



Oversight and Governance

Chief Executive's Department
Plymouth City Council
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Published 21 December 2023

CABINET

Monday 8 January 2024
2.00 pm
Council House, Plymouth

Members:

Councillor Evans OBE, Chair

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair

Councillors Aspinall, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cresswell, Dann, Haydon, Lowry and Penberthy.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

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Tracey Lee

Chief Executive

Cabinet

Agenda

Part I (Public Meeting)

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence submitted by Cabinet Members.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cabinet Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

3. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 12)

To sign and confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2023.

4. Questions from the Public

To receive questions from the public in accordance with the Constitution.

Questions, of no longer than 50 words, can be submitted to the Democratic Support Unit, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ, or email to democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk. Any questions must be received at least five clear working days before the date of the meeting.

5. Chair's Urgent Business

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

Items from Scrutiny

6. Budget Scrutiny Recommendations:

(Pages 13 - 16)

Items for discussion

7. Budget Engagement Highlight Report 2024/25:

(Pages 17 - 28)

8. Budget update including the settlement:

(Verbal Report)

Items for decision

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 9. Council Tax Discounts and Premiums: | (Pages 29 - 34) |
| 10. Council Tax Base Setting and Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25: | (Pages 35 - 42) |
| 11. Proposed amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2022: | (Pages 43 - 132) |
| 12. Licensing Act 2003 - Statement of Licensing Policy 2024 - 2029: | (Pages 133 - 194) |

Items for noting

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 13. Leader's Announcements: | (Verbal Report) |
| 14. Cabinet Member Updates: | (Verbal Report) |
| 15. LGA Update: | (Verbal Report) |

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Cabinet

Monday 11 December 2023

PRESENT:

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillor Dann, Vice Chair for this meeting.

Councillors Aspinall, Briars-Delve, Coker, Cresswell, Dann, Haydon, Lowry and Penberthy.

Also in attendance: Councillor Laing (Online but did not vote), Matt Garrett (Service Director), David Haley (Director of Children’s Services), Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health), Laura Juett (Public Health Specialist), Jackie Kings (Community Connections Strategic Manager) , Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Robert Nelder (Consultant for Public Health), Tracey Naismith (Community Connections Strategic Manager), David Northey (Interim Service Director for Finance), Anthony Payne (Strategic Director for Place) and Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.50 pm.

Note: The full discussion can be viewed on the webcast of the City Council meeting at www.plymouth.gov.uk. At a future meeting, the Council will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

68. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

69. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

70. **Questions from the Public**

The following question was submitted by Stephen Dart

Question: PCC confirmed (23/10/23) that it’s funding of Brickfields pays for “carrying out improvements to the existing stand and ongoing maintenance ... at the athletics track.” PCC states funding is from maintenance savings due to partners taking on these costs - why are PCC funding such improvements / maintenance?

Response: Thanks to Mr Dart for his follow-up question. The redevelopment of the Brickfields site really is a once in a generation opportunity to secure significant investment in sport, health and wellbeing services that will benefit not just the people of Devonport but residents all across the city and indeed visitors from outside Plymouth as well. Mr Dart’s question asks about the funding which the Council is providing towards some improvements to the athletics track and ongoing maintenance

	<p>of that facility.</p> <p>Before I answer that specific question it's worth highlighting that the Council's commitment to provide £2.75m has helped to secure over £18m of funding from our partners at Plymouth Argyle Football Club and Plymouth Argyle Community Trust. Together with Plymouth Albion and Devonport Community Leisure Ltd (who will be the voice of the local community) we will be creating a new home for elite and grassroots sport, and new health and wellbeing facilities that will be the envy of other towns and cities in the southwest.</p> <p>The funding which is being spent on the athletics track is really important. The track at Brickfields is used regularly by the City of Plymouth Athletics Club, the University of Plymouth's Athletics Club, a number of local schools and other clubs and by the Ministry of Defence. The track therefore provides opportunities for hundreds of people every year to keep fit and get into sport. And that's what this project is all about – as well as providing new facilities for elite-level football and rugby, this project is all about supporting grass roots sport and giving local people opportunities to improve their health and wellbeing.</p>
The following question was submitted by Alderman George Wheeler	
<p>Question: You advised me last June that work on the St Budeaux Interchange project was scheduled to commence from September 2023. In a recent bulletin, Mr. Mercer MP wrote that Mr. Payne had told him it would start in January. Is this correct and if not, when will it commence, please?</p>	<p>Response: In June 2023 the timescale advised for commencement by the project team for the St Budeaux Interchange Transforming Cities Fund project was for commencement in September 2023. I am now advised by the project team that the project will now commence in February 2024. The context for delivering all projects at this time are extremely challenging due to wider macro-economic circumstances, contract price inflation, materials supply issues and labour constraints. In the intervening time further work has been undertaken by the project team to</p>

	make a few adjustments to the programme to minimise potential traffic disruptions for taxi and bus users. In addition, the scheme had to also secure re-approval for the project through the Department of Transport's Change Control process before the project programme could be finalised.
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71. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chairs urgent business.

72. **Leader's Announcements**

The Leader made the following announcements:

- a) Businesses had responded well to the Resurgam Programme which led to employment rates increasing from 110,000 employees in 2020 to 116,000 employees in 2023;
- b) There had been a 27% increase in businesses in Plymouth, with 6,300 businesses operating in 2023;
- c) Decisions that had been made since May 2023 included:
 - i. £20 million forward funding deal for Derriford district centre;
 - ii. £14 million forward funding deal for a new hotel on Embankment Road;
 - iii. £22 million investment in Millbay Port improvements that would take place in January 2023;
 - iv. A business case for a further phase of Ocean's Gate that would deliver 1,779 square metres of business space and would create nearly 50 jobs;
 - v. A business case for £9.1 million investment at Langage Farm Business Park which would deliver 5,600 square metres in the Freeport;
 - vi. A £26 million bid was submitted for funding for the National Marine Park, and a response would be expected in January regarding it's success;
 - vii. First EV charging station had been installed;
- d) Work had begun on two long-term programmes: City Centre Housing and Defence Spending.

73. **Cabinet Member Updates**

Councillor Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) provided the following update:

- a) In the June 2023 OFTED and CQC-led SEND inspection, key areas of focus involved enhancing collaboration among school and college leaders for sharing information, enabling earlier identification of children at risk of increased vulnerability and negative outcomes, and reducing the likelihood of expelling pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan;
- b) Strong partnership working with the Integrated Care Board, University Hospitals Plymouth, and Livewell colleagues facilitated the initiation of the Local Area SEND Action Plan, increasing capacity for Autistic Spectrum Condition assessments and thereby reducing waiting times;
- c) Multi-disciplinary locality work in Family Hubs had initially focused on 0-5 outcomes which involved partners working together to ensure families avoid telling their story twice;
- d) The Education Team opened the first City Attendance Conference at City College in November 2023 where the key theme was 'belonging';
- e) The second Skills Summit took place at the New Continental Hotel in November 2023 and focused on the creation of new and innovative placements;
- f) The Skills Launchpad supported nearly 700 young people with personalised action plans, resulting in a 74% success rate in transitioning them into employment;
- g) The number of supported internships within Plymouth had grown from nine to 44 within the past 12 months and a further 20 places would be planned for early 2024;
- h) A SENCo conference would take place in January 2024.

Councillor Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) provided the following update:

- i) The Council had agreed to bid for the Department for Transport's Zero Emission Bus Regional Area scheme (ZEBRA 2), proposing a multi-million pound investment to introduce 50 zero-emission electric double-decker buses and the required charging infrastructure.

Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR & OD) provided the following updates:

- j) Plymouth Active Leisure had partnered up with City College Plymouth to aid students with work placements and opportunities;
- k) Nearly 2000 people had accessed the cost of living hub in the past 4 weeks;

- l) Communication messages would go out in the run up to Christmas including, how to manage your finances and how to avoid loan sharks as well as free things to do as a community.

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) provided the following updates:

- m) The government had allocated a £4.5 million Household Support Fund, with £1.7 million utilised for school holiday food vouchers, £750,000 provided through Citizen's Advice Plymouth grants for essential needs, and additional financial aid distributed via Plymouth Energy Community to alleviate fuels bills;
- n) Plymouth City Council, in partnership with Brighton Council and the LGA, co-signed a letter and provided case studies of the positive impact the Household Support Fund had to the government, aiming to prevent funding cuts post-March 2024;
- o) The coastal path at Mount Batten had been fixed; using 175 tonnes of concrete to ensure the path is secure.

Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) provided the following updates:

- p) A letter had been sent to Robbie Moore MP regarding the funding formula for New Burdens Funding;
- q) A recycling engagement campaign would be launched in the lead up to Christmas 2023;
- r) Plymouth City Council received £50,000 to deliver up to six micro-forests from the King's Coronation Living Heritage Fund;
- s) Plymouth City Council won the Sustainable Infrastructure Grand Prize and the Green Solutions Grand Prize from COP 28, giving global recognition for the work that had been done around climate change;

A video was presented regarding the [Council Energy Scheme](#).

Cabinet agreed to submit this video the LGA and Key Cities

Councillor Laing (Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications) provided the following updates:

- t) Sir John Akomfrah's Arcadia launched on 29 November 2023 at the Box;
- u) The headline acts for the Live Nation Summer Sessions music festival on The Hoe had been announced to include Sir Tom Jones, Sting, Bryan Adams, Madness, Blondie, Gabrielle, Cassyette and the Lightening Seeds and would take place 13 – 16 June 2024;

- v) Plymouth had hosted the annual You Can Do It awards in September and October for children in care and care experienced young people;
- w) A Care Leaver Employment Pathway was being developed.

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) provided the following updates:

- x) A letter would be sent to the Minister for Primary Care and Public Health to intervene with the closure of pharmacies and to take action against vital services being closed down.

74. **LGA Update**

The Leader introduced the item and highlighted the following points:

- a) There was a £4 billion national funding gap over the next two years that had been identified by the LGA;
- b) Adult and Children Social Care costs had escalated rapidly and there were issues around market sustainability and prevention, the scale of the recruitment and retention challenge facing the care workforce, and persistent levels of unmet and under-met need.
- c) Within the next 2 years, it was estimated 1 in 5 councils would issue a Section 114;
- d) Following the Governments reshuffle on 13 November 2023 he had also written to new ministers setting out the case for Plymouth – Victoria Atkins MP (H&SC) and Andrew Griffith MP (Science, Research & Innovation)
- e) The new Local Government Minister Simon Hall was a former councillor and a former LGA Vice President;
- f) The LGA would submit evidence to the Department of Levelling up Homes and Communities seeking a Select Committee Enquiry on the role of Oflog;
- g) Work on the Local Government White Paper continued.

75. **Recommendation from the Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet Response**

Councillor Reilly introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) A thorough discussion had taken place at the scrutiny committee about how we make in house foster care more desirable.
- b) Bringing more foster carers in house would save money long term as the average cost for in house was £23,488 and the average independent agencies are £53,289
- c) Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee had agreed to recommend to Cabinet that foster carers were granted council tax exemption.

In response to questions, it was explained:

- d) The cost to implement council tax exemption would be approximately £200,000 per annum.

The Leader proposed that Cabinet:

1. Thank the Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their proposal of council tax exemption for foster carers;
2. Note the recommendations from the committee and commit to providing an update on the issue at an appropriate future meeting of the committee, once the entire revised package of support for Plymouth City Council foster carers had been agreed.

This was seconded by Councillor Cresswell and agreed by the Cabinet

76. **Corporate Plan Performance Report, Quarter Two 2023/24**

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) Information would be added to the report around tolerances and comparators in order to better understand peaks and troughs in figures;
- b) The report would be linked to national data sets and benchmarked against other councils to better help us understand how Plymouth City Council is performing on a regional and national basis;
- c) The number of households prevented from becoming homeless had increased by 70 in the last quarter.

Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR & OD) added:

- d) Children's Services and Street Services were areas of concern for high levels of sickness levels due to anxiety and stress;
- e) Work with Corporate Management Team and managers would happen in 2024 to better support them and support their teams in managing sickness;
- f) As an employer Plymouth City Council made sure employees were supported whilst they work.

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) added:

- g) Re-ablement systems had been put in place to aid vulnerable people with their hospital discharge to ensure they have the care they need to get well.

Cabinet noted the Corporate Plan Performance Report, Quarter Two 2023/24.

77. Ageing Well Update

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) The Full of Life programme would support residents to enjoy life by aiding with age friendly spaces, participation and inclusion;
- b) A Steering Group for the Full of Life programme would be set up in 2024.

Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health) added:

- c) Supporting older people was one of the strategic aims in the Plymouth Plan;
- d) The first year of the programme would focus on strong engagement and a baseline assessment to have a start to an action plan;
- e) The age-friendly communities framework had been used and adapted to make it suitable for Plymouth;
- f) Plymouth City Council had applied to be part of the Centre for Ageing better and were waiting to hear feedback regarding the application;
- g) An Action Plan had been formed to focus on the shorter term actions.

In response to questions, it was explained:

- h) Regular updates would be brought to Cabinet on the actions taken.

The Leader proposed an additional recommendation that was seconded by Cllr Aspinall requesting that a detailed action plan was prepared and regular reports were provided to future Cabinet meetings.

The Cabinet agreed to note the report and for a detailed action plan and regular reports would be provided to future Cabinet meetings.

78. Dental Task Force update

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) The Dental Taskforce was launched in June 2023;
- b) Large numbers of NHS dental providers had not been fulfilling their contracts, therefore costing the Integrated Care Board money.

Robert Nelder (Consultant for Public Health) added:

- c) The Integrated Care Board would set up an Expression of Interest process whereby NHS Dental providers in Plymouth who have got capacity can apply and be paid to do more, to go live in April 2024;
- d) The ring-fence for Plymouth had been lifted to enable the increased national costs of industrial action to be covered;

Cabinet agreed to note the report and recommended the following:

- 1. To continue to support the corporate plan priority, working with the NHS to provide better access to health care and dentistry;
- 2. To seek clarification on whether NHS England specifically said that the money is un-ring-fenced and it must be put towards the bottom line or whether they were referring to all underspend.

79. **Serious Violence Duty**

Councillor Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Cemeteries and Crematoria) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) In order to prevent serious violence in the city the following works had been implemented:
 - i. Plymouth City Council worked with vulnerable victims to offer support of safe housing;
 - ii. Devon and Cornwall Police had worked in significant hotspot areas to reduce crime and provide reassurance;
 - iii. By-standing training had been offered to help people understand safety challenged poor behaviour;
 - iv. Youth Justice mentoring had taken place with children who were at risk of being drawn into crime;
 - v. Anti-social behaviour specialists worked in schools to educate children as to what healthy relationships look like;
- b) The assessment showed that different communities were impacted differently by violence;
- c) Plymouth City Council and Partners would work together to address issues at a local level which would include focusing on understanding people who cause harm in the community;
- d) Learning from the impact of what had been undertaken would be used to shape the future of the service.

Tracey Naismith (Community Connections Strategic Manager) added:

- e) Draft terms of references had been agreed to lay out what the relation with the police and crime commissioners office would look like;
- f) Terms of reference would be agreed by the end of January 2024 with a view to receive £150,000 in funding for 12 months from the Home Office;
- g) The national indicators for serious violent reduction include: hospital admissions for assaults with knives and sharp objects, reduction of knife and sharp objects enabled serious violence recorded by the police and homicides recorded by the police;
- h) The local indications for serious violence were tailored to Plymouth and included: reduction in the numbers of recorded violent crimes, reduction of the number of young people going into the criminal justice system, a reduction of those who reoffend, and a reduction of school exclusions, absences and 16 – 17 year olds not in education;
- i) Public consultations with diverse communities would take place in the next 18 months.

In response to questions, it was explained:

- j) Although Plymouth had the lowest rate of overall crime compared to similar family groups, Plymouth was second in examples of violence that include injury and sexual offences;
- k) The Safer Plymouth Chair had met with the courts to better understand sentencing and delays in sentencing.

The Leader proposed additional recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Penberthy –

1. That an action plan for Plymouth City Council would be created;
2. That support be provided to representatives of the Police and Crime Panel and Safer Plymouth in questioning the OPCC's priorities and funding;
3. That the Performance, Finance and Customer Experience Overview and Scrutiny Committee would increase their role as a crime and disorder panel in holding Safer Plymouth to account;

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Endorse the Safer Plymouth model for violence preventing in Plymouth and strategic needs assessment;
2. That an action plan for Plymouth City Council would be created;

3. That support be provided to representatives of the Police and Crime Panel and Safer Plymouth in questioning the OPCC's priorities and funding;
4. That the Performance, Finance and Customer Experience Overview and Scrutiny Committee would increase their role as a crime and disorder panel in holding Safer Plymouth to account;

80. **Housing Business Case: Purchase of Temporary Accommodation**

Having considered the Part II information in the agenda pack Cabinet agreed to remain in the public meeting and not move to a private meeting to discuss this.

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) A target would be to improve what Plymouth City Council could do for families in temporary accommodation;
- b) The solution to helping families in temporary accommodation would be buying properties to be used as temporary accommodation as the cost would be £13,600 cheaper per annum.

Jackie Kings (Community Connections Strategic Manager) added:

- c) The national housing market had a detrimental impact in Plymouth;
- d) Demand for housing in the past three years had increased with over 4,300 people (23/24 until 30 November) seeking advice and information regarding housing;
- e) The forecast financial pressure to Plymouth City Council was £2.4 million;
- f) The highest reason for presenting as homeless was landlords selling their houses and giving Section 21 Notices;
- g) A snapshot from people in temporary accommodation 30 November 2023 included:
 - i. 174 families with children
 - ii. 9 pregnancies
 - iii. 366 children
 - iv. 51 families in B and B's
 - v. 83 children in B and B's
- h) Examples of families in temporary accommodation were given;
- i) The purchase of homes would support the health and wellbeing needs of homeless households, would meet the statutory duties of the council by increasing the local authorities ability to provide affordable supported short-term accommodation for homeless households and would attract affordable homes

programme grants;

- j) The average annual cost of a bed and breakfast room was almost £22,000, with an estimated annual revenue cost per property purchased of over £8,000, therefore the annual to the Council saving is £13,600;
- k) £10 million would purchase a significant number of properties and deliver a significant saving to the budget;

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Approve the business case to enable the purchase of properties to provide appropriate supported temporary accommodation for homeless households as an alternative to bed and breakfast and other high cost night paid accommodation and support reduction of temporary accommodation costs;
2. Allocate £10,000,000 for the project into the Capital Programme funded by service borrowing;
3. Allocate up to £5,000,000 of Homes England grant to the Capital Programme, subject to a successful bid;
4. Delegate the approval of individual and bulk purchases to the Service Director for Community Connections for all purchases within approved financial envelope in consultation with the cross departmental Strategic Steering Group, Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities and Cabinet Member for Finance;
5. Authorise the Service Director for Community Connections to approve business cases and award contracts relating to this project where they would otherwise not have had the authority to do so.

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	08 January 2024
Title of Report:	Budget Scrutiny Recommendations
Lead Member:	Councillor Ian Darcy (Chair of Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
Lead Strategic Director:	Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive)
Author:	Ross Jago (Head of Governance Performance and Risk)
Contact Email:	Ross.jago@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	BudR23/25
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This Select Committee met to consider whether the Cabinet has an effective plan for the implementation of the budget for the next financial year, focusing on organisational priorities. This report sets out the recommendations made by the Budget Scrutiny Select Committee following its review of the Council's budget preparations for 2024-2025.

Taking into account positive feedback from the 2023/24 budget scrutiny process, information available to the Select Committee was available again, continuing amendments made to the 2023/24 process.

The committee undertook two days of scrutiny, with a third day if required on a date to be determined by the committee, to provide flexibility for further discussions where required.

The Committee focused the majority of their time on the greatest areas of risk facing the Council in Childrens Services, Adult Social Care and Health, Homelessness and the cost of living in the context of

- Continuing one-year Revenue Support Grant settlement, with annual inflation uplift.
- The cap on council tax increases, reflecting central Government's direction of the confirmed 2.99% for 2024/25, will revert to 1.99%.
- a further 2% Adult Social Care precept in 2024/25 with 1% modelled for future years.
- Uncertainty to future funding due to the delay in 100% Business Rates Retention.
- Reductions in other Government grant funding not reflected in reductions in, and responsibility for related service provision.
- Uncertainty about any future Fair Funding Review.
- A continuing range of increasing costs in order to meet the demands on the Council and maintain key services, particularly in Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and Homelessness.

Recommendations and Reasons

That Cabinet consider the following recommendations made by the Budget Scrutiny Select Committee.

Recommendations to Cabinet

1. that work is undertaken to assess the impact upon all council budgets of dealing with unauthorised encampments (UE).
2. Welcome continuation of current Community Grant Scheme and recommend an increase back to £5,000 per member.
3. Reprofile the Capital programme to ensure that the programme is affordable for the revenue budget.
4. Recommend an expansion of the housing programme for Care Leavers.
5. Recommend that a cross party working group is established to consider contractual arrangements for major projects and the methodology for procurement.

The Select Committee were appraised of commitments and successes of the current administrations during the course of their discussions and wish to congratulate the Cabinet on -

6. Additional Funding provided in the budget for Grass Cutting.
7. The commitment to a new Living Streets programme.
8. Increased involvement of Ward Councillors in discussion in the delivery of Section 106 schemes.
9. Commitment to not implementing Car Park charges where they are not currently in place.
10. The new Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Reason: The recommendations were made after careful consideration of the draft budget proposals and accompanying documentation.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Budget Scrutiny is a key part of the development of the 2024/25 budget and Cabinet are required to receive and respond to the recommendations of the Select Committee.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Select Committee considered the themes within the Corporate Plan to ensure that proposals within the budget and business plans deliver against the council's vision.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Recommendations within the report impact on the 2024/25 budget and subject to the response from Cabinet could have impact on future years budgets within the scope of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Financial Risks

There are no financial risks as a direct result of this report.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

There are no environmental implications as a direct result of this report.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

N/A

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A								

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	DJN. 23.2 4.17 6	Leg	LS/0 0001 312/ 1/AC /21/1 2/23	Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 21/12/2023											
Scrutiny Chair approval: Councillor Ian Darcy (Chair of Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee)											
Date approved: 12/12/2023											

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Cabinet



Date of meeting:	08 January 2024
Title of Report:	Budget Engagement Highlight Report 2024/25
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Northey (Interim Service Director for Finance)
Author:	Caroline Marr, Senior Policy Advisor
Contact Email:	Caroline.marr@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	BE_2024/25
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report provides an analysis of the responses received to the budget engagement activities carried out in 2023 in support of the 2024-25 budget setting process. The available results are presented to inform the budget discussions taking place before Cabinet recommend the budget to Council in February 2024.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. Cabinet to note the engagement report and consider the results in relation to the final budget recommendation to Council.
Reason: To ensure Cabinet are aware of the results and the views of the public are taken into consideration.

Alternative options considered and rejected

1. To not take account of public views in relation to the Council's budget setting process. This option is rejected as it does not adhere to the Council's corporate values, specifically in relation to being a democratic organisation that is committed to listening to people.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This report is particularly relevant in relation to the Council being democratic organisation that is committed to listening and hearing what people want.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

None relating to this report.

Financial Risks

None relating to this report.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None relating to this report.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

None relating to this report.

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Budget Engagement Highlight Report 2024/25							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	DJN. 23.24. 175	Leg	LS/00 0013 12/4/ AC/2 1/12/ 23	Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Northey, (Service Director for Finance)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 21/12/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Jemima Laing, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications.											
Date approved: 21/12/2023											

BUDGET ENGAGEMENT 2024-25

Results Report – Cabinet 08 January 2024



I. INTRODUCTION

A public engagement to support the 2024-25 budget setting process took place between Tuesday 14 November and Monday 11 December 2023. A questionnaire was developed which asked respondents their view on which priorities the Council should focus on in the coming year - the Council's priorities are:

- Working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets and transport.
- Build more homes - for social rent and affordable ownership.
- Green investment, jobs, skills and better education.
- Working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry.
- Keeping children, adults and communities safe.
- Making Plymouth a great place to grow up and grow old.
- Minimising the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

The questionnaire also asked respondents to provide their level of agreement on six statements in regard to managing the Council's budget. The statements were designed to test public opinion on a range of activity that could be considered by the Administration to balance the Council's budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

- 436 online questionnaires were completed and entered for analysis.

The results of this engagement will be considered by the Council's Cabinet and will form part of the final Budget report to Council in February 2024.

METHODOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION

A simple questionnaire was developed to help identify which priorities respondents felt the Council should be focussing on over the next year and to generate ideas to help the Council balance the books for 2024.

The questionnaire was available online through Plymouth City Council's consultation portal and hard copies were made available upon request.

An engagement with business representatives took place on 13 December 2023.

A communications plan was developed which set out the required materials, branding and opportunities for advertising and promoting the engagement.

The engagement exercise was promoted through a news release and the Council's website, social media channels and email bulletins for residents.

The engagement featured on the home page of the Council's website and a budget web page provided more information and a link to the questionnaire.

Social media posts were shared by community leaders and councillors and engagement was amplified by shares with community Facebook groups.

There were regular reminders on social media and through email bulletins.

Note: all percentages cited in this report are rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.

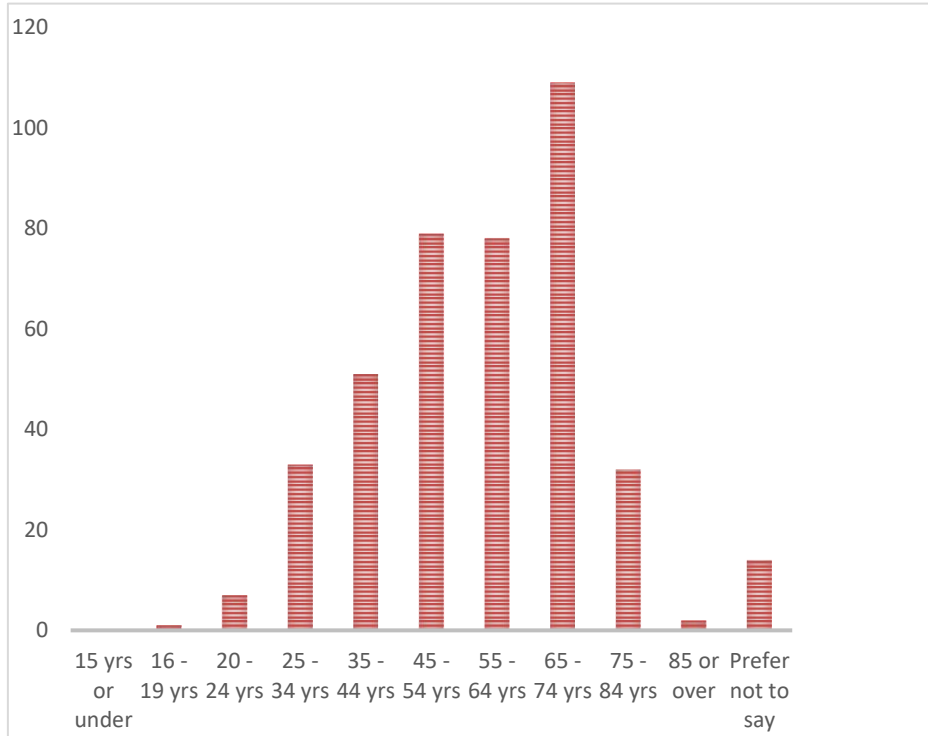


SECTION I - WHO RESPONDED?

This section provides an overview of how many people responded and the demographics of those respondents.

The following demographic information has been compiled from the total number of questionnaires analysed (436). This information has been used to identify the views of different groups of people where possible throughout this report.

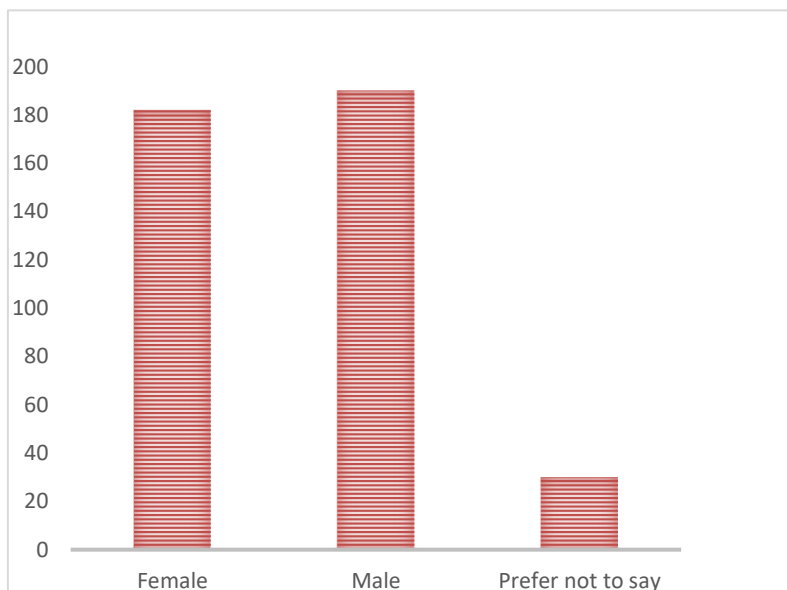
Chart 1: Respondent by age



Base: 406

The age group with the highest number of respondents was the 65 – 74 age group (109, 27%). This was followed by those aged between 45 and 54 (79, 19%) and those aged between 55 and 64 (78, 19%). There was a lower level of response from respondents aged 75 and over and those aged 24 or under.

Chart 2: Respondent by sex

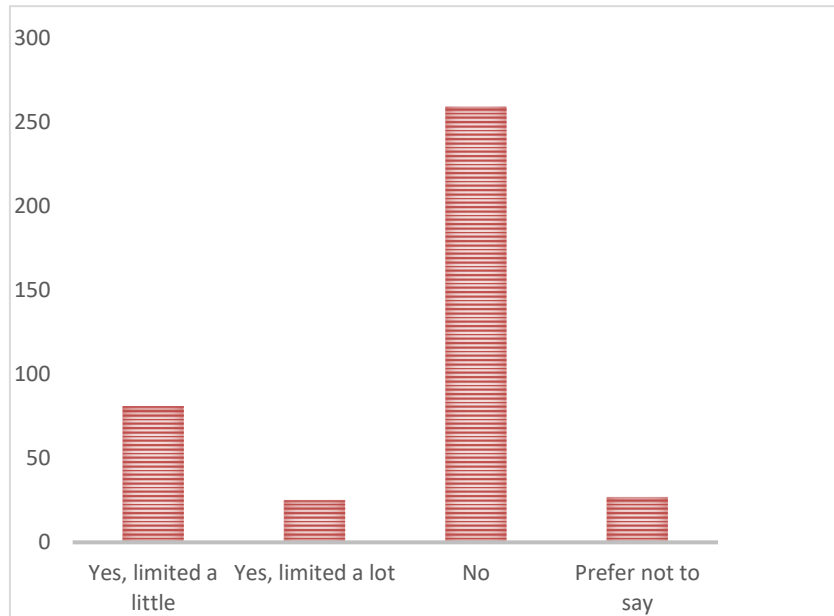


Base: 402

This engagement generated a slightly higher number of male respondents (190, 47%) compared to female respondents (182, 45%).

The majority of respondents indicated that their gender identity was the same as the sex that they registered with at birth.

Chart 3: Respondent by health and disability



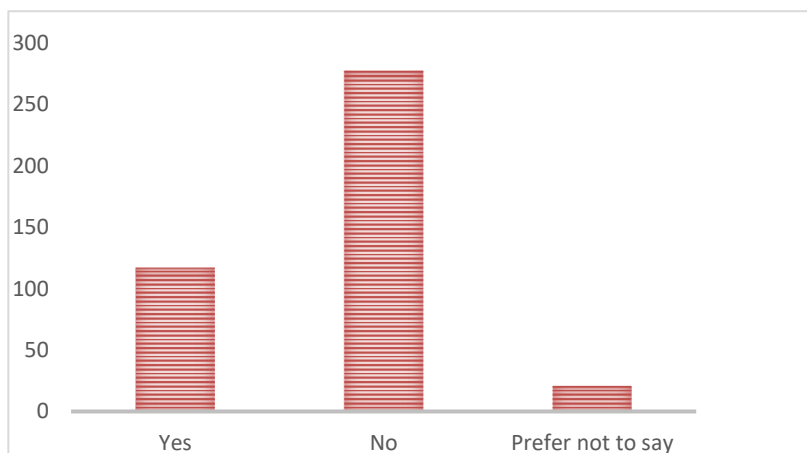
Base: 392

Most respondents indicated that they did not have any limitations due to a health condition or disability (259, 66%). 27 per cent of respondents did indicate that they were 'limited a little' or 'limited a lot'.

The majority of respondents identified their ethnicity as 'White' (329, 75%). The engagement received a small number of responses from other ethnic groups (9 in total).

The majority of respondents stated that they were not previously served in the armed forces, regular or reserves (331, 81%), however 56 respondents stated that had (14%).

Chart 4: Respondent by care experience



When asked about experience of the care system, 117 respondents indicated that they had care experience (28%), whilst 277 (67%) said that they didn't.

SECTION 2 – YOUR PRIORITIES

The questionnaire asked respondents to select up to three priorities that the Council should focus on in the coming year - the Council's priorities are:

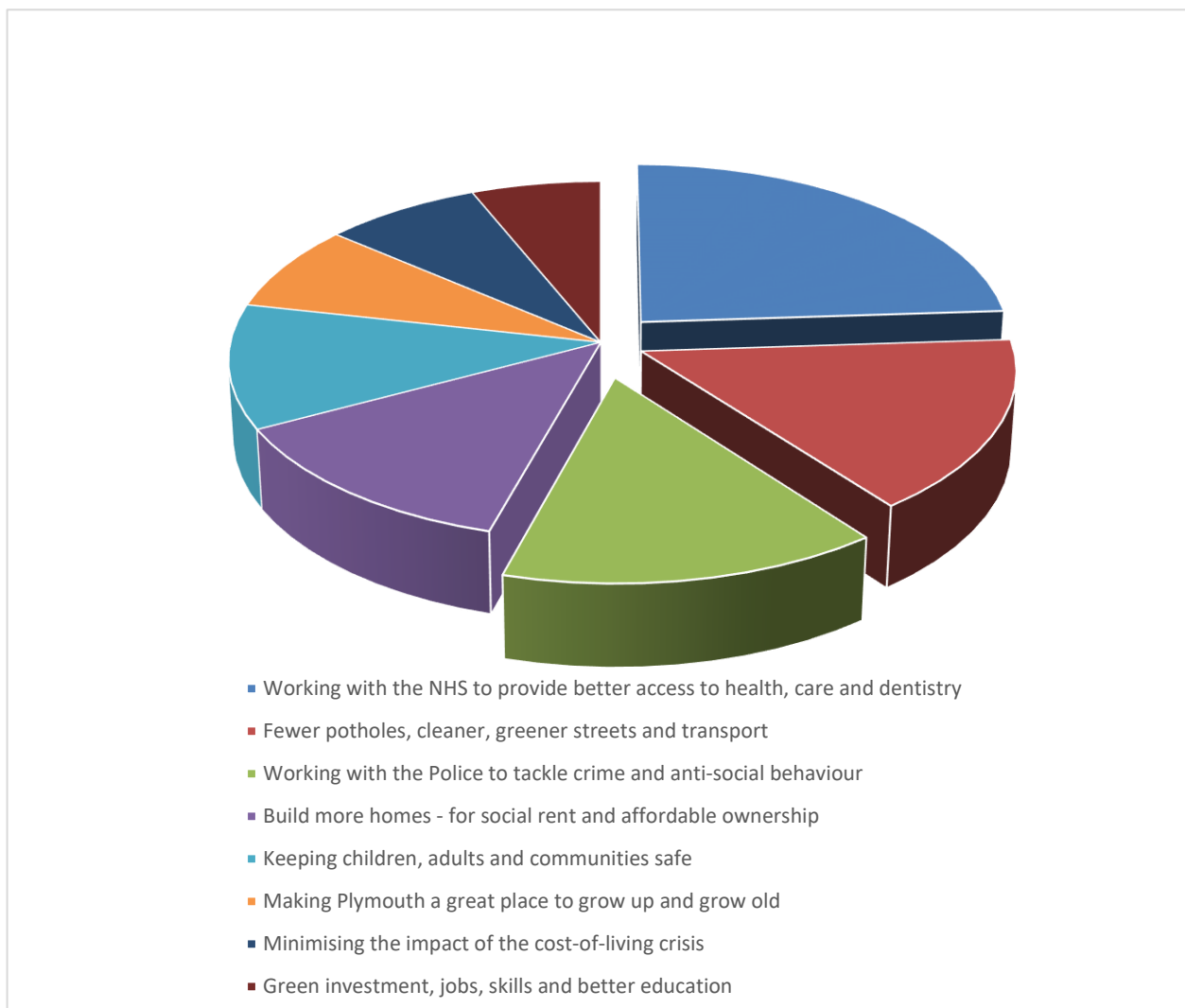
- Working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets and transport.
- Build more homes - for social rent and affordable ownership.
- Green investment, jobs, skills and better education.
- Working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry.
- Keeping children, adults and communities safe.
- Making Plymouth a great place to grow up and grow old.
- Minimising the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

The analysis added together the selections made by respondents to generate a final number and the top three priorities (cumulative approach, not ranked by preference). Respondents could not choose the same priority more than once.

The results show that 251 respondents selected **'working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry'** as the top priority that they would like the council to focus on in the next 12 months.

This was followed by **'fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets and transport'**, selected by 169 respondents and then **'working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour'** which was selected by 160 respondents.

Chart 5: Top priorities



Further analysis of priorities

Age: Respondents aged 34 years or under selected ‘working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry’ and ‘minimising the impact of the cost-of-living crisis’ as priorities for the Council to address. Those aged between 35 and 64 years selected ‘working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry’ and ‘working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour’ as clear priorities they want the Council to focus on over the next 12 months. Those respondents aged 65 years and over also want the Council to work with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry.

Sex: Both male and female respondents selected ‘working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry’ as a top priority for the Council to address. Female respondents also chose ‘working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour’ as a clear priority, whereas male respondents chose ‘fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets and transport’.

Veterans: Respondents who indicated that they had served in the armed forces either as a regular or reserve selected ‘working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry’ and ‘fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets and transport’ as clear priorities they want the Council to focus on over the next 12 months.

Disability and health: Respondents who indicated that they were limited a lot or limited a little with a disability or health condition selected ‘working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry’ as a top priority for the Council to address – this was also selected most frequently by those who were not limited with a disability or health condition. ‘Build more homes - for social rent and affordable ownership’ was also a priority selected by those with a disability or health condition.

Care experience: Respondents who indicated that they had experience of the care system selected ‘working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry’ and ‘working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour’ as clear priorities they want the Council to focus on over the next 12 months.

Further comments relating to Council’s priorities

Within this section of the engagement, respondents were asked to think about whether there was anything in addition to the Council’s priorities that should be an area of focus for the coming year.

Out of the total 436 respondents, 170 entered a written response to this question. These free text responses were analysed thematically, for most part the free text space was used by respondents to verify their selected priorities and add context, e.g. comments relating to better public transport, filling potholes, enhanced parking enforcement or no more parking charge increases, city cleanliness, access to green space and the issue with lack of NHS dentistry.

There were a high number of comments relating to better access and funding for adult social care and more general support for vulnerable residents including children, young people and issues around homelessness (30). A selection of comments is provided below.

