We do not have to do this with our own cars so why should they?

Anonymous

2/13/2024 07:14 PM

I am a part time , school run taxi . My income cannot support an extra 2 taxi tests per year . I never do any other private hire or go on the taxi rank so my mileage is a lot less than other taxis . Could it maybe done on a mileage basis to make it fair

Anonymous

2/19/2024 02:47 PM

There should be a mileage cap and age limit, whichever is reached last for example 250k miles AND aged 10 years

Anonymous

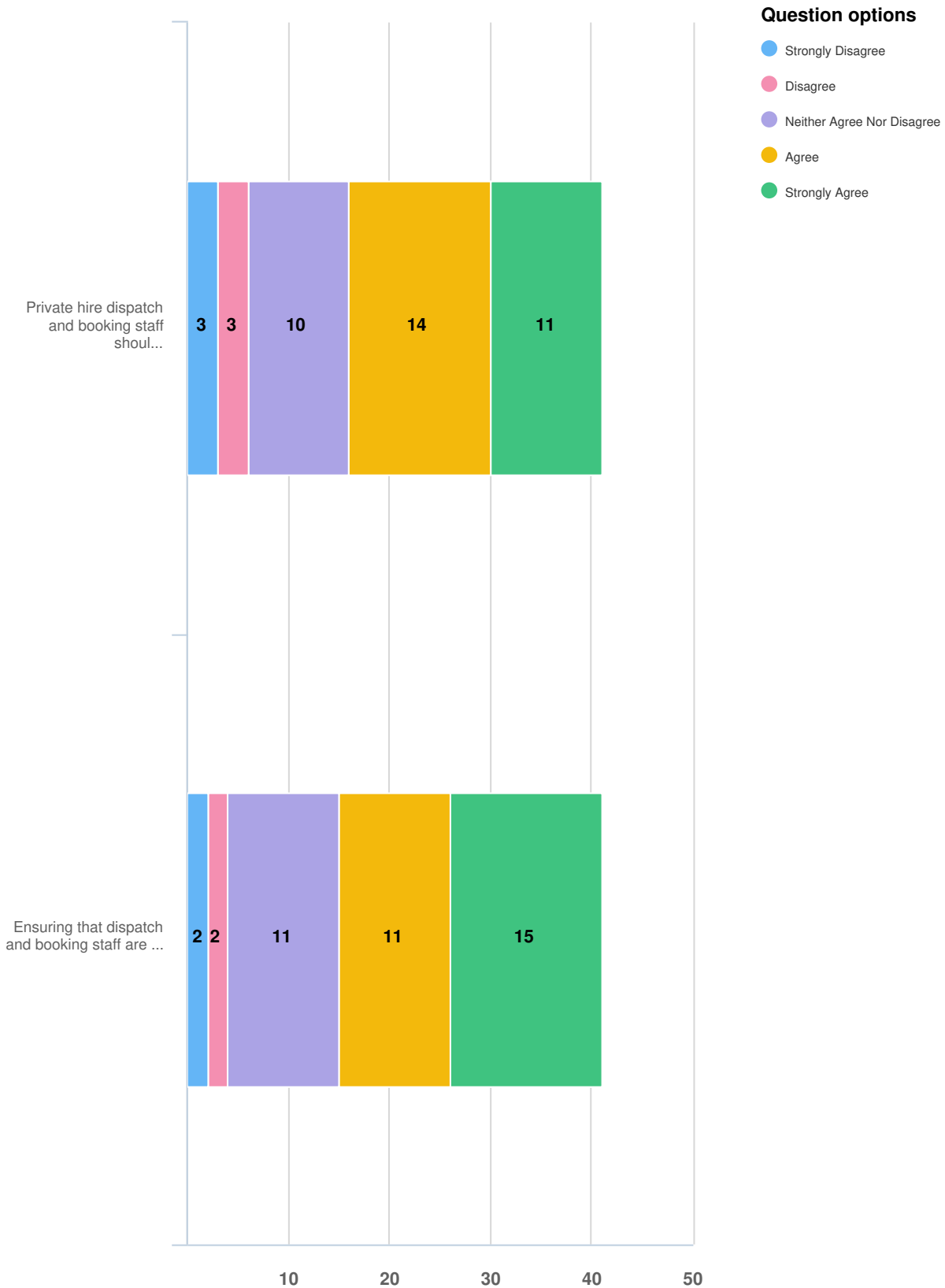
2/19/2024 11:14 PM

If problems keep popping up from testing at the intervals at present through poor maintenance check them more with spot checks.

Optional question (13 response(s), 28 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

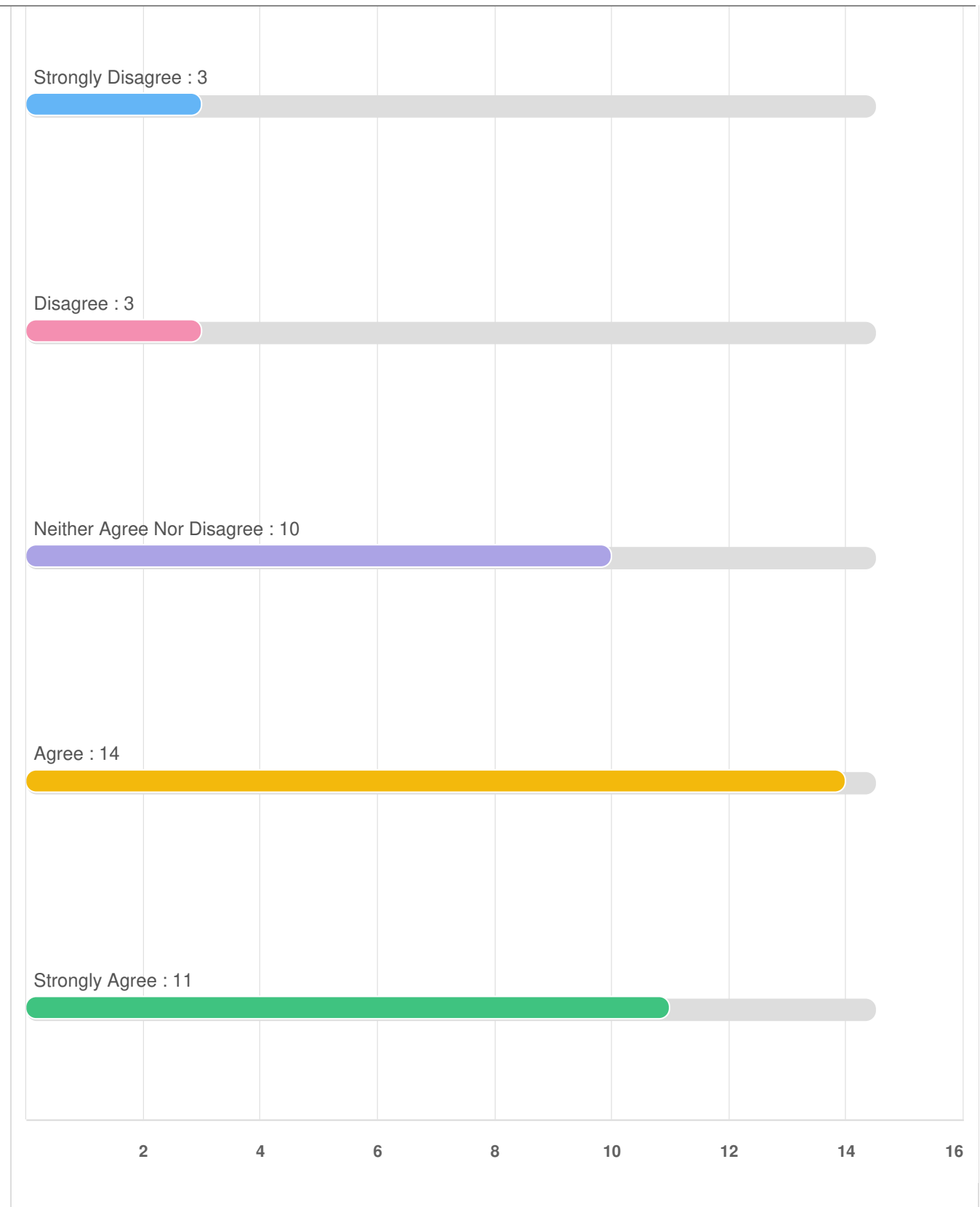
Q11 | Changes To The Private Hire Operator Policy We are proposing to introduce requirements for operators to assess the fitness and propriety of their dispatch and booking staff, this is to ensure that only trustworthy individuals are employed within th...

