



<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
Strategic Licensing Committee	6
24 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	Public

## REQUEST FOR THE REVIEW OF THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY.

**Responsible Officer** Mandy Beever, Team Manager Operational Community Safety

e-mail: Mandy.beever@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 251702

### 1. Summary

The existing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy came into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011. The Licensing Service has undergone a number of changes since this time. As a consequence it has been identified that some areas of the policy require amendment in order to facilitate the work the service is undertaking with regard to enforcement and compliance.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2014 the Strategic Licensing Committee were originally consulted in regard to the proposal for reviewing the existing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy. Following this meeting a number of Taxi Forums were held across the County in order to give the Trade the opportunity to identify areas of the policy where improvements could be made.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2014 the Strategic Licensing Committee were consulted about the suggested improvements made by the Trade and a revision of the existing policy was considered. A decision was made by the Strategic Licensing Committee to go out to formal consultation with the Trade for the period of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2014 to the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2014.

A summary of the consultation responses has been collated and is attached at Appendix A.

Copies of all the consultation responses are attached at Appendix B.

The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy has been amended to capture the suggested changes put forward by those who responded to the consultation and to include the current requirements of the Licensing Service the amended version can be found at Appendix C.

It is proposed that if the extended formal consultation is agreed the consultation will be undertaken using the Council's Website and a Taxi Forum to be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2014 in The Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

At the time of writing this report the Law Commission Consultation on Taxi Legislation had not been published and there has been no formal date released as to when the report will be available or when any changes will come into force. However if this information is released during the period of the extended consultation proposed in this report the information will be included on the Website for consideration.

In addition consideration has been given to the processes followed during previous consultations and the most effective ways to consult with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade, resulting in the recommendations below.

## **2. Recommendation**

That the Strategic Licensing Committee:-

- 2.1 Considers all the suggested amendments put forward by those who responded to the consultation as set out in Appendix B and agrees, with any necessary modifications, the summary of the amendments as set out in Appendix A.
- 2.2 Agrees that the revised policy document as set out at Appendix C is published for formal consultation for no less than 4 weeks to commence from the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014.
- 2.3 Agree that the Law Commission Consultation Report (if made available during the period of extended consultation) be added to the Website as part of the consultation proposed in this report.

## **REPORT**

### **3. Risk Assessment and Human Rights Act Appraisal**

- 3.1 This report is to request Members for permission to extend the formal consultation on the revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and therefore a risk assessment has not been carried out.

### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The Strategic Licensing Committee agreed for the Trade to be notified of the previous consultation by email and therefore this did not incur any additional costs over and above officer time to send out the notification emails. This process will be undertaken again this time if Members agree to the proposals.
- 4.2 It will cost around £500.00 to place a full circulation advert in the Shropshire Star.



## 5. Background

- 5.1 The existing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy came into effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011 as a result of lengthy consultation with Trade Representatives.
- 5.2 Following the Strategic Licensing Committee meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2014 a series of Taxi Forums were undertaken across the County (between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2014). This gave an initial opportunity for members of the Trade to make any suggestions for improvements to the existing policy. The suggestions made by the Trade at the Taxi Forums were put forward to the Strategic Licensing Committee at a meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2014 along with the revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy. Members agreed for formal consultation on the revised policy along with the suggested improvements made by the Trade to be undertaken (between the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2014 and the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2014).
- 5.3 A further revision of the existing policy has been made taking into consideration the consultation responses received. (Appendix C)
- 5.4 At the time of writing this report the Law Commission Consultation on Taxi Legislation had not been published and there has been no formal date released as to when the report will be available or when any changes will come into force. However if this information is released during the period of consultation proposed in this report the information will be included on the Website information for consideration.

### **List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

16<sup>th</sup> March 2011 – Strategic Licensing Committee Report, Common Licence Conditions for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles and Drivers.

Minutes from the Strategic Licensing Committee Meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

Minutes from the Strategic Licensing Committee Meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

Minutes from the Strategic Licensing Committee Meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

Minutes from the Strategic Licensing Committee Meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

19<sup>th</sup> March 2014 – Strategic Licensing Committee Report, Request for the Review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policies and Associated Documents.

21<sup>st</sup> May 2014 – Strategic Licensing Committee Report, Request for the Review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

**Cabinet Member:** Cllr Steve Charmley

**Local Member:**

Cover all areas of Shropshire

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – Summary of the Consultation Responses.

Appendix B – Documents submitted during the consultation (Consultation responses).

Appendix C - A copy of the revised policy to be put forward for formal consultation.

## Appendix A

### Summary of the Consultation Responses.

Appendix Letter/ Document Number	Paragraph Number	Included in Revised Policy (Y/N or In Part)	Comments on items excluded from the Policy Revision Document.
Appendix B Doc 1 (Email received on 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2014)	1	In part	Hackney Ranks, Taxi Marshalls, Taxi Forum dates - excluded as outside the requirements for the policy revision.
Appendix B Doc 2 (Email received on 30 <sup>th</sup> July 2014)	1	N	Comments only
	2	Y	Amendments to the Policy have been made.
	3	Y	Amendments to the Policy have been made.
	4	N	Medicals are used for Public Safety.
	5	N	Driving Assessments are a requirement for Public Safety. Any Driving Instructor can apply to undertake the tests, it is not restricted to Shrewsbury based Driving Instructors.
	6	N	Knowledge Tests are a requirement for Public Safety. Revisions to the Tests are continually made to ensure they are fit for purpose. The tests are undertaken centrally to reduce costs and ensure equal access to the venue is available to everyone across the county.
	7	In Part	If the Law Commission final report introduces a five year badge the Council will amend its policy accordingly. The Council currently offer the option of a Joint Drivers Badge or a Hackney Carriage Badge and a Private Hire Badge separately.
	8	In Part	Proposed changes to vehicle age requirements will alter the requirements for MOT's
	9	Y	Policy wording has been changed to make this clearer.

