



Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford

Contact Jim Dean
Direct Dial 01785 619209
Email jdean@staffordbc.gov.uk

Dear Members

Cabinet

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held on **Monday 7 July 2025 at 6.30pm** in the **Craddock Room, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford** to deal with the business as set out on the agenda.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded.

Members are reminded that contact officers are shown at the top of each report and members are welcome to raise questions etc in advance of the meeting with the appropriate officer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Dean".

Head of Law and Governance

CABINET - 7 JULY 2025

Chair - Councillor A T A Godfrey

AGENDA

- 1 Minutes of 29 May 2025 as circulated and published on 30 May 2025
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Councillors' Question Time (if any)
- 4 Proposals of the Cabinet Members (as follows):-

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(i) VfM Progress Report - Quarter 4/End of Year Report for 2024/25		3 - 24
(ii) End of Year performance Report for 2024/25		25 - 64
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Report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).		
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Membership

Chair - Councillor A T A Godfrey

A T A Godfrey	- Leader
R Kenney	- Deputy Leader (Town Centres Regeneration Portfolio)
R P Cooke	- Resources Portfolio
I D Fordham	- Environment Portfolio
J Hood	- Community Portfolio
G P K Pardesi	- Leisure Portfolio
A N Pearce	- Climate Action and Nature Recovery Portfolio
A F Reid	- Economic Development and Planning Portfolio

Agenda Item 4(a)i

VFM Progress Report - Quarter 4/End of Year Report for 2024-25

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 7 July 2025

Report of: Head of Transformation and Assurance

Portfolio: Resources Portfolio

The following matter was considered by Audit and Accounts Committee at its meeting on 25 June 2025 and is submitted to Cabinet as required.

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress in the delivery of the VFM Improvement Plan at the end of Quarter 4 2024/25.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress made in 2024/25 in the delivery of the VFM Improvement Plan set out at **APPENDIX 1**;
- 2.2 To note the proposals for refocusing the improvement plan for 2025/26 as set out in 5.7.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.3 The information allows Cabinet to ensure that all appropriate steps are being taken to address the findings of the External Auditors and improve the Council's governance arrangements.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Council's External Auditor's Annual Report (AAR) for 2021/22 and 2022/23, highlighted several significant issues relating to the Council's financial, governance and asset arrangements and made recommendations for addressing these.
- 3.2 An improvement plan to address the issues was drawn up and approved by the Audit and Accounts Committee (13 February 2024) and subsequently by Council (27 February 2024).
- 3.3 This report sets out the progress made at the end of 2024/25. Of the 37 actions due to be completed, 76% have been completed or are on target.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 Good governance and financial management specifically links to the Council's priority to be "an effective Council" and the objectives relating to:

- Value for money to local taxpayers.
- Good governance across the Council.

It also underpins the delivery of the Council's other corporate priorities and operational services.

5 Report Detail

5.1 As part of the work of the External Auditors, they are required to undertake a review of the Council's arrangements for Value for Money and their findings are set out in the Annual Audit Report for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

5.2 The AAR for 2021/22 and 2022/23 identified several areas of concern relating to the Council's financial, governance and asset arrangements and made recommendations for addressing these. One statutory recommendation was made and this is being progressed as a priority.

5.3 The External Auditors acknowledged that there has been a lack of capacity in key service areas to address these issues. The Council has sought to address this by agreeing additional funds as part of the budget process for the Finance and Transformation Teams.

5.4 A VFM improvement plan has been produced to address the issues raised in the AAR. The timescales for implementation were revised in discussions with the Council's new External Auditors and approved by Cabinet in December 2024.

5.5 At the end of 2024/25, of the 37 actions due for delivery:

- 28 (76%) have been completed or are in progress; and
- 6 (16%) of the actions are behind schedule; and
- 3 (8%) of the actions are no longer applicable.

A commentary on progress for each of the actions up to the end of quarter 4 of 2024/25 is set out in **APPENDIX 1**.

5.6 Steady progress continues to be made in completing the actions set out in the improvement plan. The key achievement in quarter 4 is the publication of the statement of accounts for 2023/24. This means that all of the Council's outstanding accounts have been published in 2024/25, although they have not been audited. All of the actions for quarter 4 (2023/24) through to quarter 2 (2024/25) have now been completed in full. There has been some slippage in quarters 3 and 4 due to ongoing capacity issues within the Finance Team and for the Head of Transformation and Assurance. The proposals for Local Government Reorganisation are also going to have an impact on capacity and the delivery of a number of the actions set out in the improvement plan.

