



Consultation on changes to Lewes District Council taxi and private hire licensing guidance – consultation report

March 2021

Background

From 25 January to 5 March 2021 we consulted on proposed changes to our Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Guidance.

A statutory guidance document, issued by the Department for Transport to all Licensing Authorities in England and Wales, required us to look at our current guidance.

It recommended incorporating additional measures into our existing Taxi and Private Hire Guidance. This was with the intention of improving and updating existing measures to protect children, vulnerable adults and the wider public when using taxis and private hire vehicles.

As a result of these new standards the council has took the opportunity to review and update the whole Guidance Document.

The Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Guidance sets out the terms and conditions that apply to those seeking licences for the Hackney Carriage or Private Hire trade. This is to protect the public and help ensure they receive a good service.

How we consulted

- We carried out a public consultation from 25 January and 5 March 2021.
- We published a page on the district council website which included the background to the review and the draft guidance.
- We provided an online survey for respondents to structure their feedback and made the offer of providing paper copies of this on request.
- We also offered the consultation information in different languages and formats.
- We publicised the consultation through the local media, our social media channels, via the council's website and by email to the council's consultation mailing list.

Next steps

- This report will be published on the council website.
- The report will be taken to the Licensing Committee on 1 April 2021.

- Once a decision has been made it will be published on the council website and shared with residents, drivers, operators and other stakeholders.

Survey findings

1. Please tell us in what capacity you are responding to this consultation:			
		Response Percent	Response Total
1	A resident	43.42%	155
2	A licensed driver working in Lewes district	47.62%	170
3	An operator based in Lewes district	5.32%	19
4	Other (please specify):	3.64%	13
		answered	357
		skipped	6
Other (please specify): (13)			
1	Often use Taxis in Newhaven but I'm from London.		
2	Taxi driver based in Brighton		
3	Derby		
4	Taxi CCTV Supplier / Installer		
5	Education Support Worker/students using taxis'		
6	Brighton resident		
7	Voluntary Sector		
8	Licensed driver working for Uber		
9	licensed driver (uber)		
10	Licensed Brighton & Hove driver		
11	Uber Brighton		
12	I am a Lewes based operator and I am answering this survey on behalf of 137 staff members		
13	Retired Service Provider to the Taxi Trade also Lewes resident		

2. We are considering three options to increase the number of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles in the Hackney Carriage Fleet in the district. Applications for new Hackney Carriage vehicle licences will not be granted unless the vehicle is Wheelchair Accessible – either side or rear loading. This will not apply to existing Hackney Carriage licence holders who apply to change their vehicles. With effect from 1 January 2022 (or an alternative date to be agreed) all applications for new and replacement Hackney Carriage Vehicles will only be granted to those vehicles that are Wheelchair Accessible. We will maintain the current guidance, under which the number of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles is expected to increase naturally. Please indicate your preference from these options. If you have a different suggestion, please also state this below.

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	New vehicle applications must be Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles	14.16%	49
2	New and replacement vehicle applications must be Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles	11.56%	40
3	Maintain the current guidance	74.28%	257
		answered	346
		skipped	17

If you also have any alternative suggestions, please give them below: (69):

No demand in Hackney Trade - WAVs mainly pre booked - 11 comments
Some customers find access to WAVs difficult - prefer saloon vehicles - 10 comments
Unnecessary and too expensive - 10 comments
Incentivise proprietors to purchase a WAV - 9 comments
Operators should have quotas - 8 comments
Leave it as it is - 8 comments
Other comments - 13

3. Under the current guidance CCTV is not mandatory but is strongly advised by the council. We are proposing that all licensed vehicles will be required to have a council-approved CCTV system installed by October 2022. How much do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree	25.42%	91
2	Agree	20.67%	74
3	Disagree	17.04%	61
4	Strongly disagree	32.68%	117
5	Don't know	4.19%	15
		answered	358
		skipped	5

4. We are proposing to introduce a Penalty Points scheme on driver's and operator's licence for breach of conditions. This would aim to improve levels of compliance and raise standards. Penalty Points would be cumulative and remain active for 12 months. This would not however prevent the council from taking other forms of legal action where needed. How much do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree	26.33%	94
2	Agree	31.65%	113
3	Disagree	21.57%	77
4	Strongly disagree	16.53%	59
5	Don't know	3.92%	14
		answered	357
		skipped	6

