

Equality Impact Assessment:

Initial assessment

What are the proposed outcomes of the policy?

Taxi Licensing on-line application process

It is proposed to replace the current paper based taxi and private hire licensing application, which is administered at the Cash Office with an online process. The current process involves customers visiting a Council building to apply and purchase their taxi and private hire licenses to interact with reception staff at Bayard Place, the Cash Office and officers in Regulatory Services.

The online system will be accessed through the council's website My Account functionality and allow customers to apply and pay for their taxi and private hire licences, badges and plates.

There will be a face to face verification meeting with an officer in regulatory services once online applications have been submitted where applicants will bring in original documents for validation and also a follow up of any other areas that require further clarification by the regulatory officer, a small sample of the the original documents required are listed below:

Taxi Driver Application:

Right to work identification, Taxi General Competency Course pass Certificate, Driving & local knowledge test pass Certificate, Medical Certificate, Driving License, DBS certificate.

Vehicle License Application:

Insurance documents for your vehicle, V5C (log book/registration document), Vehicle test certificate.

Taxi Operator:

Right to work identification, statement of fares to be charged in vehicles, basic disclosure.

The proposal is to replace the current manual system with an online portal accessed through the council's Digital Services Hub (DiSH) MyAccount. The online Taxi Licensing portal being proposed will also have a calendarised booking facility for customers to book their verification meeting once application and deposit is submitted.

They will be able to go online via various devices (e.g. Smartphones (Apple and android), PCs, tablets, laptops, etc) at the self serve PC's at the various Libraries and Bayard Place or at one of the community hubs being developed through the council's CommunityServe Programme across the city (e.g. Herlington Centre, Cross Keys in Westwood and Gladstone Park) to apply and pay for their license.

The hackney carriage and private hire licensing consultation will be launched in July 2017 and in addition to this, letters will be sent out to affected applicants followed up with a face to face meeting at the Peterborough Taxi Association and Peterborough Hackney Drivers Federation.

It is proposed that letters will be sent to all taxi operators and drivers setting out how the online system will work and asking for their feedback. It is also proposed to attend the Peterborough Taxi Association and present the new online taxi licensing system and understand their views and opinions.

The Council will launch a consultation and a communications campaign on 11 July asking for comments on the proposed Payment Strategy 2017 subject to Cabinet approval. This feedback will be reviewed and where appropriate updates will be made to the proposed

processes, alongside consideration of how affected groups might be assisted during any changes.

The council is looking at longer term solutions for verification of individuals and documents.

Which individuals or groups are most likely to be affected?

The Hackney carriage and private hire drivers and operators will be affected by the proposed on-line Taxi application process. This includes a population of approximately 900 drivers and 100 operators.

All applications currently use the existing manual process for taxi applications which involves them visiting a Council building to apply and purchase their taxi and private hire licenses interacting with reception staff at Bayard Place, the Cash Office for payments and officers in Regulatory Services for verification meetings and to date this is the only option for processing and making payments that has been on offer to the applicants.

There is no specific data collected on the equality groups.

Now consider whether any of the following groups will be disproportionately affected:

Equality Group	Note any positive or negative effects
Particular age groups	<p>The age range for the group affected are between 18 and 65. 18-65 (97.8% of existing users) Over 65 (2.2% of existing users)</p> <p>National (UK) data shows the percentage of people who have never used the internet significantly rises from the age of 65. This group of people have traditionally relied on paper based information. However, the national figure for 16-24 year olds who have never used the internet is only 0.7% of the UK population. Therefore, there is a positive impact as a result of being a young person, as this age group tend to want to transact on the internet and specifically on mobile devices.</p> <p>This could have a negative impact for those, specifically older people aged >65, who cannot easily access the internet. These people could feel digitally excluded and anxieties could increase. However, it has a positive impact for those who have internet access and are digitally capable.</p> <p>Support for this group is outlined in the remedial actions section within this document.</p>
Disabled people	<p>New ways of working: Some Mental Health conditions give rise to short attention, concentration or anxiety issues when presented with official forms or carrying out business in a new way. Expectation to contact the council and complete forms by digital means could increase anxiety for some.</p> <p>This will have a negative impact for those who cannot easily access the internet or do not have the mental capability. These people will feel digitally excluded and anxieties could increase. However, it has a positive impact for those who have internet access and are digitally capable.</p>