	10	Y	Proposed changes to the Zone requirements will accommodate this point.
	11	In Part	New front Plate is proposed. No changes have been made to the requirements of letter sizing but amendments have been made to the requirement for the roof sign to be illuminated.
	12	Y	Changes to ensure side plates are fixed permanently to the side of vehicles have been included.
	13	Y	Amendments have been made to further explain the definition of 'Executive Style Vehicles'.
	14	In Part	The Licensing Service is currently looking into using the 'Online DBS Service'. This will not change the requirement for all applicants of Driver's Licences to undertake an enhanced DBS.
	15	N	No proposals have been made to remove this requirement as it refers to Conviction's received during the period of a licence and an Enhanced DBS is done on initial application and at the point the drivers licence is due for a renewal.
	16	N	The Licensing Service has a limited number of resources and the total amount of drivers in each of the existing zones does not require a full time officer to be available 9 to 5 Monday to Friday in each zone. It is not cost effective to introduce this provision as all costs associated with providing this service would be apportioned to the licence fees. Furthermore, there are officers available across the county to answer queries 9 to 5 Monday to Friday.
	17	N	There is no statutory requirement to provide an adequate number of Taxi Ranks/Stands in each zone. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 states that the Council may appoint ranks/stands for Hackney Carriages.
	18	Y	Regular electronic updates have already commenced to update the Trade on on-going issues.
Appendix B Doc 3 (Email	1	Y	Safeguarding and the Protection of the Public have been considered throughout

received on 9 <sup>th</sup> August 2014)			the revised policy and all points raised have been considered.
Appendix B Document 4 (Email received on 21 <sup>st</sup> of August 2014)	1	In Part	Comments noted. Where policies can be harmonised this has been included.
	2	Y	Changes have been included.
	3	N	Comments noted.
	4	N	Comments noted.
	5	In Part	Amendments have been made to include the authentication and seal. It would not be appropriate to include questions regarding the geographical area administered by Telford and Wrekin Council within the Shropshire Council's Knowledge Test.
	6	In Part	Conviction and Insurance requirements have been amended. It would not be appropriate to include questions regarding the geographical area administered by Telford and Wrekin Council within the Shropshire Council's Knowledge Test. Other comments noted.
Appendix B Document 5 (Letter received on 22 August 2014)	1	Y	Proposed changes to the Zone requirements will accommodate this point.
	2	Y	Conditions of Licence cover the points raised.
	3	Y	Amendments to the Policy have been made.
Appendix B Document 6 (Email received on 22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2014)	1	Y	Proposed changes to the Zone requirements will accommodate this point.
	2	N	Comments noted
	3	Y	Document has been amended to accommodate all the points raised in this paragraph.
	4	Y	Document has been amended to



			accommodate all the points raised in this paragraph.
	5	Y	Document has been amended to accommodate all the points raised in this paragraph.
	6	Y	Document has been amended to accommodate all the points raised in this paragraph.
	7	Y	Document has been amended to accommodate all the points raised in this paragraph.
	8	Y	Document has been amended to accommodate all the points raised in this paragraph.
	9	Y	Document has been amended to accommodate all the points raised in this paragraph.
	10	N	Comment noted.
	11	N	Comment noted.
	12	Y	Document has been amended to accommodate all the points raised in this paragraph.
	13	N	Comment noted.
Appendix B Document 7 (Summary of specific suggestions for improvement points made by the Trade in regard to the current policy drawn from the Taxi Forums undertaken between the 15 <sup>th</sup> and 24 <sup>th</sup> of April 2014.	1	N	Comments noted. Proposed changes to the Zone requirements will accommodate the points raised.
	2	Y	It is proposed to remove the existing zones and introduce transitional arrangements.



	3	N	It is proposed to remove the existing zones and introduce transitional arrangements for wheelchair accessibility. The fleet of Private Hire Vehicles and the proposed changes to the Hackney Carriage Vehicles would ensure the Council were licensing a mixed fleet of vehicles to accommodate all the varying needs of disabled people.
	4	Y	Changes to the wording in the policy and checks undertaken by the Licensing Team will support this.
	5	Y	Changes to the wording of the policy support this.
	6	In Part	All the points raised in this section were considered and the policy was amended accordingly. With the exception of the re-introduction of roof signs for Private Hire Vehicles this has been rejected on the grounds of retaining a clear identity difference between Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles.
	7	In Part	The proposed introduction of the requirements of the European Emission Standards and the European New Car Assessment Programme will change the vehicles accepted for licencing and the ratio of MOT's required.
	8	In Part	It is proposed to remove the existing zones and introduce transitional arrangements for wheelchair accessibility. The fleet of Private Hire Vehicles and the proposed changes to the Hackney Carriage Vehicles would ensure the Council are licensing a mixed fleet of vehicles to accommodate all the varying needs of disabled people and the elderly.
	9	Y	The numbering system for plate numbers has changed to accommodate this.
	10	In Part	Pull back positions have been introduced for those drivers working the Telford and Wrekin Area. It is the Council's intention to consider the provision of pull back areas for the Administrative Area of Shropshire in the next policy review (2018).
	11	In Part	The proposed introduction of the requirements of the European Emission Standards and the European New Car Assessment Programme will change the

			age of vehicles accepted for licencing. No upper limit on the number of licenced vehicles has been introduced.
	12	Y	Comment noted – Driving Assessments will remain for all new drivers and additional assessments for drivers who cause reason for concern during their licence period.
	13	N	Taxi Marshall provision does not form part of this policy.
	14	Y	Consideration to make the new policy more enforceable has been included throughout.
	15	Y	The requirement for spare tyres has been included.
	16	Y	Wording in the policy has changed to reflect this.
	17	In Part	Regular electronic updates have already been introduced to keep the trade informed of on-going issues and updates.

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 24 June 2014 12:45  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Re: Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy Consultation



hi mandy;drivers keep asking about day time ranks;any update?also the taxi marshalls worked well. i would like to see them on a regular baseis.i also like the new proposals keeping hackneys black;have you a date for next forum meeting?

-----Original Message-----

**From:**  
**To:** Taxis <[Taxis@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Taxis@shropshire.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Fri, 13 Jun 2014 16:59  
**Subject:** Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy Consultation

Good Afternoon,

Please find attached information in regard to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy consultation.