“Education system working together with the council and NHS and support mental health and behavioural issues at schools.”

“I think we should be doing more for homeless people. It is totally unacceptable that in the 21st century, people are living in tents on our streets. There are so many unoccupied houses, especially on MOD housing estates that should be given to homeless people.”

“Keeping disabled people in their own homes by providing adaptations to keep them independent.”

“More activities for youth, spread around the city, to actually engage young people, especially 8 - 18-year-olds, to keep them out of trouble due to boredom...”

“Social care for young and old is in crisis and the most vulnerable people in our community are the ones suffering because of it. This should not happen in a civilised society.”

Keeping libraries open was mentioned a few times in terms of something the council should focus on.

The comment that had the greatest single-issue focus was allotments (13), mainly in relation to reducing fees to encourage use, but respondents also cited how access to allotments has additional benefits.

“Work more imaginatively with existing services and groups e.g. allotments do not get a mention here but thousands of residents benefit from cheaper and better food, mental and physical health, sense of community.”

“Allotment charges are amongst the highest in the Country; this is counter to three of PCCs published priorities: Green Investment; Making Plymouth a great place to grow old and Minimising the impact of cost-of living crisis.”

“Allotments provide source of exercise, social interaction and food provision, an area to be greatly encouraged. I would plead that these are supported, that rents are not increased again. Rises risk many folks being discouraged from maintaining their plots, especially the elderly who gain so much.”

Encouraging business growth and investment into the city, alongside an ask that the Council focus on culture, art and sport also received a handful of comments.

“Business growth needs to be a priority otherwise you can't afford anything else. You need to prioritise making Plymouth an attractive place for business investment. Get to it.”

“Facilitate the partnership between business and culture to have a joined up social value ask to feed into the top 3 three priorities.”

“Supporting and enhancing culture - which the Council already does extremely well by helping to finance the Box, the Theatre Royal, the upcoming Hoe Festival, etc.”

SECTION 3 – MANAGING OUR BUDGET

Section 3 of this engagement asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements.

- **The Council should protect local services where possible by delivering these in different and/or more efficient ways.**

This question generated 430 responses, of which 92 per cent of respondents (395) agreed or strongly agreed that the Council should protect local services where possible by delivering these in different and/or more efficient ways – over 50 per cent strongly agreed with this statement and only one per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed. 30 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

- **The Council should help avoid reducing or stopping services by increasing fees and charges by the rate of inflation.**

This question generated 425 responses, of which less than 50 per cent (46%, 196) agreed or strongly agreed that the Council should help avoid reducing or stopping services by increasing fees and charges by the rate of inflation – 33 per cent (139) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. 90 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

- **The Council should avoid cutting services by following the Government's assumption that councils will maintain their spending power by increasing Council Tax by up to 2.99%.**

This question generated 426 responses, of which less than 50 per cent (47%, 202) agreed or strongly agreed that the Council should avoid cutting services by following the Government's assumption that councils will maintain their spending power by increasing Council Tax by up to 2.99 per cent – 32 per cent (138) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. 86 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

- **The Council should help pay for rising demand for care services for elderly and vulnerable adults by accepting the 2% precept the Government allows to be added to Council Tax for this purpose.**

This question generated 428 responses, of which 52 per cent (224) agreed or strongly agreed that the Council should help pay for rising demand for care services for elderly and vulnerable adults by accepting the 2 per cent precept the Government allows to be added to Council Tax for this purpose – 29 per cent (126) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. 78 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

- **The Council should lobby central government for more funding and a fairer share for Plymouth.**

This question generated 424 responses, of which 93 per cent (393) agreed or strongly agreed that the Council should lobby central government for more funding and a fairer share for Plymouth – 75 per cent strongly agreed with this statement and only 3 per cent (12) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. 19 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

- **The Council should help achieve the ambition for Plymouth to become a carbon neutral city by 2030 by using 'green' energy sources wherever possible.**

This question generated 420 responses, of which 54 per cent (229) agreed or strongly agreed that the Council should help achieve the ambition for Plymouth to become a carbon neutral city by 2030 by using 'green' energy sources wherever possible – 25 per cent (105) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. 86 respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

Further analysis of statements

Analysis was carried out to identify whether there were any differences in views between respondents with different protected characteristics in relation to each of the statements.

NB: these results are not statistically significant and in some cases the numbers of respondents is very low within the different protected characteristics. The results are only indicative of different views.

- **The Council should protect local services where possible by delivering these in different and/or more efficient ways.**

There were no discernible differences in views between respondents with different protected characteristics in relation to this statement. The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

- **The Council should help avoid reducing or stopping services by increasing fees and charges by the rate of inflation.**

The results don't show a great difference in levels of agreement or disagreement for this statement, however, those aged between 20 and 24 years were more likely than any other age group to agree or strongly agree with this statement, with those aged between 25 and 34 years more likely than any other age group to disagree. There was no discernible difference in views between those respondents

who indicated that they had a disability or health condition and those who did not, nor between female and male respondents.

Those respondents who indicated that they previously served in the armed forces were slightly less likely to agree with this statement than those who had not, however their level of disagreement was the same as those who had not previously served in the armed forces. Those who indicated that they had experience of the care system were slightly more likely to disagree with this statement than those who had not.

- **The Council should avoid cutting services by following the Government's assumption that councils will maintain their spending power by increasing Council Tax by up to 2.99%.**

Those aged 55 years and over were slightly more likely to agree or strongly agree with this statement with the 65 to 74 years age group being most likely to agree. Those aged under 44 years more likely to disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. There was no discernible difference in views between those respondents who indicated that they had a disability or health condition and those who did not, nor between female and male respondents or between those who indicated that they had experience of the care system and those who had not.

Those respondents who indicated that they previously served in the armed forces were slightly more likely to agree with this statement than those who had not.

- **The Council should help pay for rising demand for care services for elderly and vulnerable adults by accepting the 2% precept the Government allows to be added to Council Tax for this purpose.**

Those aged 55 years and over were slightly more likely to agree or strongly agree with this statement with the 75 to 84 years age group being most likely to agree or strongly agree with this statement.

Those respondents who indicated that they had a disability or health condition were slightly more likely to agree with this statement than those who did not and those who did not were more likely to disagree. Female respondents were quite a bit more likely to agree or strongly agree with this statement.

There was no discernible difference in views between those respondents who indicated that they had previously served in the armed forces and those who had not. Those who indicated that they had experience of the care system were quite a bit more likely to agree with this statement than those who had not.

- **The Council should lobby central government for more funding and a fairer share for Plymouth.**

There were no discernible differences in views between respondents with different protected characteristics in relation to this statement. The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

- **The Council should help achieve the ambition for Plymouth to become a carbon neutral city by 2030 by using 'green' energy sources wherever possible.**

Those aged 44 years and under were more likely to agree or strongly agree with this statement with the 20 to 24 and 25- to 34-year-old age groups being most likely to agree. Those respondents who indicated that they had a disability or health condition were less likely to agree with this statement than those who did not. Female respondents were quite a bit more likely to agree or strongly agree with this statement and male respondents were more likely to disagree.

Those respondents who indicated that they previously served in the armed forces were quite a bit more likely to disagree with this statement than those who had not. Those who had not served the armed forces were quite a bit more likely to agree or strongly agree with this statement. Those who indicated that they had experience of the care system were quite a bit less likely to agree with this statement.

SECTION 4 – FURTHER COMMENTS

This final section asked respondents if they had any further suggestions about ways in which the Council could save money or raise revenue to support services.

Out of the total 436 respondents, 182 entered a written response to this question.

Several respondents (26) suggested that the Council could save money by reducing staff costs. The most common suggestion was to reduce the number or salary of senior managers. Other comments related to reducing the overall number of staff by increasing efficiency and removing any posts that were considered unnecessary.

‘Cut the massive salaries of those at the top and stop hiring advisors who are also paid huge amounts of money’.

‘Cut waste whenever possible. Use staff efficiently and be prepared to slim the workforce down if possible’.

13 respondents felt that either the number of Councillors should be reduced to save money or that expenses paid to Councillors should be reduced.

The second most common suggestion (22) was for the Council to focus on the provision of core services and reduce spending on services or projects considered unnecessary.

‘Focus ENTIRELY on providing real services for real people, and ONLY spend our tax money on providing proper services’.

‘Reduce the amount spent on vanity projects that do not increase the wellbeing of people who live in Plymouth’.

‘Stop wasting money on traffic issues, beryl bikes etc. sort the essential basics first’.

12 respondents suggested that the Council should make more use of volunteers or the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). A couple of respondents also suggested that unemployed people could be asked to volunteer.

‘We could concentrate on using local volunteers to help encourage people to help take care of where they live. This could include tree planting, litter collecting and removing graffiti.’.

‘Citizens task forces for street cleaning, rubbish clearing, verge cutting etc. Similarly long term unemployed task force for maintaining social housing stock & grounds’.

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	08 January 2024
Title of Report:	Council Tax Discounts and Premiums
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Northey (Service Director for Finance)
Author:	Paul Walshe, Head of Revenues, Benefits and Service Centre
Contact Email:	paul.walshe@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	R&B001
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

In March 2023 Council agreed to implement changes to the levying of Council Tax concerning second homes and long-term empty dwellings from 1 April 2024. However, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill was delayed in Parliament which meant billing authorities were not able to introduce the Council Tax premiums from 1 April 2024.

On 26 October 2023, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill received Royal Assent which gives billing authorities the ability to charge Council Tax premiums from 1 April 2025.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will require one year's notice to be given for premiums to be effective from 1 April 2025. Any decision must be taken by Full Council as a billing authority by 31 March 2024. If approved, an advert will need to be placed in the public domain to comply with the terms of the Bill.

Recommendations and Reasons

That Cabinet recommend to City Council to approve:

1. From 1 April 2025 the current 100% premium for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished will be levied after a period of one year;
2. From 1 April 2025 a premium of 100% will be levied on all dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially furnished (second homes).

Reasons:

The provisions within the Bill are primarily aimed at allowing councils to raise additional revenue and to acknowledge the impact that second and empty homes can have on some communities, with a view that especially in the case of empty properties this would incentivise property owners to bring those properties back into use at the earliest opportunity.

The government has confirmed that billing authorities wishing to adopt any changes arising from the Bill are required to make a council resolution confirming their requirements at least 12 months prior to the financial year in which the changes will come into effect. For April 2025 this requires a decision by the 1 April 2024.

These recommendations will encourage taxpayers to live in their main residence or ensure their property is fully occupied. In addition, this will generate funding to the support the delivery of local services.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The alternative option is to 'do nothing' and make no change to Council Tax premiums. This would limit the opportunity to raise additional income plus no change would give less of an incentive for property owners to ensure their property is fully occupied.

The council could consider delaying the introduction of premiums for another year; however this would lead to a missed opportunity to increase projected income in excess of £1.0m for each year it is delayed.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Effective financial management is fundamental to the delivery of corporate improvement priorities and is supported by maximising the total resources available to the council.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Charging Council Tax premiums will result in additional Council Tax income being generated which will support the delivery of local services.

The levying of Council Tax premiums also increases the taxbase.

It is estimated levying of a 100% premium on second homes could generate further Council Tax income of more than £1.0m.

Financial Risks

Charging Council Tax premiums increases income and is therefore not a financial risk, however some software costs are anticipated to update systems to correctly bill affected dwellings. In addition, an increase of staff resource is anticipated to administer and correspond with an expected increase of customer queries, as well as increased recovery activity.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No direct implications.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

None directly

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
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Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	CH 21.12. 23 0945	Leg	LS/000 01312/ 3/AC/2 1/12/2 3.	Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Northey (Service Director for Finance)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 20/12/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Tudor Evans OBE, Leader											
Date approved: 21/12/2023											

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill received Royal Assent in October 2023. The changes impacting Council Tax relate to second homes and long-term empty dwellings.
- 1.2 The Bill allows billing authorities to reduce the period before which a premium can be charged for empty homes and introduces the ability to charge a premium for properties which are furnished but not occupied as a primary residence.
- 1.3 The decision to implement the new measures must be taken by Full Council as a billing authority. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill requires the Local Authority to give one year's notice for the adoption of the measures. Therefore, to take effect from the 1 April 2025, Council needs to have approved by the 1 April 2024.
- 1.4 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill generally has been brought forward with the intention to address geographical disparities between different parts of the UK. The specific provisions which are subject to this paper are primarily aimed at allowing councils to raise additional revenue and to acknowledge the impact that second and empty homes can have on some communities, with a view that especially in the case of empty properties this would incentivise property owners to bring those properties back into use at the earliest opportunity.

2. Council Tax Premiums

- 2.1 The first relevant change in the Bill is reducing the period before which a premium can be charged for empty homes.
- 2.2 Council Tax legislation sets the various discounts and exemptions which local authorities can apply when setting Council Tax. In addition, the Government has allowed discretion for certain areas, for example premiums for second homes and the status of a residence i.e. unfurnished, requiring or undergoing structural repairs.
- 2.3 Plymouth City Council has used this discretion and changes were set out in the Council Tax Base Setting Report for 2023/24. The report was approved by Council on 30 January 2023:

From 1 April 2021 an additional premium has been charged of up to:

 - 100% for any dwelling empty between 2 and 5 years;
 - 200% for any dwelling empty between 5 and 10 years;
 - 300% for any dwelling empty for 10 years or more.
- 2.4 The Council's Housing Delivery Team supports the legislation as this provides a further disincentive for keeping properties empty and:
 - Helps to alleviate pressures on the housing waiting list through increased availability of rental properties.
 - Improves the visual appearance of empty properties that may blight neighbourhoods.
 - Addresses problems that may be associated with living next door to an empty home for example damp ingress, vermin, anti-social behaviour and loss of property value.
- 2.5 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill closes a loophole regarding second homes with the intention of encouraging more empty properties being brought back into use. A Council Tax premium can be avoided by the dwelling being unoccupied and 'furnished' which means it is classed as a second home for Council Tax purposes as it is non-one's sole or main residence.
- 2.6 The table below sets out the current discounts and premiums Plymouth has adopted:

Category of Dwelling	Definition	Current discount/premium
Class A – Second Homes	Dwellings which are no one's sole or main residence which are substantially furnished and subject to a 28-day planning restriction.	50% discount
Class B – Second Homes	Dwellings which are no one's sole or main residence and are substantially furnished.	0% discount
Class C	Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished.	100% discount for a period of 1 month, after 1 month 0% discount
Class D	Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished and require major repair work to render them habitable.	0% discount
Empty Homes Premium	Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than 2 years and less than 5 years.	100% premium.
Empty Homes Premium	Dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for between 5 years and 10 years.	200% premium.
Empty Homes Premium	Dwellings which are unoccupied and unfurnished for 10 years or more.	300% premium.

3. Introduction of a Council Tax premium for second homes

- 3.1 At present an empty homes premium can only be charged in respect of dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished. This term is not defined by legislation and instead use must be made of case law. Dwellings which are no one's sole or main residence and furnished are classed as second homes.
- 3.2 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill introduces powers for billing authorities to apply a premium to dwellings which have no resident and are 'substantially furnished'. The maximum Council Tax charge in these cases would be a standard 100% plus a further 100% premium, resulting in a total Council Tax charge of 200%.
- 3.3 Based on the Council Tax Base (October 2022) form, Plymouth has 1,106 second homes.
- 3.4 Initial estimates suggest that applying a 100% premium on second homes could generate further Council Tax income of more than £1.0m.

4. Reducing the minimum period for an empty home's premium

- 4.1 The second key measure in the bill is to reduce the minimum period for charging a Council Tax premium for empty properties from two years to one year.
- 4.2 From 1 April 2025, the Bill allows billing authorities to charge an empty homes premium of 100% after one year. It should also be noted that the intention is not that it takes effect to properties becoming empty from the 1 April, but the 12-month period will include a property where it became empty before this date.
- 4.3 Potential income related to this proposal is difficult to estimate as the eligibility of a dwelling for this premium will change over time. There were 1,342 empty homes of 2 years or less as at October 2022. If 10% were empty for more than 1 year but less than 2, the additional Council Tax income would be £0.224m.

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	08 January 2024
Title of Report:	Council Tax Base Setting 2024/25 and Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Northey (Service Director for Finance)
Author:	Carolyn Haynes (Head of Finance) Paul Walshe (Head of Revenues, Benefits and Service Centre)
Contact Email:	carolyn.haynes@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	FIN/SC
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To recommend the 2024/25 Council Tax Base to Council in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

Agree actions from the annual review of the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme.

Recommendations and Reasons

Cabinet recommends Council approve -

1. The Council Tax Base for 2024/25 of 75,389 equivalent Band D dwellings as set out in the report.
2. The continuation of the current Council Tax Support scheme and Exceptional Hardship Scheme for 2024/25 with the amendments as set out in Paragraph 4.

Reason for recommendations: to meet the legal requirements to set the Council Tax Base for budget setting purposes.

To help ensure that the Council Tax Support scheme treats claimants consistently, is clear to understand and is easy to administer.

Alternative options considered and rejected

It is a statutory requirement for Council to approve the Council Tax Base for the forthcoming financial year and annually review their CTS scheme. The option to amend the Council Tax Support scheme requires public consultation, and as there are no major Government amendments, it is considered correct to continue with the existing scheme.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Council Tax Base and associated 2024/25 budget papers will set out the resources available to deliver the Corporate Plan priorities.

Sign off:

Fin	DJN. 23.24. 169	Leg	LS/00 0013 12/2/ AC/1 5/21/ 23	Mon Off		HR		Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Northey (Service Director for Finance)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 13/12/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member of Finance, after discussion with Cabinet colleagues Date approved: 13/12/2023											

A. Council Tax Base Calculation

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 make arrangements for the setting of the Council Tax. The arrangements include the determination of the Council Tax Base. A Council resolution is necessary. The decision must be notified to the major precept authorities.
- 1.2 For the year commencing 1 April 2024, the major precept authorities will be Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority.
- 1.3 The Council must determine its Council Tax Base for 2024/25 during the period 1 December 2023 to 31 January 2024. The Council Tax Base is the measure of the taxable capacity of an area, for the purpose of calculating an authority's Council Tax. It represents the estimated number of Band D equivalent chargeable dwellings for the year. It also takes into account the authority's estimated Council Tax collection rate. The level of Council Tax subsequently set must be determined using the Council Tax Base figure. The Council Tax Base calculation is attached in Appendix B.
- 1.4 The calculation of the Council Tax Base allows for discounts under the Council Tax Support Scheme.

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to propose to Council the Council Tax Base of 75,389. The Council Tax Base for 2023/24 was 74,891.
- 2.2 The Tax Base calculation includes the impact of the Council Tax Support Scheme. Tax base calculations also include assumptions for the financial impact from the cost-of-living crisis and the continuing requirements of citizens for support to pay their Council Tax through the Council Tax Support scheme.

3. TAX BASE CALCULATIONS

- 3.1 Council Tax Base figures are calculated by the billing authority as the aggregate of the "relevant amounts" calculated for each property valuation band multiplied by the estimated "collection rate" for the year.
- 3.2 Relevant amounts are:
 - (a) The number of chargeable dwellings in that band shown in the valuation list as at 12 September 2023 (Ministry of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) return – Council Tax Base (CTB));
 - (b) The number of discounts, disabled reductions and exemptions which apply to those dwellings;
 - (c) Estimated changes in the number of chargeable properties between 12 September 2023 and 31 March 2025;
 - (d) Impact of the Council Tax Support scheme;
 - (e) The number of Band D equivalents within each different band.

- 3.3 The collection rate is the billing authority's estimate of the total amounts of 2024/25 Council Tax which will ultimately be paid or transferred into the Collection Fund.
- 3.4 This report assumes a collection rate for Council Tax of 97.5%. This rate reflects recent arrears collection performance, the pattern of write offs and the impact of Universal Credit. Analysis of collection rates across the age profile of debts suggests that an eventual collection rate of 97.5% is realistic and prudent in the current economic climate.
- 3.5 Appendix C shows the tax base used for the previous three years for comparison.

4. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

- 4.1 In April 2013 the National Council Tax Benefit scheme was abolished and replaced by local assistance schemes, developed and administered by local Councils. Plymouth City Council introduced two schemes from 1 April 2013; Council Tax Support and a discretionary Exceptional Hardship Scheme. The main Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme requires all working age claimants to make a minimum 20% contribution towards their Council Tax bill. All local authorities administer the same Council Tax Support scheme for Pension Age council taxpayers under regulations prescribed by central government.
- 4.2 From April 2021 Plymouth moved to an income banded working age CTS scheme. The amount of support awarded is based on the composition of the household and the income band in which the household income falls. Those on a basic qualifying benefit, known as a passported benefit, and those who receive a war pension or war disablement benefit receive a maximum 80% towards their Council Tax.
- 4.3 All councils are required to annually review their local CTS schemes. Significant changes were agreed to the CTS scheme to implement an income banded scheme in 2021/22 to support Universal Credit (UC) customers from the frequent changes to their awards.
- 4.4 CTS continues to provide vital support for many households in the city who have low incomes. It is expected that the caseload and scheme cost within 2024/25 can be funded within the available financial envelope.
- 4.5 **A change to the CTS scheme is recommended to disregard any government emergency payments;**
- 4.6 During difficult times and periods of crisis, such as the cost-of-living crisis, the government has made payments to assist households who are suffering hardship. There have been several government provisions to support vulnerable households with the cost of living, such as Alternative Fuel Payments and the Household Support Fund payments.
- 4.7 For the purpose of Housing Benefit, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have instructed local authorities to treat any such payments as 'local welfare provision' and to disregard them as income/capital for the purposes of Housing Benefit calculations and have amended HB Regulations to enable this.

4.8 However, for CTS, any new government emergency payments or increases to national welfare benefits could negatively impact a claim as it would reduce entitlement. If welfare provision is not disregarded for the purpose of CTS, then such emergency payments could, in theory, be subject to challenge as Plymouth's current CTS scheme does not provide for such payments to be disregarded.

4.9 This recommendation is to make a similar provision within our CTS scheme so that where the government announce emergency payment 'Local Welfare Provision' schemes and/or make increases to national welfare benefits, that the Council has the discretion to disregard such additional welfare payments in the assessment of CTS.

4.10 Taking the factors in the above paragraphs into account, it is recommended that the following changes are made to the CTS scheme for implementation in 2024/25:

4.11 Recommendation – That the CTS scheme be amended to disregard certain Local Welfare Provision crisis payments. This change will allow the Council to disregard any such payments so they will not have a negative impact on or reduce entitlement to CTS.

Benefits

- CTS applicants will not have CTS reduced if they receive a Local Welfare Provision.
- This recommendation brings Plymouth's CTS scheme in line with changes made to HB regulations.

Drawbacks

- None Identified

4.12 These factors have been taken into account in establishing the proposed Council Tax Base and the impact will be closely monitored throughout the year.

4.13 The Council recognises the impact of the rising cost of living and the financial strain this has placed on households. A number of crisis payments and schemes have been delivered by the Council such as the Household Support Fund and the Council Tax Energy Rebate, along with a range of other support through the Cost of Living Plan ([Cost of living | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/cost-of-living)).

4.14 Further to these measures, the Council intends to review the CTS scheme during 2024 to consider changes to provide more financial support to families with children. It is the council's intention to undertake detailed modelling on the current CTS case load and offer revised schemes which will be open to public consultation.

C. Council Tax Base - Previous Years

Band	2021/22			2022/23			2023/24		
	Number of properties	Estimated Collection Rate	Adjusted Band D Equivalent	Number of properties	Estimated Collection Rate	Adjusted Band D Equivalent	Number of properties	Estimated Collection Rate	Adjusted Band D Equivalent
A	47,670	97.5%	18,868	47,824	97.5%	19,057	48,050	97.5%	19,508
B	33,048	97.5%	19,297	33,154	97.5%	19,389	33,261	97.5%	19,664
C	23,318	97.5%	17,103	23,484	97.5%	17,266	23,575	97.5%	17,420
D	10,066	97.5%	8,308	10,132	97.5%	8,443	10,213	97.5%	8,551
E	5,136	97.5%	5,506	5,159	97.5%	5,546	5,186	97.5%	5,578
F	1,805	97.5%	2,361	1,836	97.5%	2,411	1,859	97.5%	2,456
G	606	97.5%	850	611	97.5%	863	614	97.5%	862
H	57	97.5%	37	56	97.5%	39	55	97.5%	42
Total	121,706		72,330	122,256		73,014	122,813		74,081
MOD			785			816			810
Tax Base			73,115			73,830			74,891

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	08 January 2024
Title of Report:	Proposed amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2022 in relation to Livery and Topographical Knowledge of Plymouth test.
Lead Member:	Councillor Sally Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Cemeteries & Crematoria)
Lead Strategic Director:	Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)
Author:	Nicola Horne
Contact Email:	Nicola.horne@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Taxi Policy NH/ODPH
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The Council adopted its third Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy in May 2022 which updated and set out a licensing framework required to regulate hackney carriage and private hire (taxi) services within Plymouth.

In response to various economic and operational changes that have arisen since policy implementation in May 2022, Plymouth City Council consulted on proposed amendments to the Taxi Policy 2022, between 24 October and 23 November 2023. All drivers, vehicle proprietors and operators were sent an email and letter in the post explaining the consultation and asking for their feedback using the online form or alternatively in writing. Letters and emails were also sent to a variety of agencies, departments and Councillors including disability groups, resident's associations and businesses. A total of 386 responses to the public consultation were received.

A summary of the results and recommendations are included in the Briefing Report in Appendix A for livery and Knowledge of Plymouth test, with the remaining matters being delegated to Taxi Licensing Committee.

The Executive Decision is contained in Appendix B, a copy of the consultation in Appendix C and comments received can be found in Appendix D.

Recommendations and Reasons

That Cabinet_–

1. note the responses made to the proposed amendments to the Taxi Policy;
2. recommend to City Council approval of proposals in the briefing paper to -
 - a. Remove livery requirements for vehicles;

- b. the removal of requirements for the Knowledge of Plymouth test for private hire drivers.

Subject to approval, this will be implemented on 1st April 2024 and it is considered that this will enable an increase in overall taxi provision across the city.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Do nothing- this would mean that the Policy would remain the same, presenting some operational issues, and exacerbating some economic considerations for the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Taxi Policy has relevance to the priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan by keeping children, adults and communities safe in the provision of a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire service within Plymouth. The policy ensures that any person within the hackney carriage and private hire trade works within the realms of policy to ensure safety is paramount.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

None

Financial Risks

The costs of implementation will be met, proportionately, through the existing hackney carriage and private hire trade budgets which are funded through the vehicle, driver and operator licence fee income.

Any amendments to the licensing policy should have no financial impact to the general account.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

An equality Impact Assessment has been completed and attached.

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
		If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing Note							
B	Authorisation to Consult							
C	Taxi Licensing Consultation (October 23)							
D	Consultation Responses							
E	EIA							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	HLSI 5122 3	Leg	IW 18 Dec 23 TCS 1760	Mon Off		HR		Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 15/12/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Sally Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Cemeteries & Crematoria)											
Date approved: 15/12/2023											

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BRIEFING NOTE

Appendix A

**I. Background**

- I.1. The Council adopted its third Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (Taxi Policy) in May 2022.
- I.2. This report outlines several changes to the Policy that are considered necessary when taking into consideration the economic and operational changes that have arisen since policy implementation in May 2022.
- I.3. A consultation exercise was undertaken between 24 October to 23 November 2023. The reasons for the consultation were outlined in the Executive Decision provided in Appendix B and a copy of the Consultation document is provided in Appendix C.
- I.4. The Council Constitution sets out the democratic process for decision making, and some decisions are for the Taxi Licensing Committee to make, and others are for Full Council to determine. This was set out in the Executive Decision document. This report seeks to cover those specific matters that require Full Council approval only, specifically Livery and Topographical Knowledge of Plymouth test (KOP). All other matters will be decided upon at the Taxi Licensing Committee meeting, as dictated by the Constitution.
- I.5. Table one taken from the Executive Decision report outlines a summary of the areas that were consulted upon and the appropriate decision-making route.

Table 1.

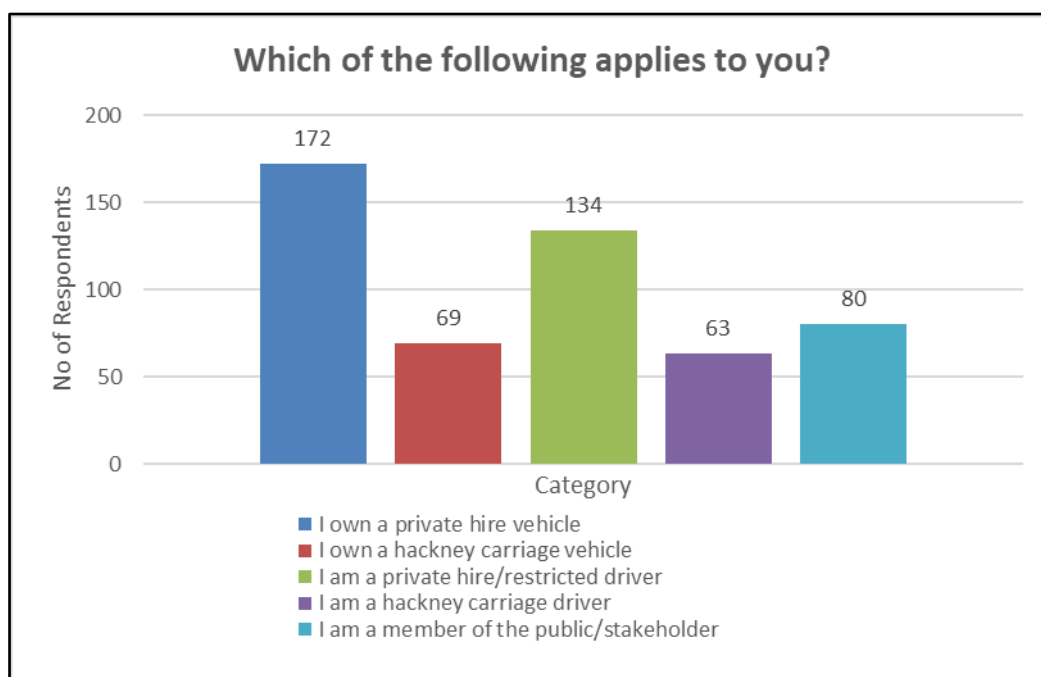
Policy Subject/Area	Changes Required	Full Council or TL Committee
Livery Policy 2022	Revoke full livery requirement & retain door signage	Full Council
Topographical Test (Knowledge of Plymouth)	Remove requirement for new private hire driver applicants to take and retain for hackney carriage drivers	Full Council
Certificate of Good Conduct	Change requirement for amount of time living in country from majority of adult life to more than 10 years in line with Barrister advice and Home Office guidance	TL Committee
Acceptable Standard of Dress (Dress Code)	Change of wording required to allow black denim, see review document for suggested wording.	TL Committee
Private Hire Driver & Hackney Carriage Driver New Driver Applicants (Accumulation of licence endorsements before application)	Amend wording to cover new applicants who have more than 6 points on licence	TL Committee
Hackney carriage Conditions of Licence. (Card Holder)	Amend card reader wording for clarity.	TL Committee

Fixing Point and must be operational and offered.	Remove requirement for card reader fixture.	
Changes to penalty Point Scheme	Review of what happens when 12 points reached i.e., points go back to nil or rollover etc, and Insertion of points for additional minor offences.	TL Committee
Private hire vehicle Specifications	Amend to allow PHV WA/tail lift vehicles to only have 1 side door. Add requirement for minimum of 4 adults to private hire vehicle specs. Amend seating requirements to allow for rear folding seats where safe and suitable. Remove engine capacity.	TL Committee

2. Consultation

- 2.1. All drivers, vehicle proprietors and operators were sent a letter by email, explaining the proposed amendments and asking for their feedback via an online questionnaire or printable form. Letters and emails were also sent to all Councillors, a variety of agencies and departments including disability groups, residents’ associations and businesses.
- 2.2. A total of 391 responses were received, 386 were made on-line and 5 were received by post or e-mail, which were added to the online system to allow analysis. There was an opportunity to leave comments. Full anonymised copies of the responses are in Appendix D. Of the 391 responses received, the following breakdown of who responded to the consultation can be seen below in Figure 1. Some responders ticked more than one of the options if they were both a driver and vehicle proprietor. 80 responses were received by members of the public but again some drivers ticked this option in addition to their licence category.

Figure 1: Breakdown of who responded to the consultation.



3. Considerations

- 3.1. There have been concerns for some time about the numbers of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles available in Plymouth. The wider 'taxi' service, (including both hackney carriages and private hire vehicles) provides a valuable support system to residents and visitors to our city. With this in mind, it is important for the Council to consider the economic wellbeing of the city, including employment opportunities, but also consider actions that can be taken to increase the availability of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles, to support the evening and nighttime economy and ensuring visitors and residents can move around the city safely at whatever time of day or night.
- 3.2. The Council have also considered the outcomes of the Violence Against Women and Girls Commission where it was reported that by having reduced numbers of 'taxis' it had an impact on the perceived safety of women and girls in our community. We are proud to have Purple Flag status, recognising Plymouth nightlife for safety and increasing the numbers of private hire and hackney carriages will help us maintain the ability to transport passengers safely.
- 3.3. We are satisfied that with other controls and checks undertaken as part of the licensing regime, we can be satisfied that even with an increase in the numbers of drivers and vehicles in the city, a safe service can be provided to the public.
- 3.4. All the individual responses to the questions about livery and topographical knowledge of Plymouth test have been reviewed, considered and are summarised below.
- 3.5. Matters that are delegated to Taxi Licensing Committee have not been considered in this report and will be reported in due course to the Taxi Licensing Committee in early 2024.
- 3.6. The recently issued Department of Transport Best Practice Guidance for Licensing Authorities, published on 17th November 2023, has also been taken into account in reviewing the consultation responses. [Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance for licensing authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance-for-licensing-authorities-in-england)

Livery Policy

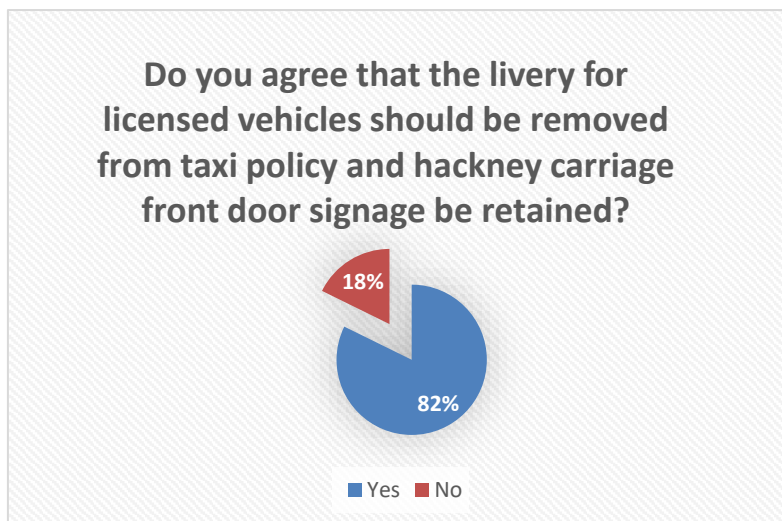
4. Background

- 4.1. PCC introduced its [Livery Policy](#) in May 2022. The Livery Policy currently requires
- 4.2. new hackney carriage vehicles entering the fleet from 1 May 2022 and existing hackney carriage vehicles to comply with the livery (colour scheme) requirements by 1 May 2027. It is also a requirement that new private hire vehicles entering the fleet cannot be white in colour.
- 4.3. The Council received feedback from vehicle proprietors, drivers and the wider taxi trade of issues relating to the cost of meeting the Livery Policy vehicles and the difficulties presented in sourcing such vehicles due to a national shortage.
- 4.4. The supply of new and second hand, 'all white' Euro 6, wheelchair accessible hackney carriage vehicles is severely limited with a continuing national shortage of the supply of vehicles of this specification and colour.
- 4.5. Furthermore, whilst there are a wide range of Euro 6 vehicles available to be licensed as private hire vehicles in Plymouth, the current policy requirement that these vehicles cannot be white severely reduces the number of vehicles that are available to be licensed.
- 4.6. The proposal was made to remove the requirements for livery for both hackney carriages and private hire vehicles, and retain a requirement for door signage. The specific question relating to Livery is shown in Figure 1 below, along with the percentages taken from the consultation responses.

5. Results

5.1. 378 responses in total were received to this question with 130 comments shown in full in Appendix D. 82% of respondents agree that livery requirements should be removed.

Figure 1



5.2. Some of those in favour of removing the livery requirement cited that cost of the livery requirements and sourcing white vehicles that are wheelchair accessible was difficult. Comments against the change in livery requirements said that having livery increased public confidence in hailing a properly licenced and approved cab. However there is overall support for the removal of the livery requirements.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. Taking into account the comments and the responses received, it is therefore proposed to remove/revoke the Livery Policy for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles in its entirety from the Taxi Policy 2022 and the associated hackney carriage and private hire vehicle conditions and retain door signage for hackney carriage vehicles.
- 6.2. This will also require small changes to the vehicle conditions, and these will be considered as per the delegation at Taxi Licensing Committee. These will include the use of a temporary vehicle for example following an accident or repair.
- 6.3. All associated vehicle conditions and specification documents will also be updated to reflect these changes.

Topographical/Knowledge of Plymouth Test

7. Background

- 7.1. During the course of the consultation, new guidance was issued by the Department of Transport (DfT) on 17th November 2023, which has a bearing on this amendment to Policy. Although not statutory guidance, licensing authorities should have due regard to best practice guidance. This is available on the following link. [Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing: best practice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice)
- 7.2. This guidance recommends that private hire drivers should not be required to undertake a knowledge test, as the DfT recognise the differences between how hackney carriages operate, such as plying for hire or being available on ranks, to private hire drivers, who have their routes transferred through an operator, and can use sat nav systems.
- 7.3. As such, this has had a significant impact on the considerations of the consultation responses. As mentioned, the aim is to increase the provision of the overall hackney carriage and private hire fleet and the impacts of removing the requirements for private hire drivers to undertake the KOP was recognised following the implementation of the existing policy in 2022, where

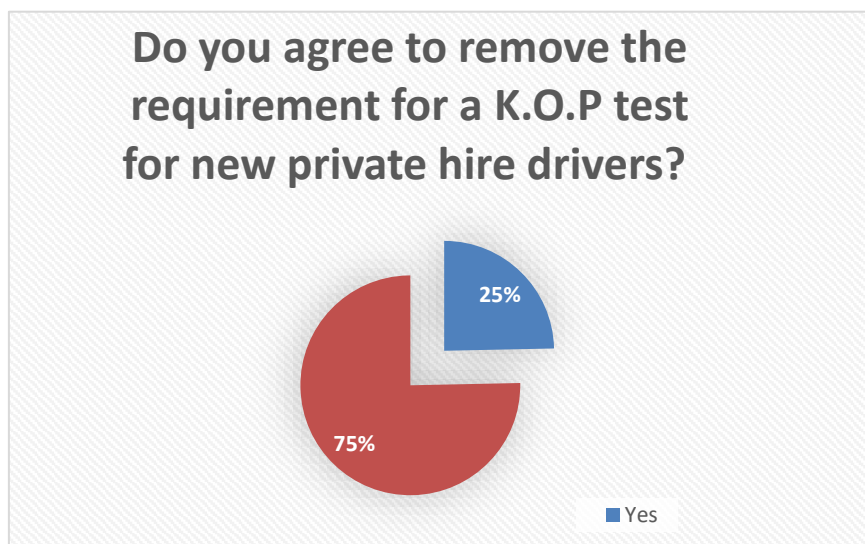
due to an error in wording there was a temporary relaxation of KOP requirements for private hire drivers.

