



Equality impact assessment (EIA) form: evidencing paying due regard to protected characteristics
(Form updated October 2023)

Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

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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 پوچھیے۔



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 revise the Council's existing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

The proposed policy incorporates the new Best Practice Guidance published by the Department for Transport and seeks to enhance the availability of wheelchair accessible hackney carriage vehicles in North Yorkshire.

The proposed revisions include introducing a new requirement for all new hackney carriage vehicle applications to be in respect of either a wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV), a zero emission vehicle (ZEV) or a hybrid electric vehicle (HEV).

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.)

It is necessary to continually revise the policy to take account of national guidance and any changes in local circumstances. The public sector equality duty has been considered in drafting the proposals and will continue to be considered throughout.

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. As is the case in many parts of the country, the demand for wheelchair accessible hackney carriage vehicles is not currently being met by the licensed trade in North Yorkshire.

The proposed revisions are intended to enhance the availability of licensed wheelchair accessible hackney carriage vehicles sufficiently to satisfy the demand for accessible services.

Alternative options have already been explored to encourage more wheelchair accessible vehicles to be licensed in North Yorkshire by waiving the licence fee and relaxing the age limits on WAVs. 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 draft policy is adopted following consultation, all applications for new hackney carriage vehicle licences from 1st April 2026 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 Standard 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 have better access to hackney carriage services in future.

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 revised policy 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?)

A 12-week consultation exercise resulted in significant feedback from the trade, the public, wheelchair users and other interested parties. In general, the consultation indicates that the trade considers the proposed hackney carriage vehicle specification to be the best of the options put forward, although some believe the proposal is overly restrictive. Wheelchair users and other respondents generally call for more stringent restrictions being imposed to promote accessibility.

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 proposals seek 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 proposals seek 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 proposals seek 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 to customers with mobility difficulties accessibility needs.
..... 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.	

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.	
People of advanced age and with a disability will benefit more because of the improved access to wheelchair accessible vehicles.	
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)	Tick option chosen
1. No adverse impact - no major change needed to the proposal. There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified.	✓
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>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 proposed revisions to policy are designed to improve access for wheelchair users. 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>Further consultation and policy revision 12 months from implementation. Ongoing dialogue with the trade and disabled passengers (including wheelchair users). Monitoring the number of wheelchair accessible and zero-emission 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
Further consultation and policy revision 12 months from implementation.	Gareth Bentley and Simon Fisher	1 April 2027		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 2027		Head of Licensing
Monitoring the number of wheelchair and fully electric vehicles.	Gareth Bentley and Simon Fisher	Ongoing and by 1 April 2027		Head of Licensing / quarterly KPIs

<p>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.</p> <p>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 proposals are designed to enhance the availability of wheelchair accessible hackney carriage vehicles in the area.</p>
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The recommendation is to introduce a new requirement for all new hackney carriage vehicle applications to be in respect of either wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs), zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) or hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs) that meet the Euro 6 Standard for emissions.

Legal Services have been involved in the drafting of the proposed policy revisions 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:

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): Callum McKeon

Date: 6 February 2026