5. We are proposing to make safeguarding and disability awareness training mandatory for all new and current drivers. The aim of this would be to raise awareness of the exploitation of children and young vulnerable adults, including where to report incidents, within the trade. How much do you agree or disagree this should be implemented for all new and current drivers?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree	32.77%	117
2	Agree	29.97%	107
3	Disagree	15.41%	55
4	Strongly disagree	17.65%	63
5	Don't know	4.20%	15
		answered	357
		skipped	6

6. We are proposing to introduce an English proficiency test, designed to ensure all new applicants are able to communicate effectively with passengers. This is particularly important when transporting vulnerable people and in the case of emergencies such as when medical treatment is required. All applicants, regardless of their nationality, would be required to take an English proficiency test or provide evidence of a relevant English Language qualification, for example a GCSE or equivalent (grade 4 or higher). How much do you agree or disagree with this proposal? Do you think this should be implemented for all new applicants?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree	52.66%	188
2	Agree	28.01%	100
3	Disagree	10.36%	37
4	Strongly disagree	6.72%	24
5	Don't know	2.24%	8
		answered	357
		skipped	6

7. We are proposing to introduce a more robust and comprehensive convictions guidance. Please take a moment to read the proposed convictions guidance before answering this question. The guidance can be found [here](#). How much do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree	31.01%	111
2	Agree	39.66%	142
3	Disagree	13.41%	48
4	Strongly disagree	7.26%	26
5	Don't know	8.66%	31
		answered	358
		skipped	5

8. Do you have any other comments to make about the proposed changes to the guidance?

Council need to support the trade more - 12 comments

No Changes Needed to the Guidance - 10 comments

Trade very bad don't add more expense - 8 comments

Support Safeguarding and extra DBS Checks - 7 comments

No further comments - 6 comments		
English Test needs to be spoken not written - 5 comments		
Accessibility issues with WAVs - 5 comments		
All licensed vehicles need intended use - 3 comments		
CCTV- 2 comments		
Other comments - 58 comments		
		answered 146
		skipped 217

Questions about you

10. Would you like to answer or skip the following questions about you?			
		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Answer the questions	52.75%	182
2	Skip the questions	47.25%	163
		answered	345
		skipped	18

11. What is your age?			
		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Under 18	0.00%	0
2	18 - 24	0.00%	0
3	25 - 34	4.64%	9
4	35 - 44	20.10%	39
5	45 - 54	27.32%	53
6	55 – 64	22.16%	43
7	65 – 74	22.16%	43
8	75 +	3.09%	6
9	Prefer not to say	0.52%	1
		answered	194
		skipped	169

12. What is your sex?			
		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Male	77.20%	149
2	Female	21.76%	42
3	Other	1.04%	2
		answered	193
		skipped	170

13. What is your ethnic group? Ethnic groups are defined by the 2011 census			
		Response Percent	Response Total
1	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	83.60%	158
	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	83.6%	158
2	Irish	2.12%	4
3	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.53%	1
4	Any Other White background	4.23%	8
5	White and Black Caribbean	0.53%	1
6	White and Black African	0.00%	0
7	White and Asian	1.06%	2
8	Any Other Mixed background	0.00%	0
9	Asian/Asian British	2.12%	4
10	Indian	0.53%	1
11	Pakistani	1.06%	2
12	Bangladeshi	1.06%	2
13	Chinese	0.00%	0
14	Any Other Asian background	0.00%	0
15	African	0.53%	1
16	Caribbean	0.00%	0
17	Any Other Black/African/Caribbean background	0.00%	0
18	Arab	1.06%	2
19	Any Other Ethnic Group (please specify):	1.59%	3
		answered	189
		skipped	174
Any Other Ethnic Group (please specify): (3)			

14. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes, limited a lot	4.35%	8
2	Yes, limited a little	10.87%	20
3	No	84.78%	156
		answered	184
		skipped	179