

Equality impact assessment (EIA) form:

Evidencing paying due regard to protected characteristics

(Form updated October 2023)

Inclusive Service Plan (ISP) for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing

If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please contact the Communications Unit on 01609 53 2013 or email communications@northyorks.gov.uk.

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।
如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。
اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔



Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are public documents. EIAs accompanying reports going to County Councillors for decisions are published with the committee papers on our website and are available in hard copy at the relevant meeting. To help people to find completed EIAs we also publish them in the Equality and Diversity section of our website. This will help people to see for themselves how we have paid due regard in order to meet statutory requirements.

Name of Directorate and Service Area	Environment, Licensing
Lead Officer and contact details	Simon Fisher, Service Development Lead simon.fisher@northyorks.gov.uk
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the EIA	Gareth Bentley, Head of Licensing gareth.bentley@northyorks.gov.uk
How will you pay due regard? e.g. working group, individual officer	Individual officers
When did the due regard process start?	January 2024

Section 1. Please describe briefly what this EIA is about. (e.g. are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, stopping doing something?)

It is proposed to adopt a new Inclusive Service Plan (ISP) in relation to hackney carriage and private hire licensing in accordance with the Department for Transport's Best Practice Guidance.

The draft ISP sets out the proposed strategy for making transport more inclusive in relation to hackney carriage and private hire vehicle provision in North Yorkshire.

Among the recommendations in the draft ISP is to introduce a new requirement for all new applications for hackney carriage vehicle licences to be in respect of either a wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV), a zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) or a hybrid electric vehicle (HEV) that meets the Euro 6 standards for emissions.

Section 2. Why is this being proposed? What are the aims? What does the authority hope to achieve by it? (e.g. to save money, meet increased demand, do things in a better way.)

On 21 February 2023, the Executive of North Yorkshire County Council committed to developing a new ISP with a view to making transport more inclusive in relation to hackney carriage and private hire vehicle provision in North Yorkshire.

In November 2023, the Department for Transport published its new Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice Guidance, which recommends that licensing authorities develop and maintain an ISP to describe:

- the demand for accessible services in their area
- the authority's strategy for making transport more inclusive
- the steps that the authority will take to improve the inclusivity of the taxi and private hire vehicle services; and
- the courses or assessments authorities require applicants to undertake.

The objectives of the draft ISP are:

- to improve the access and availability of licensed vehicles sufficiently to satisfy the demand for accessible services from wheelchair users and non-wheelchair users
- to promote passenger rights by providing information in formats that all passengers can access in relation to the service that can be expected when travelling in hackney carriage and private hire vehicles
- to deliver effective enforcement to ensure that users of licensed vehicles can be confident that any reports of non-compliance will be appropriately addressed; and
- to enhance the understanding of all licensed drivers, proprietors and operators in relation to the needs and legal rights of disabled people.

The Council has previously attempted to encourage more wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) to be licensed in North Yorkshire by waiving the licence fee and relaxing the age limits. However, the number of hackney carriage WAVs in North Yorkshire remains very low and there is no reasonable expectation that this will change without further intervention.

Alternative options have subsequently been considered to address the shortage of wheelchair accessible vehicles (including imposing a mandatory wheelchair accessible requirement on all licensed vehicles). The current proposal, however, is considered a more reasonable and proportionate measure to satisfy the Council's public sector equality duty and its air quality obligations without imposing an unnecessary regulatory burden on businesses.

Subsequent to the consultation, further options have been explored and not considered any further as detailed below:

Applying the same WAV rules to private hire vehicles – Private hire vehicles are always pre-booked meaning that the needs of the customer can be discussed before a vehicle is dispatched, which is not always possible in the case of hackney carriage vehicles. The proposed revised Policy places a new requirement on private hire operators to discuss the specific needs of a customer before making a booking. Private hire businesses often specialise to service a specific sector of the market e.g. executive contracts, home to school transport, airport runs etc. Such a policy could prevent the business operating in these markets. Private hire operators may also choose to relocate to another local authority area to avoid the new controls.

Restricting new drivers to WAV vehicles permanently or for a time limited period – The law does not permit this. The Council cannot condition a hackney carriage drivers licence restricting the type of vehicle that can be used.

Putting restrictions on larger Private Hire Operators licences requiring that a prescribed number of WAV vehicles be provided –

Such an approach would be easy to circumvent as separate private hire operator licences could be held by a number of individuals involved in the business.

Providing funding to the trade to assist them in providing WAVs.- A source of funding could not be identified. Any future opportunities will be explored.

Making no change to current policy in relation to WAVs. - The Council needs to identify a way to increase the number of WAV's.

For these practical and legal reasons none of these options were considered appropriate.

Further measures (including provision of information relating to passengers' rights and the Council's approach to dealing with complaints) are proposed to enhance the quality of the service offered by the licensed trade to all passengers with or without disabilities.

Section 3. What will change? What will be different for customers and/or staff?

If the ISP recommendations are implemented into the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy following consultation, all applications for new hackney carriage vehicle licences must be in respect of either a wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV), a zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) or a hybrid electric vehicle (HEV) that meets the Euro 6 standards for emissions.

The proposed revision will narrow the scope of vehicles that may be licensed as hackney carriages in North Yorkshire and therefore may have cost implications on proprietors of licensed vehicles.

