

Taxi Policy Survey

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

22 May 2023 - 15 April 2024

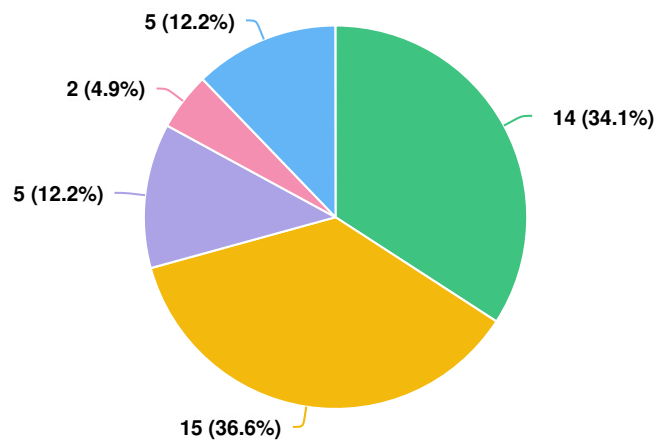
PROJECT NAME:

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...

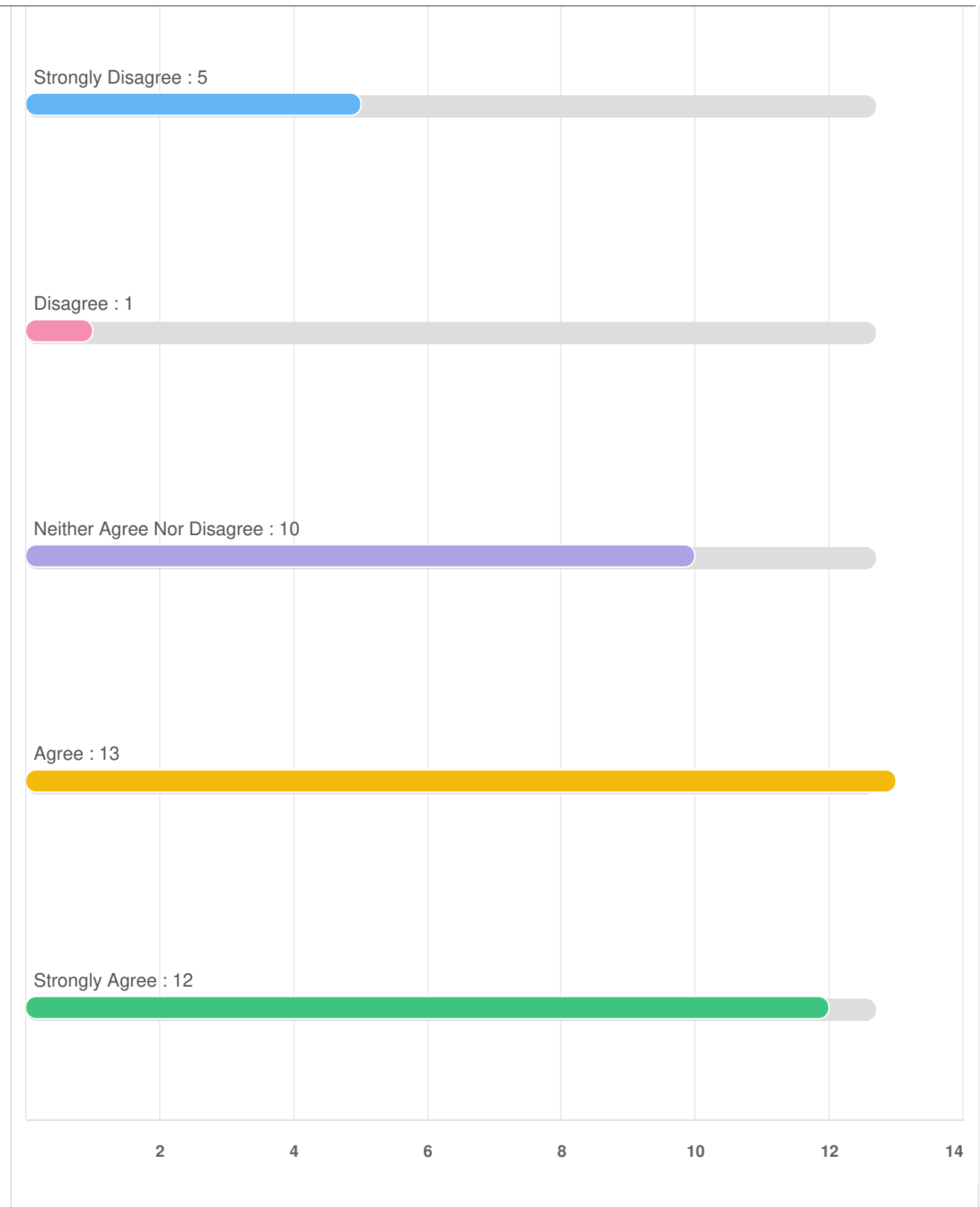


Mandatory Question (41 response(s))

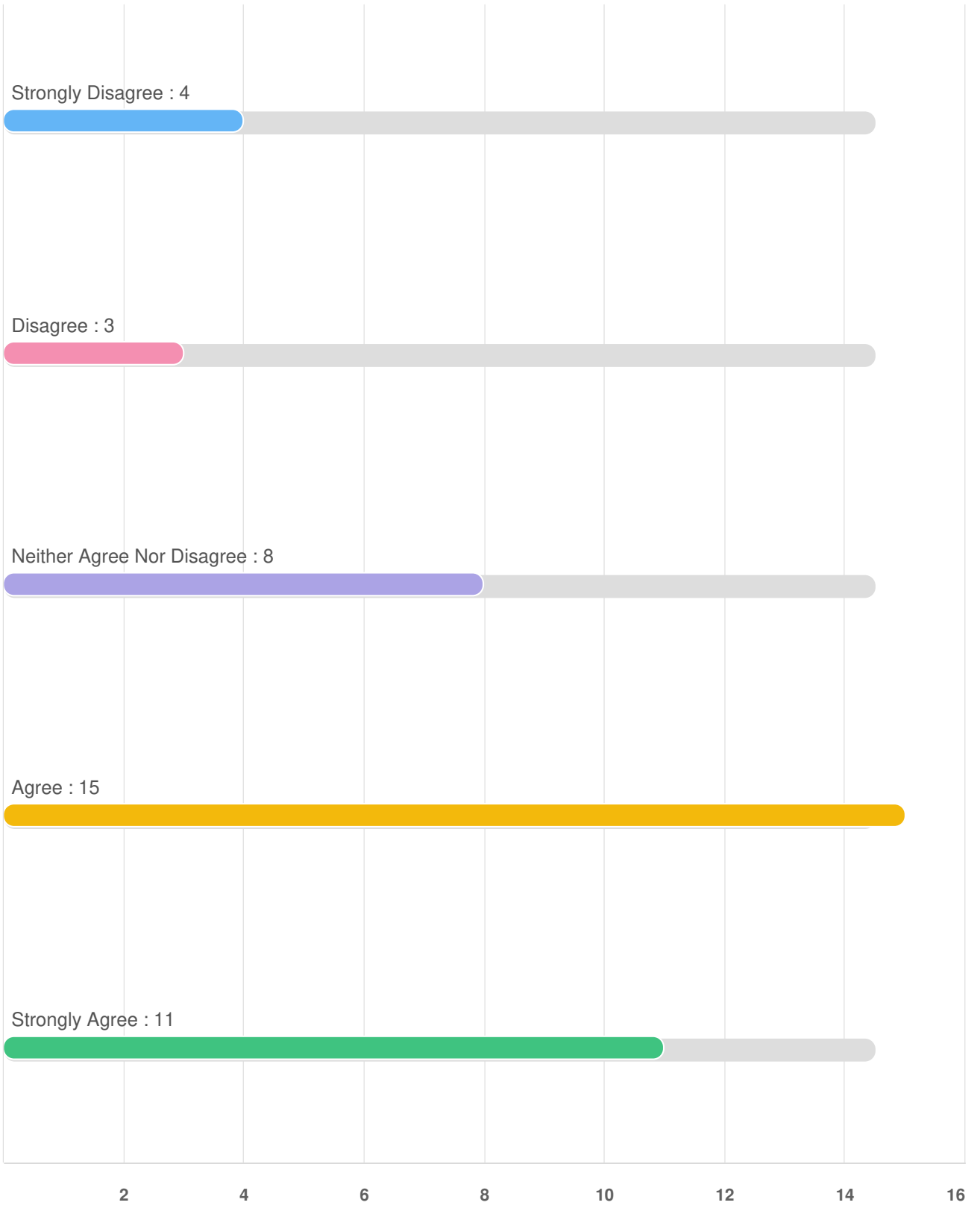
Question type: Likert Question

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...

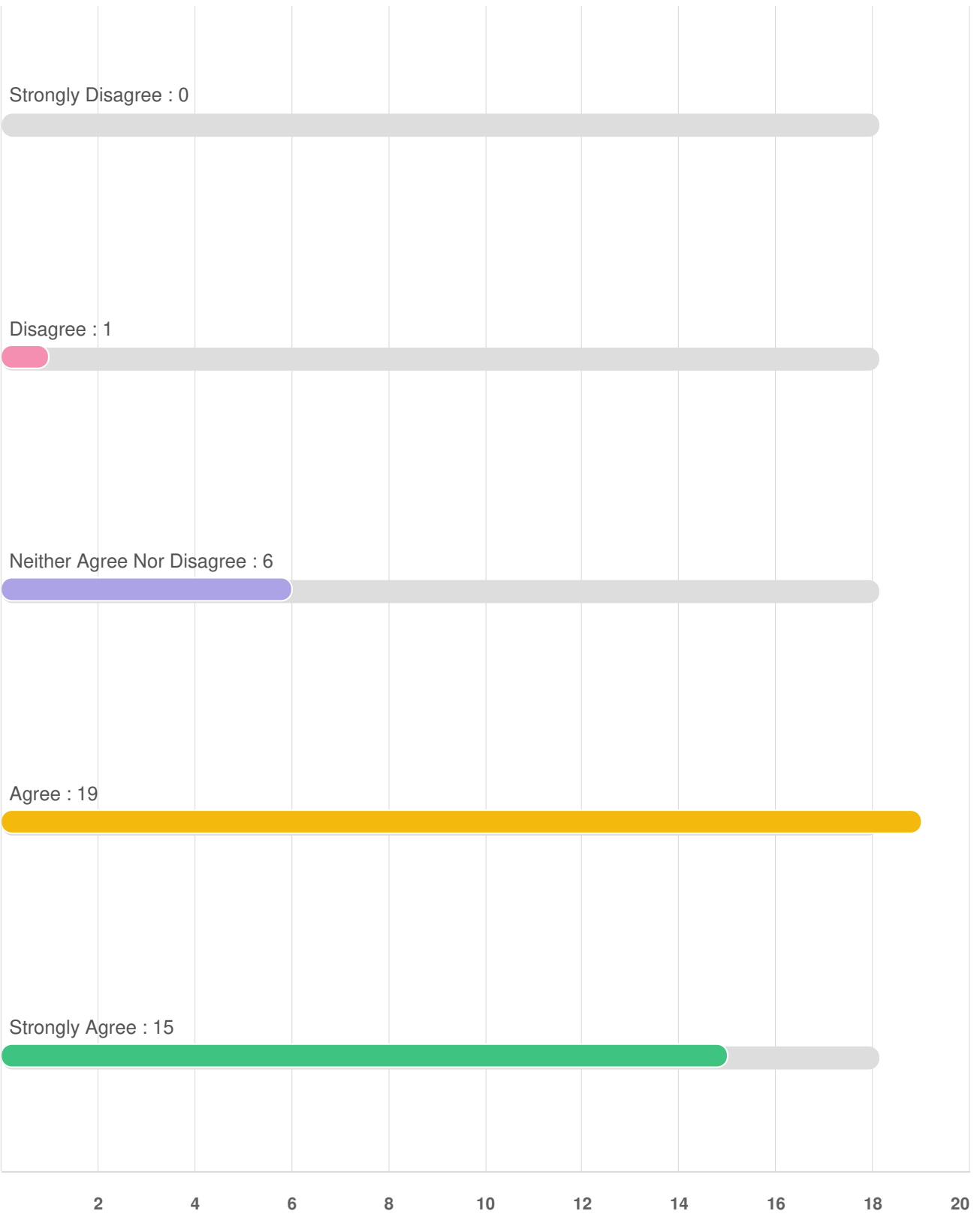
The introduction of a penalty points scheme will help protect the public.