- 7.4. During the 2 months that it took to rectify the mistake, there was a sharp increase in new applicants wishing to become licensed private hire drivers. This appeared to confirm that the KOP test for private hire drivers is currently presenting a barrier to new applicants.
- 7.5. Modern dispatch management and booking systems send bookings direct to the drivers data pads, with details of the bookings, via the inbuilt GPS navigation system which shows the most direct route to take. The routes also take account of local traffic conditions at the time of the booking. There is a valid argument that a private hire drivers' topographical knowledge does not need to be as much as a Hackney Carriage Driver who can 'ply for hire' and determine the most suitable and direct route etc while by the roadside and enroute. Private hire drivers cannot work without a GPS system or app which is accessed through their own smart phone.
- 7.6. Not all operators (operators of school contracts or fixed contracts) use dispatch management systems so these operators will be required to provide a form of electronic navigational system (GPS).
- 7.7. To ensure there is sufficient opportunity to gain local topographical experience and knowledge of Plymouth, any private hire driver who wishes to apply to be a hackney carriage driver will require three years of experience before they can apply or if they wish to apply before the three years, they will be required to complete the KOP test.

8. Results

- 8.1. The consultation in relation to KOP was asked in two parts, and the responses are dealt with in turn as part one, and part two.
- 8.2. Part one covered the removal of the requirement for a private hire driver to complete the KOP test. The question received 377 responses, of those 211 made comments, which are shown in Appendix D. 75% of respondents wished to keep the KOP requirements the same.

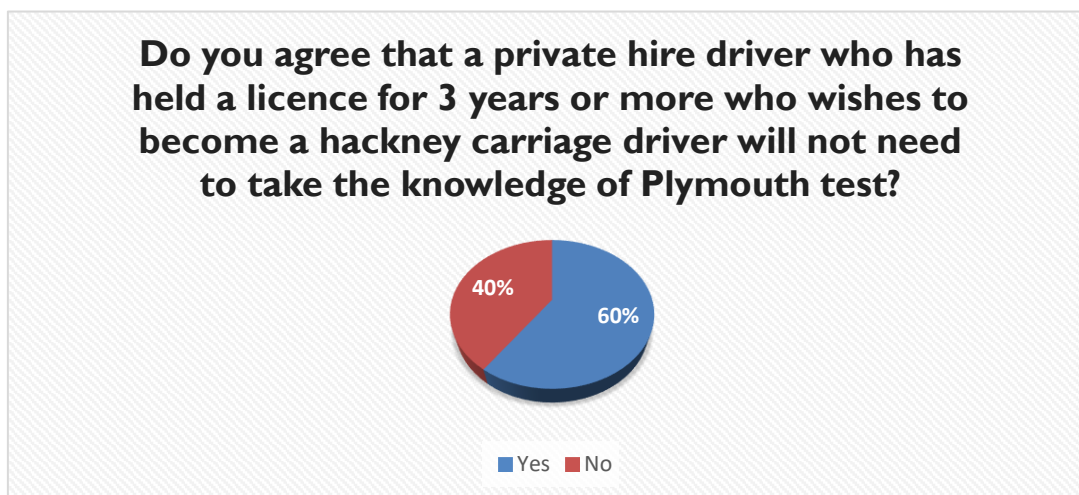
Figure 2



- 8.3. Those against the proposal included comments such as the KOP ensures drivers are of a specific standard, concerns about the reliability of the sat nav systems, and concerns that there would be an influx of lower standard, poorly trained drivers.
- 8.4. Those in support of the removal of the KOP considered the KOP was no longer relevant due to the electronic navigation systems available and others recognised it would result in an increase in drivers which would support the community and economy.

- 8.5. Part Two requested a view as to whether a private hire driver who had worked for 3 or more years should not be required to undertake a knowledge of Plymouth test if they wished to become a hackney carriage driver.
- 8.6. 375 responses were received. 224 (60%) of the respondents were in favour of the proposal and 151 (40%) were against the proposal. Full comments are available in Appendix D. Many repeated their previous concerns about the removal of the KOP test, although some recognised after driving for 3 years there would be increased knowledge.

Figure 3.



9. Recommendations

- 9.1. Full consideration has been given to the comments; however, it is recognised that the KOP for private hire drivers is a barrier to new applications, and increasing the number of drivers available is required to support the economic and safety needs of the city. This is further supported by the recently issued DfT guidance that also suggest best practice for licensing authorities is for the removal of the KOP test for private hire drivers.
- 9.2. Therefore, an amendment to reflect that the KOP test will only apply to Hackney Carriage Drivers is proposed.
- 9.3. Further proposed amendments will reflect that a private hire driver who has held a licence for 3 or more years will not need to take the KOP test if they wish to apply for a hackney carriage drivers' licence.
- 9.4. All amendments to the policy will be implemented on 1st April 2024, following the remaining matters being decided by Taxi Licensing Committee in due course.

EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a Cabinet Member



REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY BY AN INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER

Executive Decision Reference Number – CSLCC04 23/24


Decision				
1	Title of decision: Authorisation to consult on a review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2022 and Associated Policies and Conditions.			
2	Decision maker: Councillor Sally Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Cemeteries & Crematoria)			
3	Report author and contact details: Nicola Horne 01752 304556 E: nicola.horne@plymouth.gov.uk			
4	Decision to be taken: To release for consultation the proposed changes to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2022 and associated conditions and policies.			
5	Reasons for decision: The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing is a framework policy and as such Cabinet Member approval is required prior to the commencement of consultation.			
6	Alternative options considered and rejected: The Council has considered leaving the Policy as it was written however there are certain elements of the policy that require amendment, due to the cost-of-living crisis, and for clarity.			
7	Financial implications and risks: None, met through existing budgets.			
8	Is the decision a Key Decision? (please contact Democratic Support for further advice)	Yes	No	Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which:
			x	in the case of capital projects and contract awards, results in a new commitment to spend and/or save in excess of £3million in total
			x	in the case of revenue projects when the decision involves entering into new commitments and/or making new savings in excess of £1million
			x	is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the local authority.

	If yes, date of publication of the notice in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions	
9	Please specify how this decision is linked to the Council's corporate plan/Plymouth Plan and/or the policy framework and/or the revenue/capital budget:	<p>This report also links to the delivery of the City and Council priorities. In particular:</p> <p>Fewer potholes, cleaner, greener streets and transport:</p> <p>By ensuring Plymouth is a clean and tidy city and a green and sustainable city that cares for its environment; has a vibrant economy offering quality jobs and skills; and has a varied, efficient and sustainable transport network.</p> <p>Keeping children, adults and communities safe:</p> <p>By ensuring Plymouth is a friendly, welcoming city, making sure people feel safe in the city, protecting children, young people and adults.</p>
10	Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)	None.

Urgent decisions

11	Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public?	Yes		(If yes, please contact Democratic Support (democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk) for advice)
		No	x	(If no, go to section 13a)
12a	Reason for urgency:			
12b	Scrutiny Chair Signature:		Date	
	Scrutiny Committee name:			
	Print Name:			

Consultation			
I3a	Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?	Yes	
		No	x (If no go to section I4)
I3b	Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?		
I3c	Date Cabinet member consulted		
I4	Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision?	Yes	
		No	x If yes, please discuss with the Monitoring Officer
I5	Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?	Name	Dr Ruth Harrell
		Job title	Director of Public Health
		Date consulted	04 October 2023
Sign-off			
I6	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:	Democratic Support (mandatory)	DS55 23/24
		Finance (mandatory)	HLS041023
		Legal (mandatory)	IW – 0001760 – 12.10.23
		Human Resources (if applicable)	
		Corporate property (if applicable)	
		Procurement (if applicable)	
Appendices			
I7	Ref.	Title of appendix	
	A	Briefing report for publication (<i>mandatory</i>)	
	B	Equalities Impact Assessment (<i>where required</i>)	
Confidential/exempt information			
I8a		Yes	

	Do you need to include any confidential/exempt information?	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If yes, prepare a second, confidential ('Part II') briefing report and indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box in 18b below.				
		(Keep as much information as possible in the briefing report that will be in the public domain)						
		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18b	Confidential/exempt briefing report title:							
Background Papers								
19	Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are <u>unpublished</u> works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based. If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.							
Title of background paper(s)		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cabinet Member Signature								
20	I agree the decision and confirm that it is not contrary to the Council's policy and budget framework, Corporate Plan or Budget. In taking this decision I have given due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not. For further details please see the EIA attached.							
Signature			Date of decision	06 October 2023				
Print Name	Councillor Sally Haydon							

Briefing Note

Background

- 1.0 The Council adopted its third Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (“Taxi Policy”) in May 2022, which updated the licensing framework required to regulate hackney carriage and private hire (taxi) services within Plymouth.
- 1.1 The Taxi Policy is framed by virtue of the powers granted to the Council by Town and Police Clauses Act 1847, the Plymouth City Council Act 1975, and the Plymouth City Council Act 1987.
- 1.2 This report outlines several proposed changes to the Taxi Policy and associated policies and conditions that are considered necessary when taking account of the economic and operational changes that have arisen since policy implementation in May 2022.
- 1.3 The democratic process that the proposed amendments to the Taxi Policy must go through is determined by the Council Constitution which can be found [here](#): page 71.

Appendix 1, page 15, summarises the democratic process, and some decisions are for the Taxi Licensing Committee to make, and others are for Full Council to determine. This decision is to agree to consult the taxi trade on the proposed changes for a period of 4 weeks.

2.0 Proposed changes to the Livery Policy 2022 (Full Council Decision)

- 2.1 The Taxi Policy introduced the Livery Policy 2022 which can be found at the following [link](#):
- 2.2 The Council and Officers have reviewed the Livery Policy after listening to feedback from vehicle proprietors, drivers and the wider taxi trade and have taken into consideration the continuing financial burden that is currently being faced due to the cost-of-living crisis pressures.
- 2.2 In addition it is accepted that the supply of new and second hand, ‘all white’ Euro 6, wheelchair accessible hackney carriage vehicles is severely limited with a continuing national shortage of the supply of vehicles of this specification and colour.
- 2.3 Furthermore, while there is a wide range of Euro 6 vehicles available to be licensed as private hire vehicles in Plymouth, the current policy requirement that these vehicles cannot be white severely reduces the number of vehicles that are available to be licensed.
- 2.4 It is therefore proposed to remove/revoke the Livery Policy for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles in its entirety from the Taxi Policy and the associated hackney carriage and private hire vehicle conditions.
- 2.5 Although it is proposed to remove/revoke the Livery Policy, it is the Officers view that the requirement for hackney carriage vehicles to display door signage in accordance with the design approved and supplied by the Council on the driver and front passenger door should,

be maintained. In addition to the tout light and the licence plate, the door signage increases the visibility of hackney carriage vehicles and supports public safety/ security as customers can be confident that the taxi is properly licensed especially in relation to vulnerable clients transported at night.

This requirement can be applied through the hackney carriage vehicle conditions, and it is therefore proposed that the following condition is added to them:

Front Door Signage

Each Hackney Carriage shall display signs on the front passenger and driver's door in accordance with the design approved and supplied by the Council. The signs shall be constructed of vinyl and be applied directly to the driver and front passenger door.

- 2.7 It is proposed that where a hackney carriage vehicle has been licensed for a temporary period for example where a rental vehicle is used after accident or garaged for repair, the following wording would be added to the conditions:

Temporary Vehicles

In exceptional circumstances, where a temporary vehicle license is issued it will be exempt from displaying front door signage.

If these proposals are approved, then the private hire vehicle and hackney carriage vehicle conditions and specification documents will also be updated to reflect these changes.

3.0 Topographical Test/Knowledge of Plymouth (Full Council Decision)

- 3.1 After the Taxi Policy and associated guidance documents and conditions were approved by the City Council on 21 March 2022, there was an error in wording that was brought to Officers attention that incorrectly stated that the requirement for the Knowledge of Plymouth test (KOP) for new applicants only applied to those wishing to be hackney carriage drivers. This mistake was subsequently rectified by Full Council in May 2022 so that both hackney carriage and private hire driver applicants are required to take the KOP test.
- 3.2 During the 2 months that it took to rectify the mistake, taxi licensing saw a sharp increase in new applicants wishing to become licensed private hire drivers. All of Plymouth's main private hire operators reported an increase in enquiries for new drivers wishing to become private hire drivers. Plymouth like many other cities is struggling to encourage new drivers to the trade, and Officers have considered the benefit of the KOP for all drivers, due to the differences in how the fares are obtained between the hackney carriage and private hire drivers.
- 3.3 Private hire drivers cannot work without a GPS system or app which is accessed through their own smart phone. Modern dispatch management and booking systems send bookings

direct to the drivers' data pads, which along with details of the bookings show, via the inbuilt GPS navigation system, the most direct route to take. The routes take account of local traffic conditions at the time of the booking. There is a valid argument that a private hire drivers' topographical knowledge does not need to be as detailed as a hackney carriage driver who can 'ply for hire' and must determine the most suitable and direct route etc while by the roadside and enroute.

- 3.4 In light of modern technological methods of delivering work to private hire drivers through data pads, which plan the route automatically, Officers have been considering whether there is still a requirement for private hire driver applicants to sit the KOP, as it appears that this is a barrier to attracting new drivers into the private hire trade.
- 3.5 It is important to note that not all operators, such as those who operate school contracts or fixed contracts use dispatch management systems so these operators will be required to provide a form of electronic navigational system (GPS)
- 3.6 It is recognised that some private hire drivers may wish to switch to being a hackney carriage driver. In these cases, the applicant will still be required to sit the KOP test unless they have been in the trade for 3 years or more, where it is recognised that their knowledge of the local area would have increased.
- 3.7 It is therefore proposed that the requirement to take the KOP test remains for hackney carriage drivers but is removed for private hire drivers.

4.0 Certificate of Good Conduct (Taxi Licensing Committee decision)

- 4.1 The Taxi Policy requires all applicants who are a foreign national or a UK National but have lived for a period of three months or more in another Country, to obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct (COGC) from the relevant UK Embassy or Consulate of the relevant country(s) where they have resided. This is in addition to any requirement to obtain a DBS certificate.
- 4.2 Some applicants can demonstrate that there are clear and compelling reasons for them to be granted 'Exceptional Circumstances' to allow that applicant to be exempt from providing a COGC. These are:
- They have spent the majority of their adult life in this country (including five continuous years immediately prior to applying for the licence).
 - They cannot obtain a COGC from the relevant country (for example, they are an asylum seeker or a refugee, or no known process)
 - That an enhanced DBS will provide information covering a sufficient period of their adult life to allow a determination on the applicant's fitness and propriety to be made.
- 4.3 The basis for suggesting that the exemption only applies to those who have resided in the UK for the majority of their adult life is that this would mean that the enhanced DBS is likely to provide sufficient information for a decision to be made on their fitness to be a licensed driver in that it will cover the largest part of their adult life.

This requirement is seen as excessive and excludes many drivers from entering the taxi/private hire trade in Plymouth.

- 4.4 After further legal consideration and clarification from the Home Office it is proposed that the requirement for an applicant to have spent the majority of their adult life in the UK is amended to having to have lived in the UK for 10 years or more. It is the Officers view that

10 years or more in the UK will provide sufficient DBS records to establish whether the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a licence. Therefore, it is proposed that the wording in section 7.2 of the Taxi Policy is amended to state:

7.2 If within 10 years of the date of application or renewal you have lived outside of the UK for a continuous period of 3 months or more since the age of 18 you must obtain a certificate of good conduct from the country or countries that you have lived in.

- 4.5 It is also proposed to add new wording into the policy for existing drivers who have been licensed for more than 5 years and who have spent 3 months or more outside of the UK to renew without a COGC or for Taxi Licensing Committee to make a decision dependent on the reason and justification for the absence. Therefore, it is proposed that the following wording is inserted to state:

Where an existing driver (who has held a licence for 5 years or more), has lived outside the UK for a continuous period of 3 months or more and cannot provide a COGC the Council reserves the right to allow the licensed driver to continue without the COGC or to review the current licence at Taxi Licensing Committee.

5.0 Dress Code (Taxi Licensing Committee)

- 5.1 To ensure that the hackney carriage and private hire trade portrays a professional image and to ensure that driving is carried out safely, the Taxi Policy introduced the Dress Code in May 2022.

This was inserted into the [Code of Good Conduct for Licensed Drivers - Hackney carriage and Private Hire](#).

- 5.2 Contraventions of the Dress Code can result in the driver receiving penalty points leading to a review of their licence should they receive 12 or more points within a rolling 36-month period.
- 5.3 Whilst the dress code has been widely welcomed and accepted by the trade there have been continuing objections to the rule that denim jeans are not permitted. Members and Officers have listened to the arguments for and against this ruling and reviewed the situation and consider that the wording should be amended to allow the wearing of black denim jeans:

Trousers/Shorts/Skirts

Long legged trousers or black denim jeans, knee length tailored shorts, knee length skirt or dress.

- 5.4 The condition of the clothing is covered within the existing dress code through:

“All clothing worn by the driver must be clean and in good condition, and the driver must have good standards of personal hygiene.”

6.0 PHD & HCD New Driver Applicants Driver Endorsements (Taxi Licensing Committee)

- 6.1 It is a requirement for new and existing drivers under the Taxi Policy to meet the criteria set out in the Guidance on the Relevance of Convictions and Conduct. (GRCC)
- 6.2 Where an existing driver receives points or convictions on their driver’s licence (DVLA) there are provisions in the GRCC to deal with them either by warning from taxi licensing or through review of their hackney carriage or private hire driver’s licence at taxi licensing committee.
- 6.3 Where a new applicant has accumulated points on their DVLA licence prior to application there have been occasions where they do not fall under the GRCC requirements as the policy requires an applicant to go to committee if they either have six or more points arising from convictions in the last two years or they have received more than three penalty points in the twelve months prior to applying for a licence.
- 6.4 In addition, the existing GRCC does not allow the Council to consider an applicant’s pattern of offending through historic convictions or endorsements as it can with existing licensed drivers.
- 6.5 Therefore, there is disparity between the requirements for new and existing drivers and Officers propose to amend the motoring convictions wording of the GRCC for new applicants to resolve this. The proposed amended wording is shown in the table below.

Penalty points on a licence	
	Any applicant who applies to be a hackney carriage or private hire driver whose license has been endorsed with more than six points in the last two years on their licence, will not be granted a licence until two years after the last endorsement or conviction.
	Any applicant who applies to be a hackney carriage or private hire driver and their driving licence record demonstrates a pattern of offending through convictions or endorsements, the Council reserves the right to review their licence application at Taxi Licensing Committee.

7.0 Card Payments (Taxi Licensing Committee decision)

- 7.1 The Taxi Policy introduced the requirement for the hackney carriage and private hire trade to have the facility to take electronic (card) as well as cash payments. The requirement was inserted into the hackney carriage and private hire vehicle conditions.
- 7.2 In addition, the current wording requires the card reader to ‘be placed in a plastic partition between the driver and passenger’ and that faults must be rectified within three days.

- 7.3 While the requirement to have a working card reader is clear and the ability to take payments by this method is implied, the wording needs to be amended for clarity and to remove any ambiguity about providing this method of payment to customers.
- 7.4 For driver operation and in practical terms the requirement for the card reader to be placed in a plastic partition between the driver and passenger is considered onerous and not required. Provided a working card reader is available and accessible to customers it should be at the driver's decision where this is placed.
- 7.5 It is therefore proposed that the hackney carriage and private hire vehicle conditions are amended to state:

Hackney carriage Vehicle Conditions

9.0 Payments

- 9.1 All hackney carriage vehicles must have a card payment reader with the ability to always take contactless payments in the vehicle for use by customers.
- 9.2 Card payment readers must be kept in working order and any faults rectified before accepting any customers.
- 9.3 You must provide a receipt for payment if requested.

Private hire vehicle Conditions

- 9.1 All private hire vehicles must provide a card payment reader with the ability to always take contactless payments in the vehicle for use by customers.
- 9.2 Card payment readers must be kept in working order and any faults rectified before accepting any customers.
- 9.3 You must provide a receipt for payment if requested.

8.0 Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Penalty Points Scheme (Taxi Licensing Committee)

- 8.1 The Penalty Points Scheme was introduced into policy during the last Policy review to provide a more balanced, consistent, and transparent approach to enforcement against licence holders who commit minor offences and can be considered a more structured and formalised method of issuing warnings.
- 8.2 The scheme does not prevent the Council from taking any other enforcement actions it is entitled to take under legislation or byelaws. Penalty points will not be added to the person's record where they are dealt with by alternative sanctions.

- 8.3 Under the current scheme where a licence holder accumulates 12 points or more within a rolling period of 36 months their licence will be subject to a review by the Taxi Licensing Committee. After being in operation for more than a year it is the Officers view that the wording is amended to reflect that if a licence holder has accumulated 12 points or more within a 36-month period and they have had their licence reviewed by Committee that their points have been 'discharged' and they start from zero again.
- 8.4 Officers consider that this approach is fair and proportionate for minor offences and that should points be accumulated again quickly, then any previous history of noncompliance can be taken into consideration by Committee, should the licence holder appear before them again.
- 8.5 Officers therefore propose that the following wording is inserted to state:

If a licence holder accumulates 12 points or more within a rolling period of 36 months, then their licence will be subject to a review by the Taxi Licensing Committee. Once the Committee have considered the matter, the points will be considered as spent and therefore excluded from the running total recorded against any individual licensee. The Council reserves the right to take into consideration previous points accumulation and pattern of history should the 12-point threshold be reached again.

- 8.6 Officers also consider that the following additional minor offences should be added to the hackney carriage and private hire infringements tables:

Point Code	Offence / breach of condition or policy	Points	Driver	Vehicle proprietor	Regulatory framework
H38 (insertion)	Failure to display required signage and/or displaying unsuitable or inappropriate sited signs in or on the vehicle	4	√	√	Hackney carriage Vehicle Conditions Hackney carriage Vehicle Specification and Vehicle Compliance Testing Manual
P32 (amendment)	Failure to display required signage and/or displaying unsuitable or inappropriate sited signs in or on the vehicle	4	√	√	Private hire vehicle Conditions Private hire vehicle Specification and Vehicle Compliance Testing Manual
H39 (insertion)	Failure to provide working card machine for customer use.	6	√	√	Conditions of Licence Hackney Carriage Vehicle
P33 (insertion)	Failure to provide working card machine for customer use.	6	√	√	Conditions of Licence Private Hire Vehicle

9.0 PHV Vehicle Specifications (Taxi Licensing Committee Decision)

Wheelchair accessible vehicles

- 9.1 Taxi Policy prescribes the minimum standards a vehicle must satisfy to be licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle by Plymouth City Council. All hackney carriages must be wheelchair accessible whereas private hire vehicles can be wheelchair accessible, but it is not a formal requirement for a vehicle licence.
- 9.2 Private hire vehicles are required to be fitted with at least four doors with two passenger doors at the rear with a door situated on each side of the vehicle for the use of passengers. Rear opening doors are not counted for the purpose of this specification.
- 9.3 While this specification is suitable for the average private hire vehicle, the requirement to have opening doors on both sides for passengers generates a problem with the availability of those private hire vehicles that are wheelchair accessible and are fitted with tail lifts.
- 9.4 Vehicles available with 2 side loading doors other than the rear door are becoming increasingly difficult to source from manufacturers and specialist vehicle converters. Discussions with manufacturers and vehicle conversion specialists indicate that 99% of the vehicles they provide to the private hire trade are with one side loading doors. Manufacturers also state that only one side loading door is safe in the event of an emergency as most of the side doors are nearly 5ft wide opening for easy access in and out of the vehicle (along with the rear door (s)).
- 9.5 Officers offer reassurance that vehicle safety will not be compromised should this amendment be accepted as the vehicle conditions and specifications retain the requirement that they must have M1 classification from the Vehicle Certification Agency, be of fixed head design (i.e., no convertible vehicles) and fully comply with all aspects of the Vehicle Compliance Testing Manual.
- 9.6 M1 category vehicles are designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers and comprising no more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat and having a maximum mass ("technically permissible maximum laden mass") not exceeding 3.5 tons. Converted vehicles are subjected to an IVA test to be classified as M1.
- 9.7 It is the Officers view that removing the requirement for wheelchair accessible private hire vehicles to have passenger doors on both sides of the vehicle will encourage investment in newer wheelchair accessible vehicles by not making this investment cost prohibitive. It is hoped that this amendment will facilitate an increase in more licensed vehicles of this type to be able to provide a service for disabled customers without compromising on passenger safety.

The proposed wording can be seen in 'Wheelchair Accessibility' Appendix 2, page 16.

- 9.8 The current vehicle specifications policy for private hire vehicles does not state that vehicles must be able to carry 4 adults in comfort. This is an omission, and the wording needs to be amended to reflect this requirement. The proposed wording can be seen in 'Seating' Appendix 2, page 16.
- 9.9 Vehicle design and safety standards has advanced over recent years. Rear fold away seats located in the boot are not permitted to be used under the current policy however after careful consideration it is Officers view that, where it is safe and suitable, these seats should be allowed subject to conditions. Therefore, it is proposed that the seating wording is amended to reflect this. The proposed wording can be seen in 'Seating' Appendix 2, page 16.
- 9.10 As with vehicle design and safety standards vehicle engines have advanced considerably in the last years. Smaller more efficient and environmentally friendly engines can now deliver as much power as older and larger capacity engines. To reflect this advancement, it is proposed that the private hire vehicles engine must not be less than 1290cc is removed from the vehicle specifications.

Appendix I

Democratic Process

Report Section	Policy Subject/Area	Changes Required	Full Council or TL Committee
2	Livery Policy 2022	Revoke full livery requirement & retain door signage	Full Council
3	Topographical Test (Knowledge of Plymouth)	Remove requirement for new private hire driver applicants to take and retain for hackney carriage drivers	Full Council
4	Certificate of Good Conduct	Change requirement for amount of time living in country from majority of adult life to more than 10 years in line with Barrister advice and Home Office guidance	TL Committee
5	Acceptable Standard of Dress (Dress Code)	Change of wording required to allow black denim, see review document for suggested wording.	TL Committee
6	PHD & HCD New Driver Applicants (Accumulation of licence endorsements before application)	Amend wording to cover new applicants who have more than 6 points on licence	TL Committee
7	Hackney carriage Conditions of Licence. (Card Holder) Fixing Point and must be operational and offered.	Amend card reader wording for clarity. Remove requirement for card reader fixture.	TL Committee
8	Changes to penalty Point Scheme	Review of what happens when 12 points reached i.e., points go back to nil or rollover etc, and Insertion of points for additional minor offences.	TL Committee
9	Private hire vehicle Specifications	Amend to allow PHV WA/tail lift vehicles to only have 1 side door. Add requirement for minimum of 4 adults to private hire vehicle specs. Amend seating requirements to allow for rear folding seats where safe and suitable. Remove engine capacity.	TL Committee

Appendix 2 Proposed Amendments to Private Hire Vehicle Specifications Wheelchair Accessibility

Remove the following:

1. The Council will licence private hire vehicles that are capable of carrying a wheelchair.
2. Where the licensed vehicle is capable of carrying wheelchairs, all wheelchair securing devices, fixtures and fittings as specified by the vehicle manufacturer must be available for use and kept in good working order.

Replace with:

Wheelchair Accessibility

1. It is accepted that in some cases private hire vehicles need specific capability for carrying a passenger in whilst in a wheelchair.
2. These vehicles must be fitted with at least 3 doors with one door situated at the near side rear to allow convenient egress from the vehicle.
3. The driver's door must be situated on the offside and the front passenger door situated on the nearside of the vehicle to allow convenient egress from the vehicle.
4. Sliding doors are permitted to the near side rear. Any sliding door must be fitted with a device that will illuminate a sign mounted on the rear of the vehicle, which warns following traffic that the doors are opening.
5. Rear loading wheelchair access is permitted. These vehicles must be fitted with a back opening door and fitted with a tail lift or ramp mechanism to allow wheelchair(s) to be loaded whilst the passenger is in the wheelchair if required.
6. Ramps may also be used for the loading and unloading of wheelchairs from the rear or side rear side of the vehicle.
7. Passenger doors and the back opening door must be capable of being readily opened from the inside and outside of the vehicle by one operation of the latch mechanism.
8. Where the licensed vehicle is capable of carrying wheelchairs, all wheelchair securing devices, fixtures and fittings as specified by the vehicle manufacturer must be available for use and kept in good working order.

Seating

1. No vehicle shall have more than 8 passenger seats (excluding the driver seat)
2. The vehicle must be so constructed to carry a minimum of four passengers, with provision for one passenger seated beside the driver, and three passengers occupying the rear seats in comfort.
3. Where separate forward-facing seats are provided, each seating position shall be counted where a properly functioning seatbelt is provided.
4. Where a continuous forward-facing seating is provided, each seating position shall be counted where a properly functioning seatbelt is provided.

5. All licenced passenger seats will be suitably designed for an adult passenger. We are aware that some manufacturers produce vehicles with seats that take up much of the boot compartment. All seats must be of a standard size not a child's seat and that there is suitable head room for adults. In addition there must be suitable leg room for all adults when the vehicles seats are all taken.
6. Foldaway child seats located in the boot compartment should not generally be licensed as passenger seating for private hire services, on the grounds of suitability, passenger safety, comfort and reasonable leg room. There may be grounds to licence these seats for restricted operations, such as seaside and moorland tours,
7. Fold away seats will not count towards the overall passenger seating capacity of the vehicle.

Remove the following

8. It is accepted that these vehicles may not be suitable for passengers with luggage or for long journeys and consideration must be taken when booked that the journeys are local.

TAXI LICENSING POLICY OCTOBER 2023

Consultation Questions



The Council is consulting on proposed amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2022 and associated guidance documents between 24 October to 23 November 2023.

The Executive Decision report can be found at:

[Decision - Authorisation to consult on a review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2022 and Associated Policies and Conditions - Modern Council \(plymouth.gov.uk\)](#)

The location of the current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy and Associated Policies/Conditions of Licence can be found at: [Taxi licensing | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

1. Which of the following applies to you?

- I own a private hire vehicle*
- I own a hackney carriage vehicle*
- I am a private hire/restricted driver*
- I am a private hire operator*
- I am a hackney carriage driver*
- I am a member of the public/stakeholder*
- None of the above*

2. Livery Policy

Plymouth City Council (PCC) introduced a Livery Policy in May 2022. The Livery Policy requires new hackney carriage vehicles entering the fleet from 1 May 22 and existing hackney carriage vehicles to comply with the livery (colour scheme) requirements by 1 May 2027. It is also a requirement that new private hire vehicles entering the fleet cannot be white in colour.

It is proposed that the livery requirement is removed for both hackney carriage and private hire vehicles and that hackney carriage vehicles retain the requirement to have front door signage.

Do you agree that the livery for licensed vehicles should be removed from taxi policy and hackney carriage front door signage be retained.

- **Yes**, Livery requirement should be removed:
- **No**, Livery requirement should be retained:

Comments:

3. Topographical/Knowledge of Plymouth Test

It is a requirement for all new applicants wishing to become a private hire or hackney carriage driver to pass a topographical/knowledge of Plymouth test (K.O.P)

It is proposed to remove this requirement for applicants who wish to obtain a private hire drivers' licence and retain this requirement for those who wish to apply to be a hackney carriage driver.

If this proposal is approved, it is further proposed that if a private hire driver has held a licence for 3 or more years, ~~that~~ they will not need to then undertake a K.O.P test to obtain a hackney carriage drivers' licence.

Do you agree to remove the requirement for a K.O.P test for new private hire drivers?

- **Yes**
- **No**

Do you agree that a private hire driver who has held a licence for 3 years or more who wishes to become a hackney carriage driver will not need to take the K.O.P test?

- **Yes**
- **No**

Comments:

4. Certificate of Good Conduct (COGC)

The Taxi Policy requires all applicants who are a foreign national or a UK National but have lived for a period of three months or more in another Country, to obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct (COGC) from the relevant UK Embassy or Consulate of the relevant country(s) where they have resided. This is in addition to any requirement to obtain a DBS certificate.

Some applicants can demonstrate that there are clear and compelling reasons for them to be granted 'Exceptional Circumstances' to allow that applicant to be exempt from providing a COGC. These are:

- They have spent the majority of their adult life in this country (including five continuous years immediately prior to applying for the licence).
- They cannot obtain a COGC from the relevant country (for example, they are an asylum seeker or a refugee, or no known process)
- That an enhanced DBS will provide information covering a sufficient period of their adult life to allow a determination on the applicant's fitness and propriety to be made.

The basis for suggesting that the exemption only applies to those who have resided in the UK for the majority of their adult life is that this would mean that the enhanced DBS is likely to provide sufficient information for a decision to be made on their fitness to be a licensed driver in that it will cover the largest part of their adult life.

After further legal consideration and clarification from the Home Office it is proposed that the requirement for an applicant to have spent the majority of their adult life in the UK is amended to having to have lived in the UK for 10 years or more.

It is the Officers view that 10 years or more residency in the UK will provide sufficient DBS records to establish whether the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a licence. Therefore, it is proposed that the wording in section 7.2 of the Taxi Policy is amended to state:

7.2 If within 10 years of the date of application or renewal you have lived outside of the UK for a continuous period of 3 months or more since the age of 18 you must obtain a certificate of good conduct from the country or countries that you have lived in.

Do you agree that the policy should be amended?

- **Yes**
- **No**

Comments:

It is also proposed to add new wording into the policy for existing drivers who have been licensed for more than 5 years and who have spent 3 months or more outside of the UK to renew without a COGC or for Taxi Licensing Committee to decide dependent on the reason and justification for the absence.

Therefore, it is proposed that the following wording is inserted to state:

Where an existing driver (who has held a licence for 5 years or more), has lived outside the UK for a continuous period of 3 months or more and cannot provide a COGC the Council reserves the right to allow the licensed driver to continue without the COGC or to review the current licence at Taxi Licensing Committee.

Do you agree that the proposed changes to the requirements to obtain a COGC:

- **Yes**
- **No**

Comments:

5. Acceptable Standard of Dress (Dress Code)

Plymouth City Council proposes to permit the wearing of black denim jeans in the dress code.

Do you agree to the proposed amendment to the dress code:

- Yes
- No

Comments:

6. Private Hire Driver and Hackney Carriage Driver New Driver Applicants Driver Endorsements

It is a requirement for new and existing drivers under the Taxi Policy to meet the criteria set out in the Guidance on the Relevance of Convictions and Conduct. (GRCC)

Where an existing driver receives points or convictions on their driver's licence (DVLA) there are provisions in the GRCC to deal with them either by warning from taxi licensing or through review of their hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence at taxi licensing committee. Where a new applicant has accumulated points on their DVLA licence prior to application there have been occasions where they do not fall under the GRCC requirements as the policy requires an applicant to go to committee if they either have six or more points arising from convictions in the last two years or they have received more than three penalty points in the twelve months prior to applying for a licence.

In addition, the existing GRCC does not allow the Council to consider an applicant's pattern of offending through historic convictions or endorsements as it can with existing licensed drivers.

Therefore, there is disparity between the requirements for new and existing drivers and Officers propose to amend the motoring convictions wording of the GRCC for new applicants to resolve this.

It is proposed to remove the disparity in the Guidance on the Relevance of Convictions and Conduct (GRCC) between the requirements for new and existing drivers with regards to motoring convictions.

Do you agree with the proposal to amend the GRCC with regards to motoring convictions.

- Yes
- No

Comments:

7. Card Payments

It is proposed to amend the hackney carriage and private hire vehicle conditions to ensure that working card readers are always used and remove the requirement for locating the card readers in fixed positions.

Do you agree to the proposed amendments to the card reader requirements:

- **Yes**
- **No**

Comments:

8. Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Penalty Points Scheme

Under the current scheme where a licence holder accumulates 12 points or more within a rolling period of 36 months their licence will be subject to a review by the Taxi Licensing Committee. After being in operation for more than a year it is proposed that the wording is amended to reflect that if a licence holder has accumulated 12 points or more within a 36-month period and they have had their licence reviewed by Committee that their points have been 'discharged' and they start from zero again.

It is proposed to amend the penalty system to state

If a licence holder accumulates 12 points or more within a rolling period of 36 months, then their licence will be subject to a review by the Taxi Licensing Committee. Once the Committee have considered the matter, the points will be considered as spent and therefore excluded from the running total recorded against any individual licensee. The Council reserves the right to take into consideration previous points accumulation and pattern of history should the 12- point threshold be reached again.

Do you agree to the proposed amendments to the Penalty Points Scheme

- **Yes**
- **No**

Comments:

It is also proposed to introduce the addition of **penalty** points for failure to display required signage and/or displaying unsuitable or inappropriate sited signs in or on the vehicle and for failure to provide working card machine for customer use.

Do you agree to the proposed amendments to include these penalty points?

- **Yes**
- **No**

Comments:

9. Private Hire Vehicle Specifications

Taxi Policy prescribes the minimum standards a vehicle must satisfy to be licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle by Plymouth City Council. All hackney carriages must be wheelchair accessible whereas private hire vehicles can be wheelchair accessible, but it is not a formal requirement for a vehicle licence.

It is proposed that removing the requirement for wheelchair accessible private hire vehicles to have passenger doors on both sides of the vehicle will encourage investment in newer wheelchair accessible vehicles by not making this investment cost prohibitive. It is hoped that this amendment will facilitate an increase in more licensed vehicles of this type to be able to provide a service for disabled customers without compromising on passenger safety.

It is proposed to amend the PHV vehicle specifications to wheelchair accessible/tail lift vehicles to not be required to have loading doors on **both** sides of the vehicle.

Do you agree to the proposed amendments to the Private Hire Vehicle Specifications:

- **Yes**
- **No**

Comments:

The current vehicle specifications policy for private hire vehicles does not state that vehicles must be able to carry 4 adults in comfort. This is an omission, and the wording needs to be amended to reflect this requirement.

Do you agree to the proposed amendments to the Private Hire Vehicle Specifications:

- **Yes**
- **No**

Comments:

As with vehicle design and safety standards vehicle engines have advanced considerably in the last years. Smaller more efficient and environmentally friendly engines can now deliver as much power as older and larger capacity engines. To reflect this advancement, it is proposed that the private hire vehicles engine must not be less than 1290cc is removed from the vehicle specifications.