Kind Regards

Shropshire Council Licensing Service

Tel: 0345 678 9026  
Email: [Taxis@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Taxis@shropshire.gov.uk)

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<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/privacy.nsf>

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 30 July 2014 12:21  
**To:** Taxis;  
**Subject:** RE: Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy Consultation  
**Attachments:** Observations consultation review.docx

① Observations Hackney Private Hire consultation review:

Although the policy in principal has worked reasonably well and has provided both "Public" & private passengers a safe and professional means of public transport it still weigh's heavy with over administration.

Hopefully the policy review within the "Light Touch Approach" can streamline administration and continue to provide a high level of public protection and fit for 2015 & remove duplicated levels of protection already provided by central government including VOSA DVLA & medical profession.

② *Taximeters:*

**This section should be changed, as I do not know of any taximeters that use a key capable of locking a meter into position**

*9.0 Taximeters (b) Such key, flat, or other device shall be capable of being locked in such a position*

*that the machinery of the taximeter is not in action and that no fare is recorded on*

*the face of the taximeter;*

③ **First Aid kits / Fire extinguisher;**

Both fire extinguisher and first aid kit are for the driver's safety and not of the passengers; it should be the driver's choice if he wants to carry them in the vehicle. Shropshire Fire & Rescue advise drivers NOT to attempt to fight a vehicle fire but to call 999. Drivers should NOT administer first aid unless fully trained.

Note Not sure but hasn't BS (British Standard) been replaced with EN3



*8.1 There shall be provided and maintained in the vehicle at all times when it is in use or available for hire a suitable and efficient fire extinguisher complying with the current BS standard and suitable first aid kit complying with the current BS standard, such equipment to be carried in such a position in the vehicle as to be readily visible or in other suitable position, it must be available for immediate use in the event of an emergency.*

④

#### **Medicals:**

DVLA and the medical profession are ideally suited to address any driving issues regarding fitness to drive so why should the council need to duplicate.

It is age discrimination to make drivers aged over 65 have to take a more frequent medical.

#### **19. Medical Fitness**

*All drivers are required to undertake a medical examination to ensure their fitness to drive. The standards required are as laid down in the DVLA publication "At a Glance Guide to the Current Medical Standards of Fitness to Drive". The standard required is the "Group 2 Entitlement the DVLA medical standards guidance of fitness to drive". Copies of this document can be obtained from the Council's Licensing Section. No grandfather rights are given by the council in*

*relation to medical matters.*

*Applicants would be screened for fitness before a licence is issued and at five yearly intervals from age 45, or sooner if stipulated by the examining doctor.*

*Applicants over the age of 65 or who attain the age of 65 during a licensed period will be required to provide a medical certificate annually.*

⑤

**Driving Ability tests:**

The policy does not require Advanced driving skills but the test is carried out by a Shrewsbury based advanced driving examiner. If the council still consider the requirement for a driving test despite DVLA,s & medical professional's stringent administration of a driving licence, why not allow all approved School of Motoring businesses across the county to provide this diving assessment. Not only would me more cost effective for the trade & the authority but would allow driving instructor's across the county a chance to bid.

⑥

**Knowledge tests:** The knowledge test at present is little more than a paper exercise and adds very little practical value for passengers or drivers and a revised test should be available at the local office; Knowledge test should be zone specific .

*8. All new applicants will be required to take and pass a knowledge test in English*

*prior to obtaining a licence. New applicants will also be required to take and pass a driving ability test or hold an advanced motorist qualification.*

⑦

**Drivers Licences;** The council should consider a five year badge to help with costs and consider a "hackney Carriage badge and Private Hire badge as opposed to a joint badge.

⑧

**Vehicle tests.**

The policy requirement for vehicles over 9 years old to have a MOT test every 16 weeks is far too stringent and goes against best practice guidance.

9 ON DUTY? :

Clarification on what is deemed "ON DUTY "

**14. Animals**

*Whilst on duty the driver shall not convey in a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire*

*Vehicle any animals belonging to or in the custody of himself or the proprietor or*

*operator of the vehicle without prior permission of the Licensing Authority. Any*

*animal belonging to or in the custody of any passenger may be carried at the*

*driver's discretion. Assistance and guide dogs must be carried when requested*

*unless the driver holds a medical exemption. Drivers must not impose a charge*

*for carrying assistance dogs. Assistance dogs may be permitted to travel in the*

*front of the vehicle.*

10

**Removal of Zones:** The Department for transport recommends the abolition of zones, chiefly for the benefit of the travelling public. Zoning tends to diminish the supply of taxis and the scope for customer choice - for example, Very few taxis operate in North Shropshire but taxis from Oswestry only a few miles down the road from Ellesmere cannot pick up passengers unless pre booked. It can be confusing and frustrating for people wishing to hire a taxi in Ellesmere to find that a vehicle licensed by the relevant local authority is nonetheless unable to pick them up (unless pre-booked) because they are in the wrong part of the local authority area. Abolition of zones can also reduce costs for the local authority, for example through simpler administration and enforcement. It can also promote fuel efficiency, because taxis can pick up a passenger

anywhere in the local authority area, rather than having to return empty to their licensed zone after dropping a passenger in another zone."

11

#### Vehicle Signage:

A licence plate should be displayed on the Front of the vehicle as well as the back to allow for easy identification to the public.

The policy dictates the size of a taxi roof sign and precise sizes of the lettering does this need to be so stringent;

To simplify can the policy state that taxis should display a roof sign with the words TAXI and illuminated through the meter switch.

*5.5 All vehicles are required to display a white roof sign bearing the words TAXI on*

*the front and rear in uppercase black lettering of a minimum height of 79mm,*

*width 50mm, stroke width 14mm and spacing between lettering of 11mm. The*

*sign must be capable of being illuminated and mounted across the roof of the*

*vehicle (excepting purpose-built taxis). All lighting to comply with current road*

*vehicle legislation.*

12

Door signs. Why less than one week.

*3.4 Use of magnetic panels is discouraged for anything other than short term use (less*

*than one week) as they lack adequate adhesion.*

13

What is the definition of an executive style vehicle?

