



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 21 September 2023

Subject	Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licences
Report by	Councillor Mike Ninnmey, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health
Supporting Officer	<p>Christopher Bing Head of Legal and Democratic Services Chris.bing@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Jo Hooley Legal and Licensing Services Manager Jo.Hooley@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Martin Clarke Licensing Manager and Housing Lead Lawyer Martin.Clarke@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Teresa Bailey Senior Licensing Officer Teresa.Bailey@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Alison Woodley Licensing Officer Alison.Woodley@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</p>
Director	<p>Kate Blakemore Strategic Director Kate.blakemore@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</p>

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

Scrutiny Committee requested a review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licences

Options:

No other options were considered as this report was requested by the Scrutiny committee

Recommendation/s:

The Committee is asked to review the contents of the report and make any recommendations as felt necessary.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

Not applicable

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

Not applicable

Environmental:

Not applicable

Equalities and Diversity:

Not applicable

Financial:

Not applicable

Human Resources:

Not applicable

ICT:

Not applicable

Legal:

Not applicable

Risk:

Not applicable

External Consultees:

East Suffolk Council Licensed Drivers and Licensed Operators.

Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>How does this proposal support the priorities selected?</p> <p>The report has been requested to assist the Scrutiny Committee in reviewing the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Regime</p>			

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts

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| 1.1 | The Scrutiny Committee requested a review of the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Regime. |
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2 Current position

2.1 BACKGROUND

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| 2.2 | Licensing Services is responsible for ensuring that those licensed to drive Private Hire Vehicles (PHV) and Hackney Carriages (HC) are 'fit and proper' namely that they are safe drivers with good driving records and adequate experience, mentally and physically fit, honest and not persons who would take advantage of their passengers. |
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| 2.3 | In relation to Taxi and Private Hire Licensing the officer structure is attached as Appendix A. |
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| 2.4 | A Private Hire Licence allows a driver/car to undertake pre-booked journeys through an operator only. A Hackney Carriage Licence allows a driver/car to undertake pre booked journeys and ply for hire, which means that in addition to pre booked journeys they are permitted to use designated ranks and can also be hailed down in the street. They are usually identified with a TAXI sign on the roof and the council approves the maximum tariff for fares and other charges. |
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2.5 DRIVER/OPERATOR STANDARDS/APPLICATION PROCEDURE

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| 2.6 | A new applicant is required to attend an in-person appointment at one of the Council's offices with a Licensing Officer. There is an initial language proficiency test which involves elements of speaking, writing and reading the English language. |
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| 2.7 | The applicant is then required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service application form, provide Right to Work documents and ID documents. Following this appointment, the applicant can then undertake the driving assessment, the medical assessment and the college course. The Licensing Officer will undertake a check of the DVLA licence, and tax check. Once all checks have been completed satisfactorily, a 3-year licence can be issued. |
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| 2.8 | To hold a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage driver's Licence there is a statutory requirement to be a 'fit and proper person'. In addition, the Council has set its own criteria in its Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy which was last fully reviewed in March 2022 to reflect national Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards. A copy is attached as Appendix J. Any Licence granted will be subject to the Council's standard licence conditions. |
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| 2.9 | The conditions of licence provide a dress code for the drivers and a requirement that they wear their photographic identification badge. The Licences also include details of the byelaws made by the Council that the drivers are required to observe. A copy of the Hackney Carriage Driver Handbook and Conditions of Licence is attached as Appendix B and a copy of the Private Hire Driver Handbook and Conditions of Licence is attached as Appendix C. In addition, the Policy has minimum vehicle specifications as well as minimum vehicle standards. The vehicles are examined upon application and annual renewal of licence and every 6 months in between (a mid-term test). |
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2.10	The Council will not licence a vehicle that is already licenced with another local authority as this can cause disputes as to who has the jurisdiction to act against a proprietor of a vehicle. A driver can hold more than one licence and is therefore able to hold a licence in another local authority area.
2.11	Private Hire and Hackney Carriage drivers are in a unique position of trust. They transport the public, including children and vulnerable adults. People are voluntarily getting into a motor vehicle with a stranger. Therefore, the Council must ensure that drivers are, and remain, 'fit and proper' to hold a licence. This requirement is contained within Sections 51 and 59 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (Part II). Would you allow your son, daughter, spouse, partner, mother, father, grandson or granddaughter, or any other person for whom you care, to get into a vehicle with this person alone? Would you trust this person to take you to the airport and be comfortable with them knowing that your home is going to be empty for a while? If the answer to any of these questions is no, then the person is not a fit and proper to hold a driver's licence.
2.12	The Fit and Proper person test is the legal test for determining whether a person should be given a Licence. Under Part 2 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the local licensing authority cannot licence a driver unless satisfied that they are a fit and proper person. The fit and proper person test is a matter for the sub-committee to determine after a hearing. If a licence is granted that person must then remain fit and proper for the duration of that licence.
2.13	An individual will not be considered fit and proper to hold a licence if there is any evidence of dishonesty, and/or it can be shown that an applicant or existing licence holder has misled, or attempted to mislead, the Council (either Officers or Members of the Licensing Committee) as part of any process associated with the administration or determination of a licence.
2.14	<p>There are various tools to assist the Council in ascertaining whether the person is a fit and proper person and a suitable driver in accordance with our policy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We obtain an enhanced DBS check. This reveals whether the applicant has any convictions or cautions. Unlike for most other jobs, these are never spent. In addition, as the check is enhanced, the Chief Constable has discretion to add additional information and intelligence even if this does not relate to a conviction. The local licensing authority has a criminal records policy, and some offences will automatically bar a person from having a licence, the length of the bar can vary from 3 years following conviction to a lifetime bar. In all circumstances an applicant can require that their matter be put before the sub-committee. 2. There is a medical test. The driver's doctor, who has access to their medical history, must certify that they are medically fit to be a driver. The medical standard expected is that of a Group 2 DVLA vehicle driver. Group 2 licence holders are permitted to drive large goods vehicles, buses, and coaches. The medical test needs to be retaken at 45 and every 5 years after until 65 when it becomes a yearly test. Licence conditions state that we must be informed of any changes to medical circumstances which may affect driving ability. 3. An applicant is required to undergo a driving test with our independent assessor.

