

## **Appendix 3**

### **Summary of Consultation Responses**

#### **Breakdown of consultation respondents**

Online Survey:

- Members of the Taxi Trade: 651
- Members of the Public: 313
- Total Responses: 964

The Council also received formal responses from the following groups:

- Licensing Board
- Youth Cabinet
- Older People's Forum
- Rotherham Adult's Safeguarding Board
- Rotherham Children's Safeguarding Board
- Community Reference Group
- Rotherham Private Hire Association
- Rotherham Hackney Carriage Association
- ALPHA
- GMB S75 Taxi Branch

Officers also attended the following meetings, where minutes or notes were taken to form part of the consultation response:

- Women's Forum at the Unity Centre
- Rotherham East Ward Councillor Surgery
- Madrasa session at Jamia Masjid, College Road, Masbrough

Three drop-in sessions were also arranged for members of the trade and the public. Approximately forty drivers attended these sessions, and notes were taken by officers to form part of the consultation response.

The following sections outline the response to consultation for each proposed change. Where the response is broadly similar between members of the public and the trade, these have been amalgamated. Where there are clear differences, the responses have been separated. Where written responses have covered specific changes, these have been included in the appropriate section.

## 1. Public Sector Equality Duty

The consultation asked for a response on the statement:

*Licensed vehicle drivers and companies have a responsibility to promote equality and help to eliminate discrimination.*

Answer	Count	%
Strongly Agree	541	57.61
Agree	260	27.69
Disagree	17	1.81
Strongly Disagree	82	8.73
Unsure	39	4.15
Total	939	100.00

**Community Reference Group:** The group agreed that Licensing have a role to play in promoting equality and that operators should act in a fair and equal way.

**Youth Cabinet:** Operators should uphold the quality duty and use it when they are employing people or dealing with customers.

**Madrasa session, Masbrough:** Everyone should be treated the same. "Taxi driver are taxi drivers". If an operator doesn't act in an equal way, they shouldn't be allowed to have a licence.

**Licensing Board:** That the proposal be supported subject to whether Legal Services agree that this can be clearly implemented without challenge of discrimination.

## 2. Driver Medical Assessments

The consultation asked members of the trade the question:

*Have you ever had difficulty in obtaining a medical assessment from your own GP?*

Answer	Count	%
No	209	32.20
Yes	440	67.80
Grand Total	649	100.00

A second question was then asked, which stated:

*Would being able to book a medical with another GP, with prior agreement from the Licensing Manager and full access to medical records, solve the issue of obtaining a medical?*

Answer	Count	%
No	62	9.61
Yes	583	90.38
Grand Total	645	100

**CCG:** The CCG feels very strongly that drivers should go to their own GPs for private medicals, because only their GP will have access to their full medical records. Drivers are reminded of the need to take a medical three months before their licence expires, so they should have sufficient time to book an appointment.

**Trade Representatives:** Positive response overall and agreed with timescales, saw this change as a 'step in the right direction'. Would like an approved list of GPs rather than the Council giving the opportunity to go to another GP in exceptional circumstances, and where the GP has access to full medical records.

**Licensing Board:** That the proposal be fully supported.

### 3. Ancillary Operator Staff

Both members of the public and members of the taxi trade were asked to comment on the statement:

*Staff that work for taxi companies should have a basic criminal record check if they are accessing booking records or dispatching vehicles*

Answer	Count	%
Strongly Agree	328	33.99
Agree	314	32.54
Disagree	96	9.95
Strongly Disagree	92	9.53
Unsure	135	13.99
Grand Total	965	100

**Trade Representatives:** Representatives believed that this requirement may only impact local operators as those who employ people from outside the borough may not have this requirement imposed on them.

**Older People's Forum:** DBS checks should be carried out for people who access sensitive information as this would make people feel safer and more confident.

**Madrasa session, Masbrough:** The group agreed that the Council should be able to check a person's police record to make sure that a person is safe to know certain information.

**Licensing Board:** Fully supported the proposal subject to advice from Legal and HR, and that the Council should lobby for an enhanced DBS check to be available for these staff.

#### 4. Refresher Training

The consultation asked four questions on the subject of refresher training. These have been split by response from the public and the trade.