5.7 In preparation for reporting on progress in 2025/26, it is proposed to remove all of the actions that have been completed up to the end of 2024/25 from the improvement plan to allow us to focus on the work that still needs to be done. It is also proposed to re-title the action plan as the Governance Improvement Plan as all of the actions are related to the Council's governance arrangements and indeed many of the External Auditor's recommendations emanated from our Annual Governance Statement. The updated Governance Improvement Plan will be approved as part of the Annual Governance Statement process for 2024/25 and this will allow us to add any actions arising from this year's Annual Governance Review.

5.8 Progress in delivering the actions set out in the improvement plan will continue to be overseen by:

- The Leadership Team; and
- Audit and Accounts Committee.

The Audit and Accounts Committee will escalate any concerns to Cabinet and the Cabinet will also receive periodic updates.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

A failure to deliver good governance, which includes the delivery of the improvement plan, has been included in the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: VFM Improvement Plan - Summary of Progress

8 Previous Consideration

Audit and Accounts Committee - 25 June 2025 - Minute No TBC

9 Background Papers

Report to Audit and Accounts Committee 13 February 2024

Contact Officer: Judith Aupers

Telephone Number: 01543 464411

Ward Interest: All

Report Track: Audit and Accounts Committee 25 June 2025

Cabinet 7 July 2025

Key Decision: No

VFM Improvement Plan - Progress Report

Summary of Progress at 31 March 2025

Quarter					No longer applicable	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule		
Q4 2023/24	13					13
Q1 2024/25	1					1
Q2 2024/25	2					2
Q3 2024/25	2	2	1	2	3	10
Q4 2024/25	4	4	3			11
Q1 2025/26						14
Q2 2025/26						5
Q3 2025/26						5
Q4 2025/26						3
Cumulative Total to Date	22 (60%)	6 (16%)	4 (11%)	2 (5%)	3 (8%)	37 at the end of Q4

Commentary on Progress

Steady progress continues to be made, though there is some slippage due to ongoing capacity issues.

The key achievements in quarter 4 are the publication of the statement of accounts for 2023/24, the updating of the procurement regulations and the completion of the consultation on the new corporate plan.

Two of the actions from Q3 have been changed from being on target to no longer applicable. These relate to the work on transformation. Although the transformation strategy has been approved and preparatory work undertaken, further work is now under review due to the proposals for Local Government Reorganisation. It is considered that a more modest change programme is likely to be delivered and a report is to be prepared for Cabinet in quarter 1 setting out the revised plans for the future.