Do you agree to the proposed amendments to the Private Hire Vehicle Specifications:

- **Yes**
- **No**

Comments:

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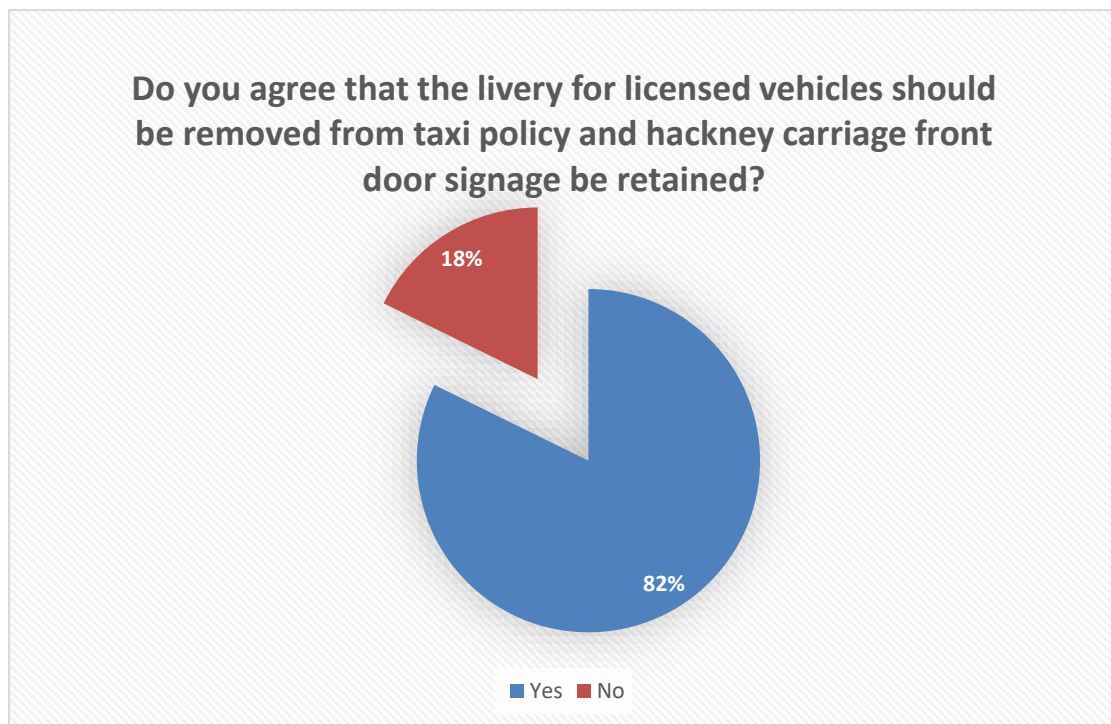
Full Comments received to the online consultation

Question 2 Livery

In total 378 responses were received for Question 2:

Do you agree that the livery for licensed vehicles should be removed from taxi policy and hackney carriage front door signage be retained?

378 (82%) of the respondents were in favour of the removal of the livery policy and 67 (18%) were in favour of retaining livery.



130 respondents commented on the proposals.

Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association Response

1. Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association: Registered in England Company No: 05444446.
2. All colours of paintwork should be acceptable as the colour does not affect the quality of service and passengers, on occasion, request a certain colour Taxi, especially children.

All PCC LA Taxis have an illuminated Roof Sign when Plying for Hire. It is an offence for any other vehicle to have an illuminated Taxi Roof Sign within the PCC LA area. Taxis have a plate on the rear and notice inside the vehicle for passengers to see. We submit that there is no requirement for additional signage on the front doors. It is noted that London does not have problem.

The Proposed front door signage is the same as the PCC Vans and other vehicles and is cheap. Plymouth Licensed Taxis deserve better so should door signage continue to be imposed then the Plymouth City Council crest bearing the Plate Number is more appropriate. They could be attached

by magnetism in the same manner as Executive Hire vehicles licensed by the LA. (See the accompanying letter regarding advertising).

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	It's too expensive and can't source white vehicles.
2	anonymous	I must admit they do stand out and look good, but it is the extra cost
3	anonymous	The Livery should be incorporated with the License Plate no that exists on all doors at present
4	anonymous	Green & white livery would increase the public's confidence that they are hailing a properly licensed and approved cab.
5	anonymous	Costly and absolutely pointless
6	anonymous	I think that private hire vehicles should have rear door signs on informing the public which operator they work with for safety reasons. There are too many vehicles with no rear signs in the city
7	anonymous	Never liked the idea of having set colours on our vehicles
8	anonymous	No
9	anonymous	As long as authorised Taxis have the company name, telephone number on the vehicle. Plus any authorised Taxis should have the appropriate licence number displayed.
10	anonymous	No
11	anonymous	I own a hackney carriage vehicle euro 4.why cannot change with one euro 5 to be under the same requirements euro 4?
12	anonymous	It's an extra headache for drivers to paint their car or buying new one. Car prices are touching sky
13	anonymous	Not particularly related to livery but I feel the 2030 timeframe for electric vehicles should be pushed back to 2035 following recent govt changes on electric vehicles.
14	anonymous	the cost to drivers is high, this is unnecessary and is causing issues within the sector.
15	anonymous	I understand why the original plan to go green and White came about but genuinely don't feel that it's a requirement for Plymouth as we have very different vehicle types for Hackney and private hire. If you are going to rescind the rule that Hackney vehicles have to be white then please can you allow private hire vehicles to be white as this colour choice was removed when the new rule came into force

ID	Name	Responses
16	anonymous	Customers that I've had in my car say that it looks like a council van, hackneys with new livery, they say its easy to see a black cab with the roof sign lit to show its for hire.
17	anonymous	No
18	anonymous	Yeah I think scrapping the livery is a good idea as I will be able to upgrade to euro 6 a lot soon because I'll be able to source a vehicle quicker and as for the Hackney front door sticker I think that is a brilliant idea as I have for years believed us Hackneys should have something on are doors
19	anonymous	This is a much more pragmatic way to deal with a difficult problem. I do think that all vehicles, including PHV's, should be obligated to display the logo of the company they currently work with, in order to help safeguard members of the travelling public.
20	anonymous	N
21	anonymous	N
22	anonymous	I object to door signs which damage the paintwork
23	anonymous	Any livery alteration costs should be met by the council, including increased insurance for a modified vehicle and also with leased vehicles, returning the cab to it's original livery which will be required at the end of the lease.
24	anonymous	I believe it should be applicable to new licenses but costs subsidised for existing vehicles
25	anonymous	Was a good idea if the council paid for it. Huge cost to a driver.
26	anonymous	No
27	anonymous	No
28	anonymous	I think it should be removed as a lot of new hybrids and electric cars which the council want us to use as private hire vehicles are easier to buy if white
29	anonymous	There are some vehicles in the livery colours already and these look distinctive and a vast improvement.
30	anonymous	Stupid idea in the first place along with everything else licencing come up with no thoughts for drivers unless you own private hire office,
31	anonymous	While designated vehicles are used as Hackney carriages, then Private hire should be entitled to license White cars as private hire vehicles
32	anonymous	I feel the branding reassuring that as a lobe family I'm getting in a "correct" vehicle.

ID	Name	Responses
33	anonymous	I think we should be able to use a white private hire vehicle
34	anonymous	I firmly believe that the change to green & white is a good idea, it would make legal & licenced taxis clear to the local population & visitors alike. The colour scheme should be consistent throughout
35	anonymous	A livery is a great idea. Unfortunately, for the reasons outlined the consultation proposal, it is unfeasible at this particular time.
36	anonymous	N/A
37	anonymous	Black Cabs with a PCC sticker and plate number is the way forward.
38	anonymous	It is already impossible to tell who's a taxi and who's not, this goes against your own pledge of making Plymouth safer for women and girls. The livery will also make Plymouth a smarter looking city
39	anonymous	Never should have been a requirement in the first place
40	anonymous	do not make any changes
41	anonymous	As it is too expensive, we don't need to spend money on uniforms, shoes and other special stuff for taxi job. This a normal friendly job with close relationships with customers. We should not be very professional, customer feels comfortable with just normal people NOT IN SPECIFIC dress code.
42	anonymous	They look great Green and white
43	anonymous	A complete waste of time, effort, and money which drivers cannot afford, even with the £200 Bursary given by the Council.
44	anonymous	I don't like any type of change
45	anonymous	No
46	anonymous	Some of us have our livery with advertisements on from which we get paid .
47	anonymous	It's just to expensive to have white most cabs come in black and if you spray the cab white you violate the body work guarantee .
48	anonymous	While some cabs need cleaning up a livery is not the answer, I support having the city of Plymouth crest on the doors with the words City of Plymouth Licensed Taxi. As with Private Hire far too many fail to display door signage showing the operator they work under, this can also be treated as a safeguarding issue to assist customers with anxiety issues.
49	anonymous	I feel it would be a good addition to make the door signage to be removable from the vehicle at the end of the evening (maybe magnetic)? With the amount of break

ID	Name	Responses
		ins on taxis over the last 18 months, I feel that this would be a good way to bring these break ins down and save taxi drivers a lot of money in repairs.
50	anonymous	I think Plymouths Coat of Arms Crest would look very professional on our doors Rather than the horrible Green and white sign you intend to use.
51	anonymous	remove the route test
52	anonymous	n
53	anonymous	n
54	anonymous	n
55	anonymous	n
56	anonymous	n
57	anonymous	Too expensive to update fleet
58	anonymous	Provided the signage is clear and the licence details displayed, it would be expedient to remove the livery.
59	anonymous	Livery will add to cost for taxi companies and make it very difficult to sell them when they reach the end of their working lives. The costs will no doubt have to be passed onto the taxi using public. A very bad idea!!!!
60	anonymous	White and green is the iconic color of Plymouth and it would make taxis stand out, so I am all for it.
61	anonymous	PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES SHOULD BE ANY COLOUR
62	anonymous	To keep as simple as that, the new car is very expensive.
63	anonymous	I totally agree that the existing livery policy should be scrapped.
64	anonymous	I agree but only for new plated taxis. It is too expensive to change a car for a £30000 one just becose does not match the colour
65	anonymous	No
66	anonymous	Should not be removed as we have all worked hard to be in this position.
67	anonymous	It's very-very expensive to paint my car on white and green and for what? What is return of invest with this proposal?
68	anonymous	Makes no difference what colour they are as long as they get you home safe

ID	Name	Responses
69	anonymous	It was a ridiculous proposal the Plymouth City taxi drivers didn't want it as it would cost them their hard earned wages to pay for it ! The members of the public using taxis and hackney cabs don't care what colour their taxi is ! They are just interested in getting to and from their destinations safely . Absolute ridiculous proposal and should be scrapped.
70	anonymous	The cost of livery is too expensive for this trade.
71	anonymous	This is a welcome proposal.
72	anonymous	it is way over dew
73	anonymous	Council should do more to make the livery affordable by seeking sponsorship or loans.... Agree a price with a local garage too so all the wrapping at a discounted price
74	anonymous	Black cap should be always to be a black up, not white and green
75	anonymous	If the council wants to have some control over the livery of hackney carriages they should specify a choice of three colours Black. Dark Blue or Dark Grey these colours seem to be standard across the hackney carriage vehicles available.
76	anonymous	Door signage should be the city of plymouth crest and not council badge
77	anonymous	It is easier for the public to identify licensed vehicles when they are all the same colour. This also gives a sense of security for people who local or are visitors to the city and not sure what vehicles are licensed or not. Research shows that people feel more comforted and assume better service standards and consistency for these vehicles.
78	anonymous	I don't agree with the signage on Hackney carriages. These are too easy to be replicated in magnetic plates. Once a vulnerable passenger they will believe it is a Hackney even if there isn't a taxi sign on top.
79	anonymous	I believe drivers should have the cab the colour of their own choice but should stick with an official door sign but prefer to see the City of Plymouth crest rather than the City Council green logo. Private hire cabs fail to show the stickers of the office they are working for, this is a safeguarding issue, vulnerable people with learning disabilities struggle to identify the right car when not showing the office door signs and number
80	anonymous	I do not believe that taxi driver should have to pay thousands for a livery when everyone knows black cabs are exactly that - black!! They are self employed and don't get an hourly wage like the average job so cannot guarantee an income. I believe Private hire should all have numbers on their doors for public knowledge of who is picking them up. Knowing that they booked a private hire car and seeing like 3 turn up not knowing which one yours is makes it hard. Especially for those with anxiety problems who don't talk to people or the elderly who don't use phones.

ID	Name	Responses
81	anonymous	Yes people come from all over the world to see the iconic black cab so if it should be any colour it should be black
82	anonymous	I think, it is a bit waste of time changing as it will only cost more money to anyone.
83	anonymous	I'd leave the trade if its not scrapped I'm 58 years old little job with amazon will see my working days out
84	anonymous	Obviously the livery policy implemented was a pipe dream with little thought on its impact. Make the livery policy easily achievable and at minimum cost.
85	anonymous	It costs too much money to change and with the cost of living it's impossible.
86	anonymous	No comments
87	anonymous	A lot of unnecessary expenses for the owner
88	anonymous	No
89	anonymous	No
90	anonymous	I'm restricted driver . I want to tell you my opinion. All private hire going with needed cop and going by there app , but why the restricted driver can not do same as private hire taxi ? I want to do private hire taxi but I need to study the knowledge test . I need time to study . In my opinion all of the privet hire taxi going by there apps . for that reason we don't need to do the knowledge test because we will go by their apps .
91	anonymous	No comments
92	anonymous	Private hire: Looking to by my own Taxi, I found some bargains but I couldn't have them because they're white, frustrating. Hackney carriage: Sometime people say "Why the Black Cabs are not Black anymore?" And me, trying to find a purpose I say "To be more visible during the night" but, I think the same, Black Cabs should be Black.
93	anonymous	All looking uniform I like. However some kind of incentive to help towards the cost of changing vehicle colour / livery should be taken into consideration
94	anonymous	Correct decision, all things considered.
95	anonymous	No comment
96	anonymous	YES U FORCED ME INTO GETTING THIS DONE AND GOT ME INTO DEBT AND NOW YOUR THINKING OF CHANGING THIS BACK AGAIN IVE HAD NO SUPPORT FINANCIALLY IN UPGRADEING FROM PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL OR ANYONE ELSE IVE BEEN FORCED TO WORK MANY MORE HOUR TO PAY FOR THIS.AND 90% OF THE DRIVERS/OWNERS ACTUALLY

ID	Name	Responses
		LIKE THE COLOUR & MANY PASSENGERS HAVE COMMENTED THAT IT LOOKS FANTASTIC.
97	anonymous	Don't think a colour matters a taxi has a light on the roof indicating it is available for hire it also has a licence plate on the rear for identification. There is no need for any other form of signage on vehicles as they are recognised world wide and it spoils the appearance
98	anonymous	No
99	anonymous	Easy to identify
100	anonymous	A Two answer facility when a Third was required. Remove the Livery Requirement and the front door signage. Neither are required.
101	anonymous	Nowhere else in the country has it so why should we? And hackney livery (advertising) makes cabs stand out
102	anonymous	The new colour stands out
103	anonymous	Upon returning to the trade Feb 2023 after nearly 20 months out due to a medical incident after the 1st vaccination, I was buzzing to get back taxiing. After ordering a new car online I booked it in for the required checks and tests only to be told it had failed on the colour!!!! It was WHITE!!!! I didn't read about the changes/livery brought in while I wasn't able to work so to say I was devastated was an understatement. I paid £1500 to get it wrapped in an allowed colour and got back on the road although not happy after having to spend money on the wrap, money I didn't have. Now I find that the livery policy might be getting scrapped and all I feel is pure anger. I think its a disgusting way to treat professional drivers who work extremely hard to make an honest living but all that seems to happen is us getting punished financially. £1500 for a wrap that possibly wouldn't have been needed!!!! Absolutely outrageous
104	anonymous	It makes the taxis stand out and safe
105	anonymous	We do not need a Colour scheme
106	anonymous	door signage not required people the world over know a TAXI has a yellow light with the word TAXI. Doors are a place for advertising as is the whole of the vehicle, is this giving revenue towards income and maintenance. Vehicle would look like council gardeners vans. Leave alone the people of plymouth are not as thick as your making out.
107	anonymous	Waste of money looks terrible
108	anonymous	I learn 2 Mounths for knowlegy and for driver test. Paid 2 times for it, and now you try to make this for free?? Shame you Plymouth License Taxi!!!! Shame for your scam!

ID	Name	Responses
109	anonymous	By removing the green and white though this will not increase the amount of hackneys coming into the trade as euro 6 vehicles second hand are still extremely expensive, maybe consider excepting euro 5 vehicles with an age limit of 2014 upwards perhaps, as the council are still happy to let a 2007 vehicle stay in the city until 2030 ! So why not think about this I have mentioned this to Graham Hooper already, these euro 5 vehicles may fall within the budget of the average taxi driver and could increase numbers , especially as number have dropped significantly nearly 75 cabs exiting the city since the 2022 policy.
110	anonymous	Special clothing require extra spending and the trade doesn't offer the chance to show off, considering the customers that are at 3 a. m.
111	anonymous	No
112	anonymous	This means even less vehicles on the road if its not changed.
113	anonymous	Expensive service,
114	anonymous	People of Plymouth need taxis not rainbows,it doesn't matter what the colour is as long as it takes you home safely and convenient.Also it will only delay the process of applying for a plate and so the chance of rather sooner get the cab on the rank,limitations regarding finding/buying a cab in some specific colours as well.There will also be limitations when trying to find a replacement temporary cab following an accident if it will have to comply with a specific colour/livery there will be less to none insurance companies that will keep specific coloured cabs in stock just for Plymouth taxi licensing authority to provide IF needed and again cabs off the road for longer periods of time and so the thought of changing jobs due to that so just loosing more drivers on a long term.
115	anonymous	I would love to see all the taxis like this
116	anonymous	They look very smart
117	anonymous	Not everyone has money to purchase new vehicles or to make colour modifications.
118	anonymous	No
119	anonymous	It reduces options in vehicles
120	anonymous	I think that it's not going to make a difference this kind of change. It's only creating financial discomfort
121	anonymous	Door signs should be kept in place in order to determine a PH vehicle from a normal car.
122	anonymous	The white policy narrows the choice of cabs on the market. Very expensive at moment.

ID	Name	Responses
123	anonymous	In my opinion it may cause financial issues for drivers who bought new vehicles in recent 5 years and they are not comply with the livery (colour scheme). Colour scheme is not bad idea, as it will make Plymouth Taxis look more professional, and let customers and tourists distinguish a difference between Hackneys and Private Hires more easily. It supposed to be postponed for old vehicles to 2033 minimum(it is giving 15 years of usage if someone bought vehicle in recent 5 years). For new vehicles it supposed to be obligatory as it is.
124	anonymous	No comments
125	anonymous	I do not think that a colour code is required to identify a Taxi as it has an illuminated roof sign as in London. Whats good enough for the capital should be good enough for Plymouth. As for front door signage to identify the vehicle is a Taxi or private vehicle/ private hire vehicle for CCTV purposes, why not duplicate the rear plate and fix to each front door which would identify the license number.
126	anonymous	Nonsense question. If you would've respected the taxi opinion on previous consultation, this question wouldn't be here
127	anonymous	Livery should stay
128	anonymous	Will make the City look safer look better.
129	anonymous	I also disagree with having the door signage on. This makes it look like Plymouth City Council own the vehicle, which obviously they do not.
130	anonymous	Looks great for safety

Topographical/Knowledge of Plymouth Test - Part One

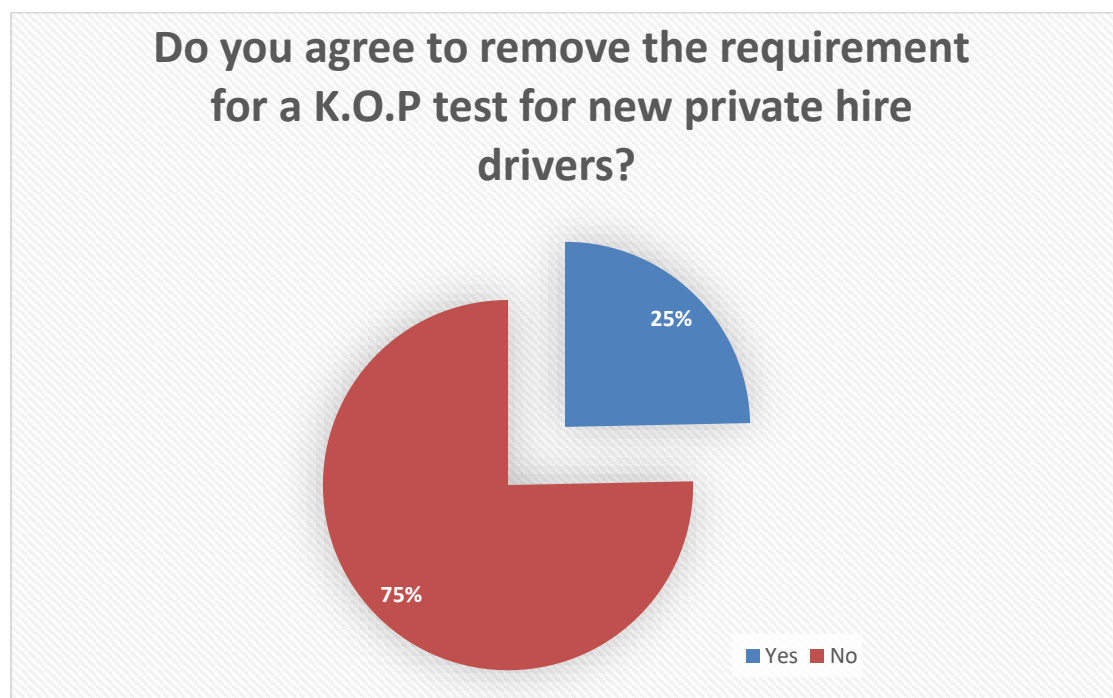
It is a requirement for all new applicants wishing to become a private hire or hackney carriage driver to pass a topographical/knowledge of Plymouth test (K.O.P)

It is proposed to remove this requirement for applicants who wish to obtain a private hire drivers' licence and retain this requirement for those who wish to apply to be a hackney carriage driver.

If this proposal is approved, it is further proposed that if a private hire driver has held a licence for 3 or more years, that they will not need to then undertake a K.O.P test to obtain a hackney carriage drivers' licence.

Do you agree to remove the requirement for a K.O.P test for new private hire drivers?

377 responses were received 284 (75%) of the respondents were against the proposal and 93 (25%) were in favour of the proposal.



211 comments were received

Plymouth Licensed Taxi Association Response

Executive Decision Document CSLCC04 23/24 is erroneous at "3.3 Private hire drivers cannot work without a GPS system or app..." This is not true. It is applicable to the majority of PHV Drivers who work through an office but there is no legal requirement for this to be the case. Indeed, the LA licences vehicles which only do tours, airport runs and school contracts. There is also the matter of sudden road closures for various reasons and drivers have to be instantly aware of alternative ways of reaching their destination.

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Local knowledge is a must, sat navs don't always take you the quickest or avoid bottlenecks.
2	anonymous	I think this is ridiculous... you HAVE to know knowledge of Plymouth. I spent months learning the Knowledge of Plymouth, for us taxi driver who have paid 100's on taxi schemes will we get refunded? I find this incredibly unfair.
3	anonymous	What happens when GPS goes down or various multi drops
4	anonymous	<p>The reasons I think the Taxi test should be scrapped is because we need to separate Taxis from Private hire. Hackneys are allowed to pickup off the street and TBH this is a bit unfair as ATM Hackneys and PH hold the same licences and qualifications and if one has the right then both should have the right as the licences are equal. If we has a system that separated Taxis from private hire, such as through a test, then this would then give Hackneys a more solid footing to have the right solely to pick up from the streets and it would keep the Hackney numbers down as people would not bother becoming a Hackney driver. We are all over busy ATM and for the last few years and customers just can't find a cab so as a city we do need more cars on the road.</p> <p>Sometimes when I am picking up or dropping off at the station I literally get pounced on by customers as people can't get a taxi locally or to go on to longer destinations. Private hire should be de regulated as we are private firms and one of the issues in the UK is that firms have too much red tape and if a driver is DBS checked and is in good health then why would he or she need a knowledge test as we have satnavs that are faster than thinking about things and safer TBH. TBH why do we need a driving test as well? Who's ever failed? The only real way to get into Private hire or taxi driving ATM, if you are on a budget, is by joining one of the big firms schools and this is strangling the smaller firms recruiting, as smaller firms can't afford the initial outlay. We have already seen the merger of a few big firms, and when the others join with them, they will dominate the city forcing drivers to pay a higher percentage, just as in other dominated cities and with foot fall dropping in our town hackneys will have no choice but to join and work for these one or two very large nationally controlled firms. I think the best way for customers and drivers is to deregulate to a point and give people who have the extra test an incentive, such as being a hackney driver. Yes, there will be an initial hit but as soon as consumers get confidence back in the trade this will iron out to be very profitable as using a well-priced cab will become the norm. The two big firms in Plymouth are strangling the city and people should try the smaller firms, many on Google business if you just type in Taxi I also think that charging firms or drivers to pickup from the station is a disgrace and this helps to render visitors transportless.</p>

ID	Name	Responses
5	anonymous	I am currently training on the kop, but do find it is not really relevant to todays electronic navigation systems. That said there is a fear that there would be an influx of PH drivers making it difficult make a living
6	anonymous	Lower the pass rate on a temporary basis, and monitor for future applicants.
7	anonymous	The knowledge test gives drivers the knowledge of most of the main artery roads within Plymouth and how to plan the shortest route for the customer, I believe this is a vital part of becoming a taxi driver
8	anonymous	Drivers with no knowledge of the city and who rely only on a sat nav, often take a longer route, thus costing passengers more.
9	anonymous	I think the knowledge test helps new drivers learn the area,
10	anonymous	Will flood the driver market with drivers that don't know the shortest routes and will create problems for all drivers
11	anonymous	The Knowledge test is not just learning the streets of plymouth and it is a good test to keep as it professionalises the driver
12	anonymous	I don't think removing the K.O.P would have any benefit to plymouth, you would end us with a lot of people over charging and following sat navs when a trained driver wouldn't need to rely on the map
13	anonymous	No
14	anonymous	There are many drivers that spend money,for knowledge test, months learning, maybe renting cars to drive to learn the streets. It's not fair new drivers just came straight into the business. Also because private hire drivers had K.O.P they should be able the chance badge for Hackney any time not after 3 years or more because was same exams for everyone -private/hackney. If new drivers don't have knowledge test how it will be driving test? They gonna use maps or sat nav? If buss driver ask for destination how driver can go there if he didn't learn nothing? How new drivers can take costumers to specific routes if they didn't learn nothing because in many situations sat nav takes you on different routes. Then are many foreign people that don't speak verry good English....if they are coming straight away into business and costumers ask for an address maybe they don't know how to type it on the sat nav....but if you learn and you had exam you have more chances to reach destination even if your English is not verry good.
15	anonymous	After being a large operator for many years in the city I think that the knowledge is learnt through experience and totally agree with the removal of KOP test

ID	Name	Responses
16	anonymous	K.o.p is very useful for starters knowing areas and places make the job easy and looks professional . Some costumers don't like to provide postcode or drive you to the destination and google maps not always give you the right routes .
17	anonymous	The removing of KOP is unfair for drivers that had to learn hard for test. Even with satnav drivers must know the area because satnav have major errors or didnt work or many time the venue or destination adress is not on satnav. As rare user of taxi I would like to be served by a taxi driver that knows the area where it serve.
18	anonymous	You need some sort of test even a shorter one.
19	anonymous	You should keep the kop as is essential for new drivers to know the streets and how to proper drive a car , when i pass the exam 6 years ago i had to study like 2 moths , now its even 50% less the amount the knowlege i had to learn.regards
20	anonymous	I know hundreds of People who started to learn in order to get a taxi linces. They just stop cuz they are lazy to learn and now all of them working for uber eats , just eat , etc. Even after the knowledge test has been reduce and been made easier ppl are still not keen to learn. Me personally I think is an offence against those who have been learning hard and made a lot of sacrifaces in order to pass the test. I completly not agree that the knowledge test to.be REMOVED. Think about us , who have learnt 100's of hours , think about our sacrifaces. If the test is removed the taxi trade will be destroyed for us and all the deliveroo and uner guys will join. I hope the council will take in consideration our vote and will care about our sacrifaces.
21	anonymous	If you remove the knowledge test current drivers will massively have there workload reduced and with most PH drivers out goings running around £500 a week mark it could force many to find differnt jobs. That would then lose alot of experienced drivers. Then being replaced with people with no knowledge possibly jumping on the job for 6 months to make a quick buck I have spoke to alot of drivers who have said they would be gone from the trade if the knowledge is scrapped because the new drivers simply wouldnt know or care about keeping the high standard. You have to be relatively intelligent to pass the knowledge by scrapping it anyone can walk in to the job. If anything should be scrapped is the £350 pound nvq the drivers have already been driving for a year before it has to be done so its simply a waste of time and money especially with you trying to help out with cost of living £350 alot of money.
22	anonymous	If you remove K.O.P there will be more taxi drivers then customer

ID	Name	Responses
23	anonymous	With a huge increase in non English drivers coming into the trade it's really more important now than it has ever been that there should be a testing procedure.
24	anonymous	Private hire drivers all use technology given to them, even the more experienced drivers use this tech, so we find it unnecessary.
25	anonymous	Currently has the luxury of allowing drivers to move between Hackney and private hire because they both sit the same test and have to score the same pass mark. Removing the test from the private hire application process creates a two tier system and one that I genuinely fear will be to the detriment of the private hire trade within Plymouth, I appreciate that there is a requirement for more drivers and that in this day and age satnav is a fundamental tool used by professional drivers but to remove The KOP Will mean the drivers can't move between the two badge groups as easily and what value public perception of private hire. By all means make the test more relevant to today's job and driving conditions, maybe less focus on the roots and more focus on venues, pubs, restaurants, places of interest. I firmly believe that the KoP is an important part of our application process
26	anonymous	Just because cars may have GPS doesn't mean you know where your going, there are shorter ways to go GPS doesn't always take you the shorter route, especially in traffic jams or if an accident has happened.
27	anonymous	1.It cost me 5 months and over 2000£ 12 years ago to obtain my driving licence.Give the money back to all private and hackney drivers who took that exam if you give up on your knowledge test 2. If you give up on this test,only one who profit about this is the taxi companies and you.On the other side all curent taxi drivers are gone lose a lot of income and many they gone give up,move to deliveries and other jobs,or they gone claim benefits. 3. There gone be a lot of complains from customers who are used to drivers who dont need direction indication
28	anonymous	No
29	anonymous	if K.o.p. is going to be removed the taxi trade is going to be flooded with low quality and untrained drivers that are not going to be able to offer the best service to the customers . To have more drivers on the road ,you just need to speed up the process of obtaining a taxi licence. At this moment ,the process lasts almost 4 months ago. Keep the Knowledge test for the better quality of the service .
30	anonymous	Removing the knowledge test would allow a lot of people joining the trade and therefore make it not profitable and would push people out of it rather than keeping them

ID	Name	Responses
31	anonymous	I completely disagree with scrapping the knowledge test provides a basic knowledge of the city I feel that is very important for are locals and visitors being a taxi driver my self for 10 plus years and living In the city since birth the knowledge test helped me understand the routes of the city and witch way to take to make the customers final total the cheapest price
32	anonymous	This is also a more pragmatic approach to dealing with the shortage of drivers. A large influx of new PHV drivers, will ensure that the taxi industry, plays its vital role in the local community transport system and to assist the night time economy, by having more vehicles available during busy times.
33	anonymous	It's good to be removed as there are not enough drivers in the city and when ever I ordered taxi I have to wait 2 r 3 hours they are busy We need more drivers in the route
34	anonymous	I don't agree that anybody could now become a taxi driver without doing the hard yards like the rest of Plymouth hard working and loyal drivers. I have been a Plymouth Private Hirer driver for over 10 years and this is my career, I take great pride that I have passed all the qualifications and I don't need to use a GPS system to navigate around Plymouth. If like the last time you brought this to the table you are to make Private Hire have fixed fares that's unfair on the customer, as fares will be increased yet again to compensate for traffic or any waiting time. This in my eyes is being driven by the operators who are looking after themselves, more driver numbers more money for them. You will open the flood gates and it will kill the industry you will just become a Uber Council.
35	anonymous	Remove the KOP will make the life easier for all of as 'dot need to wait a massive time to get taxi All drivers are voting No cuz they want to keep them self busy making £300/400 a day But for the people is better to be as much as possible of drivers on the route So that can make life more easy Safe the people from waiting on the router after finishing their party's for/ hours to get back home
36	anonymous	Satnav is not always accurate, furthermore, I have had numerous complaints over the years of drivers taking longest route following sat nav's.
37	anonymous	By removing the K.O.P test is removing the essential part of being the taxi driver. I'm thankful that I learnt mine and have found it to be invaluable as do the customers. Scrapping it would be a mistake.
38	anonymous	The quality of the taxi service will not be as high as it is at the moment.

ID	Name	Responses
39	anonymous	If you remove the KOP requirement then you must also remove the requirement that Private Hire drivers take the shortest route. If they don't have the route knowledge then they won't be able to overrule their satellite navigation system that DOES NOT always show the shortest route.
40	anonymous	The test (along with language test) ensures that drivers know where they are going and can communicate. It should be applied retrospectively to all hackney/ private hire drivers
41	anonymous	This could cause a dangerously high influx of clueless drivers who don't know the city. It is a privileged job and shouldn't be handed out to anyone.
42	anonymous	No
43	anonymous	No
44	anonymous	Think it should be some sort of knowledge test but a lot smaller than the one in place at the moment
45	anonymous	No I don't agree with removing it when I pay for a service I should expect a level of professionalism and doing the knowledge is part of that. You wouldn't employ a plumber or a builder who isn't fully trained same as a taxi driver
46	anonymous	Absolutely no way the knowledge should stay the whole system would become a joke with far too many people using taxiing like they do uber eats etc as a side hustle in the evenings and not doing many hours taking money from proper PH drivers who need to pay the bills they tried to remove it in Newcastle years ago and all the drivers stuck together and went on strike speaking to other drivers we would be here as well good luck if that happens
47	anonymous	It is not fair. We all had to sit the KOP, and 12 years ago when I did it, it was very very hard and about 114 routes, 53 end of the roads + venues + questions. Now there's only 59 routes, if they really want to enter the trade, they should sit and pass the exam.
48	anonymous	Even though we all have Google maps, it is still a massive advantage to know where you're going and to advertise the city, the more we know and where we are going is only going to improve the customer service we supply to all the holiday makers we have to this amazing city. Flooding the market with drivers not knowing what they are doing will not help. And you would start to lose the experience. Work will dry up. Start a price freeze as fares are getting too high.

