

Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the 2010 Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	To provide an option for private hire vehicles to display either a council door sign without operator details or one with operator’s details.
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) licensing in Southampton is undertaken by Southampton City Council (the Council) as the licensing authority, which has the responsibility for ensuring the public travel in safe, well maintained vehicles driven by competent drivers, while providing a fair and reasonable service for the taxi and PHV trade. Currently the Council grants over 3000 licences to over 2000 individuals.</p> <p>To deliver its responsibilities, the Council’s core functions in taxi and PHV licensing are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting the local framework, which can include safeguarding standards, fares, vehicles standards and limits on vehicle numbers; • considering licence applications and safeguarding the public by issuing, reviewing or revoking licences; and, • undertaking inspection and enforcement activities to ensure the required standards are being maintained. <p>A significant amount of work undertaken by Private hire companies is contract work which often involves the vulnerable. A number of elderly and vulnerable residents rely upon private hire and taxi services for medical appointments and shopping.</p> <p>Vehicles licensed by Southampton City Council have a set of conditions suited to the work in the city and the main public safety element of this is the requirement to have a taxi camera fitted.</p> <p>Traditionally private hire operators have taken bookings over the phone and sent a car with their company name on the door stickers so the customer can identify the car they</p>	

have booked and be reassured it is a properly licensed vehicle. This is an important public safety feature.

The introduction of modern technology, in particular mobile phone apps has revolutionised the industry. A significant number of private hire bookings are now performed via an app on a mobile phone and the car and driver details are relayed to the customers using the app. This reduces the importance of the door signage, although does not remove the issues they are designed to address.

Summary of Impact and Issues

Currently policy requires door signage on private hire vehicles to include the name and contact details of the operator. This has the effect of restricting drivers to working for only one operator at a time.

The reasons for retaining the current policy are set out in the report and relate specifically to public safety.

It should be noted, keeping the requirement to display operator details is likely to lead to some individual drivers licensing with other authorities for the same reasons.

Potential Positive Impacts

Please note it is difficult to determine the impact any change of policy will have on where drivers, proprietors or operators will licence.

The proposal to consider allowing a choice of doorsign including one without operator details is likely to lead to drivers working for more than one operator at a time and providing them with a lot more choice of the trips they fulfil, a £5 trip is less attractive than a £30 trip.

However this creates potential of short trips being cancelled leaving people vulnerable and makes them difficult to fulfil as outlined in the attached report

Responsible Service Manager	Phil Bates, Licensing Manger
Date	
Approved by Senior Manager	Mary D’Arcy, Executive Director, Communities, Culture & Homes
Date	25.10.21

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	Research shows that whilst use of digital technology has increased amongst older age groups there is still a higher proportion who are less likely to use apps which may cause	Retaining the policy mitigates this risk

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	issues identifying the vehicle they have booked.	
Disability	Some need to identify the vehicle from within their home or another building, the company livery and signage makes this easier	Retaining the policy mitigates this risk
Gender Reassignment	No identified impact	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No identified impact	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	No identified impact	N/A
Race	No identified impact	N/A
Religion or Belief	No identified impact	N/A
Sex	No identified impact	N/A
Sexual Orientation	No identified impact	N/A
Community Safety	Taxis and private hire vehicles are a high risk environment. If there is an increase in drivers and vehicles licensing elsewhere it will reduce the percentage of vehicles with taxi cameras.	Other encouragements to licence with SCC, promote the taxi camera safety feature to the public.
Poverty	No identified impact	N/A
Health & Wellbeing	Older Private hire vehicles emit more harmful emissions. The relaxation of the requirement to display operator details places the onus on the operator which in turn triggers issues for them concerning employment rights with drivers, this in turn may result in operators moving their operations to other authorities where older vehicles emitting more harmful emissions are allowed.	Work with operators to encourage them to remain licensed in SCC. Continue to work with other authorities encouraging them to adopt similar conditions on vehicles
Other Significant Impacts	No identified impact	N/A