	<p>A driving assessment must be completed to ensure the applicant is competent in vehicular control and is able to carry out manoeuvres smoothly and safely. Part of the assessment includes a knowledge test to demonstrate the applicant has adequate knowledge of the legislation, a copy of which is attached as Appendix K, and the Council's licensing requirements.</p> <p>A hackney carriage applicant will also be required to undertake a test which will involve having geographical knowledge and being able to state the shortest route between two points given by the examiner.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. An applicant is required to undergo a 2-day college course relating to the role of a professional taxi and private hire driver and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and safety in the taxi and private hire work environment • Road safety when driving passengers in a taxi or private hire vehicle • Professional customer service in the taxi and private hire industry • Taxi and private hire vehicle maintenance and safety inspections • The regulatory framework of the taxi and private hire industry • Taxi and private hire services for passengers who require assistance • Routes and fares in the taxi and private hire vehicle industries • Transporting of parcels, luggage and other items in the taxi and private hire industries • Transporting of children and young persons by taxi or private hire vehicles (safeguarding, county lines and exploitation) • Disability awareness 5. The Council checks the National Register of Taxi and Private Hire Licence Revocations and Refusals database, also known as the NR3S database, this is a government mandated database where Local Authorities are required to input data about any driver whose licences, they have revoked or suspended or refused to grant or refused to renew. This is to stop drivers going from one authority to another in search of getting a Licence.
2.15	Whilst many applications are granted without issue, if there are questions as to whether an applicant meets the Council's criteria, then officers can refer the matter to the Licensing Sub-Committee if appropriate.
2.16	In the last 12 months 4 driver applications were refused following sub-committee hearing.
2.17	The Licensing Sub-Committee is made up of 3 members of the Licensing Committee who will hear from the Licensing Officer, the Applicant, and the Legal Advisor, they will then determine whether the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a licence. If they determine that the applicant is a fit and proper person then they will be granted a Licence, if they do not determine that the applicant is a fit and proper person, then the applicant will not be granted a Licence. The sub-committee consists of 3 members to ensure that they are always able to reach a decision.
2.18	If an applicant is unhappy with the decision of the Licensing Sub-Committee, they can appeal to the Magistrates' Court. The Magistrates' Court is a rehearing of the application.