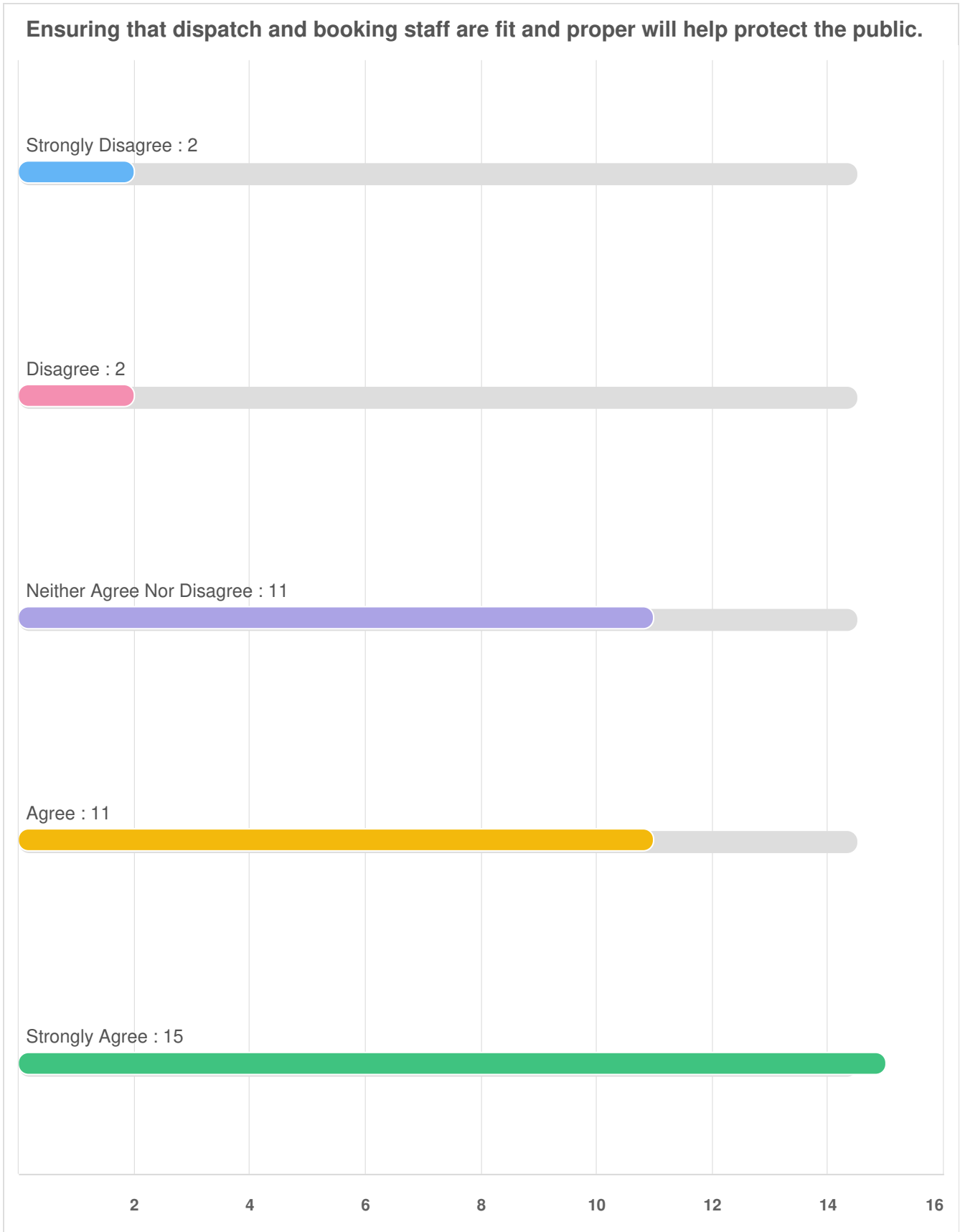


Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Likert Question

Q11 | Changes To The Private Hire Operator Policy We are proposing to introduce requirements for operators to assess the fitness and propriety of their dispatch and booking staff, this is to ensure that only trustworthy individuals are employed within th...

Private hire dispatch and booking staff should be subject to the same checks as the private hire operator themselves.





Q12 | If you wish, please provide more detail.

Anonymous

1/16/2024 06:58 AM

There is no evidence that crime has increased in Mid Devon because booking staff are not DBS checked. This is discriminatory. It implies operators employ crooked staff or the operators are crooked. Again, don't fix what isn't broken. It's yet another unwanted expense.

Anonymous

1/17/2024 01:33 PM

The dispatch and booking staff dont come into direct contact with customers where the highest levels of risk are seen . I qualified as a Safeguarding specialist lecturing on the subject to give qualifications to sports coaches and note the content of the courses has changed very little in 20 years . I dont understand why mandatory retraining may be necessary every three years except to create more work for the Safeguarding industry

Anonymous

1/17/2024 05:10 PM

Are you talking about uber? because private hire and hackney carriage go through a tough process of regulations and rules. Why do you want to make it even more difficult? Has anybody ever died in a taxi because of a driver??

Anonymous

1/19/2024 08:02 PM

Protection to the public via a phone call

Anonymous

1/26/2024 10:55 AM

I believe this is the private hire operator's responsibiliy

Anonymous

1/29/2024 10:26 AM

Anything that can be done to keep the public safe is a good thing.

