

Equality impact assessment

Appendix C

E716464472

Date assessment completed 21 May 2025

Title of equality impact assessment Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

Service Public Protection

Team Licensing

Focus / aim of equality impact assessment

A single cohesive document to incorporate all taxi licensing policies. The paramount consideration in licensing of the hackney carriage (taxis) and private hire vehicle (PHVs) trade is to protect the public.

Names and roles of officers completing the assessment

Adam Sherwood, Premises and Taxi Licensing Manager

Contact telephone number of lead officer 01279446010

Policy / service / function details

This is a new policy/service/function

What is the purpose of the policy / service / function?

The paramount consideration in licensing of the hackney carriage (taxi's) and private hire vehicle (PHV's) trades is to protect the public.

This authorities' licensing objectives are:

- Public safety;
- To promote a professional and responsible hackney carriage and private hire trade;
- Access for all, to efficient and effective transport;
- Prevention of environmental impacts.

The Department for Transport recommend that licensing authorities introduce a taxi licensing policy. The policy will function as a reference document to officers and members of committee when determining licence applications and is available to all parties applying for licences.

The licensing of taxi and private hire is regulated by licensing authorities within Local and District Councils. The role of the authority is limited to licensing drivers, vehicles and operators.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Harlow Council Licensing Team, taxi and private hire trade licensees, local organisations representing safeguarding or disability groups, other responsible authorities for regulation such as Essex Police.

Are there any other documents / strategies linked to this policy / service / function?

Harlow Council Convictions Policy (for taxi and private hire trade).

Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy - all children and adults with care and support needs have the right to be safe, happy and healthy, and to be protected from abuse and exploitation.

Harlow Health and Wellbeing Strategy - reducing health inequalities to make Harlow accessible to all.

Antisocial Behaviour Policy - licensees should be upstanding members of the community.

Who is affected by the policy / service / function?

Taxi and private hire trade licensees (drivers, operators and vehicle proprietors). General public. Users of taxi and private hire services.

Who has been involved in the development of the policy / service / function?

Harlow Council Licensing Committee

Which staff carry out the policy / service / function?

Public Protection / Harlow Council Licensing Team

Quantitative and qualitative data

Quantitative

Quantitative Research is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into usable statistics. It is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviours, and other defined variables – and generalise results from a larger sample population.

What quantitative (numerical) data do you already have about those who use or will use the policy / service / function?

The number of licensed vehicles has been steadily increasing since 2005, apart from over the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic where numbers temporarily fell to a low of 251,000 in 2021 before resuming the upward trend. There were 313,000 licensed taxi and private hire vehicles in England in 2024, an 8.2% increase from 2023. Locally, Harlow licences under 300 vehicles. Approx. 20% of Harlow licensed vehicles are wheelchair Accessible as this is a requirement for a Hackney Carriage vehicle licence.

The National Travel Survey (NTS) is a household survey of personal travel by residents of England travelling within Great Britain, from data collected via interviews and a seven-day travel diary. There is a very slight long-term downward trend over the period 2002 to 2019, with trips fluctuating between 9 and 12 trips per person per year over this period. In 2022, the average number of trips taken per person by taxi or PHV was 8, and the average distance travelled per person by taxi or PHV was 54 miles. The average taxi or PHV trip lasted 22 minutes in 2022, a 12% increase from 2021.

Almost half (46%) of trips taken by taxi or PHV in 2022 were taken for leisure purposes, other reasons include commuting (15%), shopping (12%), personal business (11%), education (10%). Frequency - most people (64%) rarely used a taxi or PHV in 2022 (used once or twice a year or less, or never), around 16% of people travelled by taxi or PHV at least once a month but less than once per week, and 7% of people travelled by taxi or PHV at least weekly. The 2022 survey showed the average number of trips taken by taxi or PHV was higher for those with mobility difficulties (17 trips per person per year) compared with those with no mobility difficulties (8 trips per person per year).

What gaps are there in the quantitative data?

None specific.

What other quantitative data do you need?

None specific.

Qualitative

Qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting. It focuses on the "why" rather than the "what" of social phenomena and relies on the direct experiences of human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives.

What qualitative data do you already have about those who use or will use the policy / service / function?

6-week consultation for trade licensees, safeguarding and disability community groups, other regulatory bodies by making direct contact. Members of the public also have access to consultations through the Council's consultations webpage.

What gaps are there in the qualitative data?

None specific.

What other qualitative data do you need?

None specific.

Consultation

Number of formal or informal consultation that have taken place or that you are planning to hold to inform your Equality impact assessment 1

Title of consultation	Date	Who did you consult with?	What were the main issues raised?	Gaps in data	If further consultations are needed to fill these gaps – state with whom, by whom, when and how is this going to be done?
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy	01 April 2025 - 13 May 2025	Taxi and Private Hire trade, Safeguarding and Disability Community Groups and Organisations, relevant regulatory or enforcement bodies, general public via webiste.	Introduction of the new policy.	None specific.	n/a

Protected characteristic groups from the Equality Act 2010

Assessment of Impact – Based on the data you have analysed and provided, and the results of the consultation or research you have undertaken, list below how the policy or function will or does work for each of the following equalities groups.

Protected characteristic groups from the Equality Act 2010 - Disability

What do you know?

Tai and private hire services are used by all disability groups. There is a particular emphasis on wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs). Transport provision for wheelchair users is well represented by the Harlow taxi trade, due to all licensed taxis being wheelchair accessible, these vehicles are available for pre-book or can be hailed at any of this Authority's taxi ranks.

What do people tell you?

Some regular groups or users who use Harlow-licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles, occasionally report that they are satisfied with the overall taxi services provided by Harlow's WAVs. WAVs have all the appropriate fastenings and seatbelt to transport non-transferrable wheelchair users in a safe and efficient manner.

What does this mean?

None specific.

What can you do?

None specific. Drivers complete training on disability awareness, the licensing authority will ensure drivers continue to transport wheelchair users using the correct safety equipment.

Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations

None specific. New policy for taxi and private hire drivers ensures they attend disability awareness training every 2 years. New licence holders will have to attend the training before being licensed.

Action plan

Number of action plans 0

Project Manager

Project Manager Adam Sherwood

Date 21 May 2025

Assistant Director Julie Ellis

Date 21/05/2025