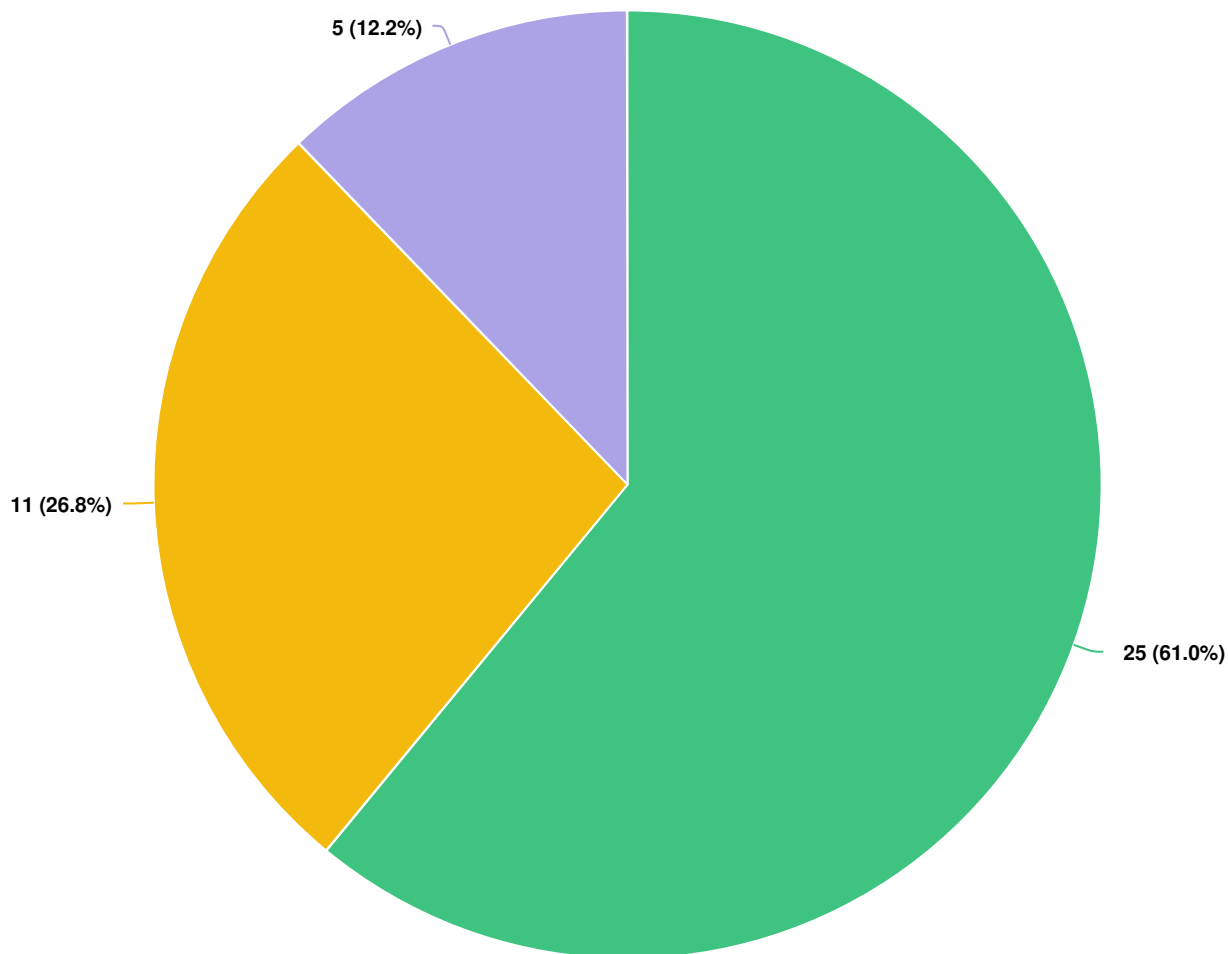
A penalty points scheme will help to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Council Tax and Private Hire vehicle policy.



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

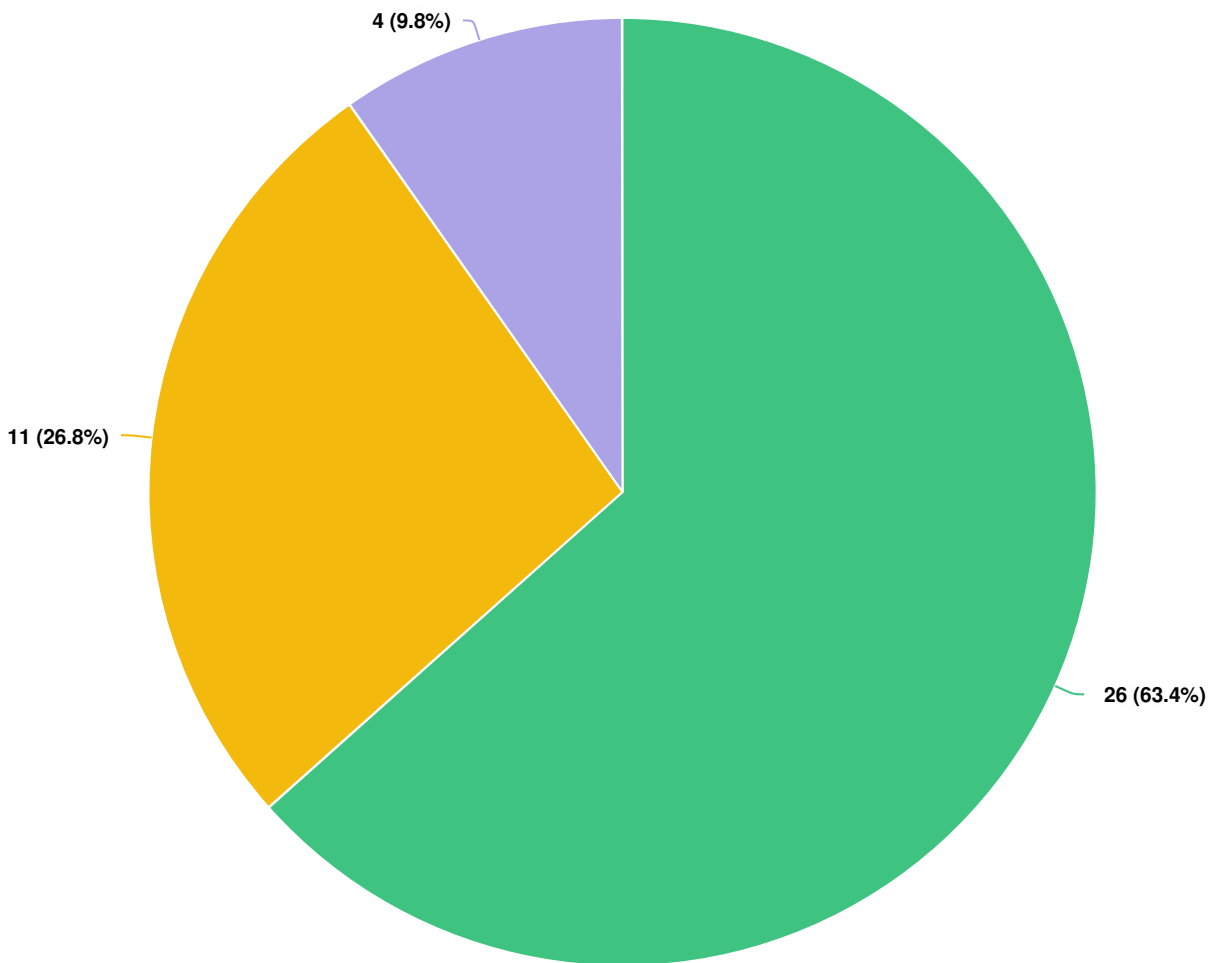
2/12/2024 08:20 PM

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...