##### a. Safeguarding Training

*Drivers should undertake refresher training for safeguarding training*

Public

Answer	Total	%
Strongly agree	76	24.28
Agree	110	35.14
Disagree	31	9.90
Strongly disagree	67	21.41
Unsure	29	9.27
Grand Total	313	100.00

Trade

Answer	Total	%
Strongly agree	38	6.23
Agree	106	17.38
Disagree	64	10.49
Strongly disagree	290	47.54
Unsure	112	18.36
Grand Total	610	100

##### b. Driver Knowledge Test

*Drivers should undertake refresher training for driver knowledge*

Public

Answer	Count	%
Strongly agree	49	15.61
Agree	56	17.83
Disagree	68	21.66
Strongly disagree	128	40.76
Unsure	13	4.14
Grand Total	314	100.00

Trade

Answer	Count	%
Strongly agree	18	2.97
Agree	32	5.27
Disagree	79	13.01
Strongly disagree	473	77.92
Unsure	5	0.82
Grand Total	607	100

##### c. Advanced Driving Assessment

*Drivers should undertake refresher training for advanced driving assessment*

## Public

Answer	Count	%
Strongly agree	52	16.72
Agree	28	9
Disagree	67	21.54
Strongly disagree	152	48.87
Unsure	12	3.86
Grand Total	311	100

## Trade

Answer	Total	%
Strongly agree	17	2.8
Agree	20	3.29
Disagree	78	12.85
Strongly disagree	483	79.57
Unsure	9	1.48
Grand Total	607	100

## d. Frequency of Refresher Training

## Public

Frequency	Count
1-3 Years	51
4-6 Years	63
7-10 Years	107
Other	88
Grand Total	309

## Trade

Frequency	Count
1-3 Years	14
4-6 Years	63
7-10 Years	386
Other	135
Grand Total	598

The majority of comments made in the 'other' category focused on:

- Refresher training is not needed because drivers have already passed these requirements
- Safeguarding should be refresher more than any other training
- Drivers thought safeguarding should be renewed when there was 'a change in the law'.
- Only drivers who have complaints raised/ Council have concerns about should have to do more training.
- There should be no assessment or pass/ fail criteria for any refresher training.

**Rotherham Adult Safeguarding Board:** Agreed all training requirements should be completed every three years

**Youth Cabinet:** Members of the board had ranging opinions. Everybody thought that safeguarding training was important and that this should be refreshed frequently. Others agreed that other requirements should be acceptable between every three and five years.

**Licensing Board:** Fully agreed all training requirements should be completed every three years

**Trade Representatives:** Disagreed with all proposals and believe that only safeguarding training should be refreshed when the law changes.

**Community Reference Group:** It was noted that training would have a financial impact on drivers, but that training was important, especially in safeguarding. Other professions have to do Professional Development.

## 5. Driver Identification

Members of the public were asked to comment on the statement:

*When I am in a taxi, I can clearly see the driver's ID badge*

Answer	Count	%
Strongly Agree	111	35.58
Agree	118	37.82
Disagree	31	9.94
Strongly disagree	27	8.65
Unsure	25	8.01
Grand Total	312	100

Members of the taxi trade were asked to comment on the statement:

*When a driver is wearing their ID badge, it is clearly visible to passengers*

Answer	Count	%
Strongly agree	386	59.38
Agree	172	26.46
Disagree	19	2.92
Strongly disagree	55	8.46
Unsure	18	2.77
Grand Total	650	100

Members of the trade were also asked:

*Do you have any issues with the driver ID badge?*

Answer	Count	%
Yes	428	65.95
No	221	34.05
Grand Total	649	100

Of the 428 drivers that said they had issues with the current ID badge, all comments were related to the size, quality or format of the current badge.

**Trade Representatives:** The three options given by the Council are welcomed by the trade, but the design of the badge should be changed to make it smaller and more professional.

**Older People’s Forum:** The badge should be large and visible to make it easy for people to see.

**Youth Cabinet:** Members of the board couldn’t remember ever seeing a driver’s badge, there was an agreement that a further sign on the dashboard should be used, as well as the idea of an armband.

**Licensing Board:** That any identification be visible from all passenger seats.

**RSAB:** That technology such as a phone app should be considered to check whether the driver is registered, and that a large notice and photograph on the dashboard would be useful for older users.