2.19	Once a driver has been granted a licence, the licensing authority carries out 6 monthly DBS checks and has continual access to DVLA records and will check if we are alerted to any cause of concern.
2.20	Attached as Appendix D is a table setting out how East Suffolk Council compares with other Local Authorities in terms of the processes for issuing and reviewing Licences, the number of licences issued, and engagement.
2.21	SAFEGUARDING/ENFORCEMENT
2.22	<p>The Licensing Team can only enforce issues of which it is aware. There are 7 main ways that the Council becomes aware of issues.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Under the terms of their Licences drivers and operators are obliged to self-report any issues within 48 hours of an arrest and release, charge or conviction of any sexual offence, any offence involving dishonesty or violence and any motoring offence, and within 7 days of any conviction or caution imposed during the period of the licence. 2. The police should notify the local licensing authority of any concerns they are aware of regarding our Licenced drivers which call into question their suitability to be a licensed driver. There are ongoing discussions between the police and the Council to try to ensure that the information that the Local Licensing Authority requires from the police is disclosed in a timely manner. 3. Local authorities are required by the Taxi and Private Hire (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022 to share any concerns they have about a driver licensed with another local authority if they think that the other Local Authority would suspend or revoke the driver's Licence were they aware of these concerns. If we are informed by another local authority then under the terms of the Act, we are required to inform the reporting local authority as to whether we intend to suspend or revoke the driver's Licence and if we are not going to do so, the reasons for not acting. 4. The Licensing Enforcement Officer carries out routine and without notice inspections. He will also consider any intelligence received and act appropriately. 5. Under the terms of their licence, drivers are required to notify the Council within 7 days of any change to their medical circumstances. This is in addition to the medical test referred to in paragraph 2.14.2 above. 6. A member of the public can make a complaint about a driver, vehicle or operator direct to the Licensing Team. 7. The driver is required to register with the DBS Update Service. This is reviewed every 6 months.
2.23	Once a complaint is received, the Licensing Authority will investigate this complaint. This is done in accordance with paragraph 3.29 of the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy which reads:

	<p>“Any member of the public or passenger is able to make a complaint about the driver, the vehicle or the journey directly to the Licensing Team via the Council’s website under the taxi and private hire licensing pages. Stickers stating how to make a complaint to the Council will be provided by the Council which must be displayed in all licensed hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.”</p>
2.24	The driver may be called in for interview and further investigations made.
2.25	Once the council has investigated the offence, the nature of the enforcement action will depend on the seriousness of the offence and the driver or operator’s record.
2.26	<p>The Council operates a graduated system of enforcement in accordance with its policy, there are 6 main options for enforcement depending upon all the relevant circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Informal verbal warning 2. Formal written warning 3. Penalty points, in accordance with the Council’s penalty points scheme as set out in the policy. Where a licensee incurs 12 or more penalty points in any three-year period, the licensee will be referred to a Licensing Sub-Committee 4. Referral to the sub-committee for determination. The Sub-committee will decide what action if any to take. This may be in the form of suspension for a period, which may be up to the end of the Licence period, immediate revocation of the Licence or no action. 5. Immediate and summary suspension or revocation of the Driver’s Licence under Section 61(2B) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. This is done by the Licensing Manager and Housing Lead Lawyer acting under delegation from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. This is an officer function as due to the logistics it is not possible to arrange a licensing sub-committee within the time frames needed to protect the public. 6. Prosecution, there are various other offences under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, and the Town Police Causes Act 1847. Whilst the Council does not normally prosecute due to the other options available, and the limited penalties provided by the Acts, the Council will prosecute when it is in the interests of justice to do so.
2.27	Any driver who is unhappy with an enforcement decision can appeal to the Magistrates’ Court within 21 days of being formally notified of the decision. If they appeal then provided their licence was not summarily suspended or revoked under Section 61(2B) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, they will be able to drive pending the hearing of their appeal.
2.28	The Council has received 5 appeals in the last 6 years. 1 was withdrawn, 1 was dismissed following a hearing, 1 was resolved by agreement and 2 are ongoing. Given the number of decisions the Council makes, this is a good record.