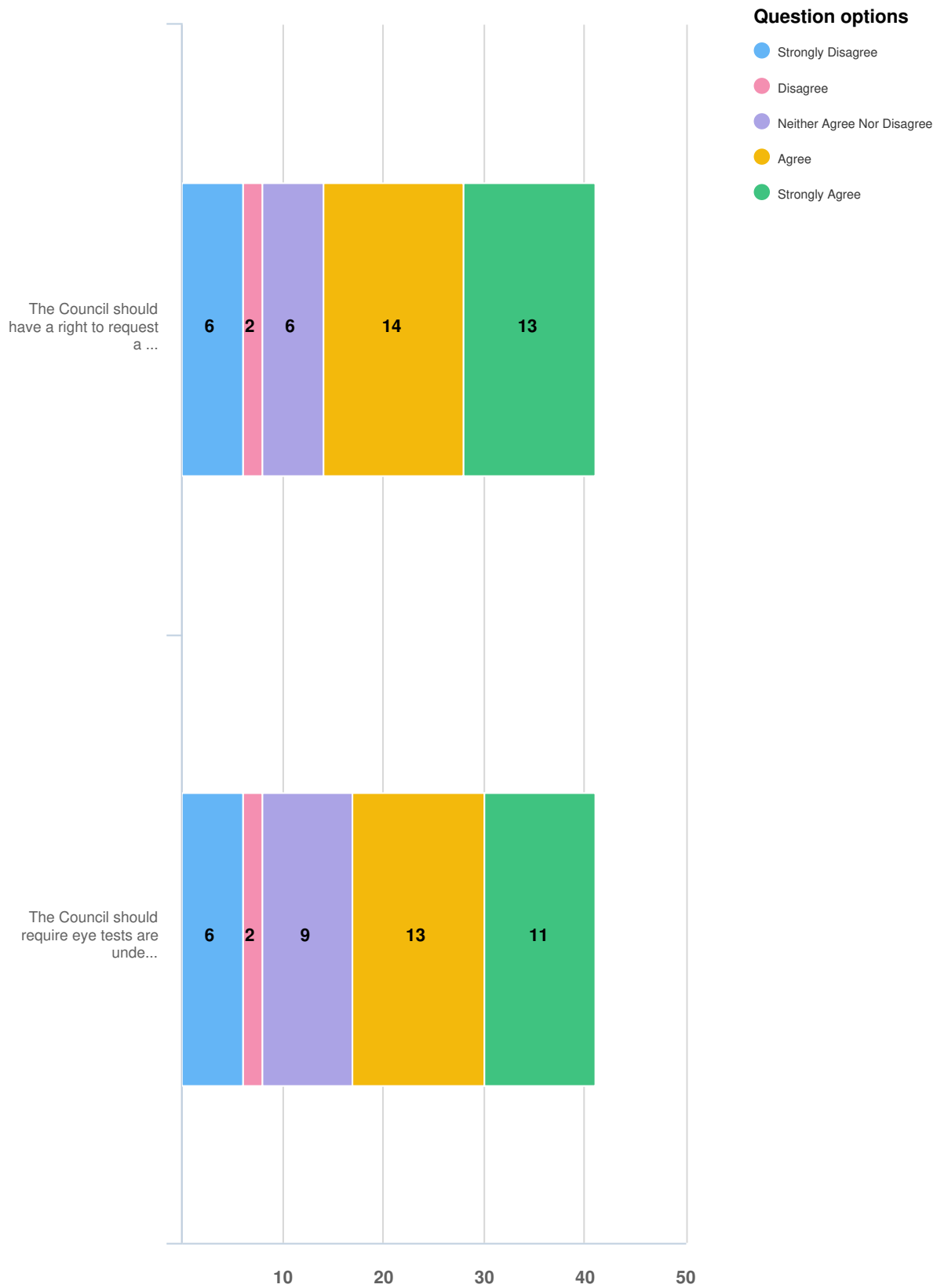


Question options

- 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

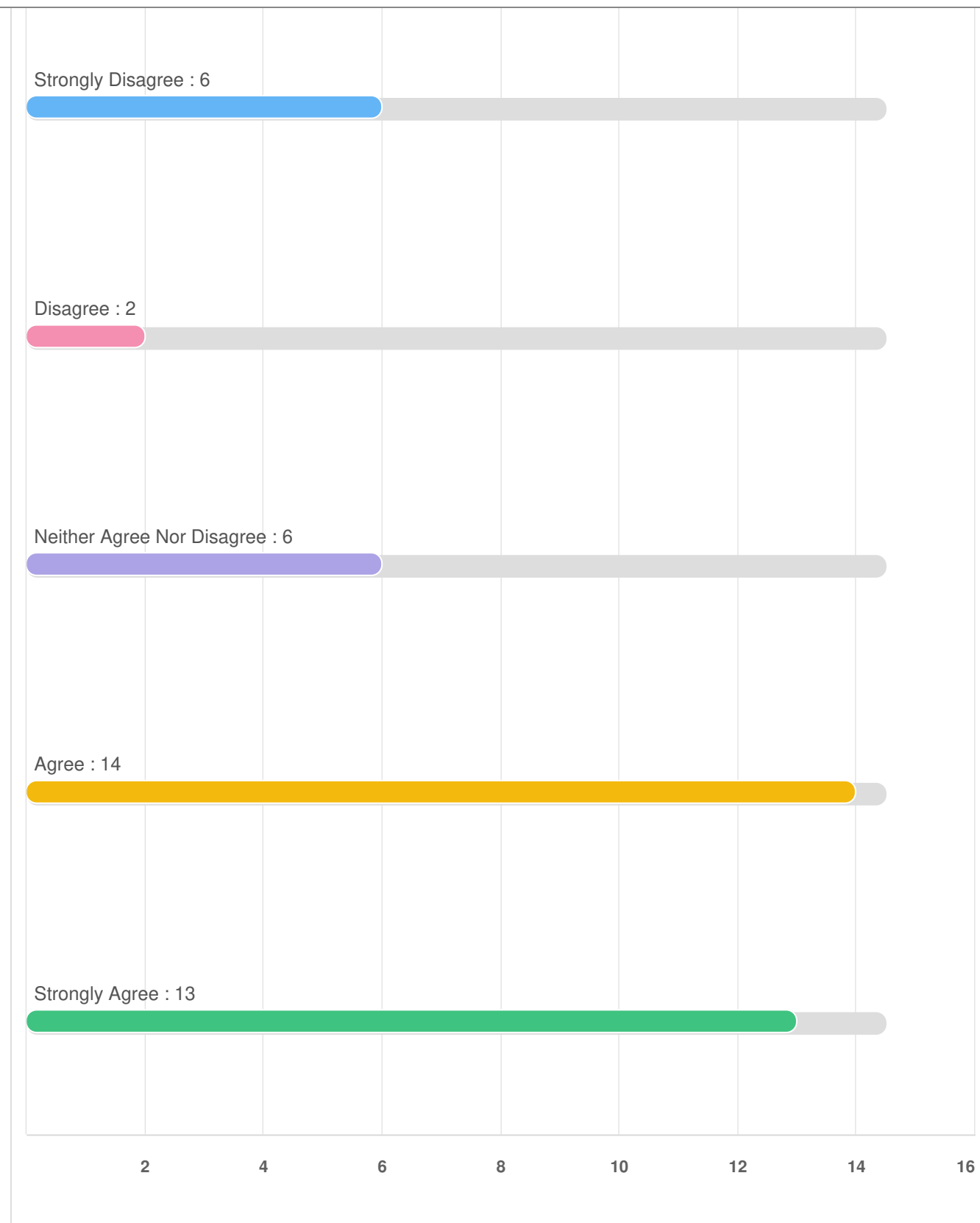
Q6 Medical Assessment Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below:



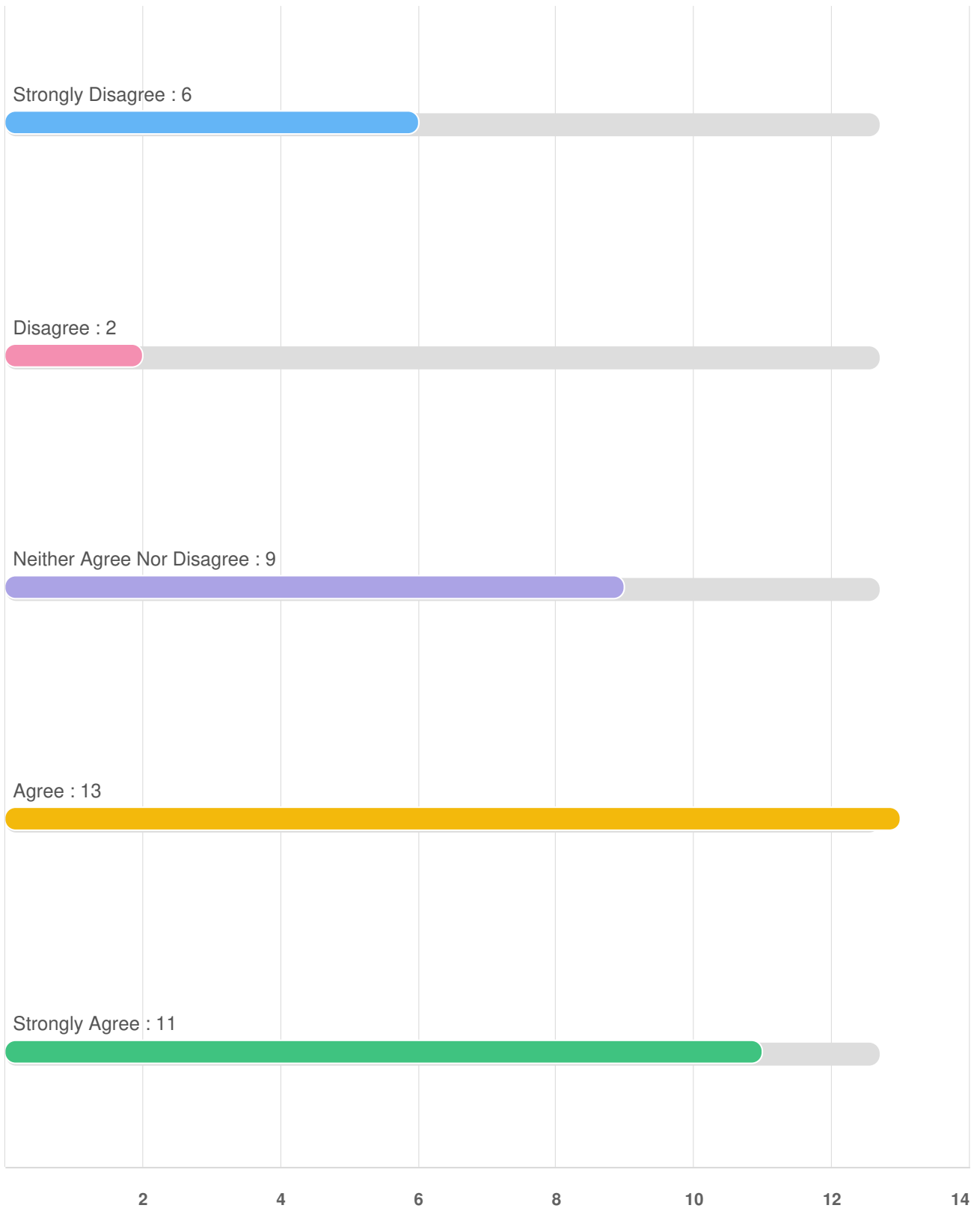
Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Likert Question