ID	Name	Responses
49	anonymous	Don't agree with being able to change to Hackney carriage after three years with no kop test
50	anonymous	The knowledge test is the best way the public feel they can trust a driver to actually know what he or she is doing. No-one wants to get into any licenced vehicle and have to direct the driver or give them postcode .Sat nav is not a licenced driver .private hire cash cow.
51	anonymous	Removal of the K.O.P is one of the worse ideas this Council has had regarding licensing. Customers need to know they are in the safe hands of a driver who knows where they are going and not constantly looking at a sat nav screen. Sat Navs do not always give you the shorted route, they do not know local knowledge about short cuts avoiding heavy traffic. Removal of the KOP would flood the industry and many of the more experienced and professional drivers who treat this as a career will leave. This intern will leave the city with a substandard service. So 100% No from all of the drivers who I've spoken too
52	anonymous	All taxi drivers should know 85% of major roads and know the area of Plymouth
53	anonymous	Is not fare for old drivers !
54	anonymous	Too much reliance on sat nav by drivers that don't know the area and are unaware of non-main routes
55	anonymous	There needs to be some sort of knowledge test maybe not as rigid as the current one, but drivers need to be armed with a certain amount it's all very well having a sat nav to take you to your destination but you need to know where Crownhill, Estover or Derriford is not forgetting that the lack of knowledge test will probably encourage drivers from other areas without any knowledge at all
56	anonymous	Without the local knowledge they will be asking me directions or following a sat nav.
57	anonymous	We tried to keep decent standards all these years,I don't see why we would drop them now. The knowledge test is an absolute must.
58	anonymous	There should be even a small test of knowing local areas in Plymouth GPS and sat navs don't always work
59	anonymous	I think a proposal to scrap the knowledge test is a bad move, And an insult to so many people that took time to pass it, It will turn our jobs into a minimum wage job as the city will be flooded by drivers that will just rely on a satnav Great move for the various offices and business owners. But a pisstake to the already qualified drivers

ID	Name	Responses
60	anonymous	Customers would feel confident if the driver had the knowledge and knew where they were going
61	anonymous	Knowing the city allows them to guide customers to their desired destination in an efficient way, which leads to faster and more economical trips for customers. With solid knowledge of streets and routes, taxi drivers can avoid areas with heavy traffic and they can choose alternative routes, saving their customers time.
62	anonymous	In this case you will increase the number of drivers, which will lead at increasing earnings for taxi operators, lower income for drivers. Drivers will be working again with much less than the minimum hourly pay. (Modern slavery)
63	anonymous	Being a taxi driver is not just about driving. Being a taxi driver is about knowledge is about knowing the city. We are a city where visitors are coming what will happen if a customer is visiting the city and book a taxi ASD (As Directed) not having the knowledge of the city will have a negative impact for the city. Also what will be different between a Delivery Driver and a taxi driver? None Yes we are using GPS but you still need to have some sort of knowledge of the city so my answer is NO - I do not agree to take out K.O.P tests
64	anonymous	I have learned 3 months to pass the test ! It is not fair to remove the requirement for a K.O.P. test for new private hire drivers ! If you want indeed to be a taxi driver , you must learn and you must pass the K.O.P. test ! If not, this will be considered disrespectful in my opinion.
65	anonymous	The knowledge is the one thing that sets taxi drivers apart from regular drivers. Would you like your loved ones to be picked up by someone who has to stop and adjust their sat nav or phone (or may be while they are driving) should they decide to go somewhere. Perhaps if the private hire offices dropped their office rents that would be enough to encourage more people into the trade.
66	anonymous	I think every new driver should go through the knowledge test whether private or Hackney it makes them more comfortable on the steering wheel safer on the road when you know where you going instead of checking the phone while driving in a busy traffic makes them look more professional in the eyes of the customers and its safer of the roads.
67	anonymous	K.O.P must remain , there are over 900 drivers in the trade at the moment that passed K.O.P to become taxi driver , New applicants must know at least, the basic knowledge of plymouth , I joined the trade last February , i can reassure that knowing areas of plymouth its heart of this job , u can not rely on GPS , Even basic knowledge is not enough to become taxi driver leave alone the driving with GPS , Being taxi driver is

ID	Name	Responses
		<p>profession , New applicants must put they time and learn the job they wish to do . I can give example from my self that who joined the trade in February , Even tho I passed the K.O.P in first time , I still sit at home and study the areas that was not in the test for become better driver and give the best service to public , its very dangerous to drive a car when you have to keep checking which way you have to go , and also GPS and Satnavs will take you quicker route not shorter ,It will cost more and which will cause a lot problems with public . Once again K.O.P MUST REMAIN FOR RESPECT OF TRADE AND FOR SAFETY OF PUBLIC .</p>
68	anonymous	No
69	anonymous	<p>I've put no but I can see the benefit here. I view knowledge tests in two ways. First,y. There is no question it is safer to know where you are going rather than following a sat-nav. Last minute lane changes, missing hidden turnings, are all risks of following sat-nav. Secondly, a routes test is a great test of character. More than anything, a persons character defines whether or not they will be an honest, reliable 'fit and proper' person. Providing the authority is satisfied that the remaining application procedures fulfil the requirement to show a person is fit and proper then I suppose removing the knowledge test is acceptable.</p>
70	anonymous	<p>I believe if anyone wish become a Taxi driver in Plymouth they should still should have to take the knowledge test even though they have been a private hire driver for 3 years or more.</p>
71	anonymous	<p>I believe that local knowledge including shortist routes should always be part of any taxi /private hire drivers skill.</p>
72	anonymous	<p>Even with the knowledge some Driver's still have no idea where street's and venues are, without the knowledge it would be a nightmare.</p>
73	anonymous	<p>Could this proposition lead to being able to also signup for companies such as Uber Taxi? Perhaps it could become more popular in Plymouth and it might be cheaper or faster than a normal taxi giving people who want to get into the trade more opportunities of earnings. I'm looking forward to this hopefully coming into effect.</p>
74	anonymous	<p>All but 3 cities have this test why are we still doing it, as a private hire driver your sent the job on your phone and then the sat nav gives you the route</p>
75	anonymous	<p>It makes no difference if you are private hire driver or hackney driver , Both private hire and hackney need to know the k.O.P you may say that private hire use a satnav to get around but the satnav doesn't always go the best route. Also do you not think that hackney DON'T use a satnav . if you put people in private hire without K.O.P it is not fair on the</p>

ID	Name	Responses
		plymouth people They should get the best possible transport experience. The knowledge means the driver knows the best, easiest, quickest and most cost effective route and knows where to divert if there is a problem with traffic/accident or road works. I understand that by stopping this you would increase new drivers coming forward but in my opinion they would not have the knowledge required.
76	anonymous	Just make the KOP easier, but leave it as a requirement.
77	anonymous	Keep the KOP as it is. Relying on Sat Nav equipment doesn't help anyone if the customer doesn't know the address or the post code ie The Futures Inn. If the driver doesn't know where the destination is and the customer doesn't either how is he going to transport him. At least if he has done a KOP he's in with a chance of knowing where he is going.
78	anonymous	Knowledge test is important, because drivers should know where are the venues, big roads and other visitors points are, and it is helpful for the drivers and passengers confidence; the customer will feel comfortable and relaxed when his driver knows where his customers want to go.
79	anonymous	No point in 2023 satnavs are faster
80	anonymous	If you allow General Public the opportunity to hold a licence without any prior knowledge of the roads system in our city, you will be causing the earnings of the regularly tested drivers to be severely affected. The Knowledge test is there for a reason. Completing the Knowledge Test and holding a badge gives the driver MORE pride to wear it than the proposed new Green and White livery on the cab would.
81	anonymous	First all nine years ago I had exams for knowledge, is not fair for the old drivers
82	anonymous	No
83	anonymous	We have all got to have a knowledge of the city of one form or another
84	anonymous	I do feel that removing the K.O.P test would be a good move to boost numbers, however, I would like to see a limit on the amount of private hire licences issued to protect those who already have them. No point doing the job if thousands of extra badges are issued
85	anonymous	You need to know all the main roads around Plymouth area. Certain times of the day you change routes.dew to accidents, roadworks, water burst anything like that you need a basic knowledge and even the up-to-date. Google Maps don't show this

ID	Name	Responses
86	anonymous	Hi I believe and many people I have spoke to believe the knowledge test should stay because it sets a level of professionalism to the trade and when I get in to a pH taxi I want to feel rest assured that the driver is fully trained and half a brain cell and some local knowledge if the kop test is removed there will be a huge influx of uber and deliveroo drivers jumping on the job who have no idea where anywhere is apart from home addresses they look at Google maps with they would have no knowledge of venues or point of interest or no nothing about the are city plenty of other citys country wide have kept the kop test so why are we plymouth renowned for having a tough test to get ya taxi badge so why make it easy and let standard's slip were suppose to be improving our city for visitors not making a bad first impression thanks
87	anonymous	There should always be discipline to certain routes, not all GPS routes take you the shortest route, if removing the knowledge test you should make it a requirement thar all private hire have a GPS dispatch system.
88	anonymous	No completely against removing the kop test have you seen bracknell council have just decided to keep the knowledge after consultation it will turn the job in to a minimum wage job and I for one and many of My fellow drivers will be off to find better paid work possibly the hgv route so don't flood our jobs with inexperienced no knowledge drivers thank you
89	anonymous	It is important to maintain key knowledge about routes and your city. The market would become saturated if this were to be removed.....However the knowledge test information should be accessible for all, there should not be a need to attend a 'school' to obtain this information. I would have liked to have gained this knowledge in my own time at work or in the evenings instead of having to take days off of work too be given this
90	anonymous	If you applied to Citybus you would have to take a route test to become a bus driver. Plymouth is constantly changing so it vital that the K.O.P test is kept in place.
91	anonymous	remove the test
92	anonymous	n
93	anonymous	n
94	anonymous	n
95	anonymous	n
96	anonymous	n

ID	Name	Responses
97	anonymous	Has been a requirement not only to have a knowledge but it by its nature encourages drivers to gain other knowledge that would benefit both local people and visitors to our fair city
98	anonymous	It is vital that all cab drivers have a knowledge of addresses and the geography of Plymouth. All applicants must do the work necessary to achieve this and pass the KOP test. It is most irritating to be a passenger when taken by a roundabout route to one's destination as it takes longer and is more costly.
99	anonymous	It is vital that taxi drivers know where they are going.
100	anonymous	Hi doesn't matter every one needs to have test to knowledge about the city and about the job anyway too many taxi in plymouth who ever want to be taxi driver they need to know plymouth. Its not good just open the door for ever kind people
101	anonymous	How will they know where they're going? SatNav alone doesn't help too much. I've taken the KOP and it took me months to learn, and it was still hard to do the work, but the knowledge I gained from it was crucial. Also, I will be invoicing PCC for the money I paid to take the test twice, and the time lost to learn for the KOP. It is very unfair for us that new drivers are allowed to get a licence without passing the KOP.
102	anonymous	You say that because PH offices use app based dispatch systems there is no need to take the KOP test yet it's the increase in technology that means it's needed just as much. PH operators are relying heavily on app based booking systems where the customer books their ride but there are multiple occasions where the pick up is wrong or the destination is wrong so the installed gps sat nav will not work correctly. Also the PH operators are relying on out sourcing calls to foreign countries and these bookings are mostly incorrect and using automated systems that crash most recently at Tower where no destinations were on the bookings.
103	anonymous	All drivers should be able to navigate the City they are without electronic help. Should tecknowledgedge fail they should have a working street knowledge in their heads.
104	anonymous	The quality in taxi will be very low, with out knowledge
105	anonymous	You must have some form of Knowledge test to be a driver, doesn't matter if your Hackney or Private. You can't just rely on a sat nav. People ask for different locations all the time, and having knowledge is key to providing a great public service.
106	anonymous	1. When i passed my test a council inspector told me he want safe rides for his wife and childs. He changed his mind? 2. Why council does not

ID	Name	Responses
		<p>run more buses in the city? Not enough customers, right? Why we need to double number of PH drivers if not enough customers then? It is only busy in rush hour and 3-4 hours weekend evenings. Rest of the time i do 1-2 jobs per hour. All drivers work extra hours to can afford all weekly payments, car mentenance, office rent, petrol, insurance, etc. The only problem is over night because drivers don't do nights anymore. Why!?!? Because of too many runners, drivers were attacked with knives, had the cars destroyed by drunk customers and we have NO PROTECTION. Police and council do nothing to help as, this is the real problem. If K.O.P. will be removed lots of people who are not able to pass the test today will be taxi drivers tomorrow and we will have an unsafe city and we will struggle to pay our bills.</p>
107	anonymous	<p>They could get a job from the office, which says as directed or the customer could change your mind or they might have a couple destinations drivers should take the knowledge if they really want to be a competent, taxi driver</p>
108	anonymous	<p>1. It's not fair towards us, whom learned a lot, we spend couple of months to be able to pass with 90% of knowledge. 2. This proposal will destroy the business. During the weeks it's not busy and sometimes we need to wait really long (30 minutes or even more, depending where you end up with your last booking) to get a job. If you remove the knowledge test everyone doing food delivery, or recently arrived to Plymouth will come to taxi trade and then the waiting time can goes up to hours. If you really want to help with the cost living you should help and support us to not loose our earnings. 3. Will destroy the safety part of the business. With knowledge you selected the most clever people. And to be honest to pass the test (especially when I went to do the test in 2019) you most have had a high intelegent level. Removing the test will allow on the road, and on public transport people whom may not got a high intelegent level. As a consequence the taxi journey won't be as safe for costumers how it used to be.</p>
109	anonymous	<p>This would flood the industry with drivers that have no knowledge of Plymouth what so ever. The 'shortage' of taxis I Plymouth has more or less sorted itself out now.</p>
110	anonymous	<p>I don't agree with removing the test as a member of the public. I want my driver to have knowledge of the city and know where they are going without having to rely on looking at a screen for most journeys which I feel is not safe. Removing the test will reduce the quality of the service</p>
111	anonymous	<p>We worked ver hard to complete this test so new driver should do the same otherwise it will not be fare.</p>

ID	Name	Responses
112	anonymous	KOP is basic for taxi drivers, just basic, it will be difficult to drive in Plymouth without this basic knowledge.
113	anonymous	Should definitely stay when I book a private hire to go out I like to know the driver has full training and level of intelligence dont even care if they use the sat nav whole point of having exams is to show your a competent person a plumber wouldn't know everthing after passing there tests but they still have to do them so should be same for private hire drivers.
114	anonymous	Simply wouldn't use them again would get a black cab number and ask for them to pick me up completely unprofessional scrapping the knowledge there has to be standards in every job and scrapping the kop would massively lower standards
115	anonymous	Would massively effect the work load if scrapped ill be off to get my hgv license and like at least 50 other drivers I have spoke to would leave immediately
116	anonymous	There is no need for a Knowledge of Plymouth test .With the advancement in Sat Nav technology there is no need to know every street or tourist attraction etc in Plymouth.Sat Nav will take you to the exact destination required. This new proposal is common sense and should be implemented in my opinion.
117	anonymous	The knowledge of Plymouth test is essential in order to know the city. As a fairly new driver, I've had my taxi badge for nearly 2 years, I don't think that the sat nav is good enough, it will not take you through the shortest routes and if you do select the shortest route it will take you through alley ways. It is essential to know the city in order to provide the best possible experience for customers, otherwise the customers will thank thay we are unprofessional. Removing the KOP test will also allow anyone to apply for a badge, there will be way too many drivers and not enough jobs for the current drivers. If the Hackney carriage drivers should still be required to undertake the KOP test, private hire driver should do so as well.
118	anonymous	Working in Public Transport it is a must to have knowledge how to do the job in a professional way and knowledge about the city, Highway Code etc. Therefore KOP must remain in place.
119	anonymous	I believe this is the best way to go considering the difference between hackney and private hire drivers in terms of how fares are calculated and how drivers follow routes. I strongly support that the KOP test requirement be removed for private hire drivers.
120	anonymous	It is part of being a taxi driver, having appropriate knowledge, of whatever area you work in.

ID	Name	Responses
121	anonymous	Given the large barrier of entry that the KOP test creates to new drivers who want to join the trade, and the clear lack of Private Hire taxis that are in Plymouth, Removing the KOP test in its entirety seems to be a sensible course of action
122	anonymous	The K.O.P test is a important part of learning the job in my opinion. however there should not be the need for private hire drivers to complete the K.O.P again if they have 3 or more year's experience of the taxi business.
123	anonymous	way over dew
124	anonymous	What a stupid idea.... This will allow any Tom dick or Harry to be a driver there's enough idiots who blamed the course and don't know where there going working already. This will just make for trouble ahead.... Really stood idea so NO NO NO NO
125	anonymous	I know modern systems have a built in navigation systems but I still think a reasonably sound knowledge of Plymouth should be a requirement of obtaining a license.
126	anonymous	Should be taken in the first year before renewal of badge
127	anonymous	Should do some kind of knowledge test in the first year of badge
128	anonymous	Taxi drivers are the first point of contact for many people visiting the city (over 5 million annually). It is crucial that they have local knowledge which they can share with incoming visitors, students coming to the city for the first time or business investors as 'ambassadors' for the city. Many cities invest significantly in training for drivers to enhance and improve this so that they are seen as welcoming and friendly. If anything the standards should be raised here not reduced.
129	anonymous	There must be rout discipline drivers should know where they are going, not all GPS systems take you the shortest route
130	anonymous	Because people with anxiety or learning disabilities could be charged higher fares as the shortest route isn't always the cheapest route to which would be set on sat navs as there may be more traffic lights etc. Drivers will end up taking advantage of the vulnerable. Not all passengers will know the best route for them especially if not from Plymouth.
131	anonymous	I think everyone should have K.O.P test
132	anonymous	Not a good idea will lower standards and a over supply of ph drivers

ID	Name	Responses
133	anonymous	No the job market could get flooded be no earnings to be made then people will leave the trade on average a private hire drivers out goings are 550 a week so there has to be plenty of work available to the current drivers
134	anonymous	Absolutely no way it needs to stay all of us drivers are proud of our trade and the effort we took to obtain a licence from the council it completely devalues it if a knowledge test is not taken and it will also leave a bad impression on visitors if the driver doesn't even have any vague idea where there going and yes gps plays a part but as many ph drivers i spoke to have many bookings a day saying as directed by customer before they get there so they need to have a Knowledge of plymouth the same as us hackney drivers many other parts of the country have thought about it and back tracked so I think you should to I think you could be opening a can of worms with current drivers if scrapped.
135	anonymous	No would flood market I'd leave the taxi trade as a driver in the city as no money to be made and pay our bills and I switch to airport runs only as many drivers have said they would do so ur have even bigger problem if its scrapped
136	anonymous	No I am operater in plymouth and I wouldn't even want to take a driver on with out knowledge test will make my firm look bad only people wanting it scrapped our 1 or 2 operaters looking to money grab radio rent keep our job professional for a fit and proper person like you always go on about thank you.
137	anonymous	You need to have knowledge of plymouth to retain the safety of yourself as a driver and the passengers.
138	anonymous	I've been in a few taxis where the driver has asked where a certain place is, as long as you get home safe I think the knowledge isn't necessary
139	anonymous	I think everyone should have the KOP
140	anonymous	Every taxi driver should have a bassic general knowledge of the city weather private hire or Hackney carriage you cannot rely on sat nave alone people change their mind where they are going all the time and if you got to pull in all the time to reset your destination if you got 4 people 4 destinations all at the cost to the customer 4 drunks at night possibly 4 different destinations could cause a lot of problems for the driver not everyone is helpfull a basic knowledge is essential
141	anonymous	Must everyone have the K . O . P

ID	Name	Responses
142	anonymous	All the private hire doing their jobs by companies apps . So I think everyone should aloud to do the private hire with out knowledge test .
143	anonymous	I think everyone should have the KOP
144	anonymous	<p>I'm a 30yrs old with 12years of driving experience driving day-by-day, ex class I lorry driver with vast experience and I belief that any taxi driver MUST have the Knowledge of Plymouth. I found K.O.P very useful, and I didn't pass it in the first instance. I found afterwards that not only an exam but is a lesson as well, is kind of a very useful course that any Taxi driver must do regardless any circumstances and I'm going to explain why in the following lines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Efficiency and Speed: Knowing the layout of the city allows taxi drivers to choose the fastest and most efficient routes (saving time for both the driver and the passenger, smaller fare, less pollution) to get passengers to their destinations. 2. Customer Service: We live in the wonderful Plymouth, a knowledgeable taxi driver can provide better customer service by offering useful information about the city, such as popular landmarks, restaurants, and points of interest. This can enhance the overall experience for passengers, especially tourists or those unfamiliar with the area. 3. Navigation Skills: Navigating through the city requires a good understanding of the road network, traffic patterns, and one-way streets. A skilled taxi driver can navigate through the city more effectively, reducing the likelihood of getting lost and frustrating the passenger (which can be very easily annoyed about it). 4. Emergency Situations: In case of emergencies, such as accidents or sudden road closures, a knowledgeable taxi driver can quickly adapt and find alternative routes to ensure the safety and timely arrival of passengers and the sat-nav is not updating in 9 of 10 chases. 5. Building Trust: Passengers often feel more comfortable and trusting of a taxi driver who exhibits familiarity with the city. This knowledge can help build trust and confidence in the driver's ability to provide a safe and efficient service. 6. Economic Considerations: Being familiar with the city enables taxi drivers to identify high-demand areas and times, potentially increasing their earning opportunities. This knowledge can also help them avoid areas with heavy traffic or low demand. <p>In summary, a taxi driver's knowledge of the city is crucial for providing efficient, safe, and customer-oriented service. It contributes to the overall satisfaction of passengers and helps drivers navigate the challenges of urban transportation effectively.</p>
145	anonymous	In today's tech world it is not relevant as the kop does not cover every st or every scenarios however the number of badges issued would need to be restricted
146	anonymous	No there is not enough work during the day as it is it would create far to many drivers and everyone would end up leaving the trade In the end

ID	Name	Responses
		we have high outgoings so if income drops it makes it impossible to do the job and it would make it impossible for everyone in the job if the work was to spread out
147	anonymous	KOP test is essential
148	anonymous	I agree with scraping the kop test , will the taxi law test still take place ? I feel it should
149	anonymous	Satnav is the best way to get to wherever you want
150	anonymous	Very poor decision, standards are already at an all time low and voluntarily lowering them even further is just ridiculous. Satellite navigation is not a suitable replacement for local knowledge, I've actually seen people sent the wrong way down one way streets for example by sat nav, and from my own experience they do not always send you on the most suitable route. Also why after 3 years should someone then have the right to become a hackney carriage driver while those of us who have been doing the job for decades have had to do things right?
151	anonymous	I think everyone have k.o.p test
152	anonymous	AS AN EXPERIENCE TAXI DRIVER THIS SHOULD BE KEPT AS IT IS THE BASIC KNOWLEDGE BEFORE U COME OUT ON THE ROAD THERE ARE LOTS OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE OUT HERE AND IF U DONT KNOW THE BASIC THERE BE WORRIED THE TEST GIVES U AN IDEAR OF WHAT EXPECTED OF A TAXI DRIVER
153	anonymous	All drivers weather Hackney carriage or phv need a basic knowledge of there city
154	anonymous	No
155	anonymous	We just want to get a taxi home
156	anonymous	The KOP is a must at some level for PH. It does not to be at the high level obviously required by Hackney Drivers. Pass marks on the same exam should be 90% for Hackney and 70% for PH Drivers.
157	anonymous	Any new driver should take a test, I believe driving 10 years+ is good enough as most drivers I've seen use Sat nav's nowadays
158	anonymous	To be a taxi driver you need to complete a knowledge test and NOT rely on sat nav
159	anonymous	I was made aware of these questions by a taxi driver who took me home to Tamerton and he was saying that drivers should have to sit a test, however he had no idea where he was going and had to use a

ID	Name	Responses
		satnav himself even though he has taken a test so there is no point of a test.
160	anonymous	<p>Knowledge test is very important for new applicants because we are not working On GPS system constantly taxi driver needs GPS in his head not on the screen Many Times system shows the longest fare not the shortest one besides customers make different stops on the way,change the destination or have their own preferences about the route on the way so it is not as easy as you think to do this job and provide a good customers service without basic knowledge of the city It is hard to understand your proposal. This app system is working since years so why you haven't change the regulations 5 or6 years ago Now the taxi market is back to normal so I don't understand the changes you try to provide You were wrong with colour of the cars idea and you are wrong again Don't Look at our job from the position of the office We are on the first line behind the wheel not you You have to decide if you follow the needs of customers and the citizens ordo follow the money of corporations and big businesses Best regards Robert</p>
161	anonymous	<p>Where do I start. As everyone in the trade knows, the knowledge test is difficult. It takes hours and hours of study and is extremely testing. The beauty of having the knowledge is that you know the CORRECT route to take and NOT WHAT A SAT NAV would tell you. Very often a sat nav will take you a long way,up a country lane,dead end etc. As a newish driver with 3/4 years experience I find having the knowledge in my head helps me every single day. Drivers becoming taxi drivers WITHOUT doing the knowledge test is,in my opinion, an absolute joke. Getting behind the wheel of a car as a new taxi driver is intimidating and nerve wrecking and customers deserve a competent PROFESSIONAL driver,NOT someone off the street following a sat nav,with NO KNOWLEDGE of plymouth. Ultimately, I cannot see what difference the PROFESSIONAL drivers right now,the drivers who have sat through hours and hours of knowledge tests,what difference their opinions will make. Again we will be punished by having UNPROFESSIONAL people of the streets with NO KNOWLEDGE, taking our hard earned money from us and not caring about their profession, something I DO!!!! To say ,again, as with the livery policy, I find the possibilities absolutely outrageous and disrespectful to present, honest,hard working drivers.</p>
162	anonymous	Most drivers use satellite navigation now.
163	anonymous	You need to have knowledge of the city
164	anonymous	We all have sat nav which makes it easier to find address
165	anonymous	If this test is removed, it will destroy the PH job, because there will be a large influx of people, and this will mean an increase in the price of car

ID	Name	Responses
		rentals (few cars, many who will), taxi companies will profit more from drivers because they will have a large influx of requests, the arrival of a large number of new drivers who do not know the city will lead to a decrease in the quality of services, the number of jobs will not keep pace with the increase of new PHs and this will lead to very low incomes for those who will have repercussions on the quality of the cars (cleaning, repairs made at dubious services or postponing a repair, etc.). The decrease in service quality will lead to more complaints to the taxi companies and to Plymouth taxi licensing and our PH image in Plymouth. Please do not destroy this job by deciding to remove the exam, you will affect many PH and their families, and in the last months due to the economic instability our incomes have decreased a lot :(As we can see even today inflation does not help at all, why do you think that a PH inflation without a bit of knowledge will help you?
166	anonymous	You will not get any new drivers in the Hackney trade for at least 3 years as vehicles are far more expensive and by that time they will be rooted in the private hire trade. hackneys will dwindle and the big companies takeover as is happening now and then you have no control over anything. no hackneys no disabled vehicles. PS you already restrict the use of a disability users use of hackney carriages pushing them into using vehicles you cant control and from other councils.
167	anonymous	Sat navs are not reliable and don't not always take you the shortest route.
ID	Name	Responses
168	anonymous	Yes. My comment is(law is for everybody) law!!!!
169	anonymous	A taxi driver needs basic city knowledge to start with , if we drop the test this would see the likes of just eat / uber eats drivers/riders become taxi drivers, have you been behind a just eat delivery driver before? They spend more time looking at the map on their phone rather than the road ! This will end up in a serious accident and someone getting hurt, If someone cannot spend 4 weeks of their life to learn some city knowledge to give themselves a fairly decent career and relatively good income they are obviously not that committed to the trade.
170	anonymous	It's not fair to me or others that spent time and money for this exam.... So no don't make this city exam free...
171	anonymous	No
172	anonymous	There has to be some kind of a exam to make a difference Will be too many drivers The number of issued licenses should be limited

ID	Name	Responses
173	anonymous	As per Government instruction ATM the public can't get a taxi when needed as no one wants to become a driver due to the test. 3. The role of licensing authorities As stated in the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards issued by the department to licensing authorities, the primary and overriding objective of licensing must be to protect the public. Licensing authorities should also be aware that, as well as ensuring taxi and private hire vehicle services are safe, the public have a reasonable expectation that the services available will be accessible and affordable
174	anonymous	Taxi drivers should have Plymouth knowledges and prove they do.
175	anonymous	Please do not remove the K.O.P Make it easier
176	anonymous	The knowledge test should remain for new drivers as a sat nav will only get you so far.and customers always change the destination route which means you have to change destination on sat nav which is unprofessional with the customer in the vehicle.You are basically saying that being a taxi driver is an unskilled job so no training is necessary. This is not a good idea.
177	anonymous	Some form of very basic knowledge of the city should be used as well as some basic skills of using a sat nav,a combination of the two would probably demonstrate a good enough ability to work as a private hire driver.
178	anonymous	I free safe if the driver had some knowledge
179	anonymous	Removing knowledge test you gonna damage the trade
180	anonymous	Removing the knowledge test will bring too many unexperienced drivers and a lot of issues as nobody will like a driver that doesn't know were to go,and even worse the actual drivers income will get low so,many will stop working.
181	anonymous	All new drivers private hire/Hackney carriage should pass the k.o.p test.
182	anonymous	No
183	anonymous	As a P/H driver myself, I've asked my passengers how they would feel if their driver had little or no knowledge of Plymouth and would have to use google or satnav. Every customer so far has said they would prefer the driver to go through the knowledge test as there are many different ways to get to the same destination. The satnav doesn't always direct you to the shortest route. And can cause stress & anxiety to costumer & drivers.

ID	Name	Responses
184	anonymous	Keep the knowledge test it helps a lot
185	anonymous	I think you should be required to take the test. If a system went down knowledge of the city is paramount! Also you could end up flooding the industry and then drivers couldn't make a living from this.
186	anonymous	By taking out the K.O.P. you are decreasing the quality of the services offered by private hire drivers/hackney carriage drivers. You have high expectations from this people regarding the services that they are providing and also the skills with the people including taking care of them, saving them from dangerous situations that they are passing etc. I think that you should be even more severe regarding the process of obtaining the right to be a private hire driver or a hackney carriage driver.
187	anonymous	I have a private hire license. I sat the KOP in 2021 when it was alot harder then it is now. I can understand that yes, private hire drivers do use GPS. But many of times my GPS has failed/crashed and I've had to rely on the basic knowledge I retained from that test. Not to mention that by removing the need for private hire drivers to take the KOP test, there will be a huge influx of new drivers which will put alot of current drivers out of work. I see no reason why the KOP test should be removed for either licenses. If somebody wants to be a taxi driver then they will complete the requirements. The city may be short on drivers as a number point of view but there are many days where myself and other drivers have barely earned anything. Perhaps shorten the KOP test rather than remove it.
188	anonymous	It is important to keep the K.O.P in order to get competent people in to Taxi industry.
189	anonymous	Barely enough work during the day as it is the shorted is only Friday and Saturday nights on pay day weekend would be ridiculous to swamp it with more drivers in the end people will leave and ur be back to square one
190	anonymous	No I don't the knowledge came in very handy when I first passed many roads and locations I never knew before that came up from customer and I knew them from the knowledge also alot of bookings come as directed by customer when u get there to pick them up so wheres the difference between Hackney and pH when that happens nothing u need the knowledge or else it will be so unprofessional and I for one would take a stand as so many of my co drivers would as well we don't wont a repeat of Newcastle 2015 google it if you don't no what I'm talking about thank you

ID	Name	Responses
191	anonymous	No thanks im fed up with drivers saying where that or I'll have to Google map that just to go somewhere they should no ie cremyll ferry or boots by the mall its ridiculous make it harder I say like the old school cabbies
192	anonymous	No will be a shit storm in plymouth if it happens be aware and think hard over 600 drivers on strike and counting on our private chat pages good luck think hard if u scrap it
193	anonymous	As a taxi driver of twenty years plus the knowledge test helps alot with learning to become a taxi driver whether it be Private Hire or Hackney Driver so the new future drivers can learn the basics aswell.Also believe a new course should be done for new drivers wishing to enter which should last 30 days to complete the course ie the knowledge KOP the drivers rest the safeguarding and the ambassadors course And the nvq course This could be set up through Plymouth City Council and companies that have schools.
194	anonymous	In my opinion it will bring a lot of issues in upcoming years for customers and Plymouth City Council. Number of Private Hire Drivers will go up of course. Quality of drivers and customer service will drastically go down. Number of complaints, unsafe situations on the road and bad behaviours of drivers would go up. I moved to Plymouth 2 years ago and needed only 3 full days to learn to K.O.P test. Passed first time. It was reduced to only 59 routes not long ago. If someone is not capable(or too lazy) to learn it and pass it, he will be dangerous on the route and there is a big chance that he will be bad PH driver anyway. After more than 3 months of doing this job I can already say this job is not so easy as it looks like. It requires to think about safety taxing people from A to B, with the shortest route and meanwhile predicting all unexpected behaviours from customers in your car as well as unexpected behaviours of road users in the same time, plus observing all notifications on our PDAs whilst driving. Sometimes Customers asking unexpectedly to Stop somewhere or to go Via some place, and without knowledge which was needed to pass that test I would be losted. Knowledge achieved to prepare myself to the test helped me to become a professional PH driver and still is helping me everyday. SatNavs was very helpful of course on the beggining and is today, but if you don't know the topography of the City you will make a lot of mistakes, longer routes, wait for customers in incorrect locations and misunderstood where to drop them off in correct place. In my opinion if someone can't or don't want to learn 59 routes, he probably is not capable or simply too lazy to become a good quality PH driver and with safely and correct manner taxing people in our council, help them with luggage, shops, entering safely to vehicle and going out safely from vehicle, understand their needs. I would like to highlight that It will bring bad influence for current PH drivers, as number of jobs available for one

ID	Name	Responses
		<p>driver per hour will be reduced, so wages in this industry would go down, and many good quality drivers will move out from business as they are capable to do other jobs for better salary(it will be myself for example, as I would go back to be HGV driver, I would try to get job in HOYER and deliver fuel as I have all required qualifications to do it). Government did similar think few years ago in HGV industry. They made it easier to make Class 1 driving license for new candidates. Now after few years they have many fresh drivers who can't drive and maneuver articulated lorries on the public roads, they struggle to maneuver or reverse in pick up/dropping off points. Causing a lot issues for Transport companies and many Insurance Companies require now few years experience. Industry is full of inappropriate HGV drivers who doesn't have imagination how to drive such a big vehicle safely. They for example hit bridges or going to narrow roads and blocking them and can't go out. In my predictions if you scrap the tests in few years time you will stay with majority of bad quality drivers which will bring a lot of troubles to the City, unsafe situations to the customers and many issues and complaints to Council as well. In this process good quality drivers as you have now(which wasn't lazy to learn and were smart enough to pass this not complicated test) would be replaced with bad quality drivers. There will be big rotation of drivers anyway, as they would not obey road rules(similar as many current food delivery drivers doesn't obey rules on the road) and taxi licensing rules and they would loose driving licences or PHD licences anyway. You would stay at the end with outnumbered bad quality drivers. If you wish to know whats gonna happen if Council will scrap K.O.P test, call please for example to Birmingham or Wolverhampton Council and find out how many problems they have with PH drivers who still want to do it for very low wage.</p>
195	anonymous	Should be the same for Hackney and private hire. Removal of Kopp makes it to easy to enter the trade ,especially for unsuitable applicants.
196	anonymous	<p>Absolutely ridiculous idea, sat nav almost never takes the shortest routes. Keep looking at a sat nav would be a massive safety issue as the driver would not have full concentration of the road and traffic ahead. Sat nav often goes down and the driver shouldn't need to ask the customer directions.. will be like having UBER in plymouth, the city flooded with drivers that haven't got a clue. If this does get enforced I hope the council will be refunding every driver that had to pay out of their own pockets to take the KOP.</p>
197	anonymous	Better service when you know what to do
198	anonymous	I had to pay and take the k.o.p test because it was a requirement at that time, I believe this still needs to be the case as a general knowledge of Plymouth should be understood by all drivers. All drivers should have a

ID	Name	Responses
		good understanding on what routes to take and where venues are when picking and dropping off passengers. Taking away the k.o.p test means this trade becomes a sat-nav industry where anyone can just jump in a car without knowing basic knowledge of the city!
199	anonymous	I think everyone should have the KOP
200	anonymous	I base my answer on nearly 40 years experience in the Taxi private hire trade in Plymouth, both as a driver and in management as a director of Plymouth Taxis LTD. The idea of encouraging more people to become private hire drivers by doing away with the K.O.P is short sighted for several reasons, which in my opinion are :- Dispatch systems are only as good as the information that is entered by the tele op and the information given to the tele op by the customer, Destinations are subject to change mid journey when the driver should have adequate knowledge of Plymouth to be able to complete the journey. The satnav of a dispatch system is not always as good as one would expect ie. Is it the most up to date version, has its parameters been set properly by the administrator (shortest route, Quickest route etc), there numerous other things that can affect communication
201	anonymous	No we need a good level of professional drivers removing the kop test would open the flood gates for anyone to do it I know many a driver who I speak to and they said it would kill the job for them as well so please keep plymouths high standard of taxi service at the best around.
202	anonymous	No should stay it will the trade if removed many other council have thought about and decided to keep it so should you
203	anonymous	Yes will kill the trade won't be enough money to go around we have high outgoings and tbh there not even a shortage anymore there quite times most days now for drivers the only ones shouting for it to be scrapped are few smaller firm owners ie alfa cars and easy cars only because they want to line there pocket with radio rent commison if they were really worried about a shortage they would expand there training school and keep the job professional and not let it get flooded with uber eats and deliveroo driver's
204	anonymous	No I had 27 fares other day 14 of them said as directed by customer so explain to me hows that any different than Hackney???? Hackney still use sat nav same as we do!!!! The knowledge has to stay it taught me alot places I wouldn't of knew before and saved me alot of time not having to follow sat nav when the destination was not pre booked will be shocking service if you scrap it
205	anonymous	Is a big risk to drive while you follow Sat nav especially when your customers are talking with you.

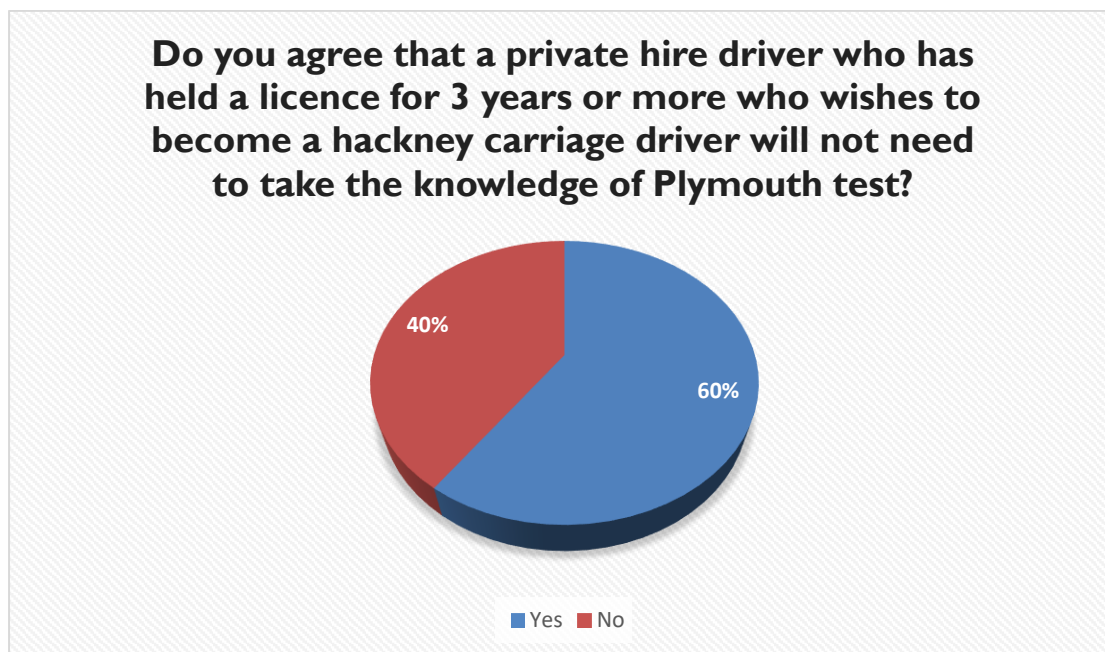
ID	Name	Responses
206	anonymous	The knowledge test should remain in place for everyone
207	anonymous	The test is important and keeps our city safe.
208	anonymous	<p>I think that the knowledge test should remain for a few reasons. First of all, quite a large number of private hire jobs come through on the system without a destination and just state 'as directed'. These quite often are jobs from restaurants and hotels, so the driver therefore becomes no different to a hackney driver and has to think on their feet exactly the same as a hackney driver does. Now because of where these jobs come from, quite often they are customers that live out of Plymouth and are visitors. How unprofessional would it look when a driver will have to start using the sat nav and ask for the address or having to ask for directions from the customer? Also I need to point out that using the sat nav will take you the quickest route, which most of the time is not the shorter cheaper route. If using the sat nav, quite often it will be trying to tell you to use the A38 when travelling through Plymouth from point to point, this could end up putting a minimum of £2 extra on the meter because of the extra distance to the shorter route. 9 times out of 10, customers want the cheaper route, not the quickest. This can cause a lot of problems for a driver, especially if the customer becomes very upset and could easily turn violent. Also quite often, people change their mind with the destination that is on the screen or need to pick up a friend from somewhere else on the way, so very often a private hire driver still needs to think on their feet. New drivers have already been saying how much the knowledge test helped them with knowing what routes to take when they started working, I also remember how much it helped me when I first started. It is also nice to be able to say that I worked hard at passing the knowledge test and if it is taken away, it would make my job feel worthless to me, please leave us with a sense of achievement in this job. Scrapping the test could also cause a massive influx of new drivers. This is not good for the already existing drivers as the work is already going downhill and we are very often now having to wait around for quite a while for our next job, private hire and hackney. Please come out and see what a Friday night is like now. Now obviously the large taxi offices will be in favour of scrapping the test so they can easily bring in more drivers, as the more drivers for them equates to more rent money. You will hear them saying we can't cover all the work, but please speak to the drivers about how much work there actually is. This could also push existing drivers into poverty and end up working for a lot less than minimum wage after costs, which then pushes drivers into working silly amounts of hours which is very dangerous for the customers and everyone else.</p>
209	anonymous	No there not a shortage of drivers there plenty of drivers through the day some days to many problem is only Friday and Saturday nights

ID	Name	Responses
		around pay weekend if u scrap knowledge it will kill the work load for all us drivers already in the trade
210	anonymous	I want the full test to be reintroduced, not 50% as it is now, if they don't know the streets and locations the drivers will keep their eyes on the phone, they will try to access the phone and they will be a danger for other traffic participants, for customers and for themselves.
211	anonymous	Been a driver for many years and use a satnav on every job as it is faster.

Topographical/Knowledge of Plymouth Test - Part Two

Do you agree that a private hire driver who has held a licence for 3 years or more who wishes to become a hackney carriage driver will not need to take the knowledge of Plymouth test?

375 responses were received. 224 (60%) of the respondents were in favour of the proposal and 151 (40%) were against the proposal.



130 comments were received.

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Regular retesting should happen too
2	anonymous	You need Knowledge of Plymouth! It was the one thing that made me confident knowing my routes you don't have time to sat nav it, you don't have time to sit and think about it when you take on a job you have to think and Go quickest way round! & I couldn't do this without my Knowledge test
3	anonymous	Na
4	anonymous	Seperate the two jobs totally giving Hackneys the extra bonus of passing a knowledge test
5	anonymous	Persons will be reliant on it systems and should be able to retain the required knowledge as we do now.
6	anonymous	See previous
7	anonymous	All drivers should have to complete the knowledge
8	anonymous	No
9	anonymous	The knowledge test was same for everyone so should be able to change it anytime....same with hackney if they want change for private.
10	anonymous	Knowledge is learnt through experience
11	anonymous	Knowing well plymouth is essential to do Hackney , if they use all the time google maps on private hire they will not memorise roads and places because there is no interest I. Learning . Service will became poor
12	anonymous	All drivers take same.test but you need to make it easier for private hire drivers to pick up and set down disabled and elderly within the city
13	anonymous	No they need knowledge straight away from day 1
14	anonymous	Let's make drivers life easy
15	anonymous	Only that it should be retained.
16	anonymous	I think driving around Plymouth and learning every area and street can take longer than 3 years, if you remove it for hackneys then they must be required to have a sat NAV in the vehicle to protect customers.

While it is accepted that an experienced PH Driver makes a better Taxi Driver through experience of 'out of the way places' the KOP test for Taxi Drivers is also more onerous with a higher pass mark and should be retained.