2.29	Between the 1.3.2022 to 28.2.2023 the Council dealt with 211 enforcement issues relating to matters such as smoking in vehicle, inappropriate behaviour/language, poor driving, not wearing badge, dirty vehicle, query fare, unfit vehicle notices issued, failure to declare speeding offence.
2.30	A table setting out the number of licensing sub-committee hearings in East Suffolk for the period 1.08.2022 to 31.07.2023 compared to other Suffolk licensing authorities is attached as Appendix E
2.31	PARTNERSHIP WORKING
2.32	The Licensing Team works in partnership with a number of outside agencies, these are mainly in the form of forums and other working groups.
2.33	The Suffolk Licensing Officer's Group (SLOG) is a working group made up of the Senior Licensing Officers from all the Suffolk district councils. The main purpose is to share knowledge and working methods to ensure that there is a consistency of service throughout the county.
2.34	The Licensing Team also works in partnership with the police. Although drivers are supposed to report any issues, and many do, we are also reliant upon the police to advise us of any issues they are aware of relating to drivers.
2.35	An example of the police's involvement is when they arrest a driver for drink driving, or domestic assault or any other offence, they should notify the local licensing authority. The Licensing Team can then decide, what action is needed to safeguard the public.
2.36	The Suffolk Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) receives and processes all safeguarding referrals of children and adults at risk of harm and abuse. The MASH is facilitated by Suffolk Social Services and was developed because of learning from previous experiences, especially from lessons highlighted by reviews of serious safeguarding incidents across the country.
2.37	Referrals to social services involving concerns over licensed drivers' behaviour or actions towards children are initially assessed by the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) which is responsible for co-ordinating the response to concerns that an adult who works with children may have caused them or could cause them harm. LADO often invite concerned parties and a Licensing Officer to attend a meeting to discuss the circumstances. If the circumstances are upheld, then the report is then passed to the MASH to consider further appropriate action which may then involve a formal Police criminal investigation.
2.38	A recurring theme of these partnerships is the importance of information sharing and close working arrangements between relevant agencies.
2.39	The Licensing Team has a good relationship with the drivers and operators in its area. We consult with the drivers and operators regarding any proposed changes to licence conditions. We also operate an open-door policy meaning that drivers and operators are always welcome to talk to us and discuss any matters that they wish to raise with us. Whilst there is not a Local Trade Association, the Licensing Team would be happy to engage if one was to be formed. Feedback from the licensed drivers and operators is attached as Appendix L.
2.40	The Licensing Team also works in unison with the other teams within the Council. Its work has recently been audited and the overall service was rated as Reasonable.
2.41	POLICY ISSUES
2.42	Sub-Committee members are selected from the Licensing Committee membership. All Licensing Committee members receive induction and refresher training from

	the Licensing Team. This training is in person and is in 2 parts. The first part is an overall overview of the Licensing Team and its functions and is led by the Senior Licensing officer. The second part relates to the Sub-Committees functions and the legal framework which sits behind this, this part is led by the Licensing Manager and Housing Lead Lawyer.
2.43	The local licensing authority has the power to limit the number of Hackney Carriages. However, no cap is currently imposed. We do not have the power to limit the number of Private Hire Vehicles.
2.44	The Council's Licensing Fees are attached as Appendix F. They apply to both the north and south of the District. There is a difference between Private Hire and Hackney Carriage as there is additional work required to Licence a Hackney Carriage, as Hackney Carriages are required to have calibrated meters which need to be checked by the Licensing Team and their contractor. There are reduced fees for electric/hybrid vehicles, this is 75% of the Licensing Fee. There are also reduced fees for disability accessible vehicles, this is 50% of the Licensing fee. Both are to encourage more electric/hybrid/disability accessible vehicles.
2.45	Included within the budget for the 2023/24 financial year, the Councils income assumptions for fees and charges totals £18 million. Fees and charges are a key source of revenue for the Council and are set with the Council's core values in mind, ensuring services provided demonstrate value for money, remain competitive and are affordable for the local area.
2.46	Fees and charges are set using key assumption, with reviews being based on either the Council's approved charging mechanism or in accordance with the limitations set by various other governing bodies.
2.47	Currently, income relating to Licensing for the 2023/24 financial year is forecast to total £440,000, of which £167,000 relates to Taxi and Private Hire Licensing, equalling approximately 38% of its total revenue.
2.48	Licensing departments are required to set charges based on a cost recovery basis.
2.49	For the 2024/25 budget setting process, a continued approach of cost recovery will be maintained reviewing the officer time and associated costs with each licensing section.
2.50	The Council has 2 separate fare tables, for the North and South of the District, this is a legacy from the predecessor Councils. These tables are attached as Appendix G Following the creation of East Suffolk Council in 2019 there was a consultation with the drivers and operators about consolidating the fare tables into a single fare table for whole of the district. The majority of drivers and operators wished to maintain existing arrangements. It is believed that this is due to the differing geography and demography of the North and South of the District. The North with a more centralised population based around Lowestoft. The South with a more geographically diverse population without a single large town as the centre of population.
2.51	Under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council does have the power to impose a single fare table, however careful consideration would need to be given before doing this given the trade's previously stated views. In any event the Act requires notices to be placed in the local newspaper and a statutory consultation would also need to take place.

