

AGENDA ITEM 5

TITLE: CONSULTATION ON LOCAL TRANSPORT AUTHORITIES AND THE LICENSING OF TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

Committee: Licensing Committee

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1.0 Issue

- 1.1 To inform Members of a Government consultation on the transfer of responsibility for taxis and private hire licensing from District Councils and Metropolitan Borough Councils to Local Transport Authorities ("LTA's") in England as part of an effort to curb "out of area" working.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the content of this report and are invited to submit comments for officers to consider.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Responsibility for licensing Hackney Carriage drivers and vehicles and Private Hire driver, vehicles and operators currently rests with approximately 263 District Councils and Metropolitan Borough Councils, each of which has their own licensing policy and conditions. Of these there are 164 District Councils, 62 Unitary Authorities, 36 Metropolitan Borough Councils and Transport for London.
- 3.2 Each authority has responsibility in respect of licences which it has issued, however, drivers and vehicles from outside an authority's area may quite legitimately be used for services in that authority's area.
- 3.3 Under the Transport Act 2000, LTA's are responsible for formulating transport policies and publishing them through a local transport plan. East Cambridgeshire District Council falls within the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority LTA which includes the District Councils in the Greater Cambridgeshire area along with Peterborough's Unitary Authority and the County Council. There are 70 LTA's in England in total.

4.0 Summary

- 4.1 In a consultation launched on 8 January 2026, the Department for Transport has proposed reduction of the number of licensing authorities from 263 to 70. The consultation runs for 12 weeks, closing on 1 April 2026.
- 4.2 A copy of the consultation can be found on the following link. [Local transport authorities and the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles - GOV.UK](#).
- 4.3 Consultation questions:

Questions to local authorities who are currently responsible for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing:

If all local transport authorities were made responsible for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing as proposed, would your local authority expect:

Question 1: Any one-off costs? If so, what would the one-off costs to your authority be for? How much would the costs be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required in hours.

Question 2: Any ongoing costs? If so, what would the ongoing costs to your authority be for? How much would the additional costs be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required in hours.

Question 3: Any one-off savings? If so, what would the savings to your authority be for? How much would the savings be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required.

Question 4: Any ongoing savings? If so, what would the savings to your authority be for? How much would the savings be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required.

Questions 5 to 8 only for LTAs to answer.

Consultation questions for the Taxi and PHV sector to answer (for Member information only):

If all local transport authorities were made responsible for taxi and PHV licensing as proposed, would you expect:

Question 9: Any one-off costs? If so, what would the one-off costs be for? How much would the additional costs be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required in hours.

Question 10: Any ongoing costs? If so, what would the ongoing costs be for? How much would the costs be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required in hours.

Question 11: Any one-off savings? If so, what would the savings to your business be for? How much would the savings be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required.

Question 12: Any ongoing savings? If so, what would the savings be for? How much would the savings be? Please provide a monetary value in pounds, if possible, otherwise the resource time required.

Consultation questions for all respondents:

Question 13: Should all local transport authorities be responsible for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing? Why?

Question 14: Are there wider economic benefits in making all local transport authorities responsible for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing? If so, what are they?

Question 15: Are there other costs in making all local transport authorities responsible for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing? If so, what are they?

- 4.4 Members will note that nearly all of the questions for consultees relates to cost and savings implications. Questions 1-4 apply to existing licensing authorities. Only question 13, addressed to all respondents, is not focused on financial issues, and is an open question asking if LTA's should take responsibility and why?
- 4.5 This consultation is related to but separate from a proposed consultation on national minimum standards for the trade, following Baroness Casey's investigation into group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, which is due to be launched this year.
- 4.6 Officers will seek to address questions 1-4 of the consultation and draft views on questions 13-15. This consultation will also be brought to the attention of the trade via a circular email.
- 4.7 It is intended to bring proposed responses to the meeting of Committee on 18 March 2026, taking into account any response from Members, who are welcome to liaise with officers in relation to the relevant questions. A response can then be submitted by 1 April 2026.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the content of this report and are invited to submit comments for officers to consider.

6.0 Additional Implications Assessment

- 6.1 In the table below, please put Yes or No in each box:

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Human Resources (HR) Implications

No	No	No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
English Devolution White Paper - English Devolution White Paper - GOV.UK	Room SF204 The Grange, Ely	Stewart Broome Licensing Manager (01353) 616287