ID	Name	Responses
17	anonymous	All drivers should take test whether Hackney or Private Hire.
18	anonymous	No
19	anonymous	Every driver should be made to take a knowledge test I will always believe that it makes a massive difference
20	anonymous	Common sense that a driver with 3 years will have gathered more knowledge during that period.
21	anonymous	Remove the test
22	anonymous	Remove the test
23	anonymous	Rules should apply to both Hackney and Private Hire drivers, no exceptions.
24	anonymous	New private hire drivers should be allowed to start work immediately but learn the KOP as they work. Their first licence issued with a probationary of two years by which time they MUST have passed the KOP test. There should also be notification in or on the vehicle informing the customer that the driver is on a probationary licence.
25	anonymous	All hackney and private hire drivers should have taken and passed K.O.P.
26	anonymous	A private hire driver should be able to transfer straight across as the tests are similar
27	anonymous	No
28	anonymous	No
29	anonymous	Safety of passengers: Knowing the city allows them to drive safely, avoid dangerous routes and act quickly in case of emergency. Recommendations for locations and attractions: Taxi drivers can provide information and recommendations about places of interest, restaurants, hotels and other destinations, which can improve the customers' experience. Credibility and professionalism: Knowledge of the city demonstrates professionalism and customers trust in the drivers' ability to take them safely and on time to their destination.
30	anonymous	Yes any driver who comes into this industry either Hackney or private hire should have to do the knowledge test no exceptions. sat nav does not count .nore should it no one has ever been allowed to use it in knowledge test so how can pcc even consider allowing anyone to drive whether private or Hackney.
31	anonymous	There are currently drivers with private hire licenses who do not work as a driver at all and then they become Hackney carriage drivers after 3 years, a driver with 3 years experience should have no problem passing a knowledge test

ID	Name	Responses
32	anonymous	Hackney drivers need extensive knowledge, more than private hire drivers,a refresher is welcomed
33	anonymous	Knowing the city allows them to drive safely, avoid dangerous routes and act quickly in case of emergency. Drivers can provide information and recommendations about places of interest, restaurants, hotels and other destinations, which which can improve the customer experience. Knowledge of the city demonstrates professionalism and customers trust in the drivers' ability to take them safely and on time to their destination.
34	anonymous	Should remain i dont think its the knowledge test stoping people . It as simple as people dont want work as taxi driver.
35	anonymous	IF A DRIVER FALLOWS THE GPS ALL THE TIME , THEY WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO LEARN THE CITY BECAUSE , YOU RELY ON TECNOLOGLY RATHER YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE OF CITY , EVEN BUSIST CITY IN UK SUCH AS LONDON STILL WANTS TO HACKNEY DRIVER TO PASS THE TEST WHICH IS WAY DIFFICULT THAN ONE WE HAVE IN PLYMOUTH , KNOWLEDGE MUST REMAIN .
36	anonymous	My answer to question 6 is yes providing the driver has operated as a private hire driver for the period
37	anonymous	Again, I am a bit split on this one but perhaps more yes than no. By this time knowledge of Plymouth should be satisfactory. Having said that, my experience as a knowledge tester is that even long standing PH drivers switching to hackney often have problems with knowledge tests involving smaller roads and this, I think, is down to following sat-navy's and not really paying attention to surroundings.
38	anonymous	If anybody wishes to become a taxi driver in Plymouth, they should be required to take the knowledge test even though they have been a private hire driver for three years or more
39	anonymous	A private hire driver who has been in that trade will in my opinion struggle to know a venue/route/address in 30 seconds as is what I believe to be the time as a hackney driver you have to do the journey.
40	anonymous	Once you've driven the street's for 3yrs or more you more or less know we're you're going.
41	anonymous	Knowledge of Plymouth should be the same for private hire and hackney carriage.
42	anonymous	No
43	anonymous	Keep the jobs seperate
44	anonymous	Leave it as it is, it ain't broke - don't fix it

ID	Name	Responses
45	anonymous	Everyone has to take an exam
46	anonymous	No
47	anonymous	You don't get the job on your screen. Customer gets in the back of your car and says where they want to go and you've got to know straight away you need certain amount of knowledge
48	anonymous	Hi I and many other I have spoke to believe kop test should remain it keeps the standard and professionalism of the trade high or else you would get uber and just eat drivers jumping on to do taxing who have no knowledge of our city they only deliver to houses wouldn't no any venues or points of interest it would give a bad first impression to people visiting the city many other citys have kept there knowledge test to keep standards high so should plymouth.
49	anonymous	Don't remove the test
50	anonymous	No knowledge test should be taken
51	anonymous	n
52	anonymous	n
53	anonymous	n
54	anonymous	n
55	anonymous	n
56	anonymous	n
57	anonymous	It is vital that all cab drivers have a knowledge of addresses and the geography of Plymouth. All applicants must do the work necessary to achieve this and pass the KOP test.
58	anonymous	No, I don't agree.
59	anonymous	As previous answer
60	anonymous	All drivers should have a local knowledge without tecknology
61	anonymous	We are not happy with it, you put us to risk to reduce or even to loose our income which will take away the daily bread from our kids and with cost of living our family will face a very difficult time. Please keep the Knowledge test, those who able to pass they are more then welcome to join us on the trade.
62	anonymous	If I got into a Hackney I would want to be able to give a a name of a business or building without knowing the full address. I would be concerned that a driver that

ID	Name	Responses
		relies on being given a start point and an end point might not have the same knowledge
63	anonymous	Agreed, I've driven for 17 years and know Plymouth well, I don't know every street name but areas and routes are straightforward
64	anonymous	Nobody wants to become a Hackney driver anymore, the tariff for private hire is bigger than the tariff for Hackney.
65	anonymous	No should take it as I said in my other comment should still take it
66	anonymous	Everyone who is willing to become a driver, whether it's Hackney or private hire should undertake KOP test.
67	anonymous	It is already in the trade and ready for Hackney.
68	anonymous	This is only sensible as 3 years is more than enough for a driver to have sufficient knowledge of Plymouth routes and venues.
69	anonymous	Should already have knowledge of Plymouth.
70	anonymous	I also feel that if people can prove that they have done a job that is equivalent to that of a private hire driver (E.g. A delivery driver) they should also be permitted to obtain a Hackney Carriage Licence, as long as the amount of driving (and areas of driving) is equivalent to that of a Private Hire Driver
71	anonymous	absolutely no need for to complete the K.O.P again.
72	anonymous	way over dew
73	anonymous	Like before a stupid idea the public have a right to expect a certain knowledge of the city and other places beyond the city limits
74	anonymous	After three years they should have a reasonably sound knowledge of Plymouth and should not have to take an additional test.
75	anonymous	Should know main routes
76	anonymous	As long as they have done knowledge tests
77	anonymous	Don't remove the test
78	anonymous	A doctor learns about medicine a mechanic learns about engines a taxi driver should learn the streets
79	anonymous	No
80	anonymous	Sat nav is not always accurate or give you the shortest route.

ID	Name	Responses
81	anonymous	No we need the knowledge test or else drivers wouldn't even have a basic understanding of routes and points of interest
82	anonymous	Again same as above.
83	anonymous	No
84	anonymous	After 3 years of private hire driving you should have acquired a good knowledge of the city
85	anonymous	No
86	anonymous	No
87	anonymous	As much as they do longer jobs they know the area very well they don't need do knowledge test .
88	anonymous	No comments
89	anonymous	I swapped from Private Hire to Hackney Carriage (so from a app having Pins on a map A to B to literally interacting with people to match you are going on the right place for the right fare) and I found that I need to learn some more in terms of routs and roads simply because some of the customers are jumping in your cab they don't know the postcode but they tell you which way to go.
90	anonymous	Yes, keep it the KOP
91	anonymous	Not right at all, response provided in part one.
92	anonymous	No
93	anonymous	EVERY ONE SHOULD HAVE A KNOWLEDGE TEST AND THERE SHOULD BE ON PERCENTAGE
94	anonymous	They still need to pass the knowledge test
95	anonymous	N/A
96	anonymous	Don't really care
97	anonymous	The Driver should achieve a 90% pass mark.
98	anonymous	Again, most drivers I've had in the past few years use sat navs
99	anonymous	I was made aware of these questions by a taxi driver who took me home to Tamerton and he was saying that drivers should have to sit a test, however he had no idea where he was going and had to use a satnav himself even though he has taken a test so there is no point of a test.

ID	Name	Responses
100	anonymous	Hackney drivers know more about plymouth than private hire with regards addresses I would say as they have to know where they are going as soon as the customer tells them. I think everything should be done PROFESSIONALLY and if that means sitting NECESSARY tests then so be it.
101	anonymous	Not really sure but I would seperate the jobs
102	anonymous	Again poor decision to go down these road of people with no understanding of here
103	anonymous	Every driver should take a knowledge test
ID	Name	Responses
104	anonymous	Without an knowledge rest,nobody should have taxibadge in Plymouth
124	anonymous	This is a back door way of watering down the standards of the taxi trade in Plymouth, if this were to go ahead i believe that there would be very few if any new hackney drives in the next Three years and there after we would have an influx of private hire drivers transferring over to hackney which would detrimental to both sides of the trade.
127	anonymous	They should take a knowledge test
111	anonymous	They should do another test and get higher percent form private hire
129	anonymous	The knowledge test without doubt needs to stay as it genuinely helps prepare drivers for this job.
128	anonymous	The Test is important
130	anonymous	Seperate the two totally or allow PHV to be badged as Hackneys
113	anonymous	Private hire drivers should pass the knowledge test to obtain the private hire badge
122	anonymous	Private hire driver already done the test
109	anonymous	Plymouth is not that big so 3 years is more than enough to get to know it while driving a ph on a daily basis.
125	anonymous	No should have to do even if you lot make the mistake of scrapping it
106	anonymous	No
114	anonymous	No
123	anonymous	No


ID	Name	Responses
107	anonymous	In the age of satnavs, there is no need for a test
116	anonymous	If you have 3 years private hire it is obvious you have sound knowledge about the business
110	anonymous	If somebody has been a private hire for minimum 3 years, that means that that person has the knowledge about the streets in Plymouth, so very easily can become a hackney carriage.
118	anonymous	I understand due to covid that Plymouth City Council has lost a lot of revenue due to drivers leaving the trade and no new drivers coming into the trade. PCC should also offer direct debit facilities to pay for all types of taxi licences as well. And Plymouth City Council taxi licencing operates a lot quicker by having face to face meetings for applications again and not taking 3 days to respond. There are ways that this can be achieved by talking to the private hire drivers and Hackney drivers. The feeling is that amongst the drivers from both Hackney and Private hire that this is just a pure money grab from Plymouth City Council. By getting rid of the KOP test to get more drivers to fill your coffers up you get rid of the KOP. You will also flood the trade with untrained new drivers and in the process you lose more of the established drivers as well especially the stubborn old ones.
119	anonymous	I think 3 years experience is more than enough.
105	anonymous	I proposed this idea myself to Steve Foreshaw, at least they have earned themselves some knowledge. Although I don't think the KOP test should be dropped I've answered this question as we know the Council will drop it anyway and give into pressure from private hire offices only interested in increasing their income rents rather than safety of the public
126	anonymous	Even worse. Using the sat nav while driving? Or typing while customer is watching? Not talking about what the driver will understand if he doesn't know the streets. Once you drive with sat nav will never know the streets.
117	anonymous	By taking out the K.O.P. you are decreasing the quality of the services offered by private hire drivers/hackney carriage drivers. You have high expectations from this people regarding the services that they are providing and also the skills with the people including taking care of them, saving them from dangerous situations that they are passing etc. I think that you should be even more severe regarding the process of obtaining the right to be a private hire driver or a hackney carriage driver
121	anonymous	Because they should still take the Kopp test
115	anonymous	After three years on the road, the P/H driver should be competent and there for have no issues changing to Hackney

ID	Name	Responses
120	anonymous	After 3 years of doing this job I can imagine you know City very well, and you don't need additional tests. In my opinion K.O.P test should stay as it is. Test For PH driver and Hackney driver is similar so whats the point to do it second time anyway.
108	anonymous	A taxi driver should have to complete the knowledge test before they become a taxi driver. Having been a taxi driver in this city for almost 25 years. I can tell you you need to know the correct route to take for journeys which I learnt through taxi school not on sat nav systems which do not take you the shortest route
112	anonymous	A private hire driver already has passed a knowledge test, plus the work experience should be proof enough for their knowledge of Plymouth.

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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – AMENDMENTS TO HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY 2022

SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

Author(s): This is the person completing the EIA template.	Nicola Horne Environmental Health Manager Public Protection Service Office of the Director of Public Health	Department and service:	Public Protection Service Office of the Director of Public Health	Date of assessment:	15th December 2023
Lead Officer: Please note that a Head of Service, Service Director, or Strategic Director must approve the EIA.	Ruth Harrell Director of Public Health	Signature:		Approval date:	15 th December 2023
Overview:	Amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2022 in relation to Livery and Topographical Knowledge of Plymouth tests taking into consideration the economic and operational changes that have arisen since implementation in May 2022.				
Decision required:	To make amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2022 in relation to livery and the Topographical Knowledge of Plymouth requirements.				

SECTION TWO: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING TOOL

Potential external impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact service users, communities or residents with protected characteristics?	Yes		No	√
Potential internal impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact Plymouth City Council employees?	Yes		No	√
Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required? (if you have answered yes to either of the questions above then a full impact assessment is required and you must complete section three)	Yes		No	√
If you do not agree that a full equality impact assessment is required, please set out your justification for why not.	These amendments to existing policy are not anticipated to result in any adverse impacts.			

SECTION THREE: FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Protected characteristics (Equality Act, 2010)	Evidence and information (e.g., data and consultation feedback)	Adverse impact	Mitigation activities	Timescale and responsible department
Age	Plymouth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16.4 per cent of people in Plymouth are children aged under 15. • 65.1 per cent are adults aged 15 to 64. • 18.5 percent are adults aged 65 and over. • 2.4 percent of the resident population are 85 and over. Southwest	Passengers accessing taxi services are not age-specific and would include all age groups from 18 years of age onwards. <u>Under 18s</u> Children and young people access taxi services in particular on an arranged contractual basis to attend educational	All taxi drivers and operators are fully vetted under the taxi application process prior to being granted a licence. Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.	Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15.9 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14, 61.8 per cent are aged 15 to 64. • 22.3 per cent are aged 65 and over. <p>England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17.4 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14. • 64.2 per cent of people are aged 15 to 64. • 18.4 per cent of people are aged 65 and over. <p>(2021 Census)</p>	<p>establishments. Normally these client groups would be accompanied by nominated carers or parents.</p>		
<p>Care experienced individuals.</p> <p>(Note that as per the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care recommendations, Plymouth City Council is treating care experience as though it is a protected characteristic).</p>	<p>It is estimated that 26 per cent of the homeless population in the UK have care experience. In Plymouth there are currently 7 per cent of care leavers open to the service (6 per cent aged 18-20 and 12 per cent of those aged 21+) who are in unsuitable accommodation.</p> <p>The Care Review reported that 41 per cent of 19–21-year-old care leavers are not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to 12 per cent of all other young people in the same age group.</p> <p>In Plymouth there are currently 50 per cent of care leavers aged 18-21 Not in Education Training or Employment (54 per cent of all those care leavers aged 18-24 who are open to the service).</p> <p>There are currently 195 care leavers aged 18 to 20 (statutory service) and 58 aged 21 to 24 (extended offer). There are more care</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>

	leavers aged 21 to 24 who could return for support from services if they wished to.			
Disability	<p>9.4 per cent of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited 'a lot' because of a physical or mental health problem.</p> <p>12.2 per cent of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited 'a little' because of a physical or mental health problem (2021 Census)</p>	<p>The hackney carriage fleet is 100% wheelchair accessible, however some vehicles may not be available to wheelchair users, as a result of drivers holding medical exemption certificates and there may be an impact on the client group.</p> <p>Hackney carriage vehicles must also carry assistance dogs.</p> <p>Officer regularly monitors wheelchair access and investigate all complaints where discrimination may arise.</p>	<p>These proposals are not intended to impact on this client group and are intended to ensure additional vehicles can be used for wheelchair access.</p> <p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>0.5 per cent of residents in Plymouth have a gender identity that is different from their sex registered at birth. 0.1 per cent of residents identify as a trans man, 0.1 per cent identify as non-binary and, 0.1 per cent identify as a trans woman (2021 Census).</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>40.1 per cent of residents have never married and never registered a civil partnership. 10 per cent are divorced, 6 percent are</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>

	<p>widowed, with 2.5 per cent are separated but still married.</p> <p>0.49 per cent of residents are, or were, married or in a civil partnership of the same sex. 0.06 per cent of residents are in a civil partnership with the opposite sex (2021 Census).</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>		
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>The total fertility rate (TFR) for England was 1.62 children per woman in 2021. The total fertility rate (TFR) for Plymouth in 2021 was 1.5.</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>
Race	<p>In 2021, 94.9 per cent of Plymouth's population identified their ethnicity as White, 2.3 per cent as Asian and 1.1 per cent as Black (2021 Census)</p> <p>People with a mixed ethnic background comprised 1.8 per cent of the population. 1 per cent of the population use a different term to describe their ethnicity (2021 Census)</p> <p>92.7 per cent of residents speak English as their main language. 2021 Census data shows that after English, Polish, Romanian, Chinese, Portuguese, and Arabic are the most spoken languages in Plymouth (2021 Census).</p>	<p>Currently driver demographic covers many nationalities.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>
Religion or belief	<p>48.9 per cent of the Plymouth population stated they had no religion. 42.5 per cent of</p>	<p>Currently driver demographic covers many</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>

	<p>the population identified as Christian (2021 Census).</p> <p>Those who identified as Muslim account for 1.3 per cent of Plymouth's population while Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or Sikh combined totalled less than 1 per cent (2021 Census).</p>	<p>nationalities and many religious beliefs and religions.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>		
Sex	<p>51 per cent of our population are women and 49 per cent are men (2021 Census).</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>88.95 per cent of residents aged 16 years and over in Plymouth describe their sexual orientation as straight or heterosexual. 2.06 per cent describe their sexuality as bisexual, 1.97 per cent of people describe their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian. 0.42 per cent of residents describe their sexual orientation using a different term (2021 Census).</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>

SECTION FOUR: HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

Human Rights	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p>	Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.	Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers

SECTION FIVE: OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Equality objectives	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
Celebrate diversity and ensure that Plymouth is a welcoming city.	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on any of the five listed equality objectives.</p>	Any discriminatory complaints, negative impacts to strategies and policies received are fully investigated.	Taxi Licensing Officers and Police Officers.
Pay equality for women, and staff with disabilities in our workforce.			
Supporting our workforce through the implementation of Our People Strategy 2020 – 2024			
Supporting victims of hate crime so they feel confident to report incidents, and working with, and through our partner organisations to achieve positive outcomes.			
Plymouth is a city where people from different backgrounds get along well.			

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Cabinet



Date of meeting:	08 January 2024
Title of Report:	Licensing Act 2003 – Statement of Licensing Policy 2024 - 2029
Lead Member:	Councillor Sally Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Cemeteries & Crematoria)
Lead Strategic Director:	Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)
Author:	Katharine O'Connor, Service Manager, Public Protection Service
Contact Email:	Katharine.O'Connor@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	LSOP/CAB/JAN08
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The Licensing Act 2003 places a duty on the Licensing Authority to determine and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy every five years.

The current Statement of Licensing Policy was published and became operative from 31 March 2019 and is valid until 30 March 2024.

Before determining its Policy, the Licensing Authority must consult in accordance with s.182 guidance issued under the Licensing Act 2003.

The draft policy was consulted on for four weeks between Thursday 16 November 2023 and Friday 15 December 2023. This report contains details of the consultation responses and a draft of the policy proposed to be adopted.

Recommendations and Reasons

- I. Recommend to the City Council that the draft Licensing Statement of Policy contained in Appendix A is adopted with effect from 31 March 2024.

Reason: The Policy has been updated to reflect changes in statutory guidance and the current needs of the City.

Alternative options considered and rejected

- I. There are no alternative options – the Policy must be considered and adopted by Plymouth City Council in order to comply with statutory requirements. Failure to approve the Policy before 31 March 2024 would result in the Council not being able to process any licensing applications after the 31 March 2024 until a new policy statement has been formally approved.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This Policy links to the delivery of the City and Council priorities. In particular:

Working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour:

The Policy provides the framework by which the Licensing Authority and the Police can promote and ensure that the Licensing Objectives are met and alcohol related crime is reduced. The licensing objectives are:

- Prevention of Crime and disorder
- Promotion of public safety
- Prevention of nuisance
- Protection of children from harm

Keeping children, adults, and communities safe:

The Policy provides the framework that regulates the sale of alcohol, provision of certain entertainment and late-night refreshment thereby ensuring Plymouth is a friendly, welcoming city, making sure people feel safe in the city, protecting children, young people and adults.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

None. Government has set fees at a level that they believe will achieve full recovery of the administrative, inspection and enforcement costs falling on the Licensing Authority associated with their licensing functions under the Licensing Act 2003. The review of the Licensing Policy is a core part of the licensing function and there are no future financial implications.

Financial Risks

There are no financial implications arising from this report or the proposed consultation.

The work on the revision of the Statement of Licensing Policy has been undertaken within the current resources of the Licensing Service.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

Members should be aware that Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 puts a statutory duty on every Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the need to do all that it reasonably can do to prevent crime and disorder in its area.

The Licensing Policy has a key role in reducing alcohol related crime and disorder, the fear of crime and the prevention of nuisance or anti-social behaviour. Risk taking behaviour, such as irresponsible alcohol usage can affect individual, their families, local communities and society as a whole. This policy aims to play its part in minimising the negative aspects of alcohol supply and use.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report: Statement of Licensing Policy							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment							
C	Draft Statement of Licensing Policy 2024 - 2029							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	HLSI 9122 3	Leg	IW 18.12. 23 TCS 2516	Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 18/12/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Sally Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Cemeteries & Crematoria) approved by email.											
Date approved: 18/12/2023											

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APPENDIX A: STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY 2024 - 2029

I. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Licensing Act 2003 requires the Licensing Authority to detail how it intends to operate and promote the licensing objectives set out in the Act by publishing a Statement of Licensing Policy. The four licensing objectives are:

- prevention of crime and disorder
- public safety
- prevention of public nuisance
- protection of children from harm

1.2 The policy sets out the principles the Licensing Authority will apply when carrying out statutory licensing duties. It details how licenced premises should operate. It informs decisions on whether to issue a licence and which conditions may be appropriate to attach to the licence.

1.3 All applicants for premises licences or club premises certificates in Plymouth are expected to have regard to the Statement of Licensing Policy and the pool of Model Conditions when preparing their operating schedules. The policy sets out a framework of what is expected from applicants and also assists them in completing their operating schedule.

1.3 The Licensing Authority must determine and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy at least every five years. The existing Statement of Licensing Policy was published in March 2019 and must be updated before 31 March 2024.

1.4 The updates contained in this version of the policy reflect changes in the statutory guidance, issued in August 2023. There are no significant changes required at this time.

1.5 Whilst this policy must be reviewed every five years, the Licensing Authority must have regard to the guidance issued by the Home Office and keep its Licensing Policy Statement under review and revised as appropriate. Any proposed changes to the statement of licensing policy will be subject to a full public consultation.

2. PROPOSED CHANGES

2.1 A number of updates have been made to the policy to ensure the policy is fit for our City and to follow the Revised Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 in August 2023.

2.2 The main changes in the guidance reflected in the Policy are summarised below:

1. Amendments to reflect changes for premises providing 'alcohol delivery services'.
2. Amendments to reflect changes in the entitlement to work in the UK for EEA citizens.
3. Clarification that Home Office Immigration Enforcement are not a responsible authority for club premises certificates.
4. Insertion of new section to reflect increase in limits to Temporary Event Notice (TENs) thresholds.
5. Clarification of rights of appeal in respect of late TENs following objection by the police or Environmental Health.
6. Clarification that full variations of premises licences should not be used to "vary substantially the premises to which the licence relates".
7. Addition of information detailing the Licensing Authority's support of the alcohol industry in demonstrating their commitment to promoting responsible drinking by seeking to ensure that the sector doesn't entice young people to drink, through the Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP)
8. Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP) – The Policy references and signposts readers to the CIP, which was last reviewed at the end of 2022. The CIP is now a stand-alone policy – it does not form part of the Statement of Licensing Policy.

9. Reference to the “Agent of Change Principle” whereby existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established.
10. Reference to the yet to be enacted legislation, the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, which aims to keep people safe by enhancing our national security and reducing the risk to the public from terrorism at of public venues. It will place a requirement on those responsible for certain locations to consider the threat from terrorism and implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures.
11. Updated list of Pool of Conditions.

3. CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 The Licensing Act 2003 states that before determining its policy a Licensing Authority must consult:

- The chief officer of police
- The Fire Authority
- Local Health Board
- Office of the Director of Public Health
- Such persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of holders of premises licences issued by the authority.
- Such persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of holders of club premises certificates issued by the authority.
- Such persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of holders of personal licences issued by the authority.
- Such other persons as the licensing authority considers to be representative of businesses and residents in its area.

3.2 A four-week public consultation exercise was undertaken between 16 November 2023 and 15 December 2023. Letters were sent to all premises holding either a ‘premises licence’ or club premises certificate’ and personal licence holders advising them of the consultation. A similar letter was sent to the Resident / Community groups and faith groups for which contact details were available. Details of the consultation were posted on our webpages. A total of approximately four thousand people or groups were contacted directly by letter. In addition, the responsible authorities were consulted (Police, Child Protection, Fire and Rescue Service, Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Public Health, Planning Authority, HSE, Maritime & Coastguard Agency and the Home Office).

3.3 A total of seven responses were received as a result of the consultation process. The written responses are contained in the table below:

No.	Consultee type	Supportive of the draft Statement of Policy?	Any changes required?	Comments
1	Personal Licence Holder	Yes	No	It is good that licensee people have this in place as people can get away with stuff and it should be stopped and people get punished correctly for their actions
2	Premises Licence Holder	Yes	No	
3	Premises Licence Holder	Yes	No	Seems that there are no changes for our operation

4	Premises Licence Holder	Yes		
5	Premises Licence Holder	Yes	No	No real changes to last one
6	Personal Licence Holder	Yes	No	No significant changes
7	Stakeholder	Yes	No	Looks very comprehensive – I do not think I have anything to add


4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The statutory guidance updates have been included in the proposed policy. There are no other significant changes required at this time.

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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – CONSIDERATION OF THE STATUTORY 5-YEAR REVIEW AND CONSULTATION OF THE CURRENT STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY 2019 TO 2024 TO INFORM THE STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY 2024 TO 2029.

SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

<p>Author(s): This is the person completing the EIA template.</p>	<p>Katharine O'Connor Environmental Health (Food Safety) Service Manager Public Protection Service Office of the Director of Public Health</p>	<p>Department and service:</p>	<p>Intelligence and Licensing Public Protection Service Office of the Director of Public Health</p>	<p>Date of assessment:</p>	<p>15th December 2023</p>
<p>Lead Officer: Please note that a Head of Service, Service Director, or Strategic Director must approve the EIA.</p>	<p>Ruth Harrell Director of Public Health</p>	<p>Signature:</p>		<p>Approval date:</p>	<p>18 December 2023</p>
<p>Overview:</p>	<p>Consideration of the statutory 5-year review and consultation of the current Statement of Licensing Policy 2019 to 2024 to inform the draft Statement of Licensing Policy 2019 to 2024. The supply and sale of alcohol has a significant contribution to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local health inequalities • Crime and disorder • Impact on communities and individuals through anti-social behaviour and noise • Violent crime, sexual offences, and domestic abuse • Positive impact on economic growth <p>The Licensing Policy will be used to promote the four licensing objectives, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of crime and disorder • Protection of public safety • Prevention of public nuisance 				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of children from harm <p>The Policy will provide the framework to ensure there is a balance between business activity and the protection of communities and individuals.</p> <p>The Policy has to recognise that it can only impact the management of licenced premises in areas under the control of the licensee or nominated manager. Many alcohol problems are associated with alcohol consumption and personal behaviour. Licensees can only control matters within their premises or within the vicinity.</p> <p>The Policy cannot place a cap on the number of alcohol licences, but it will restrict the addition of new licences where appropriate through the use of the Cumulative Impact Policy.</p> <p>The licensing system relies on responsible authorities in the consideration of applications and the monitoring of existing licences. Responsible authorities, such as the Police, will use their intelligence sources and their own Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) to use the licensing system to promote the licensing objectives. The licensing objectives will be used where appropriate to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote positive outcomes for the nine protected characteristics.</p> <p>The Policy will work in partnership to support other plans and strategies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve health inequalities, social inclusion, and community protection • Reduce crime and disorder • Reduce alcohol misuse • Encourage community engagement and participation in decision making • Encourage tourism and sustainable economic growth <p>Measures such as responsible retailing, reducing the use of glass and cumulative impact are examples of how this will be achieved.</p> <p>The Policy is designed to have a positive impact on the protection of individual and communities. The policy will be reviewed and any new information that comes forward as a result of other EIAs will be incorporated into future policies and EIAs.</p>
<p>Decision required:</p>	<p>To consider the statutory 5-year review and consultation responses for the current Statement of Licensing policy 2019 to inform next Statement of Licensing Policy 2024 to 2029.</p>

SECTION TWO: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING TOOL

<p>Potential external impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact service users, communities, or residents with protected characteristics?</p>	Yes		No	√
<p>Potential internal impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact Plymouth City Council employees?</p>	Yes		No	√
<p>Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required? (If you have answered yes to either of the questions above then a full impact assessment is required and you must complete section three)</p>	Yes	√	No	
<p>If you do not agree that a full equality impact assessment is required, please set out your justification for why not.</p>	N/A			

SECTION THREE: FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Protected characteristics (Equality Act, 2010)	Evidence and information (e.g., data and consultation feedback)	Adverse impact	Mitigation activities	Timescale and responsible department
<p>Age</p>	<p>Plymouth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16.4% of people in Plymouth are children aged under 15 65.1% are adults aged 15 to 64 18.5% are adults aged 65 and over 2.4% of the resident population are 85 and over <p>Southwest</p>	<p><u>18-25</u></p> <p>The evening and nighttime economy is mainly used by the 18-25 year age group.</p> <p>Some of the proposals may impact on licensing hours, particularly those used by the 18-to-25 year age group.</p>	<p>The aim of the Policy is to promote public safety and protect local communities. It is in the overriding public interest that these proposals are introduced.</p> <p>The Policy is designed to minimise the negative impact of the legal</p>	<p>The Policy will be formally reviewed every 5 years or sooner if required by the Licensing Team, ODPH.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15.9 % of people are aged under 15 • 61.8 % are aged 15 to 64 • 22.3 % are aged 65 and over <p>England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17.4 % of people are aged under 15 • 64.2 % of people are aged 15 to 64 • 18.4 % of people are aged 65 and over <p>(2021 Census)</p>	<p><u>Under 18s</u></p> <p>Children and young people can be directly or indirectly affected by alcohol.</p> <p>There are elevated alcohol related hospital admissions above national average and alcohol is a significant contributor to domestic abuse.</p> <p>30% of child protection cases have a domestic abuse concern – over half involve alcohol as a contributory factor.</p> <p>Plymouths hidden harm assessment predicts that between 3,900 and 6,500 children are affected by significant parental alcohol misuse.</p>	<p>operation of the licensable activities.</p> <p>The policy will be reviewed as necessary to ensure adequate protection as far as the law allows.</p> <p>Applications will be refused, conditions added, or review of existing licences will be undertaken in order to ensure the Protection of Children from Harm.</p> <p>Children’s Safeguarding Board will remain a consultee for all applications.</p>	
<p>Care experienced individuals.</p> <p>(Note that as per the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care recommendations,</p>	<p>It is estimated that 26 % of the homeless population in the UK have care experience. In Plymouth there are currently 7 % of care leavers open to the service (6 % aged 18-20 and 12 % of those aged 21+) who are in unsuitable accommodation.</p> <p>The Care Review reported that 41 % of 19–21-year-old care leavers are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) compared to</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>

<p>Plymouth City Council is treating care experience as though it is a protected characteristic).</p>	<p>12 % of all other young people in the same age group. In Plymouth there are currently 50 % of care leavers aged 18-21 Not in Education Training or Employment (54 % of all those care leavers aged 18-24 who are open to the service). There are currently 195 care leavers aged 18 to 20 (statutory service) and 58 aged 21 to 24 (extended offer). There are more care leavers aged 21 to 24 who could return for support from services if they wished to.</p>	<p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>		
<p>Disability</p>	<p>9.4 % of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited 'a lot' because of a physical or mental health problem. 12.2 % of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited 'a little' because of a physical or mental health problem (2021 Census)</p>	<p>Mental health issues and alcohol mis-use and harm are well recognised. Alcohol dependency among psychiatric patients is almost double that of the general population.</p>	<p>The Policy is designed to minimise the negative impact of the legal operation of the licensable activities. The Policy will be reviewed as necessary to ensure adequate protection as far as the law allows.</p>	<p>The Policy will be formally reviewed every 5 years or sooner if required.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>0.5 % of residents in Plymouth have a gender identity that is different from their sex registered at birth. 0.1 % of residents identify as a trans man, 0.1 % identify as non-binary and, 0.1 % identify as a trans woman (2021 Census).</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic. The prevention of crime and disorder aspects of the policy would include hate crime.</p>	<p>The Policy will be reviewed as necessary to ensure adequate protection as far as the law allows and to identify any adverse impacts.</p>

<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p>40.1 % of residents have never married and never registered a civil partnership. 10 % are divorced, 6 percent are widowed, with 2.5 % are separated but still married.</p> <p>0.49 % of residents are, or were, married or in a civil partnership of the same sex. 0.06 % of residents are in a civil partnership with the opposite sex (2021 Census).</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>The total fertility rate (TFR) for England was 1.62 children per woman in 2021. The total fertility rate (TFR) for Plymouth in 2021 was 1.5.</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>
<p>Race</p>	<p>In 2021, 94.9 % of Plymouth’s population identified their ethnicity as White, 2.3 % as Asian and 1.1 % as Black (2021 Census)</p> <p>People with a mixed ethnic background comprised 1.8 % of the population. 1 % of the population use a different term to describe their ethnicity (2021 Census)</p> <p>92.7 % of residents speak English as their main language. 2021 Census data shows that after English, Polish, Romanian, Chinese, Portuguese, and Arabic are the most spoken languages in Plymouth (2021 Census).</p>	<p>Currently driver demographic covers many nationalities.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>

<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>48.9 % of the Plymouth population stated they had no religion. 42.5 % of the population identified as Christian (2021 Census). Those who identified as Muslim account for 1.3 % of Plymouth’s population while Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or Sikh combined totalled less than 1 % (2021 Census).</p>	<p>The licensed business and residential communities/demographic cover many nationalities and many religious beliefs and religions. It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic. The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>	<p>The policy will be reviewed at least every 5 years as necessary to ensure adequate protection as far as the law allows and to identify any adverse impacts. Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>
<p>Sex</p>	<p>51 % of our population are women and 49 % are men (2021 Census).</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic. Alcohol related harm has an impact on male and females equally. Alcohol related hospital admissions are above average levels for both males and females. Sexual offences on females and lone female safety are related to alcohol availability.</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic. The Policy is designed to minimise the negative impact of the legal operation of the licensable activities. The Policy has very little ability to control individual behaviour outside of the premises controlled by a licence. The Policy will be reviewed at least every 5 years as necessary to ensure adequate</p>	<p>Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>

			<p>protection as far as the law allows and to identify any adverse impacts.</p> <p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	
Sexual orientation	<p>88.95 % of residents aged 16 years and over in Plymouth describe their sexual orientation as straight or heterosexual. 2.06 % describe their sexuality as bisexual, 1.97 % of people describe their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian. 0.42 % of residents describe their sexual orientation using a different term (2021 Census).</p>	<p>There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>The prevention of crime and disorder aspects would include hate crime.</p>	<p>The Policy will be reviewed as necessary to ensure adequate protection as far as the law allows and to identify any adverse impacts.</p> <p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>

SECTION FOUR: HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

Human Rights	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
	<p>A balance must be obtained between the achievement of the licensing objectives and human rights; these being Article 1, Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights (peaceful enjoyment of possessions) and Article 10 (Freedom of expression). Belfast City Council v Miss Behavin' Ltd is the leading case and it is clear that any decision to refuse or amend an existing licence</p>	<p>Any discriminatory complaints received are fully investigated.</p>	<p>Licensing Officers and Police Officers</p>

	must be rational, necessary, and proportionate for the promotion of the licensing objectives.		
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SECTION FIVE: OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Equality objectives	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
Celebrate diversity and ensure that Plymouth is a welcoming city.	There are no differential issues for this protected characteristic. It is not anticipated that the amendments to the Policy will have a direct adverse impact on any of the five listed equality objectives.	Any discriminatory complaints, negative impacts to strategies and policies received are fully investigated.	Licensing Officers and Police Officers.
Pay equality for women, and staff with disabilities in our workforce.			
Supporting our workforce through the implementation of Our People Strategy 2020 – 2024			
Supporting victims of hate crime so they feel confident to report incidents, and working with, and through our partner organisations to achieve positive outcomes.			
Plymouth is a city where people from different backgrounds get along well.			

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**STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY 2024 -
2029**
LICENSING ACT 2003



CONTENTS

Contents	2
1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF POLICY	3
2.0 LOCAL SUMMARY – PLYMOUTH	6
3.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES	9
4.0 THE LICENSING OBJECTIVES	11
5.0 PROMOTION OF THE LICENSING OBJECTIVES	14
6.0 OPERATING SCHEDULE	25
7.0 LICENSING CONDITIONS	27
8.0 LICENSING APPLICATIONS	28
9.0 ENFORCEMENT	33
10.0 ADMINISTRATION, EXERCISE AND DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS	34
APPENDIX 1 - RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES LIST	36
APPENDIX 2 – PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL BOUNDARY	39
APPENDIX 3 - OTHER POLICIES, LEGISLATION, CASE-LAW AND GUIDANCE SOURCES	40
APPENDIX 4 - SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS WITH CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS	42

1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF POLICY

1.1 Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 ('the Act') requires a Licensing Authority to prepare and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy ('the Policy') every 5 years. The Act designates Local Authorities as Licensing Authorities, and the Policy must be published before the Licensing Authority carries out any function in respect of individual applications made under the terms of the Act. Plymouth City Council is the Licensing Authority for this City under the terms of the Act and is responsible for determining all applications for licensable activities, as defined in Section 1 of the Act.

1.2 This is the fifth review of the Licensing Policy and following a public consultation Plymouth City Council resolved to approve the revised Policy on the DD/MM/YY to be effective from the 31st March 2024 for the next 5 years. The Licensing Authority has had regard to updated guidance issued by the Secretary of State in August 2023 under Section 182 of the Act in formulating this Policy.

1.3 This Policy sets out the Licensing Authority's general approach to making licensing decisions, and has four main purposes:

- To provide Members of the Licensing Committee with a decision-making framework. The Policy will be considered at hearings following representations.
- To inform applicants of the parameters within which the Licensing Authority can make licensing decisions and allow them to take this into account when making applications.
- To provide guidance to local residents and businesses of the boundaries within which the Licensing Authority can make licensing decisions. This will assist those parties when making representations in relation to various applications.
- To support the Licensing Authority if it must demonstrate in a court of law how it arrived at its licensing decisions.

1.4 The Policy will be kept under review and the Licensing Authority will, if necessary, after appropriate consultations, make such revisions to it as may be considered appropriate. Any amendments will be incorporated in the Policy after each review.