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

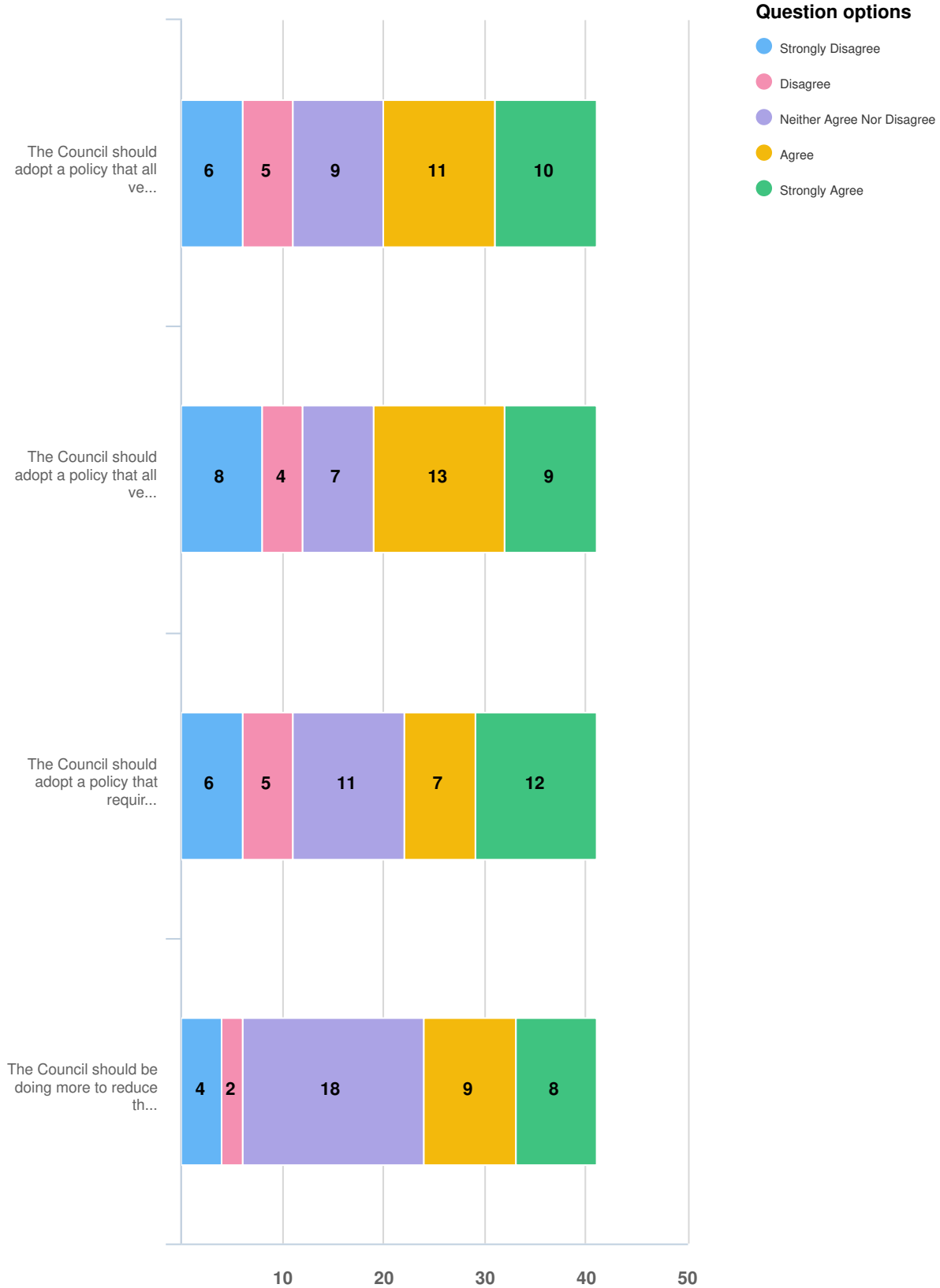
The Council should have a right to request a second opinion where concerns about a drivers medical fitness.



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



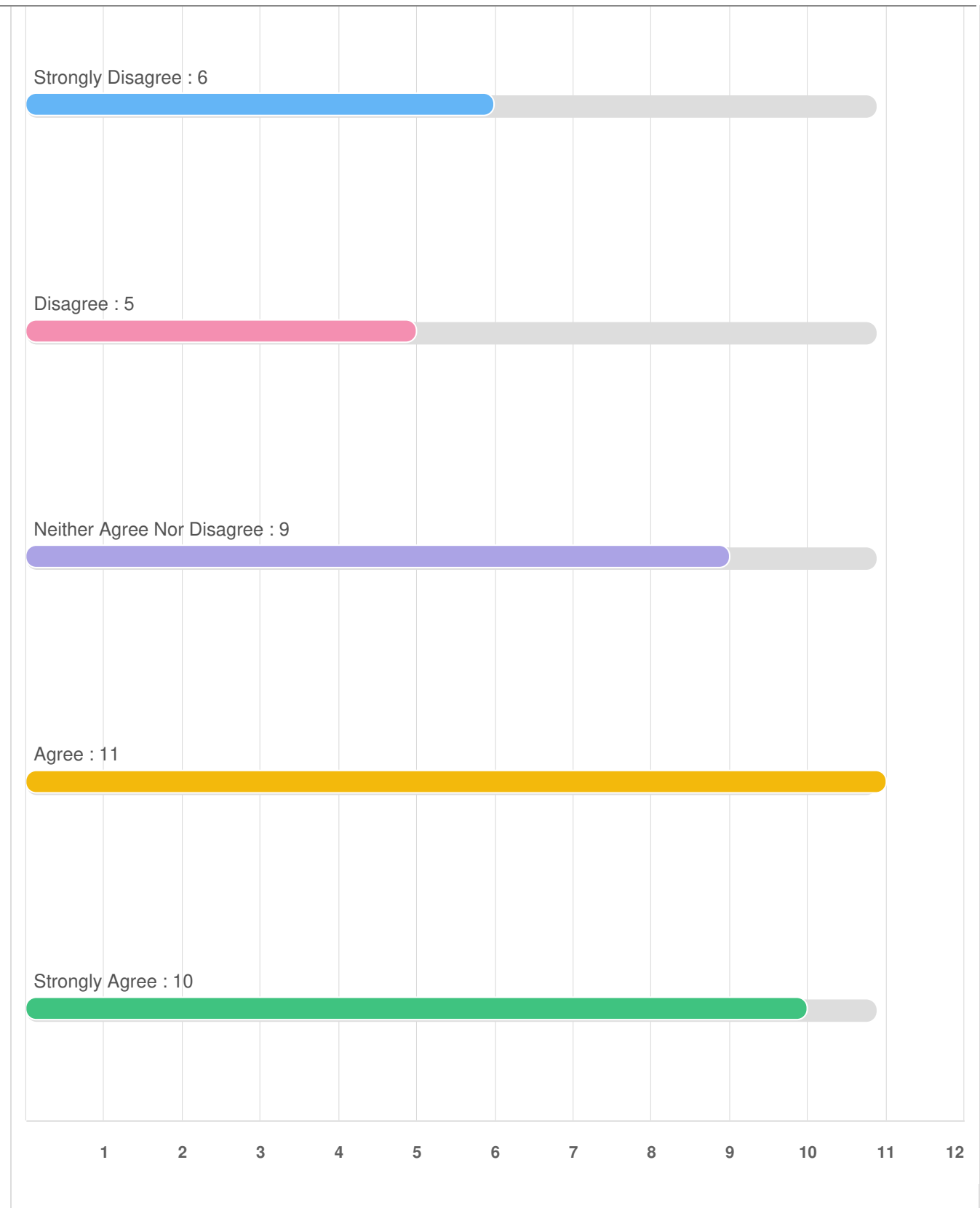
Q7 | Reducing Emissions From The Mid Devon Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Fleet Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below:



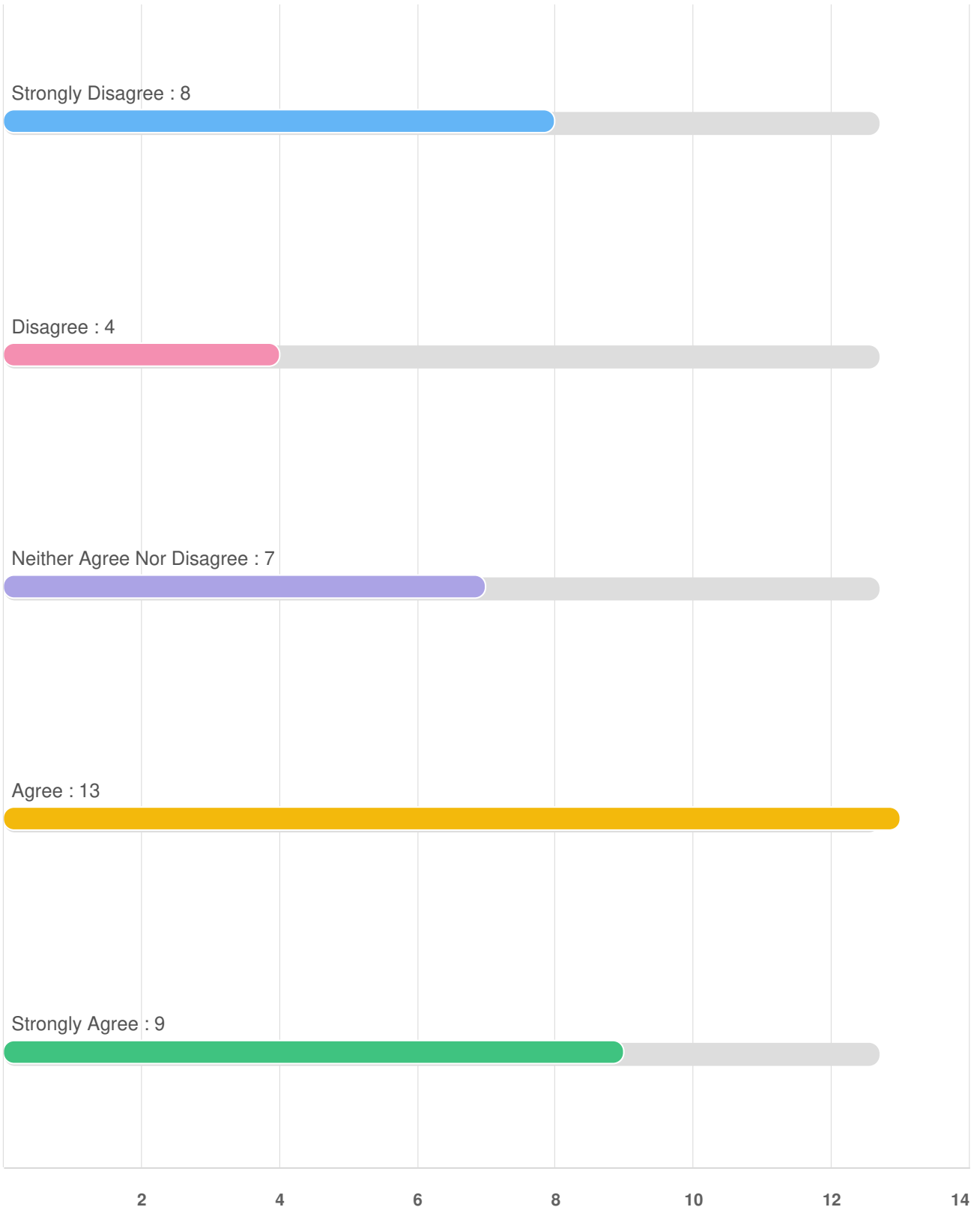
Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
 Question type: Likert Question