*3.6 All vehicles (with the exception of executive style vehicles) will be required to*

*display Council issued signage on the side of the vehicle. This will carry the*

*Council logo, PHV licence number and the words 'Prebooked only'.*



14

CRB Barring: Shropshire Council should make available the "Online CRB Barring" provision.

15

**Convictions:**

Removal of item 9. **Convictions – Written Notification.**

*As part of the licence conditions, the applicant is asked to disclose all convictions*

*and cautions. Therefore all convictions must be disclosed, including spent*

*convictions;*

This inclusion breaches confidentiality all relevant information is available within the CRB & Barring document.

16

**Licensing staffing levels:**

A licensing officer should be available 9 to 5 Monday to Friday in each of the zones to help eliminate the authority's continuing maladministration and provide equality of service across the county.

*The Council's aim is to provide a responsive service to the trade and members of*

*The public at all times during normal office hours.*

17

**Taxi Ranks:**

The policy should include the authority's statutory requirement to provide a adequate number of taxi ranks or stands in each of the zones to accommodate licenced hackney vehicles.

18

Communication:

Greater communication between the authority and licenced drivers and stakeholders including a regular newsletter.

*yours faithfully*

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From:  
To: [Taxis@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Taxis@shropshire.gov.uk)  
Subject: Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy Consultation  
Date: Fri, 13 Jun 2014 15:59:15 +0000

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For more information, please refer to <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/privacy.nsf>  
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**Removal of Zones:** The Department for transport recommends the abolition of zones. That is chiefly for the benefit of the travelling public. Zoning tends to diminish the supply of taxis and the scope for customer choice - for example, Very few taxis operate in North Shropshire but taxis from Oswestry only a few miles down the road from Ellesmere cannot pick up passengers unless pre booked. It can be confusing and frustrating for people wishing to hire a taxi in Ellesmere to find that a vehicle licensed by the relevant local authority is nonetheless unable to pick them up (unless pre-booked) because they are in the wrong part of the local authority area. Abolition of zones can also reduce costs for the local authority, for example through simpler administration and enforcement. It can also promote fuel efficiency, because taxis can pick up a passenger anywhere in the local authority area, rather than having to return empty to their licensed zone after dropping a passenger in another zone."

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Door signs.

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Removal of item 9. **Convictions – Written Notification.**

*As part of the licence conditions, the applicant is asked to disclose all convictions and cautions. Therefore all convictions must be disclosed, including spent convictions;*

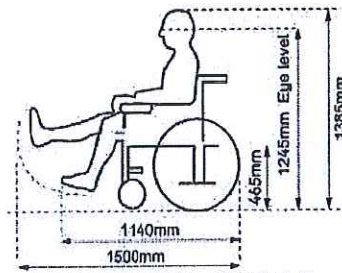
This inclusion breaches confidentiality all relevant information is available within the CRB & Barring document.

*WAV. (Wheel chair accessible vehicles) :*

*By adopting the 100% wheelchair accessible taxi policy, you will be discrimination against the very people that the Disability Discrimination Act was supposed to help. Most wheelchair users can transfer from wheelchair to saloon car but have great difficulty with WAV because the seats are at a greater height than the wheelchair (wheelchair height 465mm wav seat height 750 mm +\_*

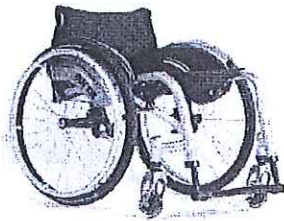


*ZONE 4 TYPE HIGH SEATING POSITION*



*: SEAT HIGHT 465 MM*

Many modern wheel chairs are of a carbon fibre composite, (quickie types) and cannot be strapped down into a wav due to the design and these passengers mostly prefer to transfer to a salon car.



*CARBON FIBRE  
quickie type*



*: saloon taxis type Shropshire zone 1,2,3,5*

**Not all disabled people are in wheelchairs.** More than 20 million people in this country, including many whom are young and look very fit, have arthritis. Many of these would find it difficult to get into a Shrewsbury and Atcham ZONE 4 Type WAV.

Why make life harder for people who already live in pain?

Taxi drivers play a major part in transporting disabled persons and we would like to carry on doing so, but many of us may be prevented from this rewarding aspect of our business by this unnecessary legislation.

We have been transporting the disabled for many years, with Oswestry having one of the largest disabled collages in the country The Derwen Collage Gobowen and The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt hospital. Many private hire licensed organisations specialize with wheelchair transportation including. Dial a ride, patient first, NSL.along with many independent private hire operators and have no unmet demand for services.

#### **Licensing staffing levels:**

A licensing officer should be available 9 to 5 Monday to Friday in each of the zones to help eliminate the authority's continuing maladministration and provide equality of service across the county.

*The Council's aim is to provide a responsive service to the trade and members of  
The public at all times during normal office hours.*

#### **Taxi Ranks:**

The policy should include the authority's statutory requirement to provide a adequate number of taxi ranks or stands in each of the zones to accommodate licenced hackney vehicles.

#### **Communication:**

Greater communication between the authority and licenced drivers and stakeholders including a regular newsletter.



---

**From:**  
**Sent:** 09 August 2014 05:45  
**To:**  
**Subject:** [GCSx] FW: Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Policy Review

Dear

① I have had opportunity to read Shropshire Council's Hackney carriage and Private Hire Policy and have a number of comments to make.

It is quite clear from the documents published in this consultation that Safeguarding is at it's heart. However when considering the potential and real events which either could or have occurred over recent years in both Shropshire and Telford, I support close, partnership working relationships with statutory partners and would encourage the Authorities ability to respond to information of relevance to the decision upon a drivers ongoing suitability to operate a taxi.

I consider it essential in the interests of safety that information known by Statutory partners needs to be shared with the Licencing authority, even when matters have not proceeded as far as prosecution, under the category of **Pressing Social Need**. Clearly the premise of being innocent until proven guilty is a bedrock of the justice system but for the authority to be truly robust and potentially discharge its duties it ought to be able to consider matters of **relevance** and committee's should have the capability to immediately suspend or revoke a licence if satisfied by the weight of evidence or information.