1.5 The Policy does not seek to explain the various application processes, however guidance and advice on making an application or requesting a review of a licence is available from the Licensing Authority on request. Applicants and members of the public are advised to contact the Licensing Authority in the event of any enquiry for appropriate advice. The Licensing Team also offers chargeable services to assist applicants to get their application right first-time including pre-application advice, application assistance, and check & send.

1.6 The Act is based around the four licensing objectives, which are:

- the prevention of crime & disorder
- public safety
- the prevention of public nuisance
- the protection of children from harm

1.7 Applicants are required to have regard to the promotion of the licensing objectives when making applications. Likewise, representations on applications must also relate to the impact on the licensing objectives.

1.8 On receipt of applications, representations may be made by Responsible Authorities or 'Other Persons'. See Appendix I for more information about Responsible Authorities.

1.9 The Licensing Authority's discretion is engaged on receipt of a relevant representation. It is obliged to consider the matters of contention or concern and determine the application by doing whatever it considers appropriate to promote the licensing objectives.

I.10 Every application, notice or representation will be considered on its own merits. The Licensing Authority will make decisions in accordance with the Act and with a view to promoting the licensing objectives.

I.11 Any decision taken in discharge of its licensing functions will have regard both to Section 182 guidance and this Licensing Policy.

I.12 References to certain words or phrases used in this policy are defined below:

- Guidance means the statutory guidance issued under Section 182 of the Act
- Premises also includes club premises
- Applications includes applications for premises licences, club premises certificates, provisional statements and reviews

I.13 This Policy and the Statutory Guidance cannot anticipate every possible scenario or set of circumstances that may arise. Therefore, the Licensing Authority may depart from this Policy and/or Statutory Guidance where it has good reason to do so. The Licensing Authority will give reasons for doing so in such circumstances.

I.14 The Licensing Authority is responsible for authorising licensable activities, the issue of personal licenses and other matters set out in the Act within this district. This Policy relates to all those licensable activities identified as falling within the provisions of the Act, namely:

- Retail sale of alcohol
- Supply of alcohol by or on behalf of club members
- Provision of regulated entertainment i.e. entertainment (unless exempted by the Act) which is provided for the public, club members or for consideration with a view to profit
- Supply of late night refreshment, being the supply of hot food and / or hot drink from any premises (subject to any statutory exemption) including food stalls, between 23.00 and 05.00

I.15 The Act makes provision for:

- the licensing of individuals for the retail sale of alcohol (Personal Licence)
- the licensing of premises for the retail sale of alcohol, provision of regulated entertainment or late-night refreshments (Premises Licence)
- the supply of alcohol or the provision of regulated entertainment in certain clubs (Club Premises Certificate)
- the permitting of certain licensable activities on a temporary basis (Temporary Event Notice)
- Provisional Statements

I.16 The types of businesses, premises and events that may require an authorisation include:

- pubs, bars, nightclubs
- private members clubs
- cinemas, theatres
- late-opening cafes, take-aways (serving hot food or drink between 23.00 and 05.00)
- community halls, village halls, schools
- shops, supermarkets, off-licences
- festivals, concerts, fairs

I.17 It is an offence under the Act to carry on licensable activities without the appropriate authorisations, or to allow such activities to be carried on, unless an exemption applies.

- I.18 A minority of consumers may behave badly and unlawfully once away from premises, and it would be unreasonable to expect licence holders to have control over these individual people. Conditions attached to various authorisations will be focussed on matters which are in the control of individual operators.
- I.19 The Licensing Authority acknowledges that licensing law is not the primary mechanism for the general control of nuisance and anti-social behaviour by individuals once they are away from licensed premises. However, it is a key aspect of such control and will always be part of a holistic approach to the management of the evening and night-time economy. The Licensing Authority, in carrying out its responsibilities under the Act, recognises:
- the need to protect the public and local residents from crime, anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance caused by irresponsible operators
 - the important role which pubs and other operators play in our local communities by minimising the regulatory burden on business, encouraging innovation and supporting responsible operators
 - the need to encourage greater community involvement in licensing decisions and give local residents the opportunity to have their say regarding licensing decisions that may affect them.
- I.20 The Licensing Authority seeks to achieve a balance between the licensed trade, the community and other stakeholders. The Licensing Authority seeks to achieve a mutual co-existence and will work with operators, Responsible Authorities and local communities to identify and resolve issues wherever possible.
- I.21 Other strategies for addressing anti-social behaviour and nuisance include:
- Planning controls
 - Powers of local authorities to designate parts of the local authority area as places where alcohol may not be consumed publicly
 - Powers of Police and Local Authorities under the Anti-Social Behaviour legislation
 - Police enforcement of the general law concerning disorder and anti-social behaviour, including the issuing of fixed penalty notices
 - The prosecution of any personal licence holder or member of staff selling alcohol to people who are drunk
 - Confiscation of alcohol from adults and children in designated areas and dispersal powers
 - Police powers to close down instantly, for up to 24 hours, any licensed premises or temporary events on grounds of disorder, the likelihood of disorder or excessive noise emanating from the premises
 - The power of the Police, other Responsible Authorities or a local resident or business to seek a review of the licence or certificate
 - Promotion of positive activities

2.0 LOCAL SUMMARY – PLYMOUTH

2.1 Plymouth is one of the largest cities on the south coast, the 15th largest city in England with a population of approximately 262,700, and an economic output of £5.2 billion, providing 108,000 jobs and with a further 100,000 people in its travel to work area (2016). A map showing the Plymouth City Council boundary is attached in Appendix 2.

2.2 Plymouth is ‘Britain’s Ocean City’, its connections to the sea go back to the sailing of the Mayflower in 1620 and now include western Europe’s largest naval base, a thriving commercial and ferry port, a significant fishing industry, and one of the most significant global concentrations of marine research and production.

2.3 The City is located in an area of outstanding beauty, with the Dartmoor National Park to the north, the natural harbour of Plymouth Sound to the south and the rivers Plym and Tamar on either side. Plymouth’s rich history and maritime heritage, combines the advantages of city living with the benefits of having the diverse countryside and coastline of Devon and Cornwall on its doorstep.

2.4 Over the next twenty years the population of Plymouth could rise to between 300,000 - 350,000 due to urban expansion (Mackay Vision 2003).

2.5 Plymouth has a rich combination of heritage and natural beauty in what is a thriving maritime city that attracts millions of visitors. Plymouth aims to be one of Europe’s most vibrant ocean cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone.

2.6 The Licensing Authority recognises that the provision of entertainment and hospitality is a major contributor to the economy of the City, attracting tourists and visitors, making for a vibrant ocean City, which in turn continues to be a major employer. Responsible businesses have a legitimate expectation of an environment that is attractive and sustainable for their businesses.

2.7 Plymouth has approximately 860 licensed premises, including public houses, restaurants, clubs, community centres and halls in this City, licensed to sell or supply alcohol or where a variety of regulated entertainment is provided on a regular or occasional basis. In addition, there are a variety of retail outlets where alcohol can be purchased as an off sale.

Integrating strategies

Public Health

2.8 Plymouth City Council’s Public Health Team is responsible for a wide range of health issues including alcohol and drug misuse services and other lifestyle campaigns to promote better health for all.

2.9 Alcohol holds a prominent place in our communities, and where enjoyed safely, it can have a positive role in family and social life, as well as being an important factor in our economy. However, this should not disguise the fact that alcohol can also have a profound negative impact on our communities, whether through visible harms such as alcohol fuelled crime, disorder and street drinking; or in relation to more hidden harms such as alcohol dependence, domestic abuse and child safeguarding issues.

2.10 The Public Health Team is a Responsible Authority under the Licensing Act 2003 and works with other organisations in the city that actually provide the services. To view the full list, please visit [Health services | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/health-services)

2.11 Tackling alcohol harm is one of the top priorities in Plymouth. Excessive drinking is one of four lifestyle behaviours, along with smoking, inactivity and poor diet, that lead to 54 per cent of deaths in Plymouth. To tackle this Plymouth City Council launched the [Thrive Plymouth | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/thrive-plymouth) initiative.

Safer Plymouth

2.12 Plymouth’s Community Safety Partnership, “Safer Plymouth”, brings the Council together with five other statutory agencies, and a number of third sector (or charitable) organisations to

tackle issues locally: [Safer Plymouth | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#) The Safer Plymouth Plan sets out how the partnership works together to reduce crime and increase community safety within the City.

2.13 Safer Plymouth's key areas of focus include:

- Domestic abuse and sexual violence
- Alcohol and drug related harm
- Anti-social behaviour
- Vulnerability and exploitation
- Modern slavery
- Cyber crime / fraud
- Serious violence reduction

The Licensing Authority will work with Safer Plymouth on these key areas.

Community Alcohol Partnership

2.14 The Licensing Authority supports the alcohol industry in demonstrating their commitment to promoting responsible drinking by seeking to ensure that the sector doesn't entice young people to drink.

2.15 A Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) is a Community Interest Company (CiC) which brings together and supports local partnerships of councils, police, retailers, schools, health providers and community groups to reduce alcohol harm among young people, improve their health and wellbeing and enhance their communities.

2.16 The Licensing Authority, as part of its membership of the Plymouth CAP, actively supports the important work in preventing underage drinking and alcohol harm to young people.

2.17 Further information on CAP initiatives can be found at: [Community Alcohol Partnerships](#)

Event Management and Safety Advisory Groups (ESAG and SAG)

2.18 Plymouth City Council has established an 'Event Safety Advisory Group' (ESAG) and a 'Safety Advisory Group' (SAG) comprising of representatives from the emergency services and other statutory agencies to advise and co-ordinate the planning for public events in the City.

2.19 Determining whether or not to refer an event to an ESAG or SAG requires a risk-based approach and the decision will be influenced by considering a combination of:

- Numbers of people attending (at any one time)
- Levels of risk with the event
- Previous history of similar events
- Events of an unusual nature
- Other events planned at the same time that may increase the impact and risk

Organisers of events meeting the above criteria, whether or not a premises licence or a temporary event notice is needed, are strongly advised to contact the ESAG or SAG in order to receive sufficient advice to ensure the safe running of the event.

2.20 Where a premises licence is needed for an event the Licensing Authority would expect to see a condition that the ESAG or SAG will be notified at least 3 months in advance. The Licensing Authority will also expect confirmation of approval for the event one month before it takes place. This is particularly important where the applicant requires a licence that is not limited to a once only event.

- 2.21 Whilst a premises licence could be granted after 28 days of the application being served, applicants should be aware that if representations are received and a hearing required, a decision may take two months. Applicants should consider this in their planning. Large capacity events will require a greater notice period for ESAG or SAG to consider the event management plan. This allows the police to ensure sufficient cover and the public transport provision to be changed to accommodate the event. At least six months notice will be expected for events of 5,000 people or more.
- 2.22 Further advice and guidance for event organisers can be found in [The Purple Guide](#)

Cumulative Impact Assessment

- 2.23 In preparing this Policy, the Licensing Authority has taken into account its published Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) which was reviewed by Full Council on the 30/01/2023.
- 2.24 In summary, and as at the date of this Policy, certain areas of Plymouth have been identified as being subject to high levels of alcohol related crime or public nuisance. Those areas are listed in the CIA found by following this link: [Licensing Policies | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)
- 2.25 The effect of this assessment is to create a rebuttable presumption that applications for a new premises licence, club premises certificate or the variation of an existing licence or certificate in those areas will normally be refused where:
- Representations have been received and it is anticipated that the application will add to the problems of crime and disorder or/and public nuisance in these areas, and
 - The applicant has been unable to demonstrate that, within their operating schedule, there will be no significant negative cumulative impact on one or more of the Licensing Objectives
- 2.26 The CIA does not change how licensing decisions are made but is a strong statement of intent about the Licensing Authority's approach to relevant applications made in these areas. However, the Licensing Authority will always consider each application on its merits.
- 2.27 The CIA is reviewed three yearly. Therefore, anyone viewing this policy is directed to the link above to find the up to date position with regard to the CIA.

3.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The Licensing Authority recognises that it operates services who act as 'Responsible Authorities' i.e. Environmental Health, Planning, Children's Services and Public Health - all can make representations on any licence application submitted under the terms of the Act. The Licensing Authority will treat these submissions with the same consideration as any other representations having regard to the terms of the Section 182 Statutory Guidance and this Policy.
- 3.2 For the purposes of the Act, Plymouth Safeguarding Partnership is the responsible authority in relation to the protection of children from harm.
- 3.3 The Act requires the Licensing Authority to keep a register containing a record of each premises licence, club premises certificate, personal licence issued and temporary event notice received and in doing this will have regard to the information set out in Schedule 3 of the Act.
- 3.4 To comply with this requirement our register may be accessed online by using the following link [Licensing register | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#). Alternatively the register may be viewed at any Plymouth Library during normal opening hours. It is recommended that any person wishing to view the register in person should contact the Licensing Team in advance to make arrangements.
- 3.5 This Policy is not intended to duplicate existing legislation and other regulatory regimes that place duties on employers and operators e.g. Health & Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974, Environmental Protection Act 1990, Equality Act 2010, Building Regulations and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The Licensing Authority will therefore only impose conditions which are appropriate in promoting the licensing objectives.
- 3.6 Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required by the local planning authority to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.
- 3.7 Applicants should be aware that the grant of permission under one regime does not remove the need for applicants to gain the necessary consents under the other. It should be remembered that the Licensing Authority can only take into account matters which are relevant to the Licensing Objectives meaning that issues that were raised as part of the planning application may not be relevant if raised under the licensing process. However, if when applying for a licence under the Act, a business indicates that they have also applied for planning permission or that they intend to do so, officers involved in the licensing process will where appropriate, consider discussions with their planning counterparts prior to determination with the aim of agreeing mutually acceptable operating hours, etc.

Culture and Leisure

- 3.8 The Licensing Authority supports promotion of a diverse range of different types and styles of entertainment, dancing and theatre, including traditional and historic plays for the wider cultural benefit of communities. There should always be a careful balance within any particular area, where the provision of regulated entertainment culturally benefits all sections of the community including families and children. Particular care should be given to ensuring that the 'entertainment package' provided in a specific area is positive, and there are not competing styles of entertainment that create an overall negative impact that may contribute to public disorder and levels of disturbance.

- 3.9 In the exercise of its licensing functions the Licensing Authority is aware that it should try to ensure that it does not apply direct or indirect measures that deter live music, dancing and theatre by imposing disproportionate licensing conditions.
- 3.10 In all cases the Licensing Authority will consider the positive and negative impact of regulated entertainment and how it impacts on the licensing objectives in the local community, and where its discretion to impose conditions is raised, only conditions appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives will be imposed.
- 3.11 The aim of the licensing process is to regulate licensable activities to promote the licensing objectives and facilitate well-run and managed premises, with licence holders displaying sensitivity to the impact of the premises on local residents.
- 3.12 The Licensing Authority recognises that the provision of entertainment is a major contributor to the economy of the City, attracting tourists and visitors, making for a vibrant City and is a major employer. Commercial occupiers of premises have a legitimate expectation of an environment that is attractive and sustainable for their businesses.

Promotion of Equality

- 3.13 This Policy recognises that the Equality Act 2010 places a legal obligation on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; to advance equality of opportunity; and to foster good relations, between persons with different protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 3.14 An equalities impact assessment has been completed and the actions of the Licensing Authority will be undertaken with due regard to equality obligations.

Safeguarding

- 3.15 The Council recognises that promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults with care and support needs, and protecting them from harm and exploitation is everyone's responsibility. Applicants, licensees, employees in licensed premises, Responsible Authorities, elected members, other local businesses and communities, everyone who has dealings with children, young people and adults with care and support needs - we all have a duty to report matters of concern to the relevant authorities. In addition, the wider safeguarding context must be considered when prospective and existing applicants submit applications, during the assessment and determination process and the ongoing use of the licence/notice.
- 3.16 Appendix 4 provides information for licence holders and their employees to help them report to the relevant authorities matters of concern that could relate to the safety of children and vulnerable persons, particularly as it relates to child exploitation and trafficking.

4.0 THE LICENSING OBJECTIVES

4.1 The Act sets out four licensing objectives which the Licensing Authority has a duty to promote when carrying out its licensing function, namely:

- Prevention of Crime and Disorder
- Public Safety
- The Prevention of Public Nuisance
- The Protection of Children from Harm

4.2 These objectives are the only factors that can be considered in determining an application and any conditions attached to a licence must be appropriate to promote the licensing objectives. If there are no relevant representations then, for example, an application must be granted and subject only to mandatory conditions and conditions consistent with the applicants operating schedule. Any conditions offered by the applicant within their operating schedule will become conditions on the licence.

Prevention of Crime and Disorder

- The use of toughened glass/ polycarbonate or other plastic / non glass bottles/ receptacles
- Measures to prevent open bottles or other drinks containers being carried from premises
- Restriction of drinks promotions and responsible retailing
- Means of providing free water
- Marketing promotions do not encourage excessive consumption and should be socially responsible
- Measures to prevent binge drinking
- Participation in pub/club watch schemes and attendance at meetings
- Use of appropriate numbers of security personal and stewards ensuring effective controls at all times. Training staff in crime prevention measures
- Search procedures
- Use of CCTV inside and outside premises, ensuring digital systems comply with Home Office minimum requirements.
- Adequate Lighting
- Design premises to minimise the opportunity for crime and disorder
- Quality of supervision and surveillance in premises
- Regular checks by staff of all public areas including toilets
- Assessment of customer profile ensuring effective management of customers both inside premises and in outside smoking / external seating areas
- Anti-discriminatory policies and practice covering e.g. homophobia and racism
- Provision of a means of communication to other venues and the Police

Public Safety:

- Promotion of responsible drinking
- Awareness of drink spiking and participation in anti-drink spiking initiatives
- Zero tolerance drug policies including the maintenance of an incident log; signage; staff training; appropriate use of searching/amnesty boxes to combat drug crime; an awareness of their

venues and possible areas requiring greater monitoring. Businesses are expected to address drug activity by working in partnership with the Police.

- Assessment of the safe capacity for the venue and adequate monitoring and control measures to avoid overcrowding. Special arrangements for large events.
- Regular removal of all glasses and bottles
- Specific precautions for the use of special affects
- Adequate provision for ventilation / temperature control
- Assessment, monitoring and management of noise exposure
- Assessment of crowd dynamics
- Safety of gas and electrical services
- Fire safety and emergency lighting
- Easy accessible free drinking water
- Maximum occupancies
- Participating in safety incentives such as 'Ask Angela Campaign' and Project Nighteye (Targeting violence against women and girls in the night-time economy)

Prevention of Public Nuisance:

- Assessment of the likelihood of nuisance affecting local communities through an assessment of the location of premises, character of the surrounding area and the proximity to residential and other sensitive premises. Nuisance could be from noise, odour or light.
- Latest admission times
- Measures for the limitation of noise emissions from the premises. These may include as appropriate noise limitation devices, sound insulation, whether windows are to be opened, the installation of acoustic lobbies and double glazing
- Measures to deal with queuing, where necessary
- Use and management of outdoor areas
- Measures to deal with dispersal of customers from the premises as necessary, including the employment of door supervisors, use of dedicated cab firms, notices in the premises requesting customers to respect neighbours
- Winding down periods particularly in public houses and night clubs etc.
- Litter collection in vicinity
- Fly posting and promotional material throughout the city
- Disposal of waste, particularly recycling of glass and plastics
- Use and maintenance of plant, including air extraction and ventilation systems
- Consideration of an adequate traffic management plan.
- Noise from deliveries/collections
- Odour and light nuisance
- Traffic Management
- Measures to supervise customers use of beer gardens, smoking and external seating areas

Protection of Children from Harm:

- Limitation of access dependent on nature of activities
- Use of British Board of Film Classification for film exhibition
- Robust proof of age provisions to include prevention of under 18s entering the premises where appropriate and the requirement for anyone looking under 18 to provide proof of age in the form of a photo driving licence, passport or accredited photo ID card bearing the PASS hologram. PASS is the UK's national guarantee scheme for proof-of-age cards

- Requirements for accompanying adults
- Adoption of a proof of age scheme such as Challenge 25
- Adequate staff training on age restricted sales
- Adequate warning signage
- All external areas to be routinely monitored to prevent children from being at risk from harm
- Measures to avoid proxy sales
- Control measures to protect child performers
- Records of refusals (refusals log)
- Suitable design and layout of alcohol display

4.4 It is recognised that the licensing function is only one means of securing the delivery of the licensing objectives and should not therefore be seen as a panacea for solving all problems within the community. The Licensing Authority will therefore continue to work in partnership with its neighbouring authorities, the Police, the Fire Authority, local businesses and local people towards the promotion of the objectives as outlined.

5.0 PROMOTION OF THE LICENSING OBJECTIVES

5.1 The following information aims to clearly state in more detail the Licensing Authority's expectations and standards for promoting the Licensing Objectives.

5.2 In applying this Policy, the Licensing Authority will have regard to its obligations under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in that it will do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in the Plymouth area.

Best Bar None, Pubwatch, Purple Flag

5.3 The Licensing Authority will support organisations such as Best Bar None, Pubwatch, Purple Flag and the Community Alcohol Partnership which contribute towards providing safer environments for the patrons of premises operating in the evening and night time economy. There are a number of groups covering areas and districts throughout Plymouth that seek to improve the network of real time information that allows them to take proactive action to minimise the effects on crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour. See Appendix 3 for more information on these and other schemes and strategies.

5.4 The Licensing Authority expects licensees to support and be active members of trade-led best practice schemes.

Drug Use and Safer Nightlife

5.5 The use of illegal drugs, particularly those which are commonly referred to as 'recreational drugs', and illegal psychoactive substances, can be harmful and in some cases contribute to fatalities. Factors that have contributed to deaths from drugs include lack of drinking water, excessive drinking of water, an overly hot environment with inadequate ventilation, or a lack of adequate information about drugs. Drugs alter the way people behave, so their distribution and possession is controlled by law.

5.6 The Licensing Authority recognises that drug use in a club/pub environment is not something that is relevant in all licensed premises. However, it is also recognised that special conditions will need to be imposed for certain types of venues to reduce the sale and consumption of drugs and to create a safer environment for those who may have taken them i.e. zero tolerance drug policies including the appropriate use of searching and amnesty boxes.

5.7 It is the responsibility of premises to help keep their customers safe from drink and drug spiking, for example by the provision of signage and information to alert customers to the risk of drink spiking, as well as medical and reporting actions needed as soon as an incident is suspected.

Door Supervisors

5.8 Whenever persons are employed at licensed premises to carry out any security function they must be licensed with the Security Industry Authority (SIA). Competent and professional door supervisors are central to maintaining public safety at licensed premises.

5.9 The Police may consider that certain premises require strict supervision to promote the licensing objective to prevent crime and disorder. In particular, the Licensing Authority will normally support an approach that requires door supervisors to be employed at premises that open beyond midnight, where the responsible authority can demonstrate that it is necessary to prevent crime and disorder.

5.10 Where premises close before midnight, door supervisors may still have to be employed, if the risks associated with the operation warrant such an approach. The number of door supervisors to be employed needs to be determined by a risk assessment carried out by the management of the premises, in most cases, in consultation with the Police Licensing Team. The suggested ratio is a minimum of 2 door supervisors for the first 100 patrons and an additional door supervisor per extra 100 patrons thereafter.

Dispersal Policy

5.11 In cases where there is a likelihood that the local community living near a licensed premises will be disturbed by patrons leaving the premises, or where there is likely to be an impact on crime and disorder the licence holder will be expected to implement a Dispersal Policy. Such a Policy would set out the steps to be taken to minimise the potential for crime and disorder and public nuisance as customers leave the premises.

5.12 Other measures which would assist in promoting the licensing objectives at closing time and which the Licensing Authority would usually expect to see addressed in the applicant's operating schedule are:

- to have a dedicated taxi/private hire vehicle service for the premises to assist in facilitating the quick removal of patrons from the premises and the immediate area
- door staff should be stationed outside the premises to direct patrons to booked taxis and generally encourage customers to leave quietly

Licensing Hours

5.13 The Licensing Authority recognises that fixed and artificially early closing times in certain areas can lead to peaks of disorder and disturbance on the streets when large numbers of people tend to leave licensed premises at the same time. Staggered licensing hours regarding the sale of alcohol may therefore be considered as an important factor in reducing conflict at late night food outlets, taxi ranks and other areas where there have previously been incidents of disorder and disturbance.

5.14 The Licensing Authority will deal with the issue of licensing hours on the individual merits of each application.

5.15 Applications for licensed premises located close to residential areas wishing to open beyond 23.00 will need to ensure that a high standard of control is included within their operating schedule so that, for example, any entertainment provided by a venue must be to entertain the patrons of that venue and not the wider community. Public nuisance (within the meaning envisaged by the Act) must not result from the operation of any venue.

5.16 Between the hours of 23:00 and 08:00 hours any new premises licence, or variation to a licence with hours beyond 23:00, is expected to include a condition of total sound containment within the licensed premises. Any existing licensed premises that cause disturbance between 23:00 and 08:00 hours are expected to take measures to reduce noise levels so as not to cause a nuisance to local residents.

5.17 New premises or variations should be in keeping with the existing trading hours of the area and have closing hours that allow for a staggered release of customers.

5.18 Closing hours will be set to protect local residents near to the venue.

Drinking Up Time and Winding Down Time

5.19 In the interests of reducing crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour, the Licensing Authority consider that it is reasonable that patrons could remain on the premises for a period of time to encourage 'wind down' where music ceases and the tone within the premises substantially changes.

5.20 The Licensing Authority will normally expect the service of alcohol to cease at least 30 minutes before customers are required to leave the premises.

5.21 In the case of nightclubs and other similar dance venues, during the 30 minutes immediately after the service of alcohol ceases, the operator will be expected to have a clearly defined strategy of how they implement a 'winding down' time. This could include:

- slowing down the pace, volume and type of music played
- brighter lighting arrangements

- serving hot food, coffee and other soft drinks
- supervisors engaging positively with groups of patrons.
- This will help in ensuring that patrons do not exit the premises in an agitated state which is likely to increase the likelihood for crime and disorder.

Late Night Refreshment

- 5.22 Late night refreshment can form an integral part of the operation of the premises and help reduce alcohol related crime and disorder and other anti-social behaviour within the vicinity of the premises.
- 5.23 Operators of late night refreshment premises will need to demonstrate clearly that nuisance, crime, disorder or other anti-social behaviour will not result as a consequence of their later operation.

Healthier Food Provision

- 5.24 The Council are keen to promote healthier food provision throughout the city. This is embedded within the Plymouth Plan which sets out the City's ambitions to be a City where the healthy choice is the easy choice. See Appendix 3 for further detail.
- 5.25 All late night refreshment venues should ensure at least 10% of their menu items meet the Public Health England recommendations as follows:
- Main meal less than 600 calories
 - Snack less than 200 calories
 - Breakfast less than 400 calories
- 5.26 Guidance and support is available to help businesses achieve these goals from the Council. Please email the Public Health team at ODPH@plymouth.gov.uk. Also see signposting to further guidance in Appendix 3.

Maximum Occupancies

- 5.27 There are some occasions where it will be appropriate to place a maximum safe occupancy figure as a licence condition to prevent crime and disorder and protect public safety.
- 5.28 It will also be appropriate to limit the occupancy in certain parts of premises. Crowding can arise from inappropriate pedestrian flow patterns caused by poor location of entry and exit doors, dance floors, bars and toilets.
- 5.29 Overcrowding has been found to be linked to lower tolerance, increased frustration and conflict. The consequences of crowding will also depend on other factors such as the levels of drunkenness and the extent of server intervention.
- 5.30 It is for the applicant to consider the maximum safe occupancy for each premises. A maximum occupancy figure may be expected as part of the operating schedule for premises or activities that present a higher risk, for example:
- Where the licensable area involves two or more floors, including mezzanines
 - Where there is an expected capacity of greater than 500
 - Premises which may be described as high volume vertical drinking establishments, including any premises which attracts the fees multiplier
 - Premises which have a licence to trade beyond midnight
 - Where the use of pyrotechnics is likely
 - Any premise within a cumulative impact area

- 5.31 Applicants will wish to consider maximum capacities based on means of escape from fire, toilet facilities, floor space and layout. The lower of these values should be used to set the maximum occupancy.

Availability of Free Water

- 5.32 Although the provision of free tap water is a mandatory condition, the Licensing Authority wants to set out the expectations on how a business should comply with this requirement. Premises should ensure that free tap water is readily available in suitable places and in suitable containers to ensure those wishing to drink responsibly can do so with ease.
- 5.33 Where the mandatory condition applies, licensed premises may be expected to:
- Prominently advertise the availability of free tap water
 - Provide tap water supplied from a mains tap within a kitchen or bar area or via suitable dispenser easily accessible by a customer
 - Provide water that meets the legal requirements for safe drinking water
 - Provide a container free of charge where appropriate
 - Refer to the Plymouth Plan for Plastics [Plymouth's Plan for Plastics | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#) and avoid the use of single use plastics where possible (for example use of reusable polycarbonate plastics) and ensure all plastics are recycled
- 5.34 Where licensees fail to meet these standards, additional conditions may be added to the licence following representations or following a review. It is hoped that licensees will voluntarily meet these requirements.

Designated Premises Supervisors (DPS)

- 5.35 The main purpose of the 'designated premises supervisor' is to ensure that there is always one specified individual who can be readily identified for the premises where a premises licence is in force. The Licensing Authority will normally expect the DPS to have an active role in the day to day operation of the licensed premises, in particular the sale and supply of alcohol. A DPS does not have to be on site all the time, but should authorise individuals to supervise the day to day management of the premises. It is recommended that each premises details their Age Verification Policy in writing, stipulating who has been delegated responsibility for day to day tasks.
- 5.36 A DPS should have sufficient experience and knowledge appropriate for the operation under their control. A DPS should be able to control the activities on site and respond quickly and efficiently to problems.
- 5.37 A DPS should be able to demonstrate that they:
- Have sufficient knowledge and experience appropriate to the premises that they intend to control
 - Are able to respond to problems quickly and to meet with Responsible Authorities, local residents and ensure adequate direct management of an individual premises in a timely manner.
- 5.38 Following a Police objection the Licensing Authority may refuse an application or remove a DPS where:
- A problem premises exists and the DPS is not capable of fulfilling the duties and expectations of a DPS
 - A proposed DPS cannot demonstrate their suitability for the licenced premises

Preventing Glass Injuries

5.39 Glass-related injuries, whether accidental or due to violent crime, can lead to major injury and be life changing. Glasses and bottles can be used as weapons in the drinking environment. By removing glass from premises, injuries may fall. Using alternatives for glass can place extra financial burdens on businesses, and customers may prefer glass containers. Removing glass from premises will be targeted to those that are considered to carry a higher risk for potential crime and disorder or the nature of the activity increases the risk of glass becoming a risk.

5.40 The Licensing Authority expects:

Licensees to consider the need for alternatives to glass as part of their application. It may be appropriate to provide alternatives to glass in the following circumstances:

- Where the nature of the event or activity prevents the frequent collection of glass from the venue
- High volume vertical drinking establishments trading beyond midnight, particularly in any cumulative impact area
- Large outdoor events
- Areas where children or vulnerable adults are likely to be present, e.g. play areas, children's parties
- Where there is a history of glass incidents
- Applicants to have early discussions with Devon and Cornwall Police on suitable alternatives. Alternatives to glass bottles must also be considered as part of the operating schedule or supporting information.
- Licensees to maintain an on-going review of the need for alternatives to glass

5.41 Where a review has been requested due to glass incidents, the application of alternatives to glass containers as conditions are very likely to be applied.

5.42 Applicants should also refer to [Plymouth's Plan for Plastics | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](https://plymouth.gov.uk/plastics-plan) and avoid the use of single use plastics where possible for example using reusable polycarbonate plastics. Where this is not possible due to public safety and crime and disorder then all plastics must be recycled.

Control of Adult Entertainment

5.43 The Policing and Crime Act has amended Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 to incorporate sexual entertainment venues. This means that premises offering lap dancing or any live performance or display of nudity on more than 11 occasions within a 12-month period, in addition to any relevant entertainment, will be required to obtain a separate sex establishment licence, authorising such activity.

5.44 The Sex Establishments Policy has been the subject of a separate public consultation and the adopted Policy will stand alone to this Licensing Policy.

5.45 When an applicant does not give any indication on their premises licence application form as to whether or not they propose to hold any performance of an adult nature, the Licensing Authority will include a condition on the premises licence that 'there will be no adult entertainment at this premises' as being consistent with the operating schedule and necessary to promote the licensing objective of preventing children from harm.

5.46 The Licensing Authority will consider the following factors when assessing applications and operating schedules. The venue's location is an important factor, particularly in sensitive locations, such as:

- near residential accommodation
- near schools, play areas or other areas where children might be present
- family leisure areas

- near historic buildings or tourist locations
 - near places of worship
- 5.47 Specific additional controls are expected as part of the operating schedule or supporting information, such as:
- exclusions of under 18s
 - code of conduct for customers, dancers and performers
 - documentary checks of dancers and performers to include proof of age, identity and (where necessary), permission to work
 - how the entertainment will be advertised and promoted at the premises and more generally, including any external signs or posters
 - minimising external advertising relating to sexual entertainment

Responsible Retailing for Off-Sales

- 5.48 The Licensing Authority wishes to minimise the negative impact on the licensing objectives created by irresponsible consumption of alcohol from retail alcohol sales.
- 5.49 The city has a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in place to help address problems of drinking alcohol in public [Citywide PSPO.pdf \(plymouth.gov.uk\)](#). Drinking in public spaces can be a major source of anti-social behaviour, often involving young persons, and it can lead to crime or the fear of crime. Local research has established that many people now drink at home before heading out for the evening, which contributes significantly to the problems of drunken and disorderly behaviour. Businesses involved in the city's evening and night time economy are left to deal with this issue.

Off Licence design and layout

- 5.50 All new applications must specify the area to be used for the sale or exposure for sale of alcohol. Displays should conform to the guidance issued by the British Retail Consortium or any other future guidance issued by trade bodies, Government departments or locally adopted standards to provide a 'responsible display' of alcohol.
- 5.51 Applicants should note that a display will not be considered suitable:
- at entrance/exit points of premises
 - where it might interfere with customer flow
 - near check outs, entrances or exits where shop lifting may become easier
 - by using advertising that does not conform to the Portman Group Code or promote irresponsible drinking
 - consisting of significant amounts of high strength alcohol or give undue prominence to high-strength alcohol

Off Licence Location and Trading Restrictions

- 5.52 The Licensing Authority may not approve applications for off sales in the following locations:
- near to alcohol addiction recovery activities or buildings
 - in areas where drinking in public spaces affects any of the licensing objectives
- 5.53 Responsible Authorities and applicants are advised to refer to the Alcohol Harm Mapping tool which has been produced by Plymouth Public Health Team. This tool brings a number of indicators of alcohol related harm and presents them at a neighbourhood level. Using the best available evidence, this provides a picture of how communities in Plymouth are affected by Alcohol. This can be used by any business or responsible authority to assist them in understanding the issues in their local area and to help protect and improve the local

population's health and wellbeing. The latest copy of the Alcohol harm mapping: Plymouth Neighbourhood Profiles can be found at: [Alcohol topic | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

Off Licence Additional Conditions / Limitations

5.54 Where applications are granted, additional conditions or limitations, such as trading hours may be appropriate. Additional conditions may include:

- no single cans or bottles of beer or cider will be sold
- no sale of high strength beers or ciders of 6.5% ABV and above.
- minimum of two staff to be on duty at times the premises remain open for sale
- staff must obtain nationally recognised training on responsible alcohol retailing within 2 months of employment
- high strength beers or ciders will be for sale behind a counter accessed only by staff
- all alcoholic drinks will be clearly labelled or marked with the name of the premises
- the premises will operate a proof of age scheme such as Challenge 25
- notices will be clearly displayed near to where alcohol is exposed for sale or sold advising customers that the area is subject to a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)
- restrictions on the design and placement of alcohol for sale

Online Alcohol Sales and Delivery

5.55 Operators of an alcohol delivery service may contact the Licensing Authority for advice. It is expected that:

- all alcohol stored at the premises shall be locked in a secure storage area.
- all staff responsible for making alcohol sales shall be trained in the requirements of the Challenge 25 age verification policy.
- alcohol shall be sold in sealed containers only.
- all deliveries of alcohol shall only be delivered to a premises address with a valid postcode and will only be delivered directly to that property.
- full name and address details, including postcode, must be given when placing an order.
- alcohol can only be delivered to a residential or business address and not to a public place.
- Challenge 25 - if the driver considers the recipient of alcohol appears under 25 recognised photographic identification to be requested before any alcohol is handed over.
- at the time the order is placed a declaration will be required from the person placing the order that that person is over 18 years of age.
- acceptable proof of age shall include identification bearing the customer's photograph, date of birth and integral holographic mark or security measure. Suitable means of identification would include PASS approved proof of age card, photo-card driving licence and passport. No ID no delivery.
- minimum age of 18 for delivery drivers.
- delivery will be refused if the driver believes the alcohol is being purchased on behalf of another person aged under 18 years.
- customers to be reminded on the website that it is a criminal offence for a person under 18 to purchase or attempt to purchase alcohol and that it is also an offence to purchase alcohol on behalf of a person aged under 18.

Protection of Children from Harm

- 5.56 The protection of children from harm includes the protection from moral, psychological and physical harm, including protecting children from early exposure to strong language and sexual expletives, in the context of film / video exhibitions, or where adult entertainment is provided.
- 5.57 The Licensing Authority recognises the great variety of premises for which licences may be sought. These will include theatres, cinemas, restaurants, pubs, nightclubs, cafes, takeaways, community halls and schools. Where relevant representations are received indicating that a particular application raises concerns under the Protection of Children from Harm licensing objective, access by children to all types of premises will not be limited unless it is considered necessary to do so and addresses the concern raised in representations.
- 5.58 Examples which may give rise to concern in respect of children would include premises:
- where entertainment or services of an adult or sexual nature are provided
 - where there is a strong element of gambling taking place
 - with a known association with drug taking or dealing
 - where there have been convictions or other forms of proof of members of the current staff at the premises for serving alcohol to minors or with a reputation for underage drinking
 - where the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises is the exclusive or primary purpose of the services provided at the premises
- 5.59 The Licensing Authority would expect the applicant to suggest restrictions in relation to access for children. If such restrictions are not contained within the operating schedule then, if relevant representations are made, the licensing authority can then consider making such restrictions as are deemed necessary to meet the licensing objectives.
- 5.60 Where the exhibition of film or video is permitted, the authority will expect age restrictions to be complied with in accordance with the British Board of Film Classification's recommendations in respect of the film/video to be exhibited. Only in exceptional cases will the authority consider variations of this general rule.
- 5.61 Conditions may be imposed (if not covered in other legislation) on licences for premises where children will be present at places of regulated entertainment to the effect that sufficient adult staff must be present to control the access and egress of children to ensure their safety and prevent harm. Where children may also be present at an event as entertainers there may be a requirement for there to be a nominated adult responsible for such child performers at such performances.
- 5.62 The options available for limiting access by children would include:
- a limit on the hours when children may be present
 - a limitation or exclusion when certain activities are taking place
 - the requirement to be accompanied by an adult
 - access may be limited to parts of the premises but not the whole
 - an age limitation (for under 18s)
- 5.63 The Licensing Authority will not impose any condition which specifically requires access for children to be provided at any premises. Where no restriction or limitation is imposed the issue of access will remain a matter for the discretion of the individual licence holder or club.
- 5.64 The Licensing Authority will take strong measures to protect children where any licence holder is convicted or other forms of proof of serving alcohol to minors, premises have a known association with drug taking or dealing, gambling takes place on the premises or where entertainment of an adult or sexual nature is commonly provided.