## 6. Vehicle Signage

Both members of the public and trade were asked to respond to the statement:

*It is easy to identify a vehicle licensed by Rotherham Council.*

Public

Answer	Count	%
Strongly agree	138	43.94
Agree	112	35.67
Disagree	26	8.28
Strongly disagree	24	7.64
Unsure	14	4.46
Grand Total	314	100

Trade

Answer	Count	%
Strongly agree	478	73.77
Agree	114	17.59
Disagree	11	1.70
Strongly disagree	36	5.56
Unsure	9	1.39
Grand Total	648	100.00

Both members of the public and trade were also asked:

*Do you support further signage on a vehicle to improve the visibility of a Rotherham licensed vehicle?*

## Public

Answer	Count	%
Yes	80	25.72
No	231	74.28
Grand Total	311	100.00

## Trade

Answer	Count	%
Yes	50	7.7
No	599	92.3
Grand Total	649	100.00

Members of the public were asked:

*Do you know that you can activate audio recording in all Rotherham taxis?*

Answer	Count	%
Yes	209	66.99
No	103	33.01
Grand Total	312	100.00

Members of the trade were asked to comment on the statement:

*The audio activation button in all vehicles is clear to passengers.*

Answer	Count	%
Strongly agree	417	64.25
Agree	144	22.19
Disagree	18	2.77
Strongly disagree	39	6.01
Unsure	31	4.78
Grand Total	649	100

**Trade Representatives:** Only the existing signage requirements should be necessary and these should not be permanently affixed. Drivers should be able to remove all signage when not working.

**Madrasa session:** There is enough signage on cars already and drivers should be able to remove the signage. The group gave examples of where they have felt unsafe or embarrassed when in the car for family use but people thought they were a taxi.

**Women's Forum:** Women raised concerns about permanent signage, and do not agree with this proposal. Drivers should be able to remove the signage when they are not working.

**Licensing Board:** A recent rise in community tensions means that the remaining five requirements should not be introduced at this time, but this decision should be regularly reviewed.



**Youth Cabinet:** Issues were raised about being able to identify a vehicle in the dark, and that a symbol should be created to make cars more easily recognisable.

## 7. Ultra Low Emission Vehicles

Both members of the public and trade were asked to comment on the statement:

*The Council should promote ULEVs for licensed vehicles*

Answer	Count	%
Strongly Agree	123	18.20
Agree	146	21.60
Disagree	72	10.65
Strongly disagree	154	22.78
Unsure	181	26.78
Grand Total	676	100

When asked on how the Council could incentivise drivers to invest in ULEV vehicles, the themes that emerged were:

- Increase the maximum age of vehicles allowed on the fleet
- Lobby Government for grant funding
- Less frequent compliance testing
- Interest free loans
- Cheaper licensing fees

**Trade Representatives:** Agree in principle with the Council helping drivers to invest in ULEV, but only monetary incentives could really push drivers to make this investment. Other proposals included: longer vehicle life; reduced fees; less testing.

**Licensing Board:** That the extension of vehicle age should not be supported due to ongoing work around Climate Change, and as cars get older the safety and comfort of the public may be reduced. Fully support ULEVs and believed the Government should be lobbied to support drivers to invest. Any grants in this area should be maximised.

**Youth Cabinet:** members were interested to know if the Council or Government would provide money to subsidise new vehicles. The Council should make costs as cheap as possible for the fees that they control. Electric cars are very expensive now but this may reduce in the future which would make it more manageable for drivers.

**Women's Forum:** Financial support would be welcome but the wellbeing of a family must come before buying a vehicle.

**Other themes emerging:**

- Reduction in the number of compliance tests, and introduce a risk based approach, rather than relying on the age of the vehicle
- Vehicle plates should be issued for twelve months rather than 4, 6 or 12 months for ease, consistency and to reduce the time that drivers spend in Riverside House. Licensing Board also raised this proposal.
- More MOT test centres to be introduced to increase capacity
- Fire extinguishers and first aid kits to be removed from vehicles as drivers do not feel as though they protect them, and would never use them in an emergency
- Permanent signage would create problems for drivers as taxis would be targeted more often which would put drivers and their families at risk
- The Council should create a list of approved GPs where a medical can take place, rather than the proposal that the Council has introduced
- The Council should do more to prevent out-of-town cars entering the borough