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
Quarter 4 2023-24						
1.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2024/25 to 2026/27 drafted and approved by Cabinet and Council. Modelling, assumptions and risk assessment included as part of the budget report. MTFS includes assessment of likely future government funding.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer		Completed	
2.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Capital Strategy to be updated in accordance with the revised Prudential Code.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer		Completed	
3.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Bring treasury strategy and its reporting to members up to date	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer		Completed	
4.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Produce draft financial statements in line with statutory requirements and working with external auditors to deliver audits effectively. (Decision to be made on outstanding audits as there is a consultation taking place as to how to clear the backlog of audits nationally at present)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	This is to be discussed with Azets as to approach	Agreed with GT/Azets not to audit the 21/22 and 22/23 accounts. This is in line with the national statutory dispensation which has been approved by Parliament. The Accounts for both years have been completed and reported to the Audit and Accounts Committee (20 November 2024).	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
5.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Draft accounts published up to 2023/24	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	The draft accounts for 2021-22 and 2022-23 have been published.	
7.	Corporate Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (Key Rec 1)	Align the MTFS to the corporate priorities in the Council's Business Plan including the costed climate change actions	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Head of Transformation and Assurance		Completed as part of budget setting 2024/25	
8.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Implement outstanding recommendation from Cyber and Network Security Audit - staff to complete cyber training	Chief Technology Officer and Information Manager	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Staff have completed cyber training	
9.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Finalise the change management strategy	Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Change Management Strategy has been approved by Leadership Team	
10.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Finalise Information Governance Framework	Head of Law and Governance	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Completed - approved by Cabinet	
11.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Review of risks in annual budget report to be consistent with corporate process	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer		Completed	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
12.	Other Related Actions	Review of Audit Reporting to Leadership Team and escalation protocols	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 2023/24	Completed - quarterly progress reports are being discussed at Leadership Team	
13.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Review of risk management policy and framework - includes review of format of the Strategic Risk Register (SRR)	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Approved by Leadership Team. To be approved by Cabinet on 5 December 2024.	
14.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Review of guidelines on risk implications for committee reports	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Approved by Leadership Team.	
Quarter 1 2024-25						
16.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Restructure of the Finance Team and creation of additional capacity	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	Restructure agreed.	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
Quarter 2 2024-25						
25.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Commence recruitment to new Finance team structure	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer and Deputy S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Recruitment for 2 senior posts was unsuccessful. The team are now reviewing the future needs of the department and considering whether trying to recruit to these posts again would be the best course of action. Recruitment for 2 finance business partner posts has been successful; one has commenced their employment and the other starts on 14 April.	
40.	Other Related Actions (from AGS 2023-24)	Review of project management arrangements and project planning for the delivery of the town centre schemes.	Head of Economic Development and Planning	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Additional interim consultancy resource has been appointed to support the programme/project management of the Stafford town centre regeneration projects. Board meetings, steering groups and weekly project team meetings have been re-established; with regular review of project plans and programmes.	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
Quarter 3 2024-25						
17.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Regular performance monitoring to be re-established with budget managers and Leadership Team.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 3 2024/25	Period 6 monitoring for 2024-25 has been completed and has been reported in the budget setting report for 2025/26. Period 9 monitoring has been completed and is making its way through the reporting cycle at present	
18.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Reporting on the delivery of savings to be established and discussed at Strategic Leadership Team meetings. Where appropriate, project plans will be developed to support the delivery of significant/complex savings.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 3 2024/25	As per the 2025/26 budget, there is no material savings programme in place.	N/A
19.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Update IT security policy and adopt a cyber security policy.	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 3 2024/25	The policy has been reviewed and is to go to Leadership Team for approval in May 2025.	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
20.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Provide refresher training to ensure compliance with process for 3 rd party data transfers and completion of privacy impact assessments.	Chief Technology Officer and Information Manager	Quarter 3 2024/25	The Data Transfer Policy has been reviewed and the refresher training has been delivered.	
21.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Complete the IT strategy	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Quarter 3 2024/25	The Digital Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 5 December 2024.	
23.	HR related issues (Improvement Recs 1 and 3)	Complete review of hybrid working. This will inform the development of the workforce strategy and the review of the Code of Conduct as well as support the development of an asset strategy.	Head of Transformation and Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 3 2024/25	A report has been drafted and is still with the Head of Service for review. Progress on this has slipped again due to work on the Local Government Reorganisation submission taking precedence. The report will now be presented to Leadership Team in Q1 2025/26	
26.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Lesson learnt exercise to be undertaken of implementation of the finance system	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 3 2024/25	Work on this has been deferred due to the ongoing capacity issues in the Finance Team. It has been rescheduled for Q1.	
27.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Training of managers in budget management and use of the new finance system.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 3 2024/25	The first session has been delivered to Leadership Team. The sessions with managers will be delivered during Q1 25/26.	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
33.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	Establish corporate project resources to support transformation work (funding allocated in 2024/25 budget)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 3 2024/25	<p>The team structure was approved as part of the report to Cabinet on the Transformation Strategy (5 December 2024). However, this work is under review in light of the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) proposals. A report will be prepared for Cabinet's consideration in Q1 2025/26.</p>	N/A
43.	Corporate Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (Key Rec 1)	<p>Process to be established for developing a service transformation and efficiency programme.</p> <p>Initial steps for both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a discussion with the Cabinet to review priorities and key projects; • engagement with Heads of Service and Service Managers to review current service levels for statutory and discretionary services (to include high level benchmarking) - this will be a pre-cursor to bringing the services together and establish the baseline for service transformation (this will build on the initial work done on SLAs). 	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 3 - 2024/25	<p>A review of key priority projects has been undertaken and this was approved by Cabinet on 7 November 2024.</p> <p>A transformation strategy and plan has been developed. This was approved by Cabinet on 5 December 2024. The report also sets out the proposals for creating a transformation team.</p> <p>As referred to above, the work on Transformation is under review in light of LGR.</p>	N/A