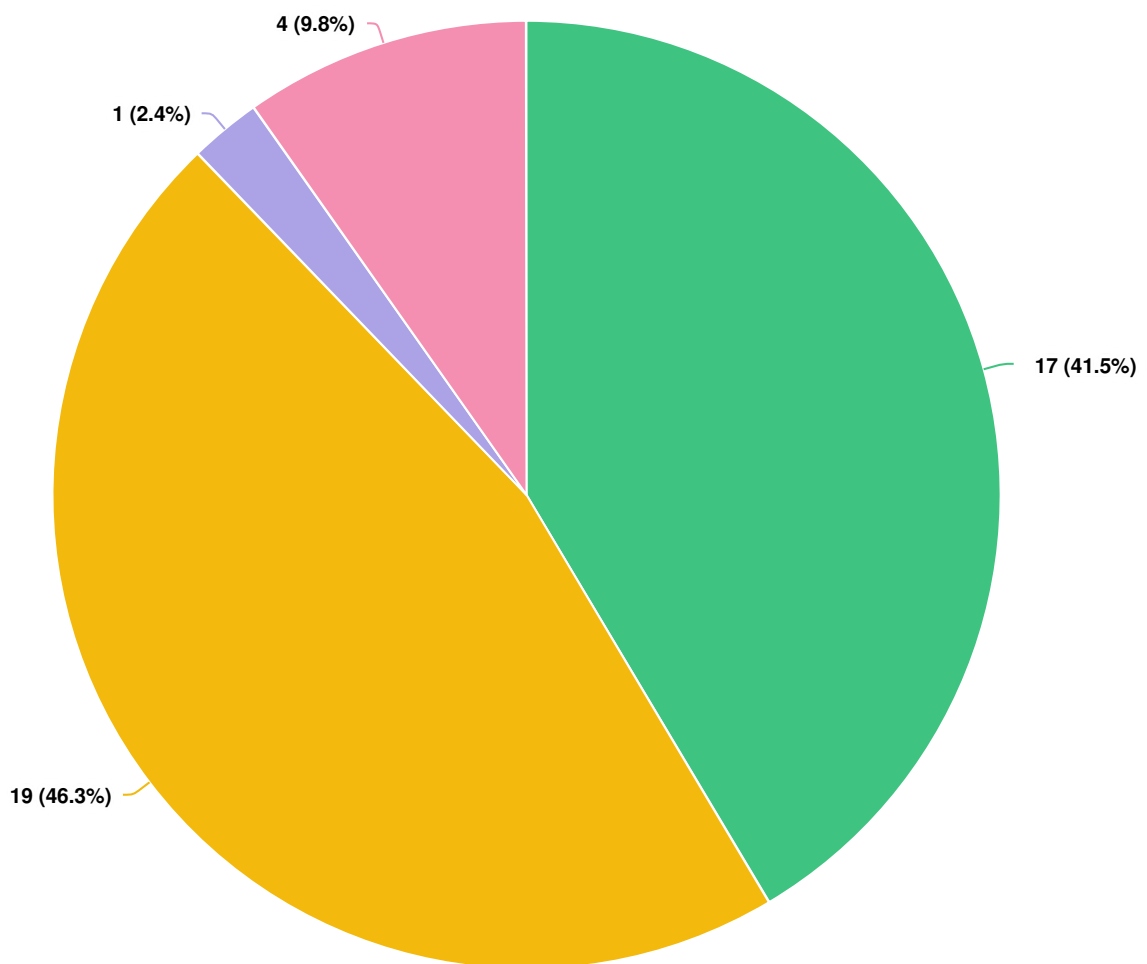
Anonymous

2/09/2024 09:20 AM

Optional question (7 response(s), 34 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q13 | In what capacity are you completing this survey?



Question options

- Other department or body
- Charity or voluntary organisation
- Mid Devon District Council licensee
- Mid Devon resident

Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q14 | Please specify.

Anonymous

1/29/2024 10:26 AM

Guide Dogs

Mandatory Question (1 response(s))

Question type: Single Line Question

Q15 | Please specify.

Anonymous

12/20/2023 01:52 PM

Licensing Employee - Test

Anonymous

1/18/2024 08:47 PM

Licenced trade in other area

Anonymous

1/29/2024 02:19 PM

Company director

Anonymous

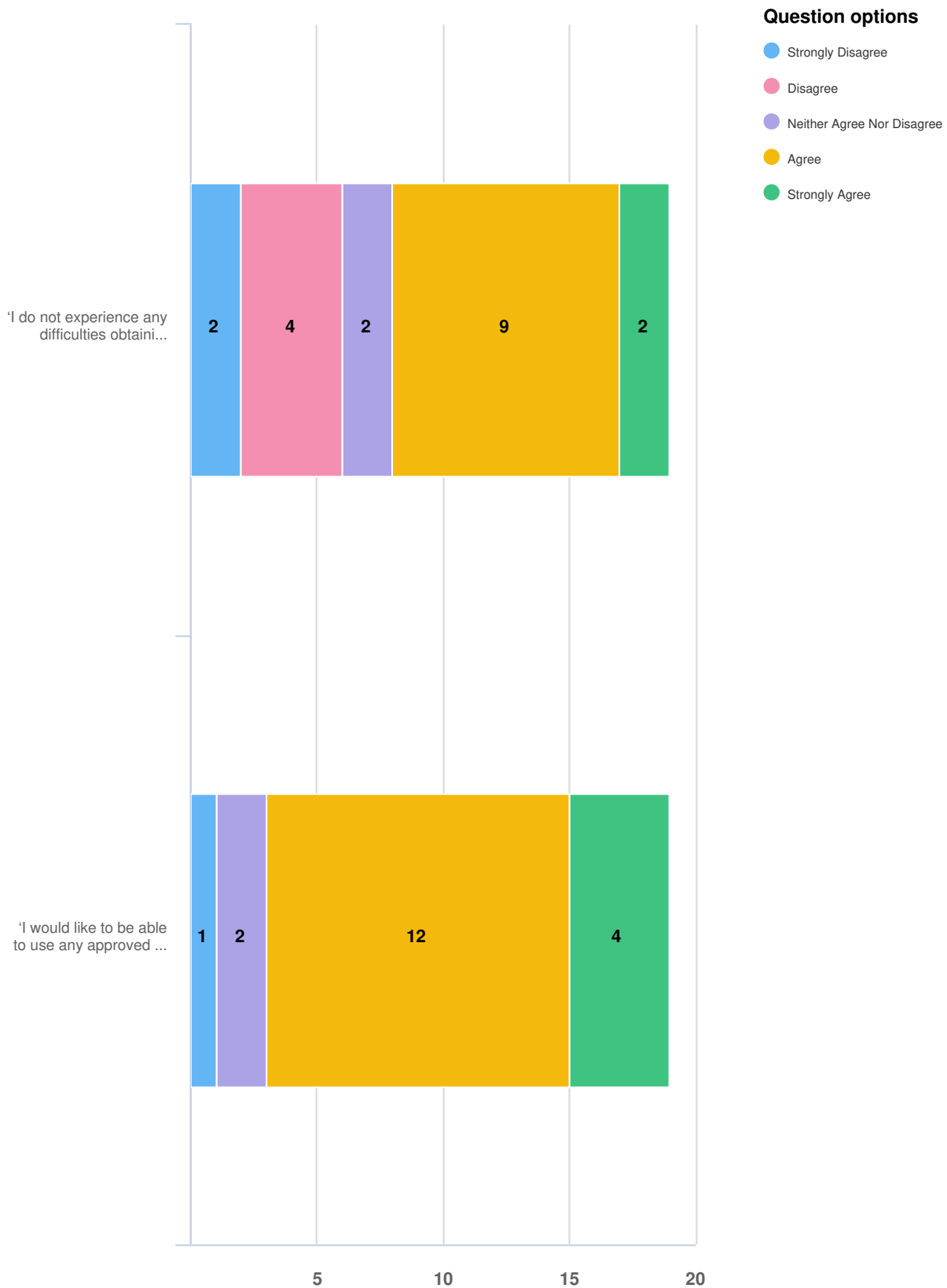
2/22/2024 10:33 AM

DVSA

Mandatory Question (4 response(s))