	<p>Work with the developing community hubs to ensure that local facilities improve disabled accessibility. The council will also work with its website developers to improve the customer experience and develop functionality which will support people with disabilities.</p> <p>The council will also continue to work with the voluntary sector and Peterborough Community Assistance Scheme to ensure help is available to disabled people</p>
Married couples or those entered into a civil partnership	There are no positive or negative impacts as a result of a person's marital status
Pregnant women or women on maternity leave	There are no positive or negative impacts as a result of a person's being pregnant or on maternity
Particular ethnic groups	<p>Adverse impact is probable or certain for the identified group but the online application process as a whole can nevertheless be justified.</p> <p>Part of the online process requires making payment for licences and vehicle plates and the identified group use the cash office for this service. Surveys have indicated that the customers using the Cash Office are predominately from the following wards: Central, Park, East, North and Dogsthorpe - in 2016, 42% of those paying their Council Tax at the Cash Office were from one of these five wards.</p> <p>The 2011 Census data indicated that there is a high percentage of Asian/Asian British identified in the above ward and therefore this group are likely to be users of the cash office.</p> <p>There is impact for the Asian population where their first language is not English. Whilst the website has a translation tool each individual platform does not have a language solution.</p> <p>With regards to people whose first language is not English, current forms and online services are not published in other languages, and the council regulatory officers do not provide any translation services and, therefore, the disadvantage is no greater or less than the current situation.</p> <p>A range of courses for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) are offered to help people with their communication skills for work and to help them in their local communities.</p> <p>There will be no impact in terms of language as the current cash office do not provide translation services. However, Google translate can be used on the website and Community Connectors are available at the community hubs to support people whose first language is not English.</p>
Those of a particular religion or who hold a particular belief	There are no known religions or beliefs that prohibit the use of technology or digital services. Therefore there are no

	positive or negative impacts as a result of a person's religion or belief
Male/Female	There are no positive or negative impacts as a result of a person's gender preference.
Those proposing to undergo, currently undergoing or who have undergone gender reassignment	There are no positive or negative impacts as a result of a person's gender preference.
Sexual orientation	There are no positive or negative impacts as a result of a person's sexual orientation.

What information is available to help you understand the effect this will have on the groups identified above?

The council has planned communications campaigns and making contacts at the various community hubs and libraries to ensure the identified group have access to the internet and digital services which will continue to deliver digital inclusion courses in the community aimed at people aged 65+.

The group identified are more likely to be more digitally aware as they already follow online application processes such as these listed below in their day to day work as well as part of requirements pre application for licenses:

Part of qualification criteria for hackney carriage and private hire drivers and operators is that they are 'fit and proper'.

Pre qualification criteria already followed by our applicants to complete online enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which is an online process.

- >Taxi General Competency course at Peterborough Regional College which is part of prequalification that drivers undergo a Knowledge test.
- > Drivers are already using digital equipment including smart phones which aid navigation as part of their job.
- > Existing DVLA process for sharing license information is done via an on line process.

On this basis there is likely to be little effect on the group identified.

Who will be the beneficiaries of the policy?

Customers who want a quicker process for taxi applications.

Customers who want a much more streamlined application process with all information in one place.

Customers who want more convenient payment options.

Customers who would like 24hours access to the taxi application process which is outside standard operating hours.

In turn the Council will also see efficiencies from the proposed online application as it streamlined and reduces the effort required which in turn will save time and improve overall customer service.

Has the policy been explained to those it might affect directly or indirectly?

The Council will launch a consultation and a communications campaign on 11 July asking for comments on the proposed Payment Strategy 2017. This feedback will be reviewed and

where appropriate updates will be made to the Strategy, alongside consideration of how affected groups might be assisted during any changes.

The hackney carriage and private hire licensing consultation will be launched which is exclusively online scheduled for July 2017 and in addition to this, letters will be sent out to affected applicants followed up with a face to face meeting at the Peterborough Taxi Association.

Can any differences be justified as appropriate or necessary?

The proposed online taxi application process is to align with the council's current and future initiatives, e.g. the implementation of the Front Door project which aims to investigate all customer contact channels and touchpoints across the council between 2016 and 2018 in order to drive channel shift and manage contact demand. This will be delivered by transforming the end to end customer journey through a digital approach which will enable self-serve and increase self-management by customers, and also divert demand away from council services.

The current paper based Taxi Licensing process requires a lot of manual input and a very long-winded convoluted process which is not very convenient in its current offering. The proposed online process has been streamlined and made a lot more efficient i.e. providing applicants with a full comprehensive checklist of pre qualifications criteria and requirements before commencing the application process to ensure a smoother and less time consuming process in turn offering applicants a much better service.

Are any remedial actions required?

It is recognised that for some vulnerable applicants, a digital service can present challenges. For some, there is a lack of skill or confidence in using IT or others may not be able to afford the appropriate equipment. In order to help people to manage, the council has developed a number of services and support into place. Some examples of this include:

- continue to provide, and extend free access, to computers at libraries;
- promote access to computers available in the Community Hubs;
- promote access to computers available in other community facilities;
- map and promote existing digital assistance provided by other organisations, e.g. Barclays Digital Eagles scheme;
- map and promote free wifi hotspots in the city;
- promote recycled computer schemes in the city;
- for key digital services, provide accompanying videos detailing step by step how to use these services;
- include in any digital training, and promote staying safe using the internet;
- target family, friends and carers to support older people to use digital tools;
- continue targeting vulnerable people through digital inclusion, whilst also training someone in the community to also be able to deliver the training; and
- provision of digital "pop ups" at key locations in the community.