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of options for efficiency savings and transformation <p>Transformation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformation options to be assessed and added to transformation programme for prioritisation. Will need to consider any investment required to deliver savings/service improvements; resourcing to deliver the changes, etc Project Manager and Project support officer to be recruited to support delivery of transformation programme, funding allocated in budget 2024/25 to fund posts; Training of managers and key officers in transformation techniques 				
Quarter 4 2024-25						
5.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Draft accounts published up to 2023/24	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	The draft accounts were published on 28 February 2025.	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
6.	Corporate Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (Key Rec 1)	Consultation to take place with stakeholders as part of development of new corporate plan and priorities.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Public consultation completed on the new corporate plan and priorities.	
15.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	Update the contracts register and ensure it is compliant with transparency requirements	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work on this has slipped and will now commence in Q1.	
22.	HR related issues (Improvement Recs 1 and 3)	Establish our culture, values and type of organisation we want to be. This work will inform the following actions	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Put on hold pending further discussion in light of Local Government Reorganisation. Considering a light touch approach.	
24.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Training for Leadership Team, managers, team leaders/principal officers on risk management	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Risk management training and workshops completed with Leadership Team and dates arranged for workshops with managers.	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
30.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Develop assurance reporting for IT eg report on outcome of annual health check/penetration testing to Leadership Team and Audit Committee	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work has commenced on the IT Assurance report and this will be reported to Leadership Team in May and the Audit Committee in June 2025.	
31.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Review of what we include in procurements re ICT controls and information governance	Head of Transformation and Assurance, Chief Technology Officer, Head of Law and Governance and Information Manager	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work is in progress and will be completed in Q1	
34.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	Review of all projects, the current governance arrangements and establish project reporting to Leadership Team	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Deputy Chief Executive (Place)	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work on this has not yet commenced - review to be undertaken in Q1 to set the framework for 2025/26	
37.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	Review and update the Procurement Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Head of Transformation and Assurance and Head of Law and Governance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Completed. Revised Procurement Regulations approved by Council 11 February 2025	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
38.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	The key elements of the procurement strategy will be built into the procurement regulations rather than as a stand-alone document.	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Completed as part of the review of the Procurement Regulations.	
56.	Fraud (Key Rec 3)	Assess fraud risks and include in risk registers as appropriate	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager and Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work in progress as part of the development of operational risk registers	
Quarter 1 2025-26						
28.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Review of Financial Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
35.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Develop risk registers for each Directorate and ICT	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Deputy Chief Executive (Place) and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
36.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Establish escalation process between other risk registers and the SRR eg services, projects	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
			Auditor & Risk Manager			
39.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	Provide training for managers on procurement and contract management	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
41.	Other Related Actions (from AGS 2023-24)	Preparation of a transformation plan for Development Management to further reduce the backlog of planning applications and to manage this within the approved budget.	Head of Economic Development and Planning	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
44.	Corporate Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (Key Rec 1)	Consultation and engagement to be embedded into the planning for the delivery of key projects where appropriate to ensure schemes meet community needs eg regeneration projects, redevelopment of play areas	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
45.	Fraud (Key Rec 3)	Review Anti - Fraud and Bribery Policy	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
46.	Fraud (Key Rec 3)	Review of Confidential Reporting Policy	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
47.	Fraud (Key Rec 3)	Assess compliance against Cipfa 2014 Code for Fraud and develop an action plan as necessary	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
57.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	Develop and adopt a performance management framework to establish golden thread from Corporate Plan to service plans through to employee reviews. Framework to include protocols for ensuring data quality	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
58.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	Review our performance report style - delivery plans and KPIs. To consider the development of performance outcome measures	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
59.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	Performance reporting for waste and leisure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review of KPIs for monitoring and reporting on performance; • establish internal validation process of contract performance; and • review information reported to Cabinet / Scrutiny 	Head of Transformation and Assurance, Head of Operations and Head of Wellbeing	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
60.	Other Related Actions	Review of Code of Governance	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
61.	Fraud (Key Rec 3)	Review the information we report on fraud work (including data matching) to the Audit Committee.	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26		
Quarter 2 2025-26						
29.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Training for managers on Financial Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Quarter 2 - 2025/26		
32.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	Establish a Corporate Project Management Methodology. Provide templates, guidelines, and training for key officers (LT, Service Managers and key Principal Officers/Team Leaders).	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2025/26		
48.	HR related issues (Improvement Recs 1 and 3)	Develop a hybrid working policy and review other related policies and processes.	Head of Transformation and Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 2 - 2025/26		
54.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Implementation of remaining module of the finance system, ongoing development and maximising use of system functionality	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2025/26		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
55.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Performance reporting for Cabinet and Scrutiny to be developed. This will be done alongside the review and development of performance and risk reporting.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2025/26		
Quarter 3 2025-26						
42.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Follow-on zero-based budgeting session with managers to continue work started as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 3 - 2025/26 for 26/27 budget setting		
49.	HR related issues (Improvement Recs 1 and 3)	Review and update the Employee Code of Conduct	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Head of Law and Governance	Quarter 3 2025/26		
50.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	Work with managers and the County's Procurement Team to develop a procurements pipeline	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 3 2025/26		
51.	Procurement and Contract Management	Process to be established for publication of key data on the Council's website to meet	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Head of	Quarter 3 2025/26		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
	(Improvement Rec 5)	transparency requirements re spend data, contracts register	Transformation and Assurance			
53.	Other Related Actions (from AGS 2023-24)	Review of Scheme of Delegations as part of shared services transformation.	Monitoring Officer and Leadership Team	Quarter 3 2025/26		
Quarter 4 2025-26						
52.	Other Related Actions	Establish an inventory of key policies and a programme of periodic reviews	Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2025/26		
62.	HR related issues (Improvement Recs 1 and 3)	Development of a workforce strategy that links to long term transformation/shared services	Head of Transformation and Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 4 - 2025/26		
63.	Other Related Actions	Development of Assurance Model	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2025/26		