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

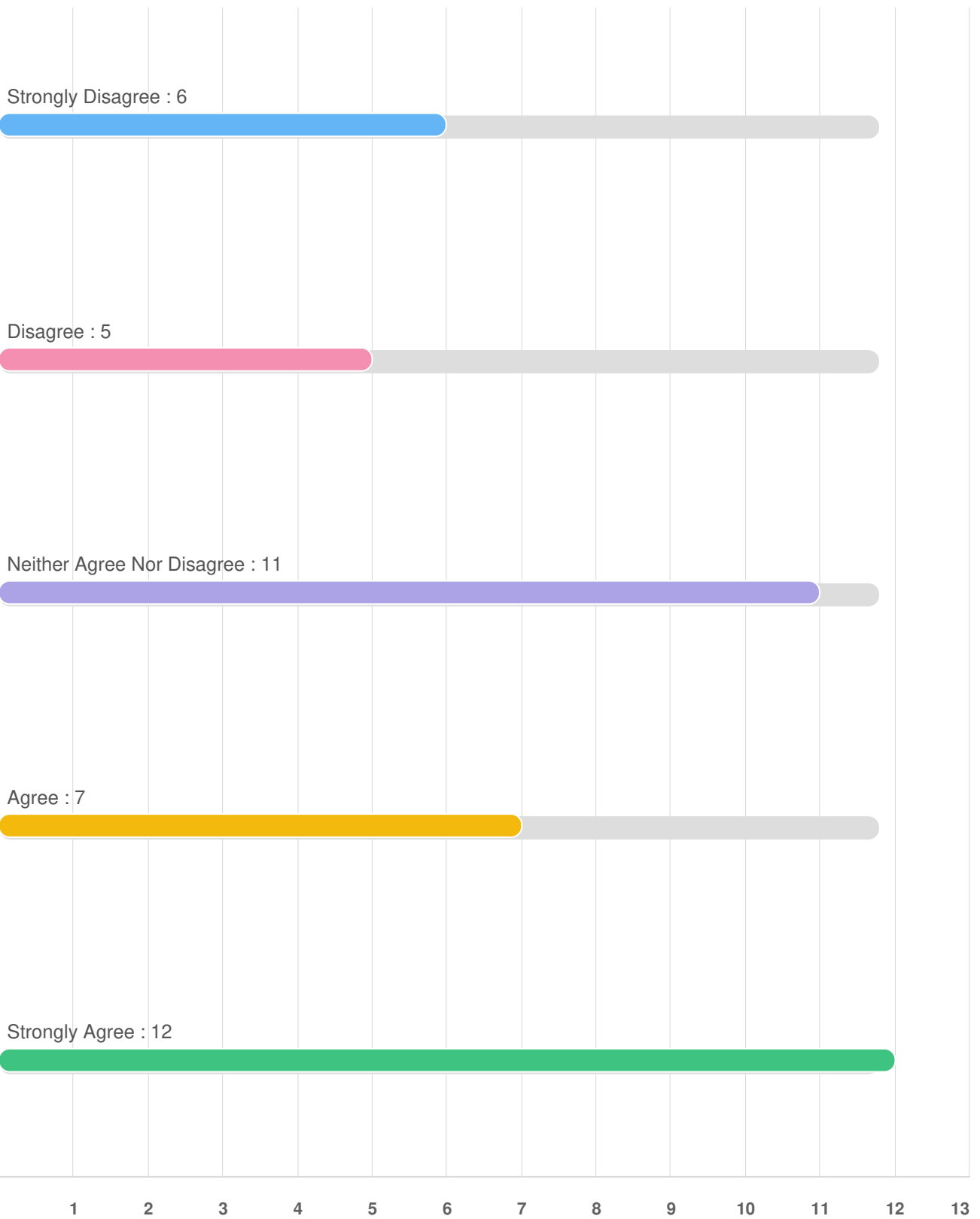
The Council should adopt a policy that all vehicles granted a new licence meet Euro 6 standards from 1 July 2024 (this does not include vehicles at renewal)



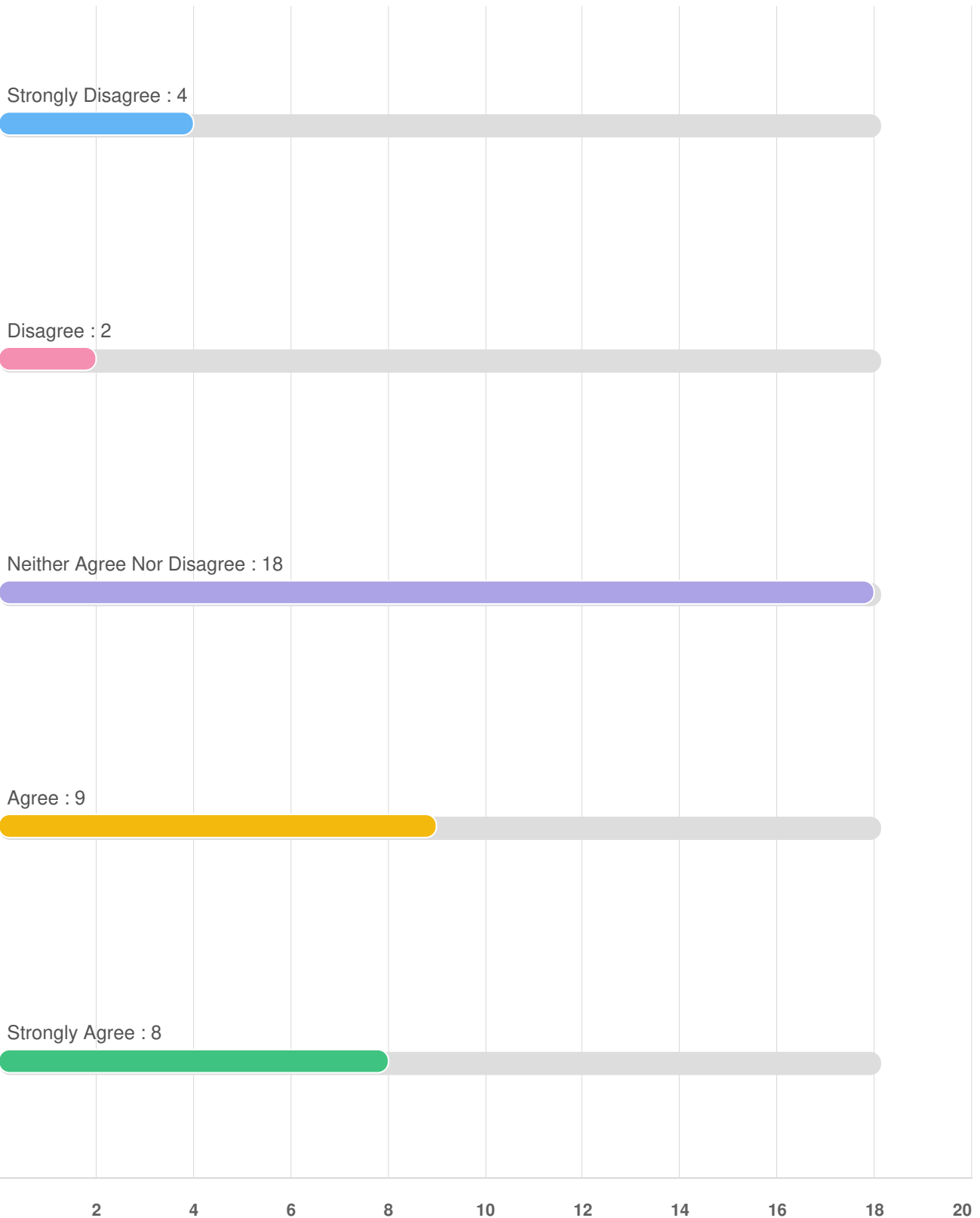
The Council should adopt a policy that all vehicles meet Euro 5 emissions at renewal of licence from 1 July 2024.