Once implemented, how will you monitor the actual impact?

The regulatory officer responsible for taxi licensing processes and application will monitor the newly proposed process and business as usual processes under current governing rules and regulatory requirements and reported on regularly.

Policy review date	
Assessment completed by	Angela Nottingham, Sandra Mushili & Vicki Palazon
Date Initial EqIA completed	29/06/2017
Signed by Head of Service	

Equality Impact Assessment:

Full assessment

Name/title of the policy area/strand or programme with which this assessment is concerned

Online Taxi Licensing process

Description/summary of the policy area/strand or programme

Taxi Licensing

It is proposed to replace the current paper based taxi and private hire licensing application, which is administered at the Cash Office with an online process. The current process involves customers visiting a Council building to apply and purchase their taxi and private hire licenses to interact with reception staff at Bayard Place, the Cash Office and officers in Regulatory Services. The online system will be accessed through the council's website My Account functionality and allow customers to apply and pay for their taxi and private hire licences, badges and plates.

There will be a face to face verification meeting with an officer in regulatory services once online applications have been submitted where applicants will bring in original documents for validation and also a follow up of any other areas that require further clarification by the regulatory officer, a sample of the some of the original documents required listed below for the 3 main application processes:

Taxi Driver Application

Right to work identification, Taxi General Competency course pass certificate, Driving & local knowledge test pass certificate, Medical certificate, Driving License, DBS certificate.

Vehicle License Application

Insurance documents for your vehicle, V5C (log book/registration document), Vehicle test certificate.

Taxi Operator

Right to work identification, Statement of good conductor, Statement of fares to be charged in vehicles, Basic disclosure.

The proposal is to replace the current manual system with an online portal accessed through the council's Digital Services Hub (DiSH) MyAccount. The online Taxi Licensing portal being proposed will also have a calendarised booking facility for customers to book their verification meeting once application and deposit is submitted. They will be able to go online via various devices (e.g. Smartphones (Apple and android), PCs, tablets, laptops, etc) or at one of the community hubs being developed through the council's CommunityServe Programme across the city (e.g. Herlington Centre, Cross Keys in Westwood and Gladstone Park) to apply, activate and pay for their license.

It is proposed that letters will be sent to all taxi operators and drivers setting out how the online system will work and asking for their feedback. It is also proposed to attend the Peterborough Taxi Association and present the new online taxi licensing system and understand their views and opinions.

The evidence base (list the principal sources of relevant evidence, both quantitative and qualitative).

The Hackney carriage and private hire drivers and operators will be affected by the proposed online Taxi application process. This includes a population of approximately 900 drivers and 100 operators in the Peterborough area.

The entire population of applications currently use the existing manual process for taxi application which includes making payments in the Cash Office and to date this is the only option for processing and making payments that has been on offer to the applicants.

What the evidence shows – keys facts

The Hackney carriage and private hire drivers and operators consisting of approximately 900 drivers and 100 operators in the Peterborough area will be affected by the proposed online Taxi application process, and 97.8% of those are between ages of 18-65 and 2.2% over 65.

Challenges and opportunities

(indicate the policy’s potential to reduce and remove existing inequalities)

Opportunities:

- The provision of an online process offering a 24 hour service to access the application process and convenient payment options.
- The provision for customers that want a quicker process for taxi applications.
- Customers will have a much more streamlined application process with all information in one place.

Challenges:

- Ensuring that applicants, particularly in the affected wards, are clear how they can make payments in the future and complete online applications
- Ensuring applicants who do not have digital access, are able to access this in the community.

Summary of Equality Impact Assessment

It is recognised that there will be an impact on existing applicants of taxi licenses, however there is sufficient mitigation and alternatives outlined to ensure a negative impact is not experienced by any applicant.

The consultation feedback process will also help inform the strategy and the approach ahead of any formal decisions.

Next Steps

Update the Equality Impact Assessment and the Payment Strategy 2017 following feedback from the consultation.

A final decision on the proposal to move taxi licensing online will be made on 25 September 2017.

This equality impact assessment as a whole is a living document and that, accordingly, it will be revised and updated, as appropriate, in the light of further evidence, discussions and representations

Policy review date	
Assessment completed by	Angela Nottingham, Sandra Mushili & Vicki Palazon
Date Full EqlA completed	29/06/2017
Signed by Head of Service	

Please send your completed assessment to equalityimpactassessments@peterborough.gov.uk. The Compliance Team will ensure that the assessment is published on the website.