Agenda Item 4(a)ii

End of Year Performance Report for 2024-25

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 7 July 2025

Report of: Head of Transformation and Assurance

Portfolio: Councillor R P Cooke, Resources Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress in delivering the Council's priorities and performance at the end of 2024-25.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress made at the end of 2024/25 relating to the delivery of the Council's priorities and performance as set out in **APPENDICES 1 AND 2**.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 The performance information allows Cabinet to monitor progress in delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and operational services.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) for 2024/25 have been produced pending the development of a new Corporate Business Plan. They set out the Council's key strategic and operational priorities and the key actions to deliver these.
- 3.2 Overall, 79% of the key actions have been delivered or are on schedule to be completed. Progress in delivering the PDPs is summarised in 5.3 of the report and set out in detail in **APPENDICES 1A TO 1D**.
- 3.3 With regard to the operational performance of the key services of the Council, 67% of targets have been met or exceeded. Further details can be found at 5.6 and in **APPENDIX 2**.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The indicators and actions contribute individually to all of the Council's priorities.

5 Report Detail

5.1 The Corporate Business Plan 2021-24 sets out the Council's overarching priorities. Pending the development of the new corporate business plan, the overarching priority themes remain the same but new priority delivery plans have been developed setting out the key strategic and operational priority projects and the key actions to deliver these.

Priority Delivery Plans

5.2 The Priority Delivery Plans are set out in **APPENDICES 1A TO 1D**, to this report. These plans establish the actions and timetable for delivery and form the basis of the Council's performance reporting framework.

5.3 A commentary on performance and a rating for each of the actions set out in the Delivery Plans is given in **APPENDICES 1A TO 1D**. A summary of progress, by rating, is given in table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of progress in delivery of key projects/actions as at end of 2024/25

Performance Rating	Action complete	Work on Target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	No longer applicable	Total Number of Actions
Corporate Business Plan Priority					N/A	
The Economy	20	2	5			27
Community	17	2	5			24
Climate Change	2		1			3
The Council	10	3	2		2	17
Total	49 (69%)	7 (10%)	13 (18%)		2 (3%)	71

5.4 At the end of 2024/25, of the 71 projects/actions due for delivery in this period:

- 56 (79%) have been completed or are on target to be completed;
- 13 (18%) are behind schedule; and
- 2 (3%) are no longer applicable.

5.5 The key project successes during 2024/25 are:

- Commencement of demolition works in Stafford town centre;
- Completion of station approach project;
- Creation of a play area improvement programme;
- New Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy approved;
- Approval of the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan; and
- The closure and publication of 3 sets of accounts bringing the Council up-to-date.

Key Performance Indicators

5.6 In addition to the Delivery Plans, performance is also reported against the delivery of key operational services; Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these services are set out in **APPENDIX 2**. In summary:

Table 2 - Summary of key performance indicators for 2024/25

Corporate Business Plan Priority					Total Number of KPIs
	Performance exceeds target	Performance on target	Performance < 5% below target	Performance > 5% below target	
The Economy	5		2		7
Community	6	1	6	1	14
The Council	9	1		2	12
Total	20 (61%)	2 (6%)	8 (24%)	3 (9%)	33

5.7 Of the 34 indicators due to be reported on:

- 22 indicators show performance on or above target (67%); and
- 11 indicators show performance below target (33%).

The reasons for underperformance are set out in **APPENDIX 2**.