Question type: Single Line Question

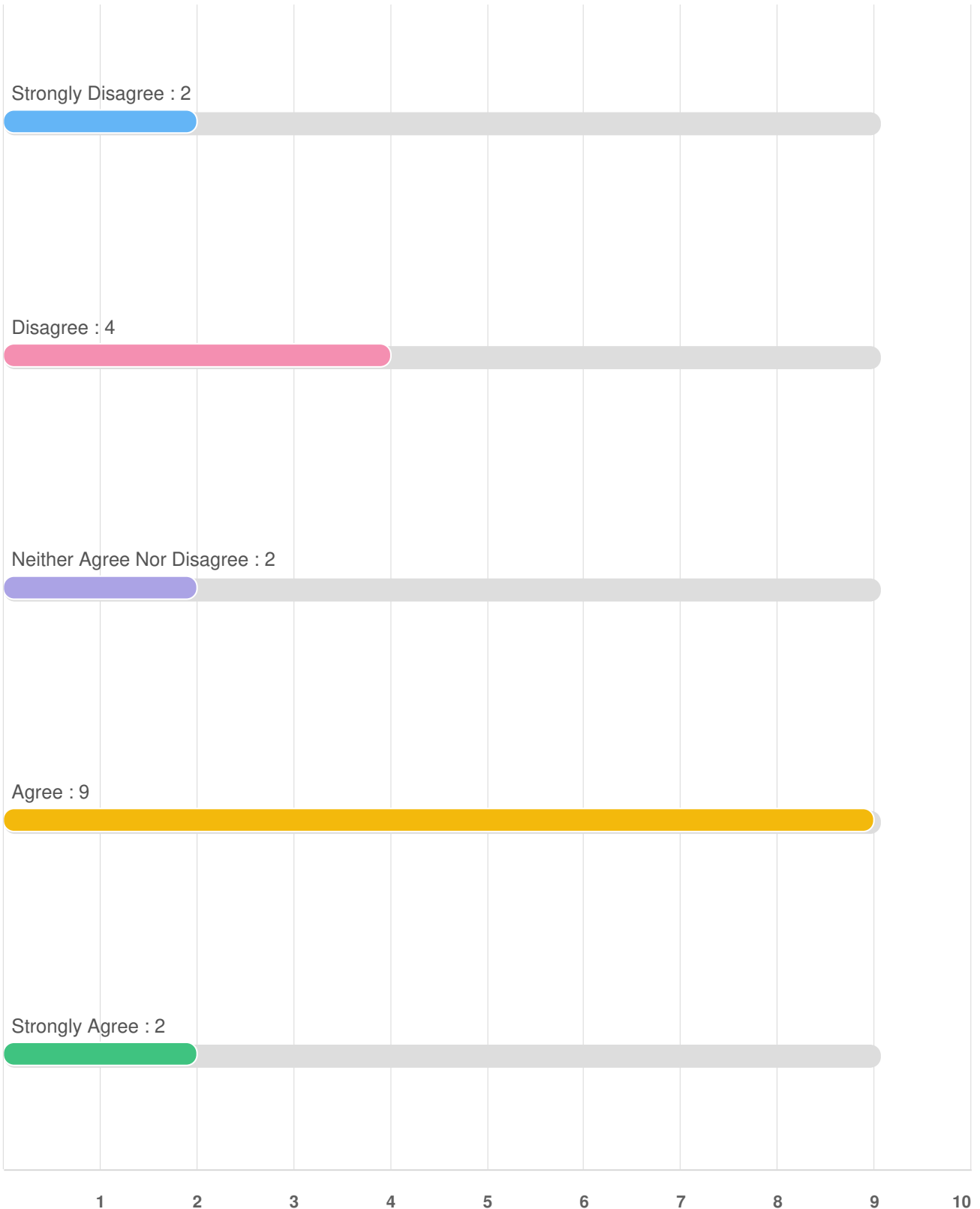
Q16 Medical Assessment Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below:



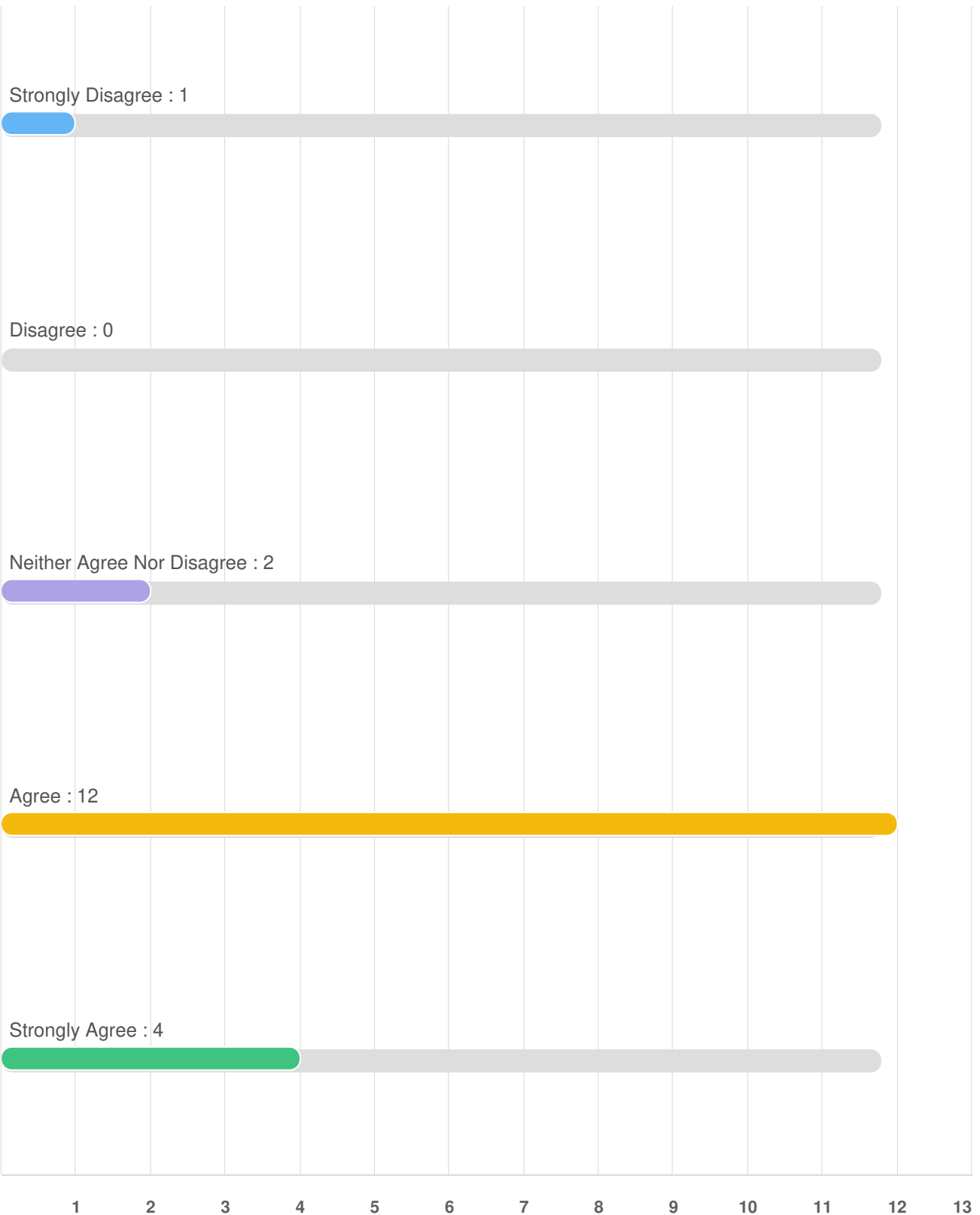
Mandatory Question (19 response(s))
Question type: Likert Question

Q16 | Medical Assessment Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below:

'I do not experience any difficulties obtaining a medical certificate from my own GP'.