I feel that information or intelligence indicating a driver is either not safe to, or no longer safe to, licence, should be disclosable. This would need to be subject to the usual safeguards and considerations and possibly some thought needs to be had around what information is disclosed to the Lincensing manager and or the members committee.

I believe the authority should be able to consider a drivers suitability on the back of a **Community Resolution** being recorded against a driver or where **No Further Action** following the investigation into a serious offence, takes place, when the weight of the information potentially alludes to their suitability to be, or to continue to be a licenced driver.

Any inference as to the suitability of the driver to be licenced would need to be seriously tested given the circumstances but if this were the second or subsequent incident with similar result then a review may be justified.

I have particular concerns about the span of the authorities control and feel that to protect itself then a review of the current arrangement whereby drivers operation wholly or mainly in another Local Authority Area is needed. I feel the capacity to safeguard weakens the further the driver operates from the location they are Licensed.

These are my main considerations and would be happy to discuss them further if necessary.

Yours sincerely

---

**From:**  
**Sent:** 21 August 2014 13:04  
**To:**  
**Subject:** FW: Shropshire Council's Consultation on HC and PH Licensing Policy  
**Attachments:** TWC Response 21 08 14.pdf

**From:**  
**Sent:** 21 August 2014 12:37  
**To:** Taxis  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Shropshire Council's Consultation on HC and PH Licensing Policy

Dear

Please find attached Telford & Wrekin Council's response to the above consultation.

Regards

Telford & Wrekin Council  
Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection  
Public Protection (Environmental Health, Licensing & Trading Standards)  
Darby House  
Telford  
TF3 4JA

Telephone: 01952 383261  
Fax: 01952 381993  
[www.telford.gov.uk](http://www.telford.gov.uk)

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This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the originator of the message.

Any views expressed in this message are those of the individual sender, except where the sender specifies and with authority, states them to be the views of Telford & Wrekin Council.

The content of this email has been automatically checked in conjunction with the relevant policies of Telford & Wrekin Council.



**Shropshire Council – Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policies**

1 Please find below a corporate response from Telford & Wrekin Council to the current consultation on Shropshire Council's Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

Telford & Wrekin Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to Shropshire Council's Consultation. It is extremely important to us to make comment to a Policy that has possible public safety implications within our Borough.

We are particularly keen to comment on this policy as Shropshire Council now licence a significant number of vehicles and drivers that were previously licensed by Telford & Wrekin Council. In addition, many licences issued by Shropshire Council relate to vehicles and drivers which operate within the Borough of Telford & Wrekin. We, therefore, feel that this would have been an ideal opportunity to look at harmonising policies, given these circumstances and the general direction of travel suggested by the Law Commission, but also feel that this opportunity may have been missed. We would be willing to discuss this further with the committee.

We do wish to work together and have invited Shropshire Council's comments on changes to our policy, such as in October 2013 Telford & Wrekin Council undertook a twelve week consultation exercise in an attempt to revise its Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy and Conditions of Licences, but unfortunately no comment was received.

2 **Section 1. Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence – Conditions of Licence.**

7.1. *policy of insurance or such security.....* We would suggest that the wording should include insurance cover for the purposes of hire and reward

3 **Section 2. Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions**

Telford & Wrekin Council has no comment to make other than our earlier comment regarding harmonising policies.

4 **Section 3 – Private Hire Operators Licence Conditions**

Telford & Wrekin Council has no comment to make other than our earlier comment regarding harmonising policies.

5 **Section 4 – Drivers' Licence Conditions**

**Requirements**

5. We would suggest that for any documents which require translation, it is worth including that such documents should also be authenticated and sealed.

8. We would suggest that it would be an opportune time to ensure the Knowledge Test includes some reference to drivers understanding the geographical area of Telford & Wrekin.

6 **Conditions of Licence**

9. Convictions. You do not state within what timeframe a licensed driver must disclose any convictions. Telford & Wrekin Council's conditions state *The Licence holder shall notify the Council in writing of any conviction, caution or charge recorded against him/her by any Authority within 7 days of such a conviction, caution or charge being imposed.*

16. Insurance – *to include third party and public hire risk – We would suggest that the wording should include insurance for hire and reward which is appropriate to the vehicle licensed (i.e. Public hire for Hackneys and private hire for Private Hire Vehicles. Private Hire Vehicles should not be insured for public hire.)* Telford & Wrekin Council's conditions state : *It is the Dual Driver's responsibility to ensure that there is a valid certificate or cover note of insurance in existence for him/her to drive the vehicle. Insurance covering Public Hire for Private Hire vehicles will not be accepted by the Council.*

20. As with the Driver Requirements (No.8), we feel it would be an opportune time to ensure the Knowledge Test includes some reference to the drivers understanding the geographic area of Telford & Wrekin.

22.1 This is an excellent inclusion. Telford & Wrekin Council should look to include this item as a condition of licence, due to the change in the Disclosure and Barring Service's procedures which has resulted in a number of drivers failing to notify the Council that they have received their Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate.



MINISTRY STRATEGIC AND PRIVATE HIRE CONSULTATION DRAFT  
22 August 2014

Shrewsbury Tourism and Local Board of the Shrewsbury Taxi Business Group have come together to produce a joint paper for the Hackney License and Private Hire Policy consultation and request that the following points be considered.

1) A street test on the knowledge of the streets in the area and the test to include questions on important buildings and famous people in Shrewsbury and surrounding districts. All tests to be held for easy identification by the public.

2) A code of conduct:  
1. drivers to be smoothly attired.  
2. with clean and smart smelling cabs  
3. drivers to be punctual for appointments.  
4. drivers to be courteous eg. queuing customers and opening vehicles doors, taking luggage to destination etc.

3) Enforcement should be carried out by Shirehall officers  
1. checking that the correct licences are used  
2. to cut out the practice of over-booking; meters should be locked once taxi is selected.

3. the use of the shirehall badge and licence checked as follows to correct holder.  
4. a system installed so that the licence controller can receive complaints and complaints by the public.