5.8 The key performance success were:

- Improved performance for planning applications;
- 99.97% of bins were collected first time;
- The target for DFGs was exceeded by 28%;
- The target for securing accommodation for the homeless was exceeded by 21%;
- Housing and council tax benefit claims were processed on average 34% quicker than last year
- Council tax and business rates collection is back on track to pre-covid levels;
- The average call wait time for the Council's main switchboard is less than 1 minute.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report. The financial management of the PDPs is standard in accordance with Financial Regulations and any measure to address a performance shortfall as reflected in a PDP report will require compensatory savings to be identified in the current year and be referred to the budget process for additional resources in future years.

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

The Council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the risks the Council faces in delivering its priorities.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Equality and diversity matters are addressed in individual services areas and by undertaking equality impact assessments for projects and programmes of work where this is necessary and appropriate.

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1A: The Economy

Appendix 1B: Community

Appendix 1C: Climate Change

Appendix 1D: The Council

Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

Corporate Plan 2021-24

Contact Officer:

Judith Aupers

Telephone Number:

01543 46411

Ward Interest:

Nil

Report Track:

Cabinet 7/7/25

Resources Scrutiny Committee 24/6/25

Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny 2/7/25

Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 17/6/25

Key Decision:

No

Priority Delivery Plan for 2024-25

Priority 1 - The Economy

Summary of Progress for the year 2024/25

Quarter					Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	
1 and 2	6		2		8
3	8		2		10
4	6	2	1		9
TOTAL	20 (74%)	2 (7%)	5 (19%)		27

Summary of Successes for the Year 2024/25

- Stafford town centre transformation; completion of key acquisitions, commencement of demolition works and station approach project.
- UKSPF 2022-2025 programme; completion and full utilisation of UKSPF grant monies.
- Completion of external review of the Council's Development Management service and development of an Improvement Plan.

Summary of Slippage as at the end of 2024/25

- Stafford Station Gateway - delay in establishing governance structure and acquiring commercial interests.
- Delay in establishing Planning Obligations Working Group.
- Delay in implementing Exacom BNG module.

Priority 1 - The Economy

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Delivery of major economic growth regeneration projects	Stafford Town Centre Transformation (Future High Street Fund)						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence work on Station Approach project 		X			Works are due to complete 17 April 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude acquisition of former Co-operative department store 		X			Contracts exchanged/completed in November 2024.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure planning consents for demolition of Guildhall Shopping Centre and former Co-operative department store 			X		Planning consent was issued on 17 October 2024 in respect of the partial demolition of the Guildhall and prior approval for partial demolition of the former Co-op was issued on 5 September 2014.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence demolition works to Guildhall Shopping Centre 			X		Contractors Cawarden were appointed in October 2024.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence demolition works to former Co-operative department store 			X		Contractors Cawarden were appointed in October 2024	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify development delivery route for cleared Guildhall and Co-op sites including delivery model, scheme development mix, funding model and procurement and details of public consultation 				X	The first stage of this work has been produced as part of the Investment Prospectus being drafted for completion early May 2025 and soft launched at UKREiiF.	
	Stafford Station Gateway						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Programme Board and governance arrangements 		X			An extension to the funding period has now been confirmed by MHCLG and work around the governance structure and project delivery is underway	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition of commercial interests (subject to confirmation of Levelling Up Funding award from MHCLG) 			X		Report to Cabinet scheduled for June 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence remediation works on site (subject to confirmation of Levelling Up Funding award from MHCLG) 				X	Remediation works in the early phases of the LUF programme relate to County Council land holdings. Site investigation works are ongoing	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	UK Shared Prosperity Fund				X	The full allocation for year 3 has been spent.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and deliver the UKSPF projects in year 3 of the Council's approved Investment Plan, working towards full allocation of spend by 31 March 2025 and delivery of outputs 				X		
Local Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation response and local impacts 		X			Consultation response submitted	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of evidence base for new Local Plan Review approach to Development Strategy for new Local Plan 			X		<p>Assessment of evidence base completed and procurement progress.</p> <p>NPPF published on 12 December 2024 and New Local Plan process established</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) and Local Plan resource requirements including evidence base Agree approach to Design Coding and Conservation Area Appraisals 				X	<p>Revised Local Development Scheme published on 19 March 2025 and Local Plan resources secured.</p> <p>Funding secured for Design Coding and assessment of Conservation Area Appraisals on-going</p>	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Development Management service improvement and transformation	• Re-introduce pre-application advice on a chargeable basis			X		Cabinet approval to re-introduce pre-application obtained on 5 December 2024.	
	• Commission External review of Development Management service		X			Consultant has been appointed following a competitive procurement exercise.	
	• Complete External review of Development Management service and development of improvement service delivery plan			X		The external review has completed and the consultant's report and service/improvement plan has been presented to Leadership Team and approved.	
	• New Planning system scoping and specification				X	Initial scoping of potential software solutions has been undertaken. Procurement of new planning system on hold and will be subject to a review in light of local government re-organisation.	
	• Review planning enforcement service provision and protocols/ policy				X	Shared Planning Enforcement Officer with Cannock Chase is now in post and initial review of enforcement service provision and protocols has taken place. Approach to managing complex cases via a multi-disciplinary working group is being developed.	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Planning Obligations - Review of Policy and Allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charging schedules for Section 106 and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) monitoring fees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet approval Implementation 		X	X		<p>BNG monitoring fees approved at Cabinet.</p> <p>S106 charging schedule approved by Cabinet.</p> <p>Implementation through Fees and Charges 2025/2026</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Exacom system for BNG 			X		Cost of implementing Exacom module for BNG has been identified; business case to be developed to identify how this can be funded and maintained.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Obligations Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish group and terms of reference Agree governance and schedule of meetings 		X			<p>Presentation to Leadership Team on 15 April 2025; terms of reference for Working Group have been developed.</p> <p>Governance and meeting schedule to be developed with meetings starting in Q1 2025/26.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme and Project Allocations including Cannock Chase SAC and Leisure through updated evidence base 				X	Infrastructure Funding Statement published in December 2024. Funds identified for project delivery	
Land Charges	Full review of Land Charges service to include a review of current processes and IT system		X			Land Charges service review complete. Review of IT systems carried out and	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
						recommendations made for replacement system.	
	Transformation of Land Charges scoped and timeline in place to drive this forward			X		Project plan for transformation and new IT system requirements in place.	
	Procure replacement IT System				X	New system installed and operational. Full implementation will continue in 2025	
	Working towards transformed service				X	Work has commenced in relation to this and will continue as the new IT system is developed	