'I would like to be able to use any approved medical provider who has access to my full medical history to issue my medical certificate and not be limited to my own GP'.



Council introduce a policy that requires vehicles met Euro 6 standard by 2026, what impact would that have you your licence?

Anonymous 1/15/2024 01:49 PM	None
Anonymous 1/15/2024 02:05 PM	Massively as would cost businesses a lot of money updating fleets.
Anonymous 1/15/2024 02:52 PM	G
Anonymous 1/15/2024 02:57 PM	None
Anonymous 1/15/2024 04:42 PM	All our vehicles are euro 6 compliant so this would have no negative impact.
Anonymous 1/15/2024 06:21 PM	Not sure
Anonymous 1/16/2024 06:58 AM	None.
Anonymous 1/16/2024 06:47 PM	None at all my vehicle is already euro 6
Anonymous 1/19/2024 03:50 AM	Don't know
Anonymous 1/19/2024 08:02 PM	None
Anonymous 1/26/2024 10:55 AM	I do not own a taxi
Anonymous 2/12/2024 09:10 AM	None
Anonymous 2/12/2024 04:02 PM	N/A

Anonymous

2/12/2024 08:20 PM

NONE

Anonymous

2/13/2024 11:05 AM

I dont own my taxi its my bosses responsibility

Anonymous

2/13/2024 07:14 PM

I am a part time driver , working for myself doing school runs and cannot afford to buy a zero emissions car.

Anonymous

2/19/2024 02:47 PM

I don't think it would have any impact on my licence.

Anonymous

2/19/2024 11:14 PM

100%

Anonymous

2/22/2024 12:45 PM

No impact at all

Mandatory Question (19 response(s))

Question type: Single Line Question

Q18 | Reducing Emissions From The Mid Devon Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Fleet If the Council introduce a policy that requires vehicles meet Euro 5 standards at renewal of licence by July 2024, what impact would that have on your licences?

Anonymous

1/15/2024 01:49 PM

None

Anonymous

1/15/2024 02:05 PM

Same cost businesses lots of money updating fleets.

Anonymous

1/15/2024 02:52 PM

Yes

Anonymous

1/15/2024 02:57 PM

None

Anonymous

1/15/2024 04:42 PM

All our vehicles are euro 5 compliant so this would have no negative impact.

Anonymous 1/15/2024 06:21 PM	No impact
Anonymous 1/16/2024 06:58 AM	None.
Anonymous 1/16/2024 06:47 PM	None
Anonymous 1/19/2024 03:50 AM	Don't know
Anonymous 1/19/2024 08:02 PM	None
Anonymous 1/26/2024 10:55 AM	I do not own a taxi
Anonymous 2/12/2024 09:10 AM	None
Anonymous 2/12/2024 04:02 PM	N/A
Anonymous 2/12/2024 08:20 PM	NONE
Anonymous 2/13/2024 11:05 AM	I dont own my taxi its my bosses responsibility
Anonymous 2/13/2024 07:14 PM	Same answer as above
Anonymous 2/19/2024 02:47 PM	We only have one vehicle on our fleet at this level of 'EURO 5' so it would likely mean we had to sell it and purchase a new vehicle.
Anonymous 2/19/2024 11:14 PM	50%

Anonymous

No impact at all

2/22/2024 12:45 PM

Mandatory Question (19 response(s))

Question type: Single Line Question

Q19 | Please provide any other feedback, comments or questions on any part of the policy.
(Please reference the section if you're providing feedback on a specific part of the document).

Anonymous

1/15/2024 02:05 PM

13, Medical assessments, It's currently very difficult for people to book medical at GP'S as they have long waiting lists plus they very often cancel appointments last minute.

Anonymous

1/15/2024 06:21 PM

Is all fine by me

Anonymous

1/16/2024 06:58 AM

There is too much "one size fits all" here. Mid Devon is very rural. Battery electric vehicles (BEV) are not viable due to their high cost and small ranges. If you want to encourage BEV, remove the rolling five year requirements for BEV. As their range increases and their costs come down there will be a natural migration. As it is, I cannot operate one because my vehicles average 300+ miles per day. Please, please do not over legislate for problems that aren't there. A light touch is all that is required. It would also be good if a regular meter rate rise was brought in. RPI each year for example. Leave the option for discounted fares in the Regulations. That way we operators aren't waiting 10 years for a pay rise.

Anonymous

1/17/2024 01:33 PM

As a resident , please dont over regulate the Taxi industry in Mid Devon and force drivers out of business

Anonymous

1/17/2024 03:39 PM

Speeding through Halberton by taxis is a problem.How can this be addressed by policies?

Anonymous

1/17/2024 05:10 PM

I read this with disgust. Decent people out there are trying to make a living in a already difficult economy, and I take taxis all the time. Never came across any problems, and I came to know many very good souls working hard out there. But by reading these NEW RULES AND REGULATIONS, it will only make life miserable and drivers will give up. After BREXIT, Britain's economy was left broken by the lack of hard workers whom left to go back home, the same could happen

to taxi drivers in Mid Devon. If you are not happy with a specific driver, than make the sanctions to one individual, not to all of them.

Anonymous

1/17/2024 06:44 PM

All vehicles should have Dash cam

Anonymous

1/18/2024 08:47 PM

Making draconian regulations encourages drivers to register in different areas. With lower standards . These vehicles will still work in your areas

Anonymous

1/19/2024 08:02 PM

I provide a car that is road worthy. The quality of roads are NOT worthy of my car, out of town. People book taxis more because of increasing road CLOSURES , road damage where they live transferring the loss to the unsuspecting taxi. Eye tests : The NHS says every 2 years is sufficient MDDC says every year is required after 65. Who knows best ?

Anonymous

1/26/2024 10:55 AM

I believe taxi industry is going through a very difficult period. Many operators are still badly affected after Covid restrictions and struggle now to cope with the raise of inflation and living cost. The tariff increase cannot cover increased expenses that any taxi driver has. Applying more restrictions to vehicles and extra expenses to drivers at this time when everybody is living from one month to another, is only going to affect taxi drivers and operators even more and jeopardize the local taxi business. I believe that all taxi drivers and operators want to have newer, cleaner and safer vehicles, they want to take pride in their job. For the moment, I believe it's appropriate to follow the national legislation and regulations on the industry.