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

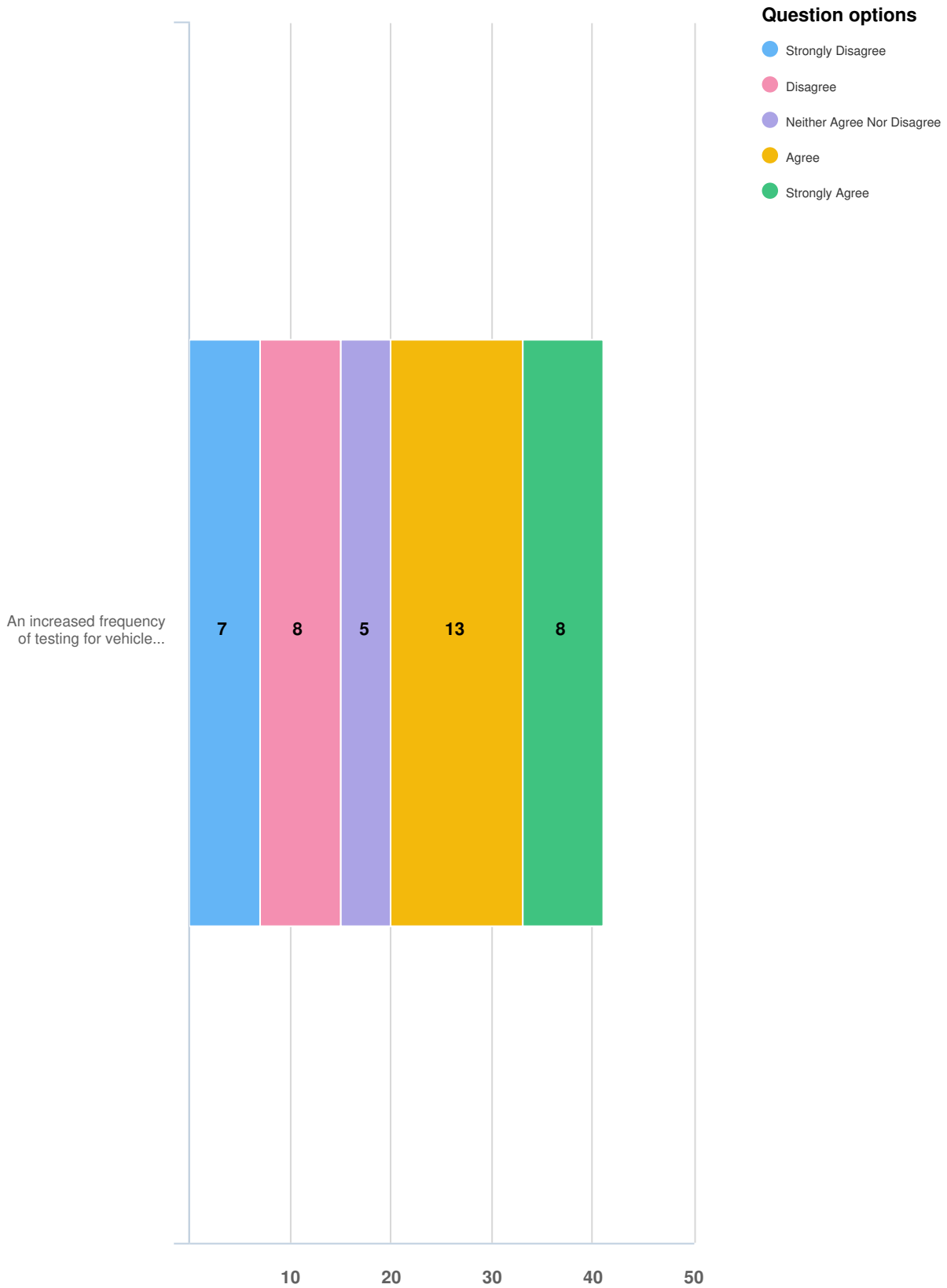
3/27/2024 11:27 AM

i thought we had left Europe. Other priorities

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

Question type: Essay Question

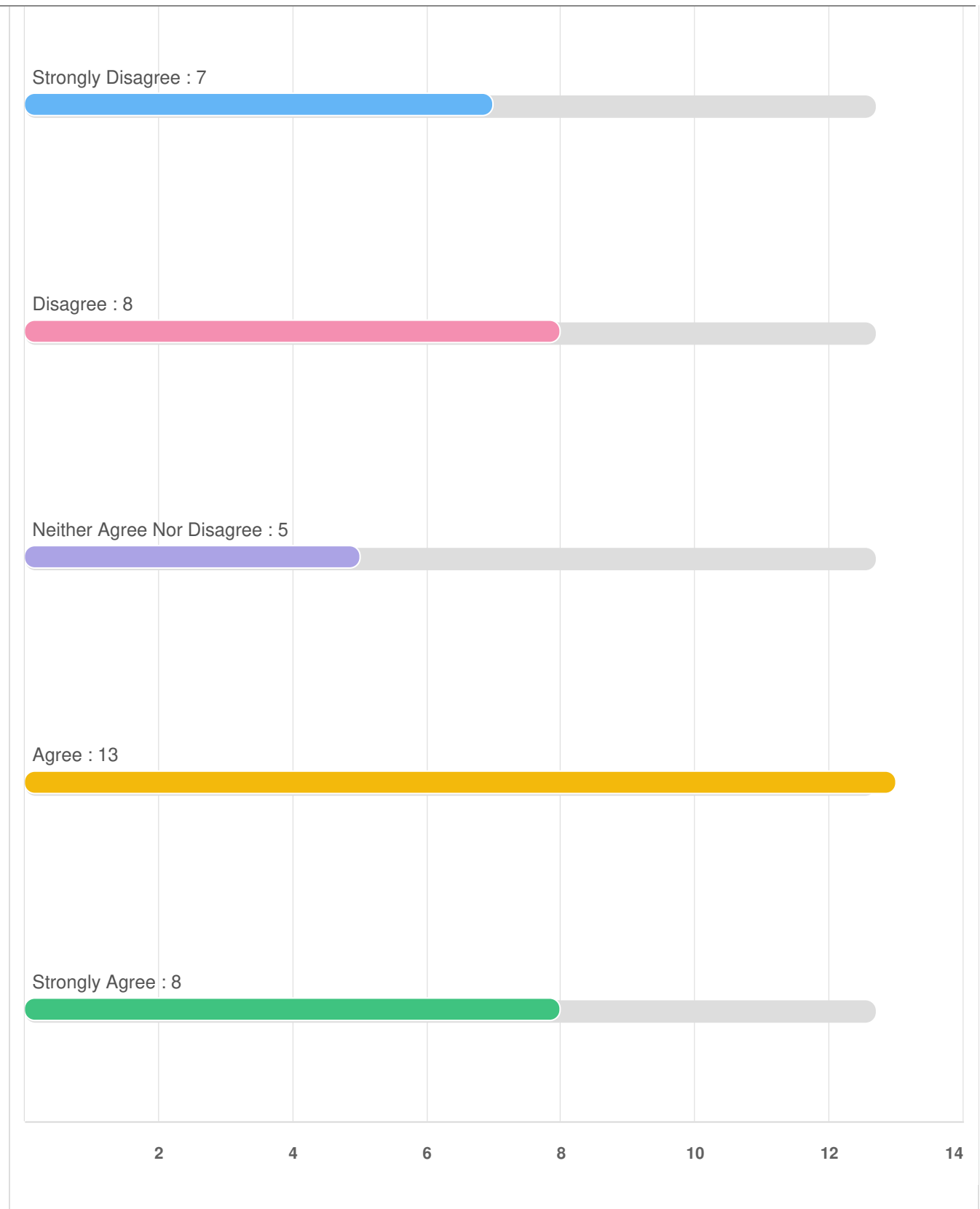
Q9 Testing Frequency Please indicate your level of agreement with the statement below:



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

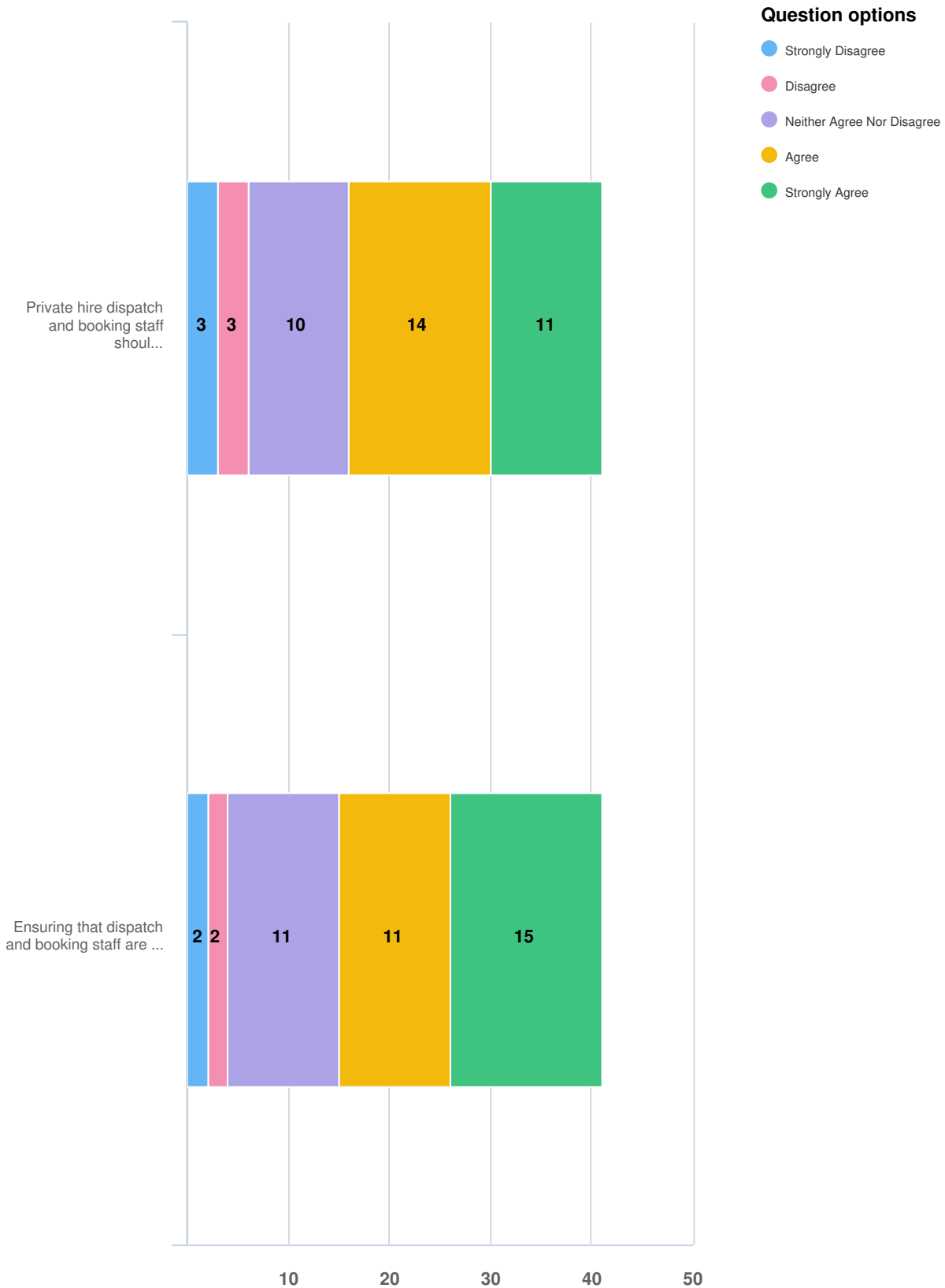
2/19/2024 11:14 PM

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

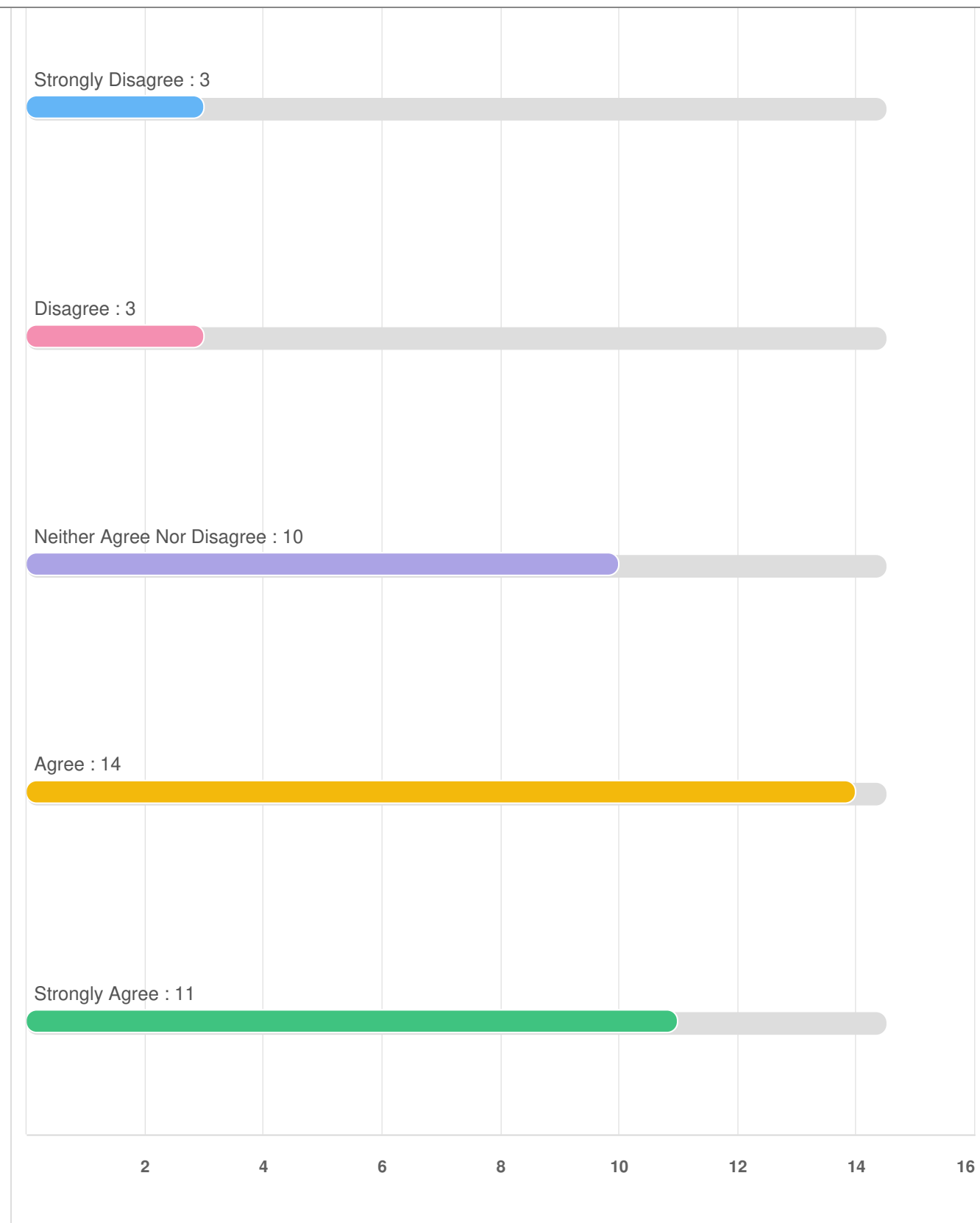
Q11 | Changes To The Private Hire Operator Policy We are proposing to introduce requirements for operators to assess the fitness and propriety of their dispatch and booking staff, this is to ensure that only trustworthy individuals are employed within th...

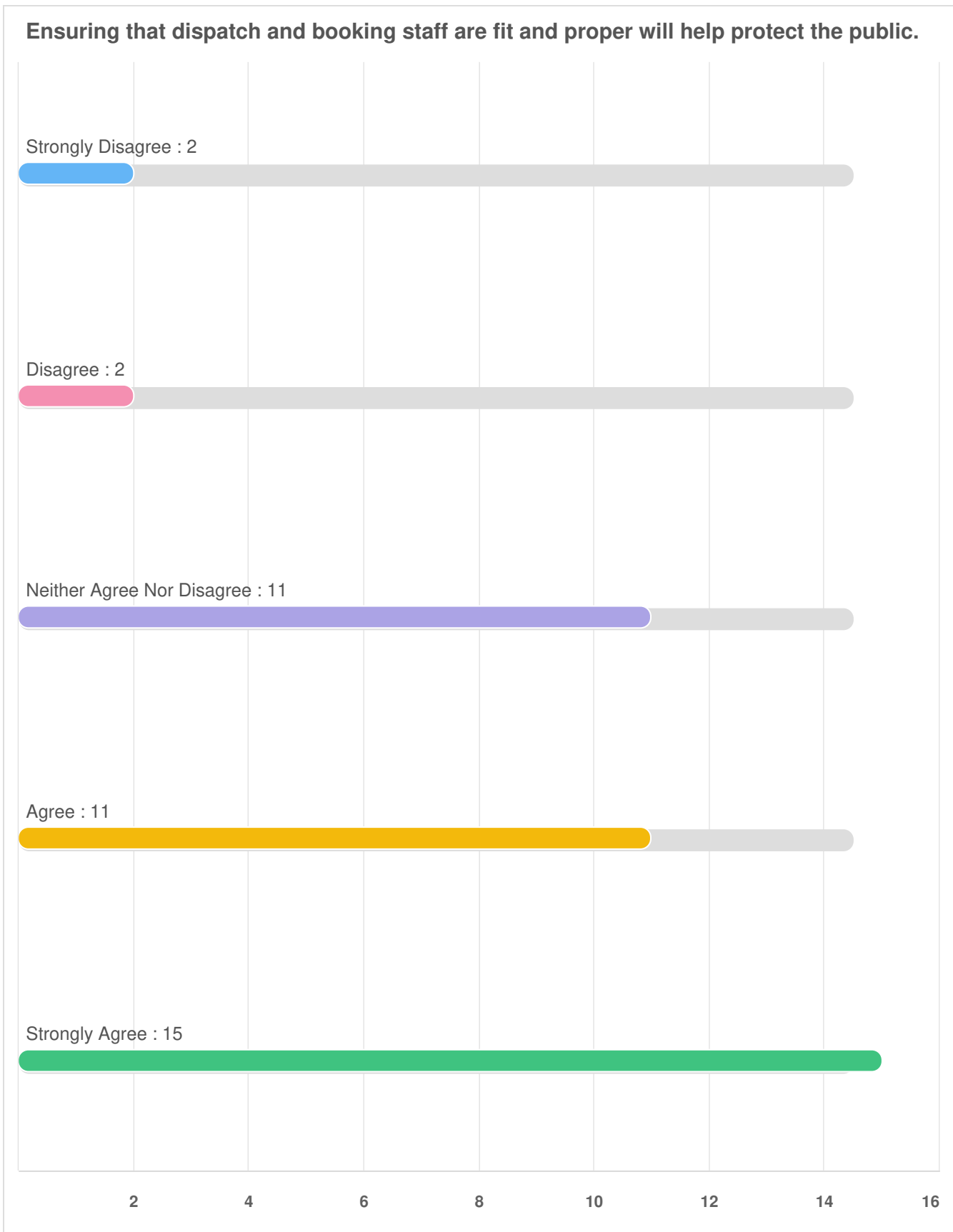


Mandatory Question (41 response(s))
Question type: Likert Question

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.