Priority Delivery Plan for 2024-25

Priority 2 - The Community

Summary of Progress for the year 2024/25

Quarter					Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	
1&2	5				5
3	7				7
4	5	2	5		12
TOTAL	17 (71%)	2 (8%)	5 (21%)		24

Summary of Successes for the Year 2024/25

The majority (5 of 7) of the waste actions were completed on or ahead of target during 2024/25. The current waste and recycling collection service was reviewed against the requirements of the Resources and Waste Strategy 2018 (final version published 2024) and found to be overall compliant, pending the introduction of a new food waste collection service nationally and some minor inclusions of some additional materials, such as 'C' grade film into dry recycling collections. Preparations for the new food waste collection service were completed on target during Q4, including the completion of the negotiation with the incumbent contractor and the start of the procurement process of the food waste containers and caddies. These are being jointly procured across Staffordshire, via Staffordshire's Waste Partnership, led by the Partnership Manager, enabling economies of scale and best value.

Both Play Area/Parks Improvement PDPs have been completed on target, by the end of 2024/25, with elected members being surveyed and a play area improvement programme being created and presented to Cabinet during Q4.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy has been approved by Cabinet, this is the culmination of 9 month's work with partners and sets the priorities for the next 5 years.

Summary of Slippage as at the end of 2024/25

During 2024/25 Operations saw two areas of slippage, the review of the potential 10-year extension of the kerbside waste collection contract, due to delays with the negotiation with the incumbent contractor around the provision of the new food waste collection service and the review of tree management requirements at both Councils. The latter being due to its resource complexity. The draft tree management report is with members of Leadership Team for review, following which it will be going to full Leadership Team and onto Cabinets at both Councils', planned during Q1 of 2025/26.

The Housing Strategy has yet to go out to procurement but will be progressed in Q1 of 2025/26.

Freedom Leisure Strategic Partnership Plan was delayed due to changes mid-year in personnel for both the operator and Council contract management staff. The agreed approach was to develop in partnership, a suite of individual annual plans which shape strategic delivery of leisure, wellbeing and heritage by theme for 25/26. These have been drafted, reviewed and will be signed off May 2025.