Anonymous

1/28/2024 11:21 AM

We need Uber or Bolt taxis

Anonymous

1/29/2024 10:26 AM

Mid Devon Taxi & PHV Policy Consultation – Guide Dogs. Guide Dogs provides mobility services to increase the independence of people with sight loss in the UK. Alongside our mobility work we campaign to break down physical and legal barriers to enable people with sight loss to get around on their own terms. In Devon there are an estimated 35,900 people living with sight loss. Taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) and the door-to-door service they provide are essential for disabled people. They are particularly important for the independence of blind and partially sighted people, who are unable to drive, and often face barriers when using public transport. However, accessing taxis and PHVs can be a major challenge for assistance

dog owners. A 2022 Guide Dogs survey [1] found that 63% of respondents said they have been refused access to a taxi or PHV in the past 12 months. 7% said it had happened to them between six and 10 times. None of the respondents indicated that they were presented with an exemption certificate when they were refused, despite this being a criminal offence under the Equality Act 2010. Such access refusals can have a significant impact on assistance dog owners' lives, leading to feelings of anger and embarrassment and a loss of confidence and independence, which can often lead to isolation and poor mental health. Key recommendations:

- Highlighting the law: The policy should clearly state that all drivers are under a duty to carry, free of charge, any assistance dog. We advise specifically highlighting within the policy that this is a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2010 and failure to do so is a criminal offence.
- Disability equality training: All drivers should be required to undertake disability equality training.
- Test for medical exemption certificate: The policy should specify state that a medical exemption certificate for carrying assistance dogs will only be issued when authorised by a medical practitioner and accompanied by medical evidence, such as a blood test, a skin prick test or clinical history.
- Tactile medical exemption certificates: The medical exemption certificates should be accompanied by features distinguishable to vision-impaired passengers, such as an embossed or raised 'E'.
- Zero tolerance: The policy should state that Mid Devon District Council will use its best endeavours to investigate all reported violations of the Equality Act 2010 in a timely manner with a view to pursuing a conviction.
- Mystery shopping: The policy should state that Mid Devon District Council will work together in conjunction with assistance dog owners to ensure that licensing requirements are being complied with by various means such as, but not limited to, test purchases.

Highlighting obligations under Equality Act 2010 in respect of Assistance Dogs Guide Dogs welcome the inclusion within the draft policy of sections 11.12 & 11.13; however, we advise that the policy should explicitly specify that all drivers have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to carry, free of charge, any assistance dog and failure to do so is a criminal offence. The consequences of delayed travel combined with the emotional impact of facing discrimination and confrontation when trying to carry out everyday activities take a significant toll on assistance dog owners. Apart from feelings of anger and embarrassment, refusals can undermine the independence that assistance dogs bring to their owners. Assistance dog owners also reported that the stress of refusals has had a detrimental impact on their mental health and on whether they feel able to leave the house. This also has a negative impact on their ability to access work and other opportunities. As guide dog owners report:

- "Each refusal is crushing, confidence shattering, rejecting, and traumatic. I always feel that I don't want to go out after - but work dictates I must." Guide dog owner, Stevenage

"I was left on my own at the side of the road in the dark. I am deaf and unable to phone for help and it made me feel very vulnerable. It makes me feel afraid to go out." Assistance dog owner • "I was very upset, it was dark, raining and 10pm at night. I was scared. I avoid evening invites, as I worry about getting home. I lose out on the chance of socialising with friends, which is bad, as I have no family." Guide dog owner, Rochester • "I used to have a very tough two-hour commute to work. The taxi part of the journey was the shortest bit travel wise, but it always ended up being the bit that held me up the most because I was having to spend time facing drivers who wouldn't take me with my dog. ... It's good that my contract was flexi hours otherwise I'm sure I would have been sacked for being late all the time – it happened so often." Guide dog owner, Daventry Further, guide dog owners have expressed concern of access refusals which take the form of drivers not stopping the car when they see the dog. We recommend ensuring that this is clearly identified as an illegal access refusal. Disability equality training Guide Dogs welcome the inclusion within the draft policy of sections 11.5 & 14.2. Drivers who refuse to carry an assistance dog are committing a criminal offence under the Equality Act 2010. A Guide Dogs survey found that many taxi drivers are unaware of their legal obligations and the impact refusals have on assistance dog owners. The best way to address this is through disability equality (as opposed to disability awareness) training for all taxi and PHV drivers. Therefore, to help reduce the number of access refusals, it is important that drivers know their legal obligations and how to best offer assistance to their customers with vision impairments, including those travelling with a guide dog. The new Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022 [2] amends the Equality Act 2010 to place duties on taxi drivers and PHV drivers and operators, so any disabled person has specific rights and protections to be transported and receive assistance when using a taxi or PHV without being charged extra. As part of the amendments, taxi and PHV drivers could face fines of up to £1,000 if they fail to provide reasonable mobility assistance to disabled passengers taking a pre-booked vehicle. We recommend that this training, as well as highlighting a driver's legal obligations and disabled people's rights, should focus on the concept of people being disabled by society's barriers and attitudes. It should highlight the role an organisation and individuals play in the removal of those barriers, while also including awareness elements such as customer care, etiquette, and appropriate communication. Many of the positive experiences disabled people report when using taxis and PHVs come about following disability equality training. Councils that have introduced disability equality training report very positive results with fewer refusals and drivers feeling more confident in assisting passengers with disabilities. Medical exemption certificates The proposed policy does not contain any information on the process of obtaining a medical exemption certificate, which is the only

circumstance when a driver is legally exempt from their obligation to carry assistance dogs. We believe the policy should specify that in order to apply for a medical exemption certificate from carrying assistance dogs, this must be authorised by a medical practitioner and accompanied by medical evidence which demonstrates the driver's genuine medical condition that is aggravated by exposure to dogs, such as a blood test, a skin prick test or clinical history. Further, it is often difficult for vision-impaired passengers to identify the validity of exemption certificates. Currently, it is not permissible for licensing authorities to issue exemption certificates which incorporate tactile features, as this would alter the certificate's prescribed form and render it invalid. We therefore recommend that Mid Devon District Council issues exemption certificates that are accompanied by features distinguishable to vision-impaired passengers, such as an embossed or raised 'E' and a braille marker to accommodate both braille readers and non-braille readers.

Enforcement While our most recent survey shows that a substantial percentage of assistance dog owners have been refused access over a one-year period, many of these incidents are not reported. Indeed, research in 2019 found that only 8% of owners who had been refused access had taken legal action which resulted in prosecution. In part, the underreporting is due to challenges of reporting, especially for people with sight loss. However, it is also due to disappointment at the lack of action taken following an access refusal and the low fines issued. Considering the significant impact an access refusal can have on assistance dog owners and their communities, it is important that assistance dog owners know that all cases of access refusals are viewed very seriously and are investigated. It is a criminal offence for any operator or driver to refuse to carry assistance dogs. On conviction for such an offence, drivers can be fined up to £1,000. As failure to carry an assistance dog is a criminal offence, we recommend a zero-tolerance approach to enforcement of the Equality Act 2010. We therefore recommend that it is clearly stated that failure to carry an assistance dog without the requisite medical exemption certificate will result in immediate suspension or revocation of a driver's license. Further, the current conditions do not appear to contain any reference to prosecution of drivers who refuse a passenger. We also recommend a zero-tolerance approach to enforcement of the Equality Act 2010 in seeking prosecutions and therefore recommend that Mid Devon District Council states it will use its best endeavours to investigate all reported violations of the Equality Act 2010 in a timely manner, with a view to pursuing a conviction. We also recommend that Mid Devon District Council works together in conjunction with assistance dog owners to ensure that licensing requirements are being complied with by various means such as, but not limited to, test purchases. [1].