Film Classification

- 5.65 It is mandatory for a condition to be included in all premises licences and club premises certificates authorising the exhibition of films, for the admission of children to films to be restricted in accordance with the recommendations given either by a body designated under Section 4 of the Video Recordings Act 1984 - the British Board of Film Classification is the only body which has been so designated or by the Licensing Authority itself.
- 5.66 The Licensing Authority has a procedure in place for the approval of unclassified films that includes conditions relating to the admission of children and supports any relevant BBFC Guidelines and shall not seek to duplicate their recommendations. The Film Authorisation Procedure can be found on the Council's website. Any changes to these procedures are not considered changes to this Policy and as such any amendment to these procedures will not necessitate a review of the Licensing Policy.

Public Nuisance

- 5.67 The Licensing Authority will assess each application having regard to noise and the likelihood of nuisance being caused to local residents.
- 5.68 The imposition of conditions to a premises licence may only be attached if the conditions are consistent with the operating schedule submitted as part of the application process, or if relevant representations are received.
- 5.69 The Licensing Authority may impose conditions in relation to licensed premises to prevent unnecessary noise, vibration and disturbance to local residents, as it considers appropriate, subject to the submission of relevant representations. This may include:
- sound proofing requirements
 - restrictions on times when music or other licensable activities take place
 - the use of sound limiting devices properly set to prevent noise breakout and disturbance.
- 5.70 The Licensing Authority may impose conditions relating to the limitation of the hours of open-air entertainment, and the use of outdoor areas, gardens and patios to control and prevent unnecessary noise and disturbance.

The Licensing Authority will have the following approach to certain regulated entertainment:

- the provision of regulated entertainment outdoors after 23:00 and before 08:00 will not generally be permitted.
 - between the hours of 23:00 and 08:00 hours any new premises licence, or variation to a licence with licenced hours beyond 23:00, is expected to include a condition of total sound containment within the licensed premises.
 - any existing licensed premises that cause disturbance between 23:00 and 08:00 hours are expected to take measures to reduce noise levels so as not to cause a nuisance to local residents.
- 5.71 The Licensing Authority may impose conditions requiring the display of signs both inside and outside of the premises reminding customers to leave the premises quietly and to respect the rights of nearby residents.

No Smoking Legislation

- 5.72 The Health Act 2006 prohibits smoking in public places and workplaces. This includes all licensed premises both permanent and temporary structures such as tents and marquees.

- 5.73 Smoke free legislation has created problems for some licensed premises in respect to noise disturbance and nuisance. It is the responsibility of the premises licence holder to ensure by proper management and control that, at all reasonable times, they minimise the effects on the surrounding residential property.
- 5.74 Many premises do not have a beer garden or similar area, which results in their customers smoking on the public pavement outside the front of the premises. The Licensing Authority acknowledge the potential problems in respect to crime and disorder that can arise as a consequence and would encourage the operator to contact the Police Licensing team in order to seek advice on how best to manage the risk of crime and disorder.
- 5.75 Where representations are submitted regarding the use of the outside of the premises e.g. beer garden, public pavement or thoroughfare, the Licensing Authority will give due consideration to imposing reasonable conditions that are designed to reduce noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour to local residents.
- 5.76 The same considerations apply to patrons vaping outside of premises.

Fly posting and promotional material

- 5.76 Plymouth often faces the widespread problem of illegal and nuisance fly posting and littering from promotional material used to promote bands and events in the city. This can have an impact on the prevention of public nuisance objective and the prevention of crime and disorder objective within the Licensing Act 2003.
- 5.77 Existing legislation seeks to address this problem however, it often proves ineffective in preventing this type of nuisance advertising. Some licence holders leave the advertising of regulated entertainment to events promoters and then use this to argue that they are not responsible for any illegal fly posting that occurs.
- 5.78 The Licensing Authority expects responsible licence holders to ensure the licensed objectives are properly promoted when advertising regulated entertainment on their premises. For this reason, licence holders should outline in their operating schedules the steps to be taken ensure advertising of licensable activities does not cause nuisance or give risk to crime and disorder.
- 5.79 Premises Licence Holders are encouraged to have explicit agreements or contracts with named individuals or companies used to promote events to address the issue of fly posting and littering from promotional material. They should also maintain a register of individuals and companies contracted with, for inspection by any Responsible Authority or Authorised Officer on request. Where appropriate and where consistent with the applicant's operating schedule the Licensing Authority will impose conditions to this effect when its discretion to do so has been engaged.

Fire Safety

- 5.80 The Licensing Authority is committed to ensuring public safety in licensed premises by working in close partnership with the Fire Authority, subject to the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The Licensing Authority will consider relevant representations from the Fire Authority concerning the implications relating to fire safety for each individual application/variation for, a premises licence and seek to protect the safety of all persons at all licensed premises by ensuring that the requirements of the Fire Authority are met.
- 5.81 In order to avoid the necessity for representations to be made, applicants will be advised where appropriate to consult the Fire Authority and ensure that they have sight of such documentation as may be required in order to allow a reasonable assessment to be made.
- 5.82 The Licensing Authority will consider applying capacity limits where there are valid reasons and where it has been demonstrated that they will promote any of the licensing objectives.

Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill

- 5.83 The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill (sometimes referred to as ‘Protect Duty’ or ‘Martyn’s Law’) is expected to become law in 2024/25. The aim of this new legislation is to improve safety and security at public venues, to help ensure that people are prepared, ready to respond and know what to do in the event of a terrorist attack.
- 5.84 When it becomes law, there will be a legal requirement on those responsible for certain venues to increase their preparedness for and protection from a terrorist attack by requiring them to take proportionate steps, depending on the size and nature of the activities that take place.
- 5.85 In the meantime, although terrorist attacks are rare, the threat from terrorism is real and increasingly unpredictable, and therefore operators should consider the threat and implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures to ensure public safety.
- 5.86 Consequently, the Licensing Authority would expect large capacity venues and organisers of large events to consider the following measures:
- a requirement to engage with freely available counter-terrorism advice and training
 - a requirement to conduct vulnerability assessments of their operating places and spaces
 - a requirement to mitigate the risks created by any vulnerabilities identified
 - a requirement to have a counter-terrorism plan
 - ensuring appropriate access for emergency services and vehicles
 - establish good communication networks with the police and signing up for local incident alerts
 - ensuring the presence of sufficient trained first aiders on the premises and appropriate first aid kits

6.0 OPERATING SCHEDULE

- 6.1 Where an application is approved, the Licensing Authority may apply and interpret conditions that are consistent with the operating schedule, which are appropriate and proportionate for the promotion of the licensing objectives. Clear and enforceable conditions replicated from proposals in the operating schedule, along with relevant mandatory conditions, will form part of the licence.
- 6.2 Applicants are encouraged to make themselves aware of any relevant planning and transportation policies, tourism and cultural strategies or local crime prevention strategies and to have taken these into account, where appropriate, when formulating their Operating Schedule. To assist some policies and guidance sources are set out in Appendix 3.
- 6.3 Applicants that carry out inadequate research or fail to consider their business operation often submit very poor quality schedules - this can prejudice their application and cause unnecessary work for Responsible Authorities who have to negotiate and discuss in detail the business operation in order to get a better understanding of the business and propose voluntary conditions.
- 6.4 The Licensing Authority expects the content of an operating schedule to address the following points:
- applicants are expected to demonstrate that they understand:
 - the layout of the local area and physical environment including crime and disorder hotspots, proximity to residential premises and proximity to areas where children may congregate
 - any risk posed to the local area by the applicants' proposed licensable activities
 - any local initiatives (for example, local crime reduction initiatives or voluntary schemes including local taxi-marshalling schemes, street pastors and other schemes) which may help to mitigate potential risks
 - regulated entertainment that incorporates any of the following activities for the entertainment or attraction of the public must be properly defined and explained in the operating schedule of the application:
 - Striptease, lap dancing or any similar performance
 - The installation of strobe or laser equipment
 - The use of special effects such as pyrotechnics or the introduction to any area occupied by the public of naked flame or any material, vapour, liquid, foam or novelty foodstuff
 - The use of any temporary structure or staged area
 - operating schedule must be specific to the individual application
 - operating schedule must be sufficiently comprehensive to enable the Licensing Authority and other Responsible Authorities to consider the application fully
 - where appropriate, specify the maximum intended occupancy including staff, performers and members of the public and how these numbers are controlled
 - address the Council's expectations contained within this Licensing Policy
 - where an application is submitted within a CIA area, applicants should demonstrate an understanding of how the policy impacts on their application, any measure they will take to mitigate the impact and why they consider the application should be an exception to the policy
 - where an application for the grant of a new application or variation of a premises licence is located in a residential area, it should set out how the potential effects of public nuisance and noise disturbance, for example, will be minimised and controlled

- 6.5 Responsible Authorities will not be expected to provide a form of consultancy in modifying Operating Schedules. Representations may be used to seek clarification on how the applicant intends to manage their operation.
- 6.6 Prior to submitting an application, the Licensing Authority recommends that an applicant seek expert advice and guidance from all Responsible Authorities on matters relating to the licensing objectives as this will assist in completing their operating schedule. This will ensure the application is processed efficiently.
- 6.7 Applicants for new licences are strongly advised to liaise with the relevant Responsible Authorities in relation to adopting measures to avoid crime and disorder problems, improve public safety, limit public nuisance and protect children from harm in the premises to be licensed.
- 6.8 Potential wording of the operating schedule can be based on separate guidance issued by the Licensing Authority and Responsible Authorities.
- 6.9 The applicant may wish to submit supporting information to be read alongside the operating schedule; this information will not normally form part of the voluntary conditions offered through the operating schedule, but it is intended to advise Responsible Authorities about how the business will be managed and operated. It may be necessary to include some aspects of the supporting information into conditions where representations are received.

7.0 LICENSING CONDITIONS

7.1 The Licensing Authority cannot not impose conditions (other than the mandatory conditions and those consistent with the applicants operating schedule) unless its discretion has been engaged following the receipt of relevant representations and upon it being satisfied that is appropriate to impose conditions to promote the licensing objectives.

7.2 Where licensing conditions are imposed following relevant representations, they shall be appropriate to promote one or more of the licensing objectives and proportionate having regard to the size, style, characteristics and activities undertaken. Any condition imposed must also be practical, achievable and enforceable.

7.3 The Licensing Authority recommends that Responsible Authorities draw up their own pool of conditions to assist licence holders and applicants in developing an operating schedule that is suitable and sufficient for their licensed premises. The Licensing Authority's pool of conditions can be found here: [DOCUMENT TITLE \(plymouth.gov.uk\)](https://plymouth.gov.uk)

7.4 Where appropriate, conditions will aim to deter and prevent crime and disorder, improve public safety; prevent public nuisance; and protect children from harm.

7.5 All representations will be considered during the decision making process unless they are not considered to be relevant to the licensing objectives, or are frivolous, vexatious or repetitious.

7.6 When imposing conditions, the Licensing Authority shall consider the direct impact the existing or proposed licensable activities will have on members of the public living, working or engaged in normal activity in the vicinity of the premises. In addition, the Licensing Authority shall focus on matters within the control of licensed operators on or outside the premises. Whilst "vicinity" has not been defined in the Act this Licensing Authority shall take a "common sense" approach and shall treat each application on its own merit.

7.7 The initial application and subsequent approval is often closely linked to the individual nature of the activities intended for the business. For example, premises where the initial application for music is intended to be low key can be transferred and turned into a venue with very loud bands regularly throughout the week, leading to public nuisance. Depending on the nature of the application if representations are received then additional conditions may be placed on the licences by Committee that prevent the activities initially proposed by the applicant from altering to a degree that may affect any of the licensing objectives.

7.8 The Licensing Authority will not impose conditions which replicate matters that constitute the offences set out in Part 7 of the Licensing Act e.g. unauthorised licensable activities, allowing disorderly conduct, sale of alcohol to any person who is drunk or is underage. Nevertheless, the Licensing Authority will take into account any breaches of conditions and offences under the Licensing Act when considering the imposition of conditions in reviews and the variation of licences.

8.0 LICENSING APPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Applicants must demonstrate that they have the right to work in the UK and are not subject to a condition preventing them from doing work that relates to some licensing act applications.
- 8.2 When an application is received the Licensing Authority will consider each:
- on its own merits
 - in accordance with the Act, any subsequent amendments and supporting Regulations
 - with regard to guidance issued under Section 182 of the Act and this Policy
- 8.3 In particular it is important to note that “opening hours”, the times when premises are open to the public, are not necessarily identical to the hours during which licensable activities may take place.
- 8.4 The Licensing Authority will expect that an applicant will indicate whether or not the area to be licensed includes or comprises any part of the public highway. It is the Policy of the Council to support the provision of street cafés that make a positive contribution to the street scene and to the vitality of shopping and tourist areas bringing life, colour and interest on to the street.
- 8.5 The Highways Team at the Council may grant permission for an applicant to use the public highway outside premises for placing tables and chairs but the use of such an area will be subject to separate application, requirements and conditions under provisions of the Highways Act 1980. Further details can be found at [Tables and chairs permit on a public road or street | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/tables-and-chairs-permit-on-a-public-road-or-street)

New Applications and Full Variations

- 8.6 All licensing applications for the grant or variation of a premises licence must be served on the Licensing Authority and on the Responsible Authorities within the City of Plymouth. The contact details (current at the time of writing this Policy) for the Responsible Authorities are detailed in Appendix I. However, applicants are advised to check the specific details in the Home Office S.182 Guidance and the Act to ensure they have complied with the requirements under the Act.
- 8.7 Where an application for the grant of a premises licence or club premises certificate, variation of the same or a provisional statement, or any part of it, is submitted in writing, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that a copy of the application has been sent to all Responsible Authorities as stipulated in the Act. Where such applications have been submitted electronically copies of the application will be forwarded to the Responsible Authorities by the Licensing Authority.
- 8.8 Full variations should not be used to ‘vary substantially the premises to which the licence relates’.

Minor Variations

- 8.9 An application can be made for a minor variation to premises licences and club premises certificates where the change is considered to have ‘no adverse impact’ on the promotion of any of the four licensing objectives.
- 8.10 Minor variations can be used to:
- make minor changes to the structure or layout of a premises
 - make small adjustments to the licensing hours
 - remove out of date, irrelevant or unenforceable conditions
 - add or remove certain licensable activities

- add volunteered conditions to a premises licence or club premises certificate
- 8.11 Examples of where the minor variation process **cannot** be used include:
- extending the period for which the licence or certificate has effect
 - specifying, in a premises licence, an individual as the premises supervisor
 - adding the sale by retail or supply of alcohol as an activity authorised by a licence or certificate
 - authorising the sale by retail or supply of alcohol at any time between 23.00 and 07.00
 - authorising an increase in the amount of time on any day during which alcohol may be sold by retail or supplied
 - varying a licence for a community premises so as to apply the condition that every supply of alcohol under that licence must be made or authorised by the management committee.
 - substantially varying the premises to which the licence or club premises certificate relates
- 8.12 Under a minor variation the applicant must send the application to the Licensing Authority and must advertise the application on a white notice for a period of ten working days, at the premises, beginning with the day after the application was given to the Authority. The applicant is not required to advertise the variation in a local newspaper or send a copy to Responsible Authorities.
- 8.13 On receipt of a minor variation application, the Licensing Authority will consider the application and consult whichever of the Responsible Authorities it considers appropriate. In deciding on the application, the Licensing Authority will consider any relevant representations received within the statutory time limit (ten working days from the day after the application was received by the licensing authority). The Licensing Authority will either grant the application or refuse it where it considers that the proposed application could impact adversely on any of the four licensing objectives.
- 8.14 There is no right to a hearing under the minor variation process.
- 8.15 If the Licensing Authority fails to determine the application within 15 working days, the application will be treated as being refused and the fee returned. However, in such cases the Licensing Authority and applicant may agree instead that the undetermined application should be treated as a new application and that the fee originally submitted will be treated as a fee for the new application thus avoiding the need for a new application to be submitted.

Review of Premises Licence

- 8.16 A Responsible Authority or other persons may at any time call for a review of a premises licence or club premises certificate, where problems associated with the licensing objectives are occurring after the grant or variation of a premises licence or club premises certificate. Examples may be where there has been a breach of licensing conditions, failed test purchases or activities undermine the licensing objectives. The conduct of review hearings is set out in the relevant statutory instruments.
- 8.17 Where the request for review originates from other persons, the Licensing Authority may reject the application if it is considered frivolous, vexatious or repetitious.
- 8.18 In all cases, an application for review must relate to a particular premises in respect of which there is a premises licence or club premises certificate and must be relevant to one or more of the four licensing objectives.
- 8.19 Where a review is brought the Licensing Authority may take any of the following actions:
- modify the conditions of the premises licence (which includes adding new conditions or any alteration or omission of an existing condition), e.g. by reducing the hours of opening or by requiring door supervisors at particular times

- exclude a licensable activity from the scope of the licence, e.g. to exclude the performance of live music or playing of recorded music
 - remove the designated premises supervisor, e.g. because they consider that the problems are the result of poor management
 - suspend the licence for a period not exceeding three months
 - revoke the licence
 - take no action
- 8.20 In deciding which of these powers to invoke, this Licensing Authority will seek to establish the cause of the concerns which the application and any relevant representations identify. The remedial action taken should be directed at these causes and should always be an appropriate and proportionate response. For example, the removal and replacement of the designated premises supervisor may be sufficient to remedy a problem where the cause of the identified problem directly relates to poor management decisions made by that individual.
- 8.21 Equally, it may be that poor management is a direct reflection of poor company practice or Policy and the removal of the designated premises supervisor may be an inadequate response to the problems presented.
- 8.22 The Licensing Authority will consider each case on its own merits having regard to the relevant law and guidance.
- 8.23 Where reviews are sought by residents or Responsible Authorities in relation to public nuisance alleged to arise from a licensed premises, the nature of the premises, its track record and length of time it has been providing the activities complained of will all be taken into account in determining the application.

Relevant, Vexatious and Frivolous Representations

- 8.24 Officer decisions as to whether representations are relevant, frivolous or vexatious will be made objectively having regard to all the available facts and not on the basis of any political judgment:
- a frivolous representation can be categorised by a lack of seriousness or concerning very minor issues which would not warrant any steps being taken
 - a vexatious representation arises where it is intended to cause aggravation or annoyance to another person or business without any justification (e.g. disputes between rival businesses).
 - a representation would only be relevant if it relates to the likely effect on at least one of the licensing objectives, relates to the application under consideration and is received within the relevant timescales.
- 8.25 Where representations are rejected, the Responsible Authority or other persons making that representation will be given a written reason as to why this is the case. Anyone who wishes the decision to be reconsidered should lodge a complaint with Plymouth City Council, [Feedback and complaints | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/feedback-complaints)
- 8.26 In borderline cases, the benefit of the doubt about any aspect of a representation will be given to the person making that representation.

Use of petitions

- 8.27 Standard letters of support or objection, and petitions can be submitted in response to an application or review.
- 8.28 Standard letters, with only the signature and address of the sender, will be considered as a petition as they contain no additional individual comment. Standard letters that have additional

detail regarding the representation will be considered as a separate representation and will be published separately as part of any Committee report.

- 8.29 Petitions will be published as part of the Committee report, and reference will be made to the number of names supporting the petition. Notification about any Committee hearing will not be sent to names received via a petition.

Temporary Event Notices (TEN's)

- 8.30 A TEN is a notification given by an individual to the Licensing Authority where it is proposed to use premises for one or more licensable activities during a period not exceeding 168 hours and can be used to authorise relatively small-scale ad hoc events held in or on any premises involving no more than 499 people at any one time.
- 8.31 A TEN is typically used to:
- authorise a licensable activity at a premises not currently licensed e.g. selling alcohol at a fete
 - temporarily extend the hours for providing a licensed activity at an existing licensed premises for a specific event
 - provide for licensable activities not authorised by the existing licence.
- 8.32 The organiser must give the Licensing Authority notice of the proposed event and give a copy of the notice to the Police and Environmental Health.
- 8.33 Where an application or any part of it, is submitted in writing, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that a copy of the application has been sent to the Police as stipulated in the Act. Where an application has been submitted electronically copies of the application will be forwarded to the Responsible Authorities by the Police.
- 8.34 The organiser must normally give the Licensing Authority a minimum of 10 clear working days' notice. This does NOT include the date of submission, the date of the event, or weekends or bank holidays. In a significant number of cases this time period does not allow sufficient time for the organiser to liaise with the Police or Environmental Health and other relevant bodies to ensure that the event passes off safely with minimum disturbance to local residents. Therefore, the Licensing Authority will normally expect that the application be submitted no earlier than 28 days before the planned event. The giving of 28 days' notice allows for reasonable discussions to take place with the Police and Environmental Health.
- 8.35 The Licensing Authority will consider any breach of previous voluntary agreements to be an important matter when considering an objection to a TEN application.
- 8.36 A late TEN may be served between nine and five working days before a proposed event commences. If a late TEN is served with fewer than 5 working days' notice it is deemed invalid and will be rejected. The Licensing Authority has no discretion to accept TENs outside the permitted statutory deadlines. If an objection is received to a late TEN there is no provision for any modification, hearing or adding existing conditions and a Counter Notice will be issued preventing the event from going ahead. There is no right of appeal in respect of late TENs following an objection by the Police or Environmental Health.
- 8.37 The Licensing Authority will actively encourage the organiser to notify other relevant agencies such as the Fire Authority (crowd safety and management) in order to obtain expert advice on how best to minimise the risk of injury and public nuisance.
- 8.38 In addition, whilst under the Act applicants do not have to notify the Planning Authority in respect of a temporary event, they are encouraged to do so to ensure that any relevant planning consent is in place.

Provisional Statements

- 8.39 Where premises are being or are about to be constructed, extended or otherwise altered so that they can be used for licensable activities, those involved with the project or with an interest in it may request some assurance that a premises licence covering the desired licensable activities would be granted for the premises when the building work is completed.
- 8.40 Any person falling within Section 16 of the 2003 Act can apply for a premises licence before new premises are constructed, extended or changed. In those cases, the Licensing Authority would include a date when the licence would come into effect. However, where the information described below is not available an application for a provisional statement would be required instead:
- clear plans of the proposed structure
 - the activities to take place
 - the time at which such activities will take place
 - the proposed hours of opening
 - where the applicant wishes the licence to have effect for a limited period, that period
 - the steps to be taken to promote the licensing objectives
 - where the sale of alcohol is involved, whether supplies are proposed to be for consumption on or off the premises (or both) and the name of the designated premises supervisor the applicant wishes to specify
- 8.41 The 2003 Act provides for a person who has an interest in the premises to apply for a “provisional statement”. This will not be time limited, but the longer the delay before an application for a premises licence is made, the more likely it is that there will be material changes and that the licensing authority will accept representations when the application for the premises licence is finally made.
- 8.42 Applications for a provisional statement are made in a similar manner to those for new and variation applications as set out above.

9.0 ENFORCEMENT

- 9.1 The Licensing Authority has established protocols with the Police and other enforcing authorities. These protocols provide for the targeting of 'problem' and 'high-risk' premises with a proportionate, but vigorous and intelligence led enforcement approach. Premises which are shown to be well managed and maintained a 'lighter' approach is applied.
- 9.2 The Licensing Authority has adopted an [Enforcement Policy](#) that is available on the Council's web site which adopts the good principles of consistency, transparency, proportionality and accountability set out in the Regulators Compliance Code.
- 9.3 The Licensing Authority conducts its inspection and enforcement procedures in accordance with the Enforcement Policy and better regulation to ensure that it is effective, well targeted and contributes to economic progress.
- 9.4 The Council will generally use the least intrusive regulatory tool to achieve compliance and will ensure that any regulatory action is proportionate to the importance of the matters to which it relates.

10.0 ADMINISTRATION, EXERCISE AND DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Licensing Authority

10.1 The licensing function under the Act must be carried out by the Licensing Committee (Miscellaneous) other than for certain exemptions under the Act such as the setting of Policy. This committee may further delegate its functions down to a Sub-Committee or officers.

10.2 Where the decision or function is purely administrative in nature, in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness such decision making will for the most part be carried out by officers.

10.3 Table I, below, sets out how the Licensing Authority intends its functions to be carried out.

Table I

Matter to be dealt with	Sub Committee	Officers
Application for personal licence	If a police or immigration enforcement objection	If no objection made
Application for personal licence with unspent convictions	If a police objection	If no objection made
Application for premises licence/club premises certificate	If a relevant representation made	If no relevant representation made
Application for provisional statement	If a relevant representation made	If no relevant representation made
Application to vary premises licence/club premises certificate	If a relevant representation made	If no relevant representation made
Application to vary designated premises supervisor	If a police objection	All other cases
Request to be removed as designated premises supervisor		All cases
Application for transfer of premises licence	If a police objection	All other cases
Application for interim authorities	If a police objection	All other cases
Application to review premises licence/ club premises certificate	All cases	
Decision on whether a complaint is irrelevant, frivolous or vexatious		All cases
Decision to object when local authority is a consultee and not the relevant authority considering the application	All cases	
Determination of an objection to a temporary event notice	All cases unless all parties agree to conditions	Where all parties agree to the imposition of conditions
Decision whether to consult other Responsible Authorities on minor variation applications		All cases

Matter to be dealt with	Sub Committee	Officers
Determination of application to vary premises licence at community premises to include alternative licence condition	If a police objection	All other cases
Determination of minor variation application		All cases
Decision to suspend a premises licence / club premises certificate for failure to pay for the annual fee / late night levy		All cases

APPENDIX I - RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES LIST

Applicants are required to submit the original licensing application to the Licensing Authority and send a full copy of the application (including plans) to each of the following Responsible Authorities.

Where an application, or any part of it, is submitted in writing it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that a full copy of the application (including plans) has been sent to each of the following Responsible Authorities numbered 1 to 9.

Where an application (for a premises licence, club premises certificate (or variations to the same) or provisional statements or Temporary Event Notice) has been submitted electronically, copies of the application will be forwarded to the relevant Responsible Authorities by the Licensing Authority.

Licensing Authority

Licensing Team, Public Protection Service, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House,
West Hoe Road, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ

Tel: 01752 304141

Email: licensing@plymouth.gov.uk

Responsible Authorities

1. Child Protection

Safeguarding Team, Children Young People and Families, Plymouth City Council, Midland House,
Notte Street, Plymouth, PL1 2EJ

Tel: 01752 306340

Email: PSCP@plymouth.gov.uk or Gateway@plymouth.gov.uk

2. Devon and Cornwall Police

Licensing Department, Launceston Police Station, Moorland Road, Launceston, PL15 7HY

Tel: 01566 770500

Email: licensing.team@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

3. Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service

West Devon Headquarters, Glen Road, Plympton, Plymouth, PL7 3XT

Tel: 01752 333600

Email: firesafetyhelpdesk@dsfire.gov.uk

4. Environmental Health

Public Protection Service, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ

Tel: 01752 304147

Email: public.protection@plymouth.gov.uk

5. Heart of the South West Trading Standards Service

County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 4QD

Tel: 01752 304147

E-mail: tradingstandards@devon.gov.uk

6. Health and Safety Executive

North Quay House, Sutton Harbour, Plymouth, PL4 0RA

[Ask about health and safety - Contact HSE](#)

7. Planning Authority

Planning Authority, Development Consents Manager, Plymouth City Council, Level 2 West Wing, Ballard House, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ

Tel: 01752 304471

E-mail: Planningconsents@plymouth.gov.uk

8. Public Health Team

Office of the Director of Public Health, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ

Tel: 01752 398606

Email: odphlicensingapplications@plymouth.gov.uk

9. Home Office (Immigration Enforcement)

Alcohol Licensing Team, Lunar House, 40 Wellesley Road, Croydon, CR9 2BY

Email: Alcohol@homeoffice.gov.uk

Home Office Immigration Enforcement is not a responsible authority in relation to club premises certificates

In relation to vessels, Responsible Authorities also include navigation authorities within the meaning of S. 221(1) of the Water Resources Act 1991 that have statutory functions in relation to the waters

where the vessel is usually moored or berthed or any waters where it is proposed to be navigated when being used for licensable activities

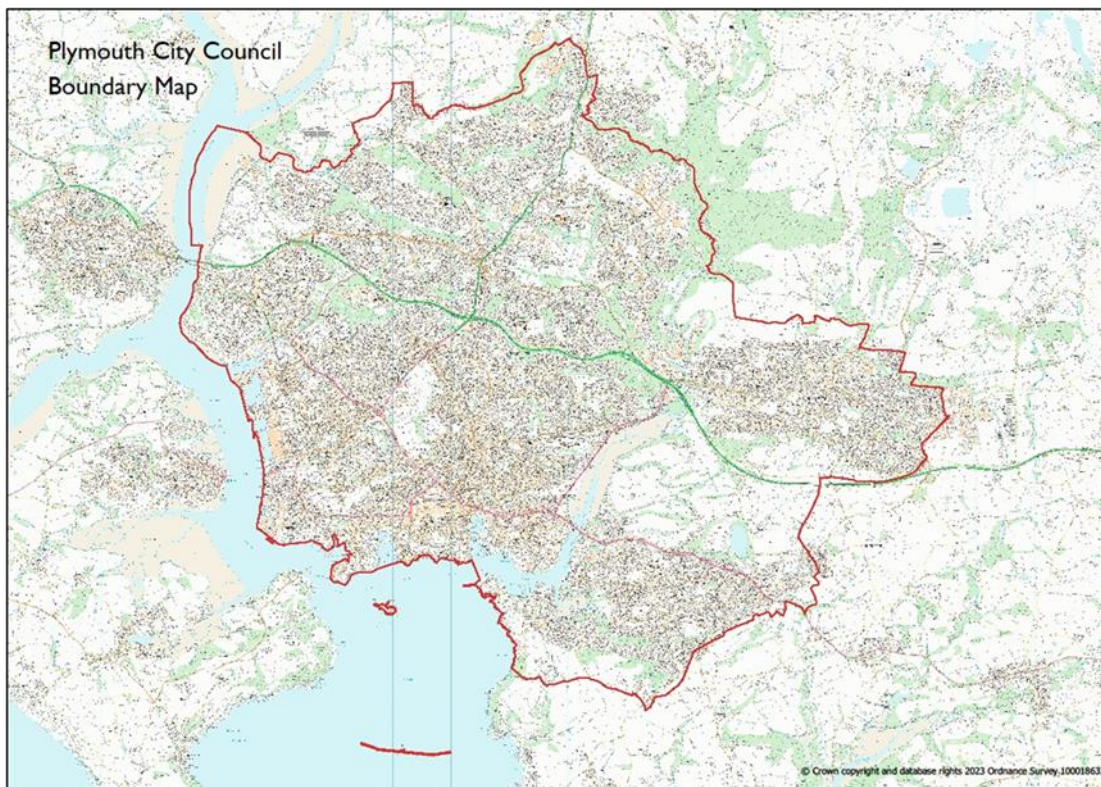
Maritime & Coastguard Agency

Plymouth Marine Office, Suite 5, Endeavour House, Oceansgate, Vivid Approach, Plymouth. PL1 4RW

Tel: 020 390 85245

Email: mcaplymouthadmin@mcga.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2 – PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL BOUNDARY



APPENDIX 3 - OTHER POLICIES, LEGISLATION, CASE-LAW AND GUIDANCE SOURCES

There are several local and national policies, strategies, responsibilities, and guidance documents which should be taken into account in order to complement the authority's Licensing Policy. More information about each of these can be found via the links below.

Plymouth City Council Strategies and Policies

Safer Plymouth: [Safer Plymouth | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

The Plymouth Plan: www.plymouth.gov.uk/planningandbuildingcontrol/plymouthplan

Local Transport Plan: [Local Transport Plan | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

Local Development Framework Strategy: [What is a Local Development Framework? | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

Local Economic Strategy: [Strategic growth | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

Strategic Alcohol Plan for Plymouth: www.plymouth.gov.uk/publichealth/alcohol

Cumulative Impact Assessment: [Licensing Policies | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

Related Strategies and Policies and useful references

British Beer and Pub Association: [Home | BBPA \(beerandpub.com\)](#)

Home Office Alcohol licensing guidance: [Alcohol licensing guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

National and local Pubwatch schemes: [Welcome to National Pubwatch, a voluntary organisation](#)

[Portman Group Code of Practice on the Naming, Packaging and Promotion of Alcoholic Drinks](#)

[Purple Flag Award | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

[Home - Best Bar None](#)

UK Hospitality: [About us - UKHospitality](#)

Association of Town Centre Managers (ACTM and Purple Flag): [High Streets | ATCM | UK and Ireland](#)

British Board of Film Classification (BBFC): [British Board of Film Classification \(BBFC\) | BBFC](#)

BII: <http://www.bii.org/>

British Retail Consortium (BRC): [British Retail Consortium \(brc.org.uk\)](#)

UK Cinema Association Limited(UKCA): [UK Cinema Association \(formerly Cinema Exhibitors' Association\) \(cinemauk.org.uk\)](#)

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (see links to the Licensing Act 2003, Explanatory Notes, Guidance and Regulations): www.culture.gov.uk

Equity

[We are the performing arts and entertainment trade union | Equity](#)

Outdoor Arts UK: [Welcome to OutdoorArtsUK](#)

Institute of Licensing (IOL): [I Institute of Licensing](#)

Justices Clerks' Society Good Practice Guide, Licensing: [Justices' Clerks' Society | JC-Society.com](#)

Federation of Licensed Victuallers Associations (LVAs): [Home - FLVA](#)

National Association of Local Government Arts Officers: [National Association of Local Government Arts Officers - CultureHive](#)

Healthy Eating:

[Eat well - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[takeawaystoolkit.pdf \(london.gov.uk\)](#)

[Encouraging healthier 'out of home' food provision - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Strategies for Encouraging Healthier Out of Home Food Provision A toolkit for local councils \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

APPENDIX 4 - SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS WITH CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS

Introduction

Set out below is information for licence holders to help them report to the relevant authorities, matters of concern that could relate to the safety of children, young people and adults with care and support needs, particularly as it relates to child exploitation, abuse, modern slavery and human trafficking.

General Information

Plymouth City Council's Licensing Team is helping to tackle child exploitation, abuse, modern slavery and human trafficking by working together with key partners, particularly Devon and Cornwall Police, Children and Adult Services within the Council, and the Safeguarding Team. The Safeguarding Team also work with the police, children's and adults social care, schools, health services and the youth offending team as well as specialist child exploitation organisations.

Through agencies working together and sharing information, we aim to identify and prevent exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking to protect children, young people and adults with care and support needs and disrupt the activities in order to prosecute perpetrators of abuse.

Sharing information with Devon and Cornwall Police and Children's/Adult Social Care helps to protect children, young people and adults with care and support needs from harm.

How licence holders can help tackle child exploitation, abuse and modern slavery

Licence holders may become aware of children, young persons and adults with care and support needs, or people who are victims of modern slavery or human trafficking. This may be in hotels, bars and restaurants, late night takeaways, off licences or other licensed premises. Licence holders and staff employed in licensed premises are in an ideal position to help protect people.

Safeguarding children, young people and adults with care and support needs is everyone's business and everyone's responsibility.

Child Exploitation

Exploitation of children and young people involves exploitation situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive something, e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money, etc. as a result of them performing an activity on them. Violence, coercion, intimidation and sexual activity are commonly involved in such exploitative relationships.

Child sexual exploitation involves perpetrators grooming youngsters and using their powers to sexually abuse them. Sexual exploitation of children and young people can take many forms, whether it occurs through a seemingly 'consensual' relationship with an older boyfriend, or a young person having sex in return for attention, gifts, alcohol or cigarettes.

Child exploitation is a crime that can affect any child, anytime, anywhere- regardless of their social or ethnic background.

In particular, licence holders and staff in licensed premises should ask themselves the following types of questions:

- does your customer appear to be under 18 years old?
- are they with a much older person and appear to be in a relationship?

- do you think that they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs?
- are children, young people or adults with care and support needs regularly being dropped off/picked up or collected and taken elsewhere from licensed premises such as a hotel, B&B or late night takeaway?
- is a child, young person or adult with care and support needs regularly being brought to a licensed premises such as a hotel or B&B where you work? If so, ask yourself why?

If the answers to any of the questions above gives you even the slightest cause for concern, these concerns should be reported.

If you have reason to suspect that a child is being abused or at risk of abuse it is your responsibility to report your concerns to and share information with Devon and Cornwall Police (Tel:101 or if immediate risk 999) and Plymouth Children's Gateway Service (Tel: 01752 668000 or email for enquiries and referrals: gateway@plymouth.gov.uk)

Alternatively please complete the online form:

[Report child abuse or neglect | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

[Report adult abuse or neglect | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

Further information about Plymouth's Safeguarding Team can be found at [Adults and children's social care | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

Adults with care and support needs

An adult with care and support needs is someone who is in need of community care services due to disability, age or illness. They may be unable to take care of or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

In particular, licence holders and staff who work in licensed premises should ask themselves the following questions when coming into contact with children, young people or adults with care and support needs:

- has your customer got any physical signs of abuse or neglect?
- are they a regular customer? Do you see changes in their behaviour or mood?
- a customer tells you they are having difficulties with someone else
- a customer tells you they have a worry about someone
- a customer tells you they have hurt a person
- a customer tells you something they have seen or heard
- do you know something that causes concern about someone else's welfare?
- you see worrying behaviour towards someone

If the answers to any of the questions above give you even the slightest cause for concern you may need to take urgent action to protect the adult.

Your first priority is with the adult, to make them safe (including reporting to the police if immediate action is required). If you or the person concerned need to raise a concern with Plymouth City Council to help, please contact 01752 668000 or out of hours 01752 346984.

Alternatively, please complete the online form - [Report adult abuse or neglect | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

Further information about Plymouth's Safeguarding Team can be found at [Adults and children's social care | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

Modern Slavery and human trafficking

Modern slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights and can take various forms such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking.

In particular, licence holders and staff who work in licensed premises should ask themselves the following questions when coming into contact with children, young people or adults with care and support needs:

- is the victim in possession of a passport, identification or travel documents? Are these documents in possession of someone else?
- does the victim act as if they were instructed or coached by someone else? Do they allow others to speak for them when spoken to directly?
- was the victim recruited for one purpose and forced to engage in some other job? Was their transport paid for by facilitators, whom they must pay back through providing services?
- does the victim receive little or no payment for their work? Is someone else in control of their earnings?
- was the victim forced to perform sexual acts?
- does the victim have freedom of movement?
- is the victim under the impression they are bonded by debt or in a situation of dependence?
- has the victim been harmed or deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care or other life necessities?
- can the victim freely contact friends or family? Do they have limited social interaction or contact with people outside their immediate environment?

Report something suspicious you spot to the Police or other authorities – it could be at licensed premises where you work, where workers seem reticent to engage, not appropriately dressed for their work or increasingly ill fed and unkempt. Or a young person repeatedly being brought to a hotel by another person for short periods of time.

If there is an immediate danger to the suspected victim or if you think that the suspected victim is under 18, inform the police and call 999 as a matter of urgency.

For England and Wales, please call the Modern Slavery 24 hour confidential referral helpline on 0800 0121700 anytime of the day or night to refer a victim of trafficking or receive advice. Further information can be found at [Modern Slavery Helpline](#)