Hackney License and Private Hire Policy Consultant,  
Shropshire Council,  
Shirehall,  
Shrewsbury.  
SY2 6MB.

LICENSING  
22 AUG 2014  
RECEIVED

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 22 August 2014 10:49  
**To:**  
**Subject:** FW: Consultation Response - Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy -  
**Attachments:** 2014.08.22 Letter policy consultation response) to Shropshire Council.pdf; ATT00001.txt

-----Original Message-----

**From:**  
**Sent:** 22 August 2014 08:56  
**To:** Taxis  
**Subject:** Consultation Response - Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy -

Dear Sir / Madam,

As you may be aware, I act on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, the two largest private hire companies in the county.

In connection with your consultation in relation to the proposed new / amended Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy, please see the attached letter, which I send on behalf of my aforementioned clients.

If you require further information or clarification of anything therein, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Licensing Consultant, Mediator and Trainer Consulting Editor, Paterson's Licensing Acts 2015

Licensing  
Shropshire Council  
Shirehall  
Abbey Foregate  
Shrewsbury  
SY2 6ND

Our Ref:  
Your Ref:  
Date: 22 August 2014  
Please ask for:

By First Class post and email to:  
licensing@shropshire.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy  
Consultation response of Central Taxis (Shrewsbury) and Diamond Cars (Shifnal)**

I act on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, the two largest private hire companies in the county.

Please accept this letter as their joint response to the consultation in relation to the proposed revised / new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

In the hope that it assists, we shall present comments under subject headings and, wherever possible, identify text with reference to page, paragraph or condition of licence number.

**1 Hackney carriage zones**

Not only would it be useful if the proposed policy included details of the recognised hackney carriage zones, but if an explanation were given as to their creation and the decision to retain them.

Whilst not a matter that directly affects my clients, the Council will appreciate that it is being challenged by way of objection to the annual accounts to satisfy the External Auditor that the Council genuinely has only five hackney carriage zones and not more, as it would if the former district councils had failed to pass resolutions to amalgamate their zones into single controlled districts.

**2 Private hire licensing**

As the Council will appreciate, it is also being challenged to prove that each and every former district council adopted throughout the whole of each area Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, because in the absence of such adoption, the Council cannot administer private hire licensing in any such area. The following comments are made without prejudice to these legal challenges.

**3 Regulators' Code**

The Regulators' Code (BDRO 14/705) came into force on 6 April 2014. It is a statutory code made under section 23 of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and applies to local authorities in relation to hackney carriage and private hire licensing.

Rather than reproduce the whole code herein, we highlight below certain provisions of the code that we think to be particularly relevant and attach a copy of the code for your ease of reference.

5.1 Regulators should provide advice and guidance that is focused on assisting those they regulate to understand and meet their responsibilities. When providing advice and guidance, legal requirements should be distinguished from suggested good practice and the impact of the advice or guidance should be considered so that it does not impose unnecessary burdens in itself.

5.2 Regulators should publish guidance and information in a clear, accessible, concise format using media appropriate to the target audience and written in plain language for the audience.

With the greatest of respect, the current proposed policy does not meet the above requirements. Rather than being a policy, it is a collation of a multitude of documents that fail in many regards to clearly distinguish policy, law, conditions of licence and good practice.

The Council is urged to reformulate the document so that it begins by clearly setting out policy matters (including those not included in the consultation document, such as that relating to the intended use of a hackney carriage and in relation to enforcement) and then separately append details of legal requirements, conditions of licence and any other relevant documents.

The guidance notes appearing at pages 25-29 appear best to amount to policy and ought to be the foundation of the proposed policy document followed by the relevance of convictions policy appearing at pages 31-46, although it would be appreciated if that document could be simplified and condensed.

**4** Section 1: Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence – Conditions of Licence

Conditions 2 and 3 and much of 4 and 7.1 are not conditions of licence, but pre-licensing requirements that might be better described as being 'policy', because whilst they express the Council's usual requirements it may, in the exercise of its statutory discretion, derogate from policy if it considers it appropriate to do so in a particular case.

Condition 6 duplicates statutory requirements – Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, sections 49 and 50(3) – and should not, therefore appear as a condition of licence, but could properly be included in a list of legal requirements.

Condition 7.3 duplicates statutory requirements – Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, sections 50(4), 53(3) and 68 – and should not, therefore appear as a condition of licence, but could properly be included in a list of legal requirements.

Condition 13 duplicates Condition 6.2 which itself duplicates a statutory requirement.

Conditions 14 and 15 concerning notification of change of address and of convictions, cautions, arrests, etc are new and have my clients full support.

Condition 16 appears to be a statement of fact and not a condition of licence.

**5** Section 2: Private Hire Vehicle Licence – Conditions of Licence

Conditions 1 and much of 2 and 7.1 are not conditions of licence, but pre-licensing requirements that might be better described as being 'policy', because whilst they express the Council's usual requirements it may, in the exercise of its statutory discretion, derogate from policy if it considers it appropriate to do so in a particular case.

Conditions 7.1 and 8.1 duplicate or partially duplicate statutory requirements – Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, sections 50(3) and (4) and 58(1) – and should not, therefore appear as conditions of licence, but could properly be included in a list of legal requirements.

Conditions 9 and 10 concerning notification of change of address and of convictions, cautions, arrests, etc are new and have my clients full support.

**6** Section 3: Private Hire Operators Licence – Conditions of Licence

Conditions 2, 3 and 5 are not conditions of licence, but concerned with pre-licensing requirements. Furthermore, Condition 3 appears to suggest that the Council will

unlawfully require applicants who are not licensed drivers to submit to an DBS check. As the occupation of 'private hire operator' is not an exempt occupation, as prescribed by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975, a no-one can lawfully request a Standard or Enhanced DBS disclosure certificate. A Basic disclosure certificate can only be obtained by an individual from Disclosure Scotland, should the Council wish to incorporate such a pre-licensing requirement as a matter of policy.