The proposal is intended to ensure that all customers are able to utilise hackney carriage services in future and an improved service will be offered to all passengers.

Customers will also have more access to information on passengers' rights and the Council's approach to dealing with complaints.

There will be minor changes for staff who will be advising the public and trade of the ISP and implementing any changes in their day-to-day procedures.

Section 4. Involvement and consultation (What involvement and consultation has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results? What consultation will be needed and how will it be done?)

Subject to Executive approval, the draft ISP will be consulted on for a period of 12 weeks to gauge the views of the public, the licensed trade and any other interested parties, including wheelchair users and their representatives. The Communications Team will be fully engaged in delivering the consultation. Any responses to the consultation will be considered by the Executive in due course prior to a decision being made.

Section 5. What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

The proposals are cost neutral. The vast majority of the licensing authority's service costs (including the proposed consultation and any subsequent meetings) are recovered by way of licence fees and the service will continue to operate on the same cost-recovery basis in future.

Section 6. How will this proposal affect people with protected characteristics?	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
Age		✓		Mobility difficulties and accessibility needs are often more prominent with age. The draft ISP seeks to enhance the availability of suitable vehicles for wheelchair users. Further measures are proposed to enhance the quality of the service offered by the licensed trade to ambulant passengers with mobility difficulties and accessibility needs.
Disability		✓		The draft ISP seeks to enhance the availability of suitable vehicles for wheelchair users. Further measures are proposed to enhance the quality of the service offered by the licensed trade to wheelchair users and ambulant disabled passengers.
Sex	✓			
Race	✓			
Gender reassignment	✓			
Sexual orientation	✓			
Religion or belief	✓			
Pregnancy or maternity	✓			
Marriage or civil partnership	✓			

Section 7. How will this proposal affect people who...	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
..live in a rural area?	✓			
...have a low income?	✓			
...are carers (unpaid family or friend)?		✓		The draft ISP seeks to enhance the availability of suitable vehicles for wheelchair users, which should assist carers. Further measures are proposed to enhance the quality of the service offered by the licensed trade to wheelchair users, ambulant disabled passengers and their carers, family and friends.
..... are from the Armed Forces Community	✓			

Section 8. Geographic impact – Please detail where the impact will be (please tick all that apply)	
North Yorkshire wide	✓
Craven	
Hambleton	
Harrogate	
Richmondshire	
Ryedale	
Scarborough	
Selby	
If you have ticked one or more areas, will specific town(s)/village(s) be particularly impacted? If so, please specify below.	

<p>Section 9. Will the proposal affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics? (e.g. older women or young gay men) State what you think the effect may be and why, providing evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.</p> <p>People of advanced age and with a disability will benefit more because of the improved access to wheelchair accessible vehicles.</p>	
<p>Section 10. Next steps to address the anticipated impact. Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen. (Remember: we have an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services and work for us)</p>	<p>Tick option chosen</p>
<p>1. No adverse impact - no major change needed to the proposal. There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified.</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>2. Adverse impact - adjust the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We will change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or we will achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people.</p>	
<p>3. Adverse impact - continue the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We cannot change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, nor can we achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people. (There must be compelling reasons for continuing with proposals which will have the most adverse impacts. Get advice from Legal Services)</p>	
<p>4. Actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and remove the proposal – The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It must be stopped.</p>	
<p>Explanation of why option has been chosen. (Include any advice given by Legal Services.)</p> <p>The draft ISP is designed to enhance access for wheelchair users and to improve the service for all people with disabilities. The impact can only be a positive one.</p>	

<p>Section 11. If the proposal is to be implemented how will you find out how it is really affecting people? (How will you monitor and review the changes?)</p> <p>The draft ISP makes arrangements for evaluation and review 12 months from implementation. Ongoing dialogue with the trade and disabled passengers (including wheelchair users). Monitoring the number of wheelchair accessible vehicles.</p>
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<p>Section 12. Action plan. List any actions you need to take which have been identified in this EIA, including post implementation review to find out how the outcomes have been achieved in practice and what impacts there have actually been on people with protected characteristics.</p>				
Action	Lead	By when	Progress	Monitoring arrangements
Evaluation and review 12 months from implementation.	Gareth Bentley and Simon Fisher	1 April 2026		Head of Licensing / Service Plan / quarterly KPIs

Ongoing dialogue with the trade and wheelchair users.	Gareth Bentley and Simon Fisher	Ongoing and by 1 April 2026		Head of Licensing
Monitoring the number of wheelchair and fully electric vehicles.	Gareth Bentley and Simon Fisher	Ongoing and by 1 April 2026		Head of Licensing / quarterly KPIs

Section 13. Summary Summarise the findings of your EIA, including impacts, recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

Research indicates that there is a shortage of licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) in North Yorkshire, and this is supported by comparisons with national data. The draft ISP is designed to enhance the availability of wheelchair accessible hackney carriage vehicles in the area.

The recommendation is to consult on the proposals and consider any responses in due course with a view to implementing the new ISP, with or without further amendments.

Legal Services have been involved in the drafting of the ISP and in the preparation of the report.

Section 14. Sign off section

This full EIA was completed by:

Name: Gareth Bentley
Job title: Head of Licensing
Directorate: Environment
Signature:
Completion date: 06.02.2026

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): Callum McKeon

Date: 6 February 2026