2.52	CHALLENGES
2.53	In relation to Uber is it important to stress Uber is a Private Hire Operator and in law no different to any other Private Hire Operator and will be treated no differently from any other operator. It is a matter for Uber as to whether they want to operate in East Suffolk. If they apply for an operator's licence this will be processed the same as any other applicant. If there were concerns about whether they are a fit and proper person to hold an operator's Licence, then it would be referred to the sub-committee for determination. The Licensing Committee does not know why Uber does not operate in East Suffolk; it is a commercial decision for Uber.
2.54	Attached as Appendix H is a table showing the impact that lockdown had on the number of licensed vehicles/drivers.
2.55	The decrease in hackney carriages cannot be put down solely to the effects of Covid. Many hackney carriage drivers have decided to change to a private hire vehicle. One of the large operators decided to change their vehicles from hackney carriage to private hire.
2.56	The Council is encouraging taxi and private hire operators to switch to electric/hybrid vehicles and disability adapted vehicles by a fee reduction scheme. This is the "carrot" approach. The Council does not have a policy regarding Hydrogen vehicles.
2.57	The Council does not operate a "stick" approach of refusing to Licence non hybrid/electric vehicles. The reason for this it would be uneconomical to force drivers and operator to switch to non-hybrid/electric vehicles.
2.58	In addition, there is not currently the infrastructure to run a taxi service based on electric or Hydrogen based vehicles alone. This may change in the future. If the Council wishes to take further immediate action, then one option may be linking fees to emissions or refusing to licence vehicles whose emissions are above a certain threshold.
2.59	It must be borne in mind that any policy the Council implements is subject to Judicial Review and may be overturned by the Court if it is found to be so unreasonable that no reasonable council could have imposed considering the geography and demography of the district. This could result in significant cost and reputational damage to the Council as well as industry discontent.
2.60	In relation to rural areas, there is a difficulty in getting Hackney Carriages to operate in these areas as their fares are regulated by the Council and it may not be economical for them to operate in rural areas. The Council has no power to force Hackney Carriages to ply for hire in a particular area. Likewise, outside of Lowestoft late night supply of Hackney Carriages is limited as there is not the nighttime economy required to generate the demand for Hackney Carriages. It is noticeable that there are fewer Hackney Carriages in the South of the District compared to the North of the District, 39 in North, 25 in South. This is a difficult problem to solve as fares need to be set at a level where drivers and operators can make a living but also set at a level that is affordable to the travelling public.
2.61	In relation taxi sharing and the rural community, there is a standard condition in a driver's licence which states that a driver will only carry additional passengers with the consent of the hirer and the number of passengers must not exceed the number for which the vehicle is licensed.

2.62	In relation to the geographical spread of drivers and operators please see Appendix I below which contains information relation the location of Private Hire Operators, Hackney Carriages and location of Taxi Ranks.
2.63	It is difficult to say if any area has excess or a lack supply as the supply and demand is market led. The licensing team has only received one comment about the lack of service and this relates to the availability of taxis when a nightclub in Felixstowe closes.
2.64	Drivers and Operators are notifying the Licensing Team that Community Bus services are taking over their business. https://www.factsbus.org.uk/ https://www.agespace.org/local/suffolk/enjoying-life/community-transport-schemes
2.65	There is a list of wheelchair adapted vehicles published on our website in accordance with section 167 of the Equality Act 2010. It is open to the licensing authorities to have a policy that requires all new licenced vehicles be wheelchair adapted. The was adopted by another Suffolk licensing authority but was removed following a negative response from the trade.
2.66	Under the Equality Act 2010 licensed drivers are not obliged to carry pets to the vet other than guide dogs and other assistance dogs, a driver can be exempted from this requirement if they obtain medical exemption certificate from their doctor. The licensing team have not received any complaints about drivers refusing to take pets.

3 Reason/s for recommendation

3.1	This report provides detailed responses and evidence to enable the Scrutiny Committee to review the function.
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Appendices

Appendices:	
Appendix A	Licensing Services Structure Chart
Appendix B	Hackney Carriage Driver Handbook and Conditions of Licence
Appendix C	Private Hire Driver Handbook and Conditions of Licence
Appendix D	How East Suffolk Council compares with other Local Authorities in terms of the processes for issuing and reviewing Licences, the number of licences issued, and engagement
Appendix E	Number of licensing sub-committee hearings in East Suffolk for the period 1.08.2022 to 31.07.2023 compared to other Suffolk licensing authorities
Appendix F	Fee table
Appendix G	North and South Fares Table
Appendix H	Table showing the impact that lockdown had on the number of licensed vehicles/drivers

Appendix I	Information relation the location of Private Hire Operators, Hackney Carriages and location of Taxi Ranks.
Appendix J	Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy
Appendix K	Relevant Legislation
Appendix L	Trade Responses

Background reference papers:

None