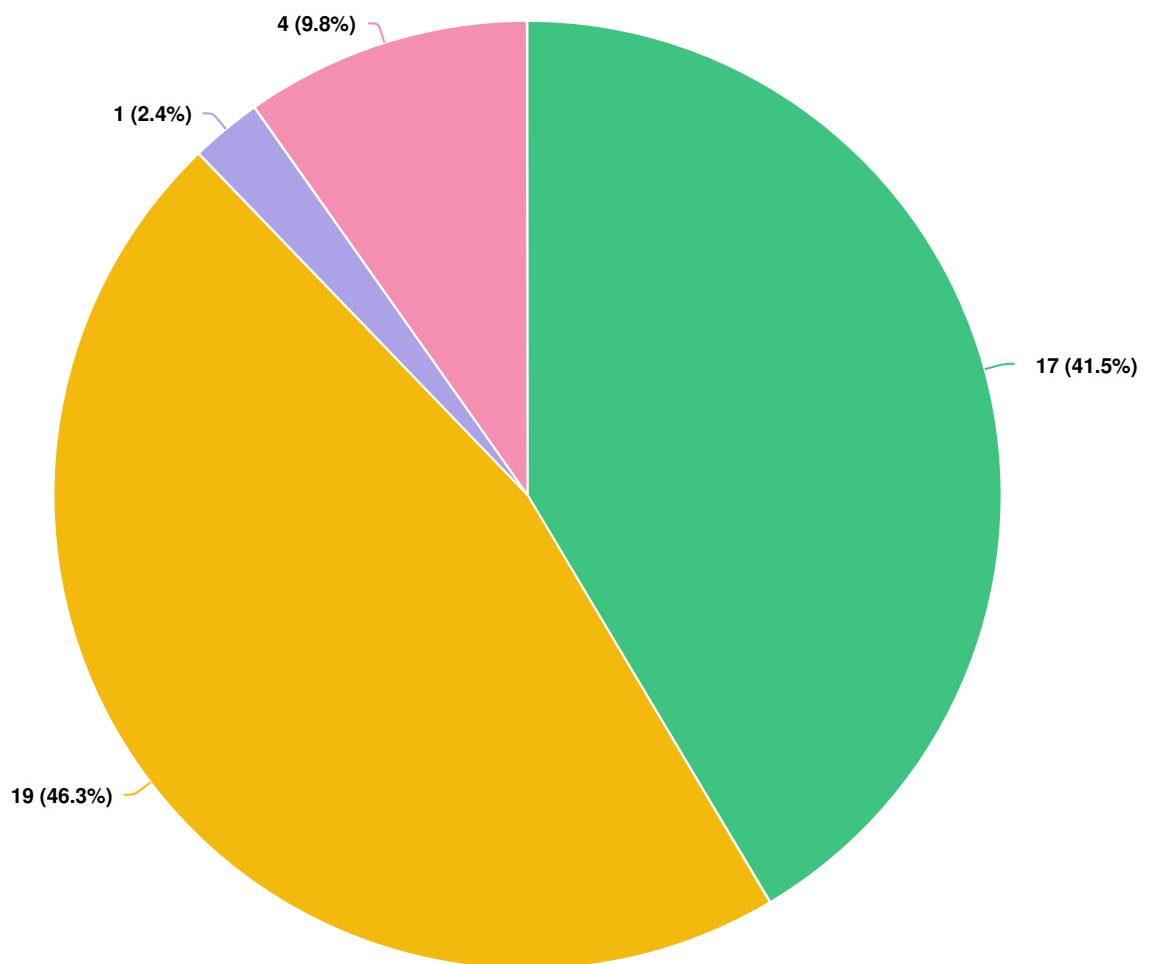
Anonymous

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

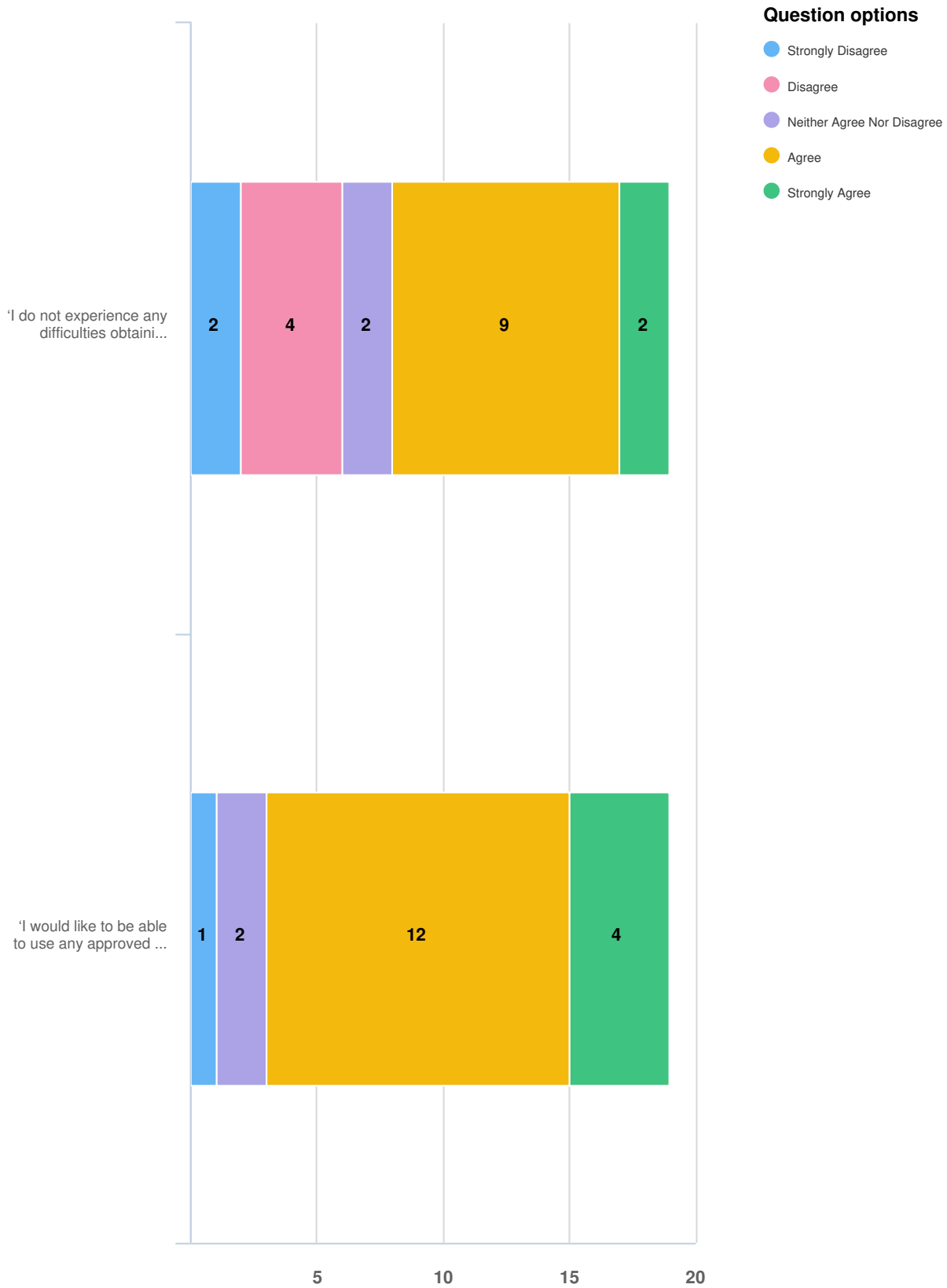
2/22/2024 10:33 AM

DVSA

Mandatory Question (4 response(s))

Question type: Single Line Question

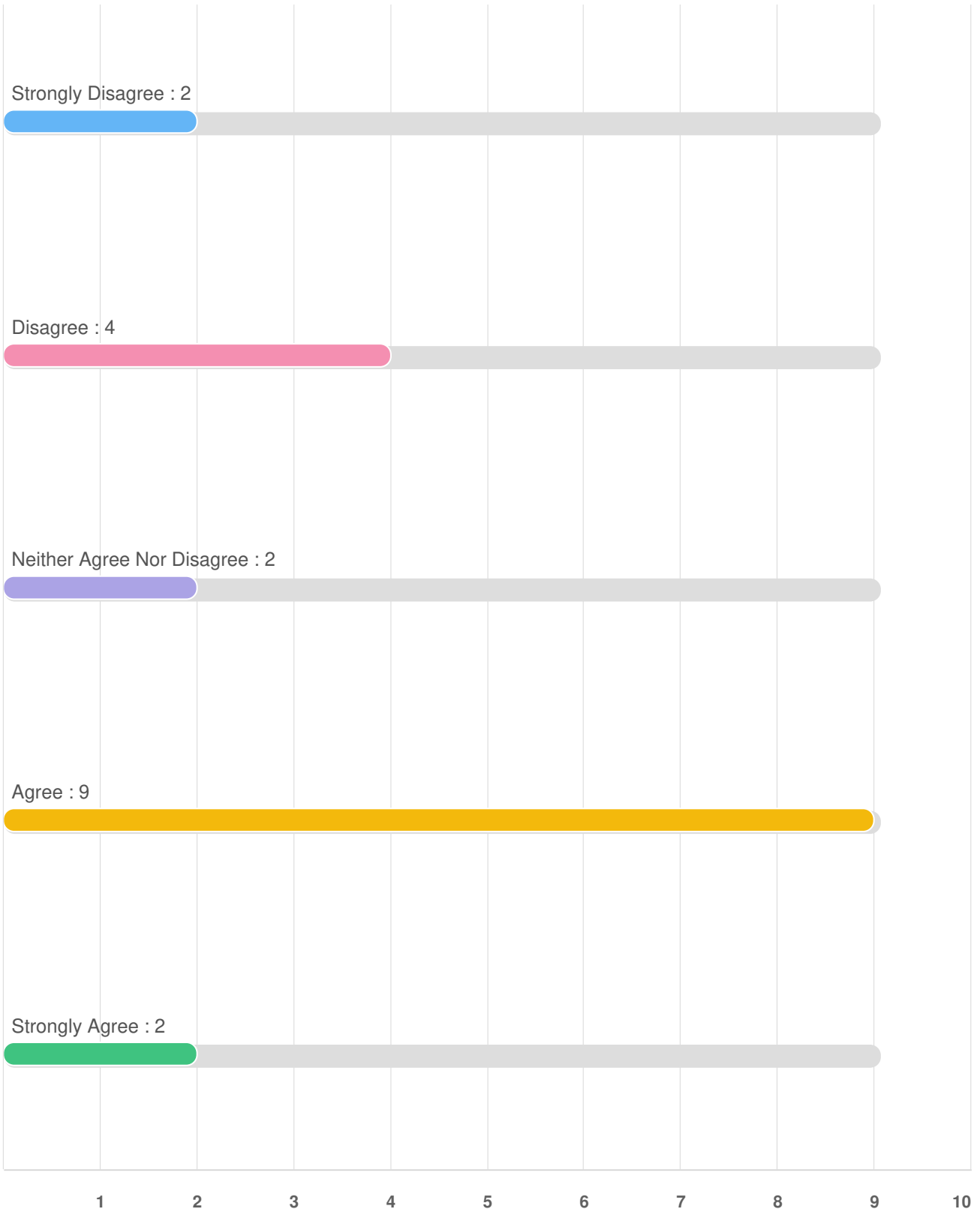
Q16 Medical Assessment Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below:



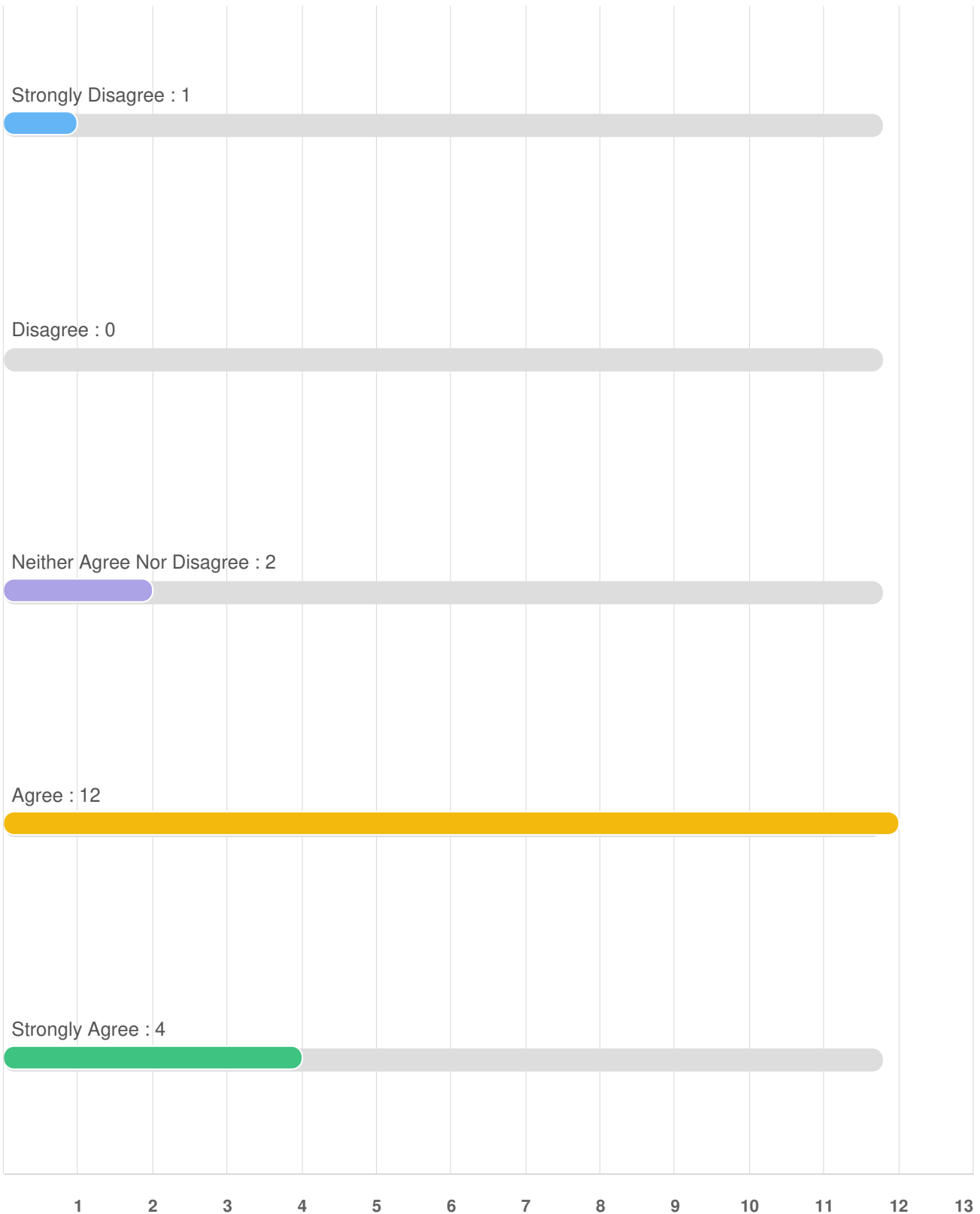
Mandatory Question (19 response(s))
Question type: Likert Question

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'.



Q17 | Reducing Emissions From The Mid Devon Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle FleetIf the

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