<https://gd-prod.azureedge.net/-/media/project/guidedogs/guidedogsdotorg/files/how-you-can-help/campaigning/guide-dogs-access-report-2022.pdf> [2].

Anonymous

1/29/2024 02:19 PM

The government recently spent a lot of money on doing a best practice document for local authorities to follow. It would be nice if the work and effort that went into this document was taken into account

Anonymous

2/12/2024 08:20 PM

IT SEEMS LIKE YOU ARE JUST TRYING TO PROVIDE MORE COSTS AND HASSLE THAN IS REQUIRED

Anonymous

2/13/2024 07:14 PM

Will the council be offering any help or incentives to help with any of these changes that are being proposed . As like others I am impacted by the cost of living crisis and just feel that putting more hurdles in the way of what is already a costly process of keeping a taxi business going could put more independent taxi drivers out of business as it wouldn't be viable .

Anonymous

2/19/2024 02:47 PM

I do think there should be more thought put into ensuring the licence holders fully understand their obligations and responsibilities as there is a lot to remember regarding the terms and conditions of your licence. Medicals also seem to be a grey area and whilst I don't agree with a second opinion (I think one medically qualified opinion is fine) I do think there are issues that could impact a driver's ability to perform their job safely and well that aren't picked up on via current medical testing e.g. mental health issues

Anonymous

2/22/2024 12:45 PM

An eye test is already a part of the medical we have to take

Anonymous

3/27/2024 11:27 AM

more disability transport needed attitude of drivers opening doors for the blind All taxis to be electric booking staff to have checks done more information needed on breaking rules use of own equipment more cover of blind parking and help

Optional question (18 response(s), 23 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Equality Impact Assessment

Purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment process:

The Equality Act (2010) introduced the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) requiring public bodies to give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Consideration must be given to the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act (2010). Assessments should consider relevant evidence relating to persons with protected characteristics in relation to assessments of potential impact.

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that policies, functions, plans or decisions (hereafter referred to as 'policy/ decision') do not create unnecessary barriers for people protected under the Act. Where negative impacts are identified these should be eliminated or minimised, and opportunities for positive impact should be maximised. An EIA is not required for a decision in relation to an individual.

Screening is a short exercise to determine whether a policy/ decision is relevant to equalities, and if so, whether a full EIA should be conducted.

Section 1: Equality Impact Assessment Screening

<u>Basic Details</u>	
Title and description of the policy/ decision:	Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy
Job title of the person(s) undertaking the assessment:	Team Leader (Commercial)
Council service:	Public Health and Housing Options
Date of assessment:	16 th May 2024

What are the aims, purposes, objectives and proposed outcomes of the policy/ decision?
<p>The main objective of the policy is to protect the public who may be at risk of harm from the activities associated with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing regime.</p> <p>Specific outcomes are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the organisation delivers a consistent and fair approach to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licensing decision making • provide a clear and transparent set of criteria for potential applicants and licence holders. • provide a standard for enforcement, including a penalty point scheme, to hold to account where standards are not met/maintained.

<u>Further Details</u>	
Who may be affected by the policy/ decision?	Licensee Service users
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of the policy/ decision? E.g. a consultation exercise	<p>12 week consultation open to everyone on the Lets Talk Mid Devon platform, and a directed consultation with key stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • face-to-face workshop for Licensees • face-to-face workshop with Regulatory committee • Devon and Cornwall Constabulary • Devon County Council • Community Safety Partnership • Town and Parish Councils within Mid Devon • Department for Transport • Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency • Age UK
Will there be scope for prompt, independent reviews and appeals against decisions arising from the policy/ decision?	There are appeal mechanisms built in such as appeal of a penalty point issue (internal) and appeal to Magistrate Court following decision of the Regulatory Sub-Committee

To which part(s) of the Public Sector Equality Duties is the policy/ decision relevant:	Yes	No	Details
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy includes requirements of the Equality Act 2010 which the authority has a legal obligation to enforce. Ensuring equal access to all service users and action to be taken against unlawful discrimination against service users.
2. Advance equality of opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3. Foster good relations between different groups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Through enhanced safeguarding training requirements and disability awareness training/assessment, we can help to break down barriers between service users within a vulnerable group and Licensees.

Which of the protected characteristics is the policy/ decision relevant to?

Tick and briefly describe any likely equalities impact (positive, negative, or neutral)

Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Comments
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is a legal requirement that a Licensed driver must have held a valid driver's licences for 12 months, therefore restricting by age who can apply. Additionally there are enhanced medical requirements (more frequent) for licensees over 65 years of age, due to the safety issue of age related ill health and driving.
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Investigation and enforcement against licensees who contravene Equality Act 2012. Requirement for disability awareness assessment and/or training built into the Licensing process.
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Comments
Pregnancy/ maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Marriage and Civil partnership*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

*Applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination.

Decision by Corporate Manager to recommend this policy/ decision for an Equality Impact Assessment?

Yes/ No

If the answer is “Yes”, please continue to the Section 2 and complete the Equality Impact Assessment. If the answer is “No”, please give a brief reason here.

EIA Screening Complete

Section 2: Equality Impact Assessment

Evidence and Consultation

What existing sources of information have you gathered to help identify how people covered by the protected characteristics may be affected by this policy/ decision? E.g. consultations, national or local data and/or research, complaints or customer feedback. Please identify any gaps in the available information that might make it difficult to form an opinion about the effect of the policy on different groups.

Please complete this table for all the Protected Characteristics. If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be justified or where possible mitigated either to reduce or remove them. (Please add rows where needed)

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impacts/ Issues Identified/ Opportunities identified	Mitigation required (action) or Justification	Lead Officer and target completion date	What is the expected outcome from the action?
Sex				
Age				
Disability				
Religion or Belief				
Race				
Sexual Orientation				
Gender Reassignment				

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impacts/ Issues Identified/ Opportunities identified	Mitigation required (action) or Justification	Lead Officer and target completion date	What is the expected outcome from the action?
Pregnancy/ maternity				
Marriage and civil partnership*				

*(Applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination)

Please provide details of arrangements to monitor and review the policy/ decision and any mitigating actions or actions to promote equality:

Please state where the EIA will be published (e.g. on the Mid Devon District Council website):

=====

Equality Impact Assessment Sign off

For completion by Corporate Manager

Are you prepared to agree and sign off the EIA?

Yes **No**

If "No", provide details of why and next steps:

Name:

Job Title:

Date:



Report for: Regulatory Committee

Date of Meeting:	28 June 2024
Subject:	LICENSING UPDATE REPORT
Cabinet Member:	David Wulff, Cabinet Member for Quality (Cost) of Living, Equalities and Public Health
Responsible Officer:	Simon Newcombe – Head of Housing and Health
Exempt:	No
Wards Affected:	All wards
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To provide the Committee with an overview of the regulatory activity undertaken by the Licensing Team as applicable to the Regulatory Committee.

Recommendation(s):

- 1. That the Committee note the contents of the report**

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report provides an overview of the activity carried out by the Licensing Team, during the second half of 2023/24 in respect of the following:

- Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing;
- animal licences such as animal boarding, pet shops, riding establishments and dangerous wild animals;
- caravan sites;
- scrap metal activities; and
- the registration of acupuncturists, tattooists etc.