Condition 6 partially duplicates statutory requirements by stating the need to have an OFCOM licence and to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, but also seeks to prescribe the level of service an operator should provide to a customer when it would not do so when licensing any other business. No local authority attaches conditions requiring bookmakers shops / offices to be adequately heated and ventilated or to require an ice cream van to be in attendance at a particular location at a particular time or to require pubs and off-licences to have sufficient staff to avoid queuing at the bar or checkout. These are commercial matters for the determination of the operator. Good operators will meet or exceed these standards and prosper whilst poor operators will have to raise their standards or fail.

Condition 7 will purports to restrict an operator's ability to sub-contract to an operator elsewhere in the country, which they will be able to if the Deregulation Bill receives Royal Assent.

Condition 14 has not been, but should be, amended to bring it in line with the wording now proposed in relation to notifying the Council of convictions, cautions, arrests, etc in relation to other licences, i.e. hackney carriage vehicle licence, private hire vehicle licence and driver licence.

Condition 15 concerning the use of the words 'taxi' and 'cab' in the singular or plural is accepted and supported by my clients as a longstanding condition, but if the condition is not to be enforced – and it is not as the Council licenses operators trading as '... Taxis' – the Council should remove the condition. Alternatively the Council should enforce the condition, because it cannot commercially favour one operator over another.

Condition 16 is not, as a matter of fact, a condition, but a statement detailing the period for which a licence will be granted. This information is not only stated on the face of the licence, but will also be required to be changed from one or three years to five years if the Deregulation Bill receives Royal Assent.

Condition 17 is attached to the wrong licence. The condition is concerned with the installation and use of CCTV in vehicles and should, therefore be attached to hackney carriage vehicle and private hire vehicle licences.



**Section 4: Drivers' Licence - Conditions of Licence**

Conditions 1-10 (although there is no number 10) are categorised as 'requirements' and are not conditions of licence, but pre-licensing requirements that might be better described as being 'policy', because whilst they express the Council's usual requirements it may, in the exercise of its statutory discretion, derogate from policy if it considers it appropriate to do so in a particular case.

The introduction of a maximum of three knowledge tests and driving assessments provided by Conditions 8 and 9 are noted and supported, as long as 'a Manager' exercises their discretion to allow an additional knowledge test(s) or driving assessment(s) in appropriate cases.

The request by some members of the hackney carriage trade for a separate test for hackney carriage drivers is supported by my clients, who respectfully urge the Council to specifically consider what subjects it is necessary to test for each type of licence, as required by the paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 of the Regulators' Code. For example, it is suggested that all applicants for a driver's licence ought to be tested in mathematics, English and customer service, including disability awareness. The applicant's knowledge of the Highway Code should only be tested as part of the driving assessment and not unnecessarily duplicated within the knowledge test.

Whilst hackney carriage drivers might reasonably be required to demonstrate local topographical knowledge of the zone in which they intend to ply for hire, the private hire driver, having the benefits of pre-booking and support from their operator, should not need to demonstrate, let alone have, local topographical knowledge. This assertion is perhaps best demonstrated by the licensing requirements in London - a hackney carriage driver has to pass the internationally renowned 'London knowledge', but a private hire driver does not. Even to be licensed as a London private hire driver an applicant has to merely demonstrate topographical skills - the ability to plan a route from one specified location to another in London. Whilst it cannot be said that such an assessment would be irrelevant, because of the rural nature of Shropshire, it is submitted that such an assessment would be unnecessary. It is appreciated that this would necessitate the introduction of separate tests and separate driver licences - hackney carriage, private hire and combined hackney carriage and private hire driver licences. As the licensing processes are the same, it is accepted that the fee payable for each licence would be the same.

Separating the licences, which is legally necessary, because the Council cannot insist upon granting a combined licence to someone who wants to apply for only one of the licences, will require the compilation of conditions of licence specific to a private hire driver's licence, because a number of the current conditions relate to hackney carriage drivers.

The Council would also have to make or enforce existing byelaws in relation to hackney carriage drivers, because there is no power to attach conditions to a hackney carriage driver's licence. See *Wathan v Talbot Port Neath County*

Borough Council [2002] EWHC 1634 (Admin). It is suspected this is well known by the Council and probably one of the factors that resulted in the Council introducing the combined hackney carriage and private hire driver's licence.

Conditions 1, 3, 4.3, 6.2, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17 duplicate a myriad of statutory requirements - The Smoke-Free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007 (as stated in Condition 1), Transport Act 1985, section 139(2) and Schedule 7, Town Police Clauses Act 1847, section 48 (as stated in Condition 4.3), The Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seatbelts) Regulations 1993 (as amended), Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, sections 61(2)(a), 50(3) and 50(4) and the Criminal Justice Act and Public Order Act 1994, section 167.

Conditions 20 and 21 are not conditions of licence, but pre-licensing requirements that might be better described as being 'policy', because whilst they express the Council's usual requirements it may, in the exercise of its statutory discretion, derogate from policy if it considers it appropriate to do so in a particular case.

In relation to Condition 21, the Council is asked to include all documents in the application pack that it requires to be submitted, because it seems unreasonable to reject an application when the required documents were not provided by the Council in the first place.

Condition 22 appears to be a matter of policy in relation to those applying for their first driver's licence, but might usefully be a condition attached to a licence renewed prior to receipt of the DBS disclosure certificate. It is respectfully submitted that the Council might emphasise the need for drivers to produce the DBS disclosure certificate by re-stating the requirement on the face of the licence and / or in a covering letter issued with the licence.

With regards to the requirement for a DBS disclosure certificate, the Council is asked to introduce on-line bulk processing, presuming that annually it (and not just licensing) processes in excess of 1,500 applications, being the minimum number required to enrol for bulk processing. It is accepted that this comes at a higher cost to the applicant, but it is considered that the benefit to the trade of dramatically improved processing times and to the Council access to better information. If the Council cannot introduce bulk processing or chooses not to do so, it is respectfully asked to revise its processes so that an applicant for a new licence may submit their DBS application at the very beginning of the licensing process, because it is the part of the process that usually takes the longest and can delay a person's entry into the hackney carriage or private hire trade.

**Section 5: Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licence - Guidance Notes**

As has already been mentioned, this section appears to be 'policy' and would, from a readers perspective, better come at the beginning of this collation of documents.

