

Draft Taxi Licensing Policy Consultation

Background

The proposed draft policy provides information about the licensing of hackney carriages, private hire vehicles, their drivers and operators at Southampton City Council. It sets out the requirements for the different categories of taxi licences and how the taxi licensing regime is enforced.

In 2021, we consulted about disclosure and barring checks, taxi cameras and vehicle livery. Following that, the decision was made to require drivers to obtain 6 monthly enhanced DBS checks and retain the requirement to have approved taxi cameras fitted. It was also decided that door signage to include operator details was retained, but it was agreed that this matter would be reviewed after a year. As a result, we now have a number of further proposed changes that we would like to consult on.

In addition to consultation feedback, any actions recommended by the Department for Transport Best Practise Guidance will also be considered.

This questionnaire broadly covers the proposed changes, but the full draft policy is available to view on our website: www.southampton.gov.uk/consultations

This public consultation closes 22 March 2023.

Proposals

Proposal 1. Southampton City Council is proposing to remove the requirement in Private Hire Vehicles to display the name and contact details of the operator of the vehicle.

The removal of the requirement to display an operator on the door sticker will allow drivers to work for more than one operator at the same time. The proposal is to retain door stickers but remove the requirement to display operator details.

To read this in full please visit the full draft policy: Full Draft Policy

One risk of this proposal is that there is an increased chance some trips may be left without a vehicle, in the case that drivers are more selective. To address this risk, alongside proposal 1, should it be adopted, the council proposes to add in new conditions to both vehicle and operator licences.

Proposal 2. If the requirement to display operator details is removed, the council would propose adding in that once a hiring has been accepted, it must be completed unless there is good cause not to.

To read this in full please visit the full draft policy: Full Draft Policy

Proposal 3. In addition to Proposal 2, if the requirement to display operator details is removed, we propose that operators must have a policy on how these incidents will be addressed and reported to the licensing authority.

To read this in full please visit the full draft policy: Full Draft Policy

Proposal 4. We propose adding in a condition where operators must notify the Licensing Authority of incidents or complaints made against drivers and operators. Adding this in formalises reporting regimes and ensures that reports are made from all operators to assist with public protection.

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Proposal 5. Currently, the policy notes that the operator must notify the Licensing Authority of commencement or termination of vehicles operated by them. We propose to add a condition requiring operators to report drivers as well vehicles that work on their platform.

In order to allow variation in the methods used to submit this information, we propose adding in the wording: “to the satisfaction of the Council.” The current system of individual notifications for vehicles works well for small operators, but larger ones may wish to submit their information via an API or weekly spreadsheet. This method can be agreed to assist both the operator and the authority with ease of administration.

To read this in full please visit the full draft policy: Full Draft Policy

Question. If you disagree, or have any comments, impacts, suggestions or alternatives you feel we should consider, please provide details:

Reading the draft policy

Question. Have you read the proposed draft policy?

Yes, all of it Yes, some of it No

Question. If you have read the proposed draft policy, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The draft policy is easy to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The draft policy provides sufficient information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question. If there were parts of the draft policy that you did not understand or you feel need more information, please provide further details:

Overall impact of the draft policy

Question. If the draft policy was to be implemented, what impact do you feel this may have on you, your family, your business or the wider community?

A very positive impact A slightly negative impact.....
A slightly positive impact A very negative impact
No impact at all Don't know

Question. Please use the following space to tell us more about the potential impact the draft policy and if there is anything else we should consider:

About you

Which of the following describe your interest in the consultation? *(Tick all that apply)*

As a hackney carriage proprietor (vehicle owner).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	As a resident of Southampton	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a hackney carriage driver.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	As a resident elsewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a private hire vehicle proprietor (vehicle owner).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	As a private business	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a private hire driver	<input type="checkbox"/>	As a public sector organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a private hire operator.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	As a third sector organisations (Voluntary groups, Community groups, Charities).....	<input type="checkbox"/>
As an employee of a private hire company	<input type="checkbox"/>	As a political member.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a regular user of either hackney carriages or private hire vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
If other, please specify:	<input type="text"/>		

What is your postcode? *(This is used for geographical analysis only and will not be used to contact or identify you)*

What is your sex?

Female..... Male..... Prefer not to say

Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

Yes..... No

If no, please write in your gender identity:

What is your age?

Under 18.. 25 - 34..... 45 - 54..... 65 - 74..... 85+.....
18 - 24..... 35 - 44..... 55 - 64..... 75 - 84..... Prefer not to say

What is your ethnic group?

Asian or Asian British.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed or multiple ethnic groups.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	White British	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other ethnic group...	<input type="checkbox"/>	White Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any physical or mental conditions or impairments, lasting or due to last 12 months or more, that have a substantial effect on your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

Yes..... No

What happens next?

The consultation closes on 22 March 2023. After this date, all feedback will be analysed and considered before a final decision is made.

Thank you for your time.

Please return completed surveys to: Consultations, First Floor West Wing, Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LY.

Alternatively, please hand completed surveys back to any Southampton City Council run library.

The information collected about you during this survey will only be used for the purposes of research. We may use it to contact you about this. We will only share your information with other organisations or council departments if we need to. The survey responses will be analysed by Southampton City Council. We may also share it to prevent, investigate or prosecute criminal offences, or as the law otherwise allows. Please be aware that any comments given on this form may be published in reports. However, the council will endeavour to remove any references that could identify individuals or organisations. Our Privacy Policy (<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/privacy>) explains how we handle your personal data, and we can provide a copy if you are unable to access the Internet.