2 Service Delivery updates

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire

- 2.1 A three month consultation on the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy took place between January and April 2024. A separate full report considering the responses and subsequent changes to the policy is being presented to Committee. The consultation included a face to face engagement session with Licensees, attended by the Chair of Regulatory Committee. This was a positive and engaging session and we have had requests from the trade to repeat the opportunity.
- 2.2 The Department for Transport published revised Best Practice Guidance for Taxis and Public Hire Vehicle Licensing, which has been considered through the Policy review.
- 2.3 The Government launched its new [Disability Action Plan](#) including a commitment to work with representatives from the guide dog and assistance animals sectors to improve access. The updated Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) best practice guidance underlines that councils must take action against drivers who discriminate against disabled people, including assistance dog owners, bringing prosecutions and suspending or revoking licences where required.
- 2.4 During the second half of 2023/24 the Team dealt with Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing applications as detailed below - () shows the variance on past half year:

	Total number of licences as 31/03/2024	Number of new applications and renewals processed between 1/10/2023 – 31/03/2024	Number of cancelled or surrendered licenses between 1/10/2023 – 31/03/2024
Hackney Carriage Vehicle licence	66 (+7.6%)	30	0
Private Hire Vehicle licence	68 (+6%)	37	0
Private Hire Operator licence	17 (+6%)	3	0
Combined Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver licence	146 (+8%)	27	1 x revoke 1 x suspended

- 2.5 51 Taxi inspections were carried out in the second half of 2023/24.

Animal Welfare

- 2.6 The Team are responsible for licencing animal related establishments. This can range from dog breeding through to zoos. There are 44 animal related licenses in total that relate to the following activities - () variance since last report:

Type of activity	Number of licences
Cat/dog boarding	12 (no change)
Home boarding	6 (no change)
Day care	3 (+1)
Dog breeding	15 (+2)
Hiring out horses	4 (no change)
Pet shops	3 (no change)
Exhibition of animals	1 (no change)
Dangerous wild animals	1 (+1)

- 2.7 In the second half of 2023/24 the team processed 13 new and/or renewal applications which included an inspection of the establishment to check animal welfare and adherence to licence conditions.
- 2.8 Inspections of dog breeding establishments and horse riding establishments are delivered in conjunction with a veterinary surgeon, who looks at the condition, welfare and suitability of the animals.
- 2.9 When complaints or requests for variations are received about licenced animal premises, an inspection may be carried out to check compliance with the conditions of the licence. 7 visits involving 4 premises were carried out in the second half of 2023/2024 to investigate and follow up on complaints.
- 2.10 One suspension notice was served on a licenced dog breeder, due to non-compliance with licence conditions. The Licensee took steps to remedy the non-compliances and the suspension notice was subsequently lifted.
- 2.11 The Licensing Officer is currently working through a period of experiential learning to achieve the Level 3 Certificate for Animal Inspectors qualification. This will provide us with improved flexibility and resilience to deliver these inspections in-house in the future.

Mobile Homes and Caravan sites

- 2.12 There are 45 sites across Mid Devon, 30 of which are touring sites.
- 2.13 The public register for fit and proper persons is available [here](#), there are currently 3 people on the register.

Specified beauty treatments

- 2.14 These are covered by the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, including tattooing, piercing, electrolysis and acupuncture. Officers from Licensing work closely with officers from the Food and Health and Safety team

to administer these licences. This is due to the risks associated with these activities and the need for health and safety and infectious disease considerations.

2.15 Total figures for premises and personal registrations in place across the District, including a breakdown of those issued in the first half of 2023/24.

	Total as 31/03/2024	New from 1/10/2023 – 31/03/2024
Acupuncture premises	19	2
Acupuncture personal	17	3
Piercing premises	30	0
Piercing personal	14	2
Micro needling Premises	1	0
Micro needling Personal	1	0
Electrolysis premises	10	0
Electrolysis personal	1	0
Tattooing premises	29	0
Tattooing personal	30	0
Total	152	7

2.16 Once issued a registration for beauty treatments, both premises and personal, have no expiry date. Over the past 12 months, Licensing Assistants have carried out a piece of work to ensure historic data held on the database and also in paper files is accurate and up to date, this has resulted in a number of registrations being inactivated.

2.17 No further update is available at this time following the consultation on the licensing of non-surgical cosmetic procedures in England that closed in October 2023.

2.18 Under the proposed scheme, which will be operated by local authorities in England, practitioners will need to be licensed to perform specific procedures, and the premises from which they operate will also need to be licensed. It is likely that there will be a significant impact on the service when the new licensing framework is rolled out.

Scrap metal

2.19 There are 4 active site licenses for scrap metal and 8 mobile scrap metal collectors licences in place across the District.

3 Hearings and Enforcement

3.1 Three Regulatory Sub-committee hearings were conducted in the second half of 2023/24:

- Consideration of a licenced driver remaining fit and proper to hold said licence. The outcome of the hearing was that the licence was revoked.
- Consideration of a new vehicle application, for a vehicle that was outside of the policy requirement for new vehicles to be a maximum of 5 years old at the time of first licence. The outcome of the hearing was that the licence was granted.
- Consideration of a new driver application, to determine if the applicant is fit and proper for the purposes of being issued a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver licence. The outcome of the hearing was that the licence was not granted.

Financial Implications: All licences for the areas mentioned above have a charge associated with them. As opposed to licensing functions that come under Licensing Act 2003/Gambling Act 2005 (Licensing Committee), these charges are set locally and reviewed on an annual basis. In some cases these are subject to statutory consultation processes. These must all be calculated based on the resource required to meet statutory obligations in issuing the license and regulating the licenced activity on a non-profit basis. The income from the licences is therefore used to offset the running of the Service. The Service is not self-funding overall as some of the fees are set at a national level (Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005) and therefore do not fully cover costs but makes a significant contribution towards its costs within the general fund.

Legal Implications: There are various regulations that govern the range of applications administered by the Licensing Team. These detail a range of duties and statutory deadlines, as well as policy and procedural requirements.

Risk Assessment: Provision of the licensing service is statutory obligation. If resources for the Team are not available there is a risk that the Council is unable to meet its statutory duties in relation to licensed activities. This would put the health and safety of residents at risk if they accessed a service that did not meet licensing standards. This is a particular concern in respect of taxis and the beauty industry. Animal welfare is also at risk if the Council was unable to conduct regular checks of these establishments.

Impact on Climate Change: There is no direct impact on climate change as a result of this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment: An equality impact assessment is not required in respect of this update report.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: This report links directly to the Licensing Authority functions of the Council with the primary aim of protecting public safety and ensuring the well-being of our community and licensed service users. It therefore contributes to the priority of Community, People and Equalities within the Corporate Plan.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 19 June 2024

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 19 June 2024

Chief Officer: Simon Newcombe

Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director

Date: 19 June 2023

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 19 June 2024

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

Name: Harriet Said - Commercial Team Leader, Public Health and Housing Options

Email: hsaid@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 244603

Name: Tanya Wenham - Operations Manager for Public Health and Housing Options

Email: twenham@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 244610

Background papers:

The Department for Transport Best practice guidance for Taxis and Private Hire vehicle Licensing [Taxi and private hire vehicle: best practice guidance to assist licensing authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100000/taxi_and_private_hire_vehicle_best_practice_guidance_to_assist_licensing_authorities_-_gov.uk.pdf)

Disability Action Plan [Disability Action Plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100000/disability_action_plan_-_gov.uk.pdf)