



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Equality Impact Assessment: Full Assessment

1. Background

Requirement	Detail
Title of Proposal	Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy
Type of proposal: Change/Update to current sovereign policies.	Updated policy to supersede the existing sovereign policies
Department	Regulatory Services
Section	Licensing
Lead Officer Name	Nicholas Sutcliffe
Lead Officer Job Title	Licensing Manager
Officer who completed Equality Screening Assessment	Nicholas Sutcliffe
Equality Screening Assessment completion date.	1/9/23

Requirement	Detail
Director Informed of Full Assessment Requirement on (date).	1/9/23
Equality Impact Assessment Completion Date	1/9/23

2. Legal Requirements

The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on all public bodies to have `due regard` to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Foster good relations.
- Advance the opportunity of equality.

Equality Impact Assessments are the way we evidence that we have met the requirements of the general equality duty.

As a local authority we also have a specific duty to publish information about people who are affected by our policies and practices.

All Equality Impact Assessments will be published on the West Northamptonshire Council website.

3. Proposal Details

Description of the proposal:

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy

What are the key objectives of this proposal?

This new Policy will replace the current and still in force Northampton Borough, Daventry District and South Northamptonshire District Council policies and includes a number of updates and improvements with a clear policy statement. One unified policy is required to ensure consistency of approach and standards across West Northamptonshire.

This policy document sets out the driver, vehicle and operator standards and the way we will undertake our responsibilities for hackney carriage and private hire licensing. The policy sets out a clear approach to these matters for officers, members of the trade and the public.

The significant areas this policy focuses on are:

- improved driver standards,
- strengthening the “fit and proper person” test
- adopting the nationally recognised IOL convictions policy
- mandatory safeguarding training
- spoken English testing
- driving standards training

Who will benefit from this proposal?

The policy will benefit those who we licence by giving them clarity around the application process and the standards that West Northants Council requires. It will benefit the public as it will help to ensure that the drivers and vehicles they use have met the highest standards. It will also benefit officers as it updates all 3 current sovereign policies and will ensure a consistent approach across West Northants.

What were the findings of the initial Equality Screening Assessment?

An initial screening was undertaken before the policy went out to consultation and we didn’t identify any potential negative impacts. However, during the consultation period concerns around the Certificate of Good Character (the equivalent of an overseas DBS criminal record check so important in ensuring that we can be confident our licence holders remain “fit and proper”) were raised in relation to the

extra burden the requirement for one to be submitted for any period of 3 or months spent outside of the country would have on a certain demographic.

4. Data Evidence

What information or data, additional to that found in the ESA have you obtained?

The issue was around the frequency rather than the requirement for the Certificate itself. Having done some research it transpired that a number of local authorities ranging from Leeds to our neighbours, North Northants Council have made the requirement for a Certificate to be supplied for any period of 6 months or more spent outside of the country. During the consultation period this was communicated to the trade and this seemed to be far more acceptable.

How does this data or information help you assess the impact of the proposal on protected groups?

Extending the time period would reduce the burden on our licence holders who regularly visit countries in which their family reside. There has previously been a requirement for new applicants to provide a Certificate had their 5 year address history identified a period spent outside of the UK and those checks haven't revealed any convictions so moving from 3 months to 6 months would be very low risk.

What changes do you recommend being made to the proposal as a result of this evidence?

It is recommended that the policy requirement be changed from 3 months to 6 months. This has been discussed with both the Assistant Director – Reg Services and the Chair of the Licensing Committee and both agree.

What impact could these changes have on the overall outcome of the proposal?

The change will not have an overall impact on the policy.

Could these changes have a negative impact on any other equality group(s)?

The change will not have a negative impact on any other group.

5. Equality Impact

Using the evidence gathered above, describe the potential negative impact this proposal may have on individuals or groups because of their characteristics in the table below. Ensure you consider different groups within the protected groups.

Characteristic	The potential negative impact
Age	No negative impact
Disability	No negative impact
Sex	No negative impact
Marriage or Civil Partnership	No negative impact
Pregnancy or Maternity	No negative impact
Race	No negative impact if we move from 3 months to 6 months
Religion or Belief	No negative impact
Gender reassignment	No negative impact
Sexual Orientation	No negative impact

Characteristic	The potential negative impact
Health & Wellbeing	No negative impact

Consultation

Who has been consulted with as part of this Equality Impact Assessment?

Who was consulted	Dates	Why was this group consulted?	Any negative impact on equality groups identified?	What change(s) will be made to the proposal as a result of this consultation?
The taxi trade as part of the wider policy consultation	30/1/23 – 23/4/23	Due to the nature of the make-up of licence holders the 3-month requirement had the potential to create an extra burden.	The 3-month requirement had the potential to have a negative impact.	Changing the requirement from 3 months to 6 months to fall in with the requirement of other licensing authorities will reduce the burden to a proportionate level.

Are further consultations planned? (give dates, explain reason who is to be consulted).

6. Assessing the Impact

Has the possibility of the negative impact identified in the Equality Screening Assessment been eliminated once the above changes have been implemented?

If no, an Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan must be completed to evidence how the negative impact will be mitigated, reduced and reviewed. (Please see action plan template at the end of this document)

Yes

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

What monitoring systems are in place to measure and monitor the impact that the proposals have on protected groups?

We will remain in contact with the taxi trade via meetings with both the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Associations to ensure that 6 months remains a sensible threshold.

8. Decision Making Summary

Findings should be summarised here. Highlight how the proposal contributes towards the general equality duty. Include changes you have made as part of this process.

We listened to what the taxi trade had to say during the 3 month long consultation process and took on board on what they had to say about the requirement to submit a Certificate after 3 or more months outside of the country. We decided that a period of 6 months or more would be more reasonable and wouldn't be as onerous for a large section of our trade. It also aligns us with our neighbours at North Northants Council and their recently introduced new policy. So, the requirement will be that a Certificate of Good Character will now be required for a period of 6 months or more rather than the originally proposed 3 months or more.

9. Authorisation

Authorised by	Signature	Date
Department Director		
Assistant Chief Executive		

- A signed copy should be retained by the owner for audit purposes.
- A completed copy should be attached to the relevant committee paper.
- An electronic copy must be emailed to equalities@westnorthants.gov.uk to be logged and where necessary published.

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Adverse Impact	Actions to eliminate or reduce adverse impact	Officer Responsible	Action Target Date	Completed