Save for the matters already identified in relation to hackney carriage vehicle licences, private hire vehicle licences, operator licences and driver licences, my clients have no representations to make in relation to this section.

9

**Appendix A: Drivers' Licence – Guidance Relating to the Relevance of Convictions and Cautions**

It is respectfully submitted that, as a 19 page document (including 3 pages contained in Appendix D), this policy is too long and complex. Other councils have managed to condense their policies in relation to the relevance of convictions, medical standards and knowledge into a single page document that is simple to read and understand.

For the avoidance of doubt, I confirm that the objectives of the policy are not challenged in any way whatsoever, although one question why paragraph 53 in relation to sexual offences suggests that the period from from conviction should "usually [be] between 7 and 12 years" when paragraph 57 then goes on to specify 12 years free from conviction in relation to each of the offences listed, which may not be, but seems fairly comprehensive.

When considering how it might condense and simplify this policy the Council is urged to consider the new rehabilitation periods for convictions and cautions incorporated into the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, section 139, which might provide an opportunity for the Council to link its requirements to the statutory rehabilitation periods.

10

**Appendix B: Trailer Guidance**

No comment.

11

**Appendix C: Stretched Limousine Guidance**

No comment.

12

**Appendix D:**

Whilst a reference list of motoring offence and the associated offence code is useful, as stated above, it should not be necessary to incorporate this into the relevance of convictions policy.

13

**Appendix E: Advertising on Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles**

No comment.

If anything herein requires further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Reviews  
Appendix C

1. Dual Badging of drivers was discussed. It was noted that different skills were required by Hackney Carriage drivers to those held by private hire drivers.
  - 1a. Remove the current Joint Drivers Licence and Knowledge Test and replace it with a separate Private Hire and Hackney Drivers Badges.
  - 1b. Separate Knowledge Test for Hackney Carriage Drivers that is more difficult than the current one, to reduce numbers of awarded licences.
  - 1c. Replace the current Knowledge Test with a specific Zone Test for the Hackney Drivers application and a County Wide Knowledge Test for Private Hire Driver Applicants.
  - 1d. Drivers requested that the knowledge test should be revised to be more zone specific.
  - 1e. Were any changes proposed to the licensing process for new drivers.
2. Removal of Zones.
  - Oswestry drivers were in support of the removal of the zones which they considered restricted their trade and public access to their service.
  - Shrewsbury drivers stressed that they did not want the zones removed.
  - It was commented that operators had accepted a single county wide tariff on the understanding that de-zoning of the county would follow.
3. Disabled Access to Hackney Carriages.
  - The Drivers stated that they did not want this policy adapted across the county as a mixed fleet of cars was more suitable for disabled people. They stated that to accommodate wheel chairs, cars needed to be higher which meant that they were inaccessible to many disabled people and to some elderly customers.
4. Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles.
  - Drivers considered that the wording in the policy required amendment as it currently just referred to the requirement to be wheelchair accessible. It was suggested that a test be introduced to ensure that the vehicle could legally transport a wheelchair. Additionally it was noted that the vehicle should be wheelchair accessible at all times.

Meters.

5. A driver stated that the policy referred to mechanical meters which were no longer used and did not state that they should be calendar controlled and locked to prevent tampering.

6. Roof signs – these were considered by the trade to be useful as a means of identification of vehicles as 'taxis' to customers. There had been occasions where the lack of roof sign had resulted in loss of trade when a customer had seen the taxi roof sign on the hackney vehicle and the hackney takes the trade!

- 6a. Drivers enquired about the re-introduction of roof signage, and stated that they were in favour of it. Also the re-introduction of plates displayed on the front and rear of the vehicle. This was cited as a matter of driver safety.

6b. Create a clearer identity difference between Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles.

- It was suggested that Hackney Carriages should be black in colour as they were previous.
- It was added that this would have to be phased in as some drivers had now bought vehicles in a different colour.

6c. Private Hire Vehicle Door and Roof Signs.

- The signs that were shown during the previous consultation were different those produced.
- The colour of the roof sign was irrelevant and this should be removed from the policy.

7. Consider specific types of vehicles for Private Hire and Hackney use being introduced.

- Drivers' views differed on this point. Whilst some supported the additional vehicle test, others argued that age was no indication of usage and the requirement for additional MOTs should be based on this.
- A driver proposed that the vehicles should have an MOT twice a year or every 15,000 miles, whichever came first.

8. Height of access to vehicle.

- It was pointed out that there should be a maximum height to step into a vehicle as some members of the public especially elderly people cannot get into some vehicles.

APPENDIX B  
DOC. 7

9. Plate numbers – it was considered that these caused confusion – some customers thinking the plate number was a telephone number!
10. Private Hire 'Pull Back Position' – the current lack of a pull back position for private hire vehicles in Shropshire caused problems as drivers currently parked up in areas where they knew the work was likely to be forthcoming. MB commented that the current lack of pull back condition in the policy allowed private hire drivers to park in any designated, safe place to park.
11. Age of Vehicles – Were there any plans to reduce the age of vehicles allowed to be licensed?  
11a. Introduce a 10 year upper age limit on vehicles.
12. Introduce an upper limit on vehicle numbers licensed.
13. The driving assessment.  
• A number of drivers queried the requirement for all drivers to undergo a driving assessment. An operator stated that the DVLA confirmed a driver's competence through the issuing of the Driving Licence. MB replied that this was not always an indication of a sufficient level of competence to carry paying passengers.  
• A driver proposed that new drivers should only undertake a driving assessment test if there were concerns regarding their driving ability.
14. Taxi Marshalls every weekend to be paid for by the Hackney Carriage Fees.
15. Make the new policy more enforceable.
16. Spare Tyres.  
• It was pointed out that some new vehicles do not have a spare tyre and Private Hire Vehicles have to carry a spare tyre.
17. Access to Officers.  
• Drivers commented that the policy required that any reportable incident be reported immediately. This was not possible when the incident happened outside office hours. Drivers requested that the policy be re-worded to reflect this.
18. Future Consultation. Drivers asked for the introduction of a twice yearly newsletter and annual Taxi Forum.