Priority 2 - The Community

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Housing and Homelessness Strategy and approach to building new Council homes	Prepare documents to commission Stafford Housing Strategy including approach to developing Council Housing			X		Draft documents have been prepared in order to commission a housing strategy	
	Start procurement for Stafford Housing Strategy				X	Strategy brief ready to go out to procurement, this was delayed as an opportunity to do the work in house was explored but unfortunately didn't come to fruition.	
	Prepare documents to commission consultants to scope the feasibility of a housing development on Council owned land			X		Draft documents have been prepared to commission consultants to scope the feasibility of developing housing on Council owned land	
	Start procurement to scope the feasibility of development on a Council owned site				X	Strategy brief ready to go out to procurement, this was delayed as an opportunity to do the work in house was explored but unfortunately didn't come to fruition.	
	Completion of Stafford Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy				X	Stafford's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 06 March 2025	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Review of the Leisure, Culture and Heritage Contract	Finalise Freedom Leisure Strategic Partnership Plan				X	A suite of individual annual plans for physical activity and sport; healthy communities; culture and heritage; events and entertainment have been drafted and will be considered for approval at the Quarter 4 contract review meeting in May 2025.	
Design and Deliver Stafford Borough's approach to Health	Complete delivery of health inequalities funded projects		X			All funded projects successfully completed.	
	Evaluation of health inequalities funded projects to inform future activity			X		Evaluations completed in quarter 3 and presentation to Community Wellbeing Scrutiny on 15 January 2025 detailing the projects and what was achieved.	
	Commence work on drafting Community Wellbeing Strategy, setting out priorities across community safety and health				X	Research into health and wellbeing data locally has been developed, including insights from Public Health and ICB partners, and from open public data sources. Outline priorities were mapped at a stakeholder health workshop held in January. Drafting has commenced.	
Waste and Recycling - Kerbside collection contract (2018-2028)	Review current waste collection service			X		The waste collection service has been reviewed with reference to compliance with the final version of the Resources and Waste Strategy 2018, published in 2024. The overall minor required amendments will be made as part of and/or following contract negotiation.	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Waste and Recycling - Introduction of mandatory food waste kerbside collections [* denotes action subject to confirmation of government funding settlement]	Review potential extension options with incumbent waste collection contractor				X	The review of the potential extension with the incumbent contractor was delayed due to the negotiation around the introduction of the new food waste collection service from April 2026. The review is now due to begin during Q1 2025/26.	
	Report to Cabinet on extension option or re-procurement requirement				X	Delayed due to the above and will be dependent upon the results of the Q1 2025/26 review.	
Waste and Recycling - Introduction of mandatory food waste kerbside collections [* denotes action subject to confirmation of government funding settlement]	Design of new service model and discussions with contractor			X		Discussions were successfully completed during Q3 with the incumbent contractor to carry out the food waste collections in the final two years of their contract. Cabinet briefing was given in Q4 on the proposed new service provision and its operation.	
	Consider and action revenue settlement offered by Government			X*		2025/26 revenue settlement was received during Q4, subject to further annual settlements.	
	Cabinet approval for new service, start date, and permission to spend				X*	Completed - report around new service was given to Cabinet early in Q4 as per the above.	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Prepare to tender for the procurement of food waste caddies				X*	Tender documentation has been completed. Containers are being procured alongside the other Staffordshire Waste Partnership (SWP) Councils as part of a joint procurement exercise, led by the SWP Manager.	
Tree Management (OP3)	Review current services and establish requirements (including Tree Protection Orders)				X	Work is in progress on reviewing the current tree management arrangements. A report is being prepared on the Tree Management System and tree inspections that are required and this will be going to Leadership Team in Q1 2025/26 and then on to Cabinets at both Councils.	
Play Area/Parks Improvements (OP4)	Review condition of current play areas and funding availability for improvements and cyclical maintenance			X		Play area review has been undertaken by officers and the data processed. The processed data will be used to create and inform the play area improvement programme that is intended to be taken to Cabinet during Q4.	
	Create improvement programme				X	A play area improvement programme has been created and was presented to Cabinet during Q4.	
Private Water Supply (OP6)	Review of current position	X				Review undertaken, follow up carried out on audit reports to understand current position of the service to facilitate required changes	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Ensure staff have undergone training and are certified competent to deliver this testing regime	X				Water sampling training completed by 2 members of staff, who are now competent to carry out water sampling activities	
	Formulate a delivery plan for testing for all supplies due to be tested		X			Delivery Plan has been formulated and high-risk supplies identified. Specialist contractor commissioned to lead on complex supplies will commence sampling in Q3	
	Commence testing program		X			Risk assessment commenced during Q3. Contractors engaged and started work in Q4	
	Complete testing program for 24/5. Plan program from 25/6				X	91% of eligible supplies risk assessed. Plan for 25/26 in place. A delay in engaging the contractor contributed to a small shortfall. Also, we were made aware in Dec 2024 of some supplies that had previously not been included in our records. These supplies will be risk assessed and sampled in Q1 2025.	

Priority Delivery Plan for 2024-25

Priority 3 - Climate Change

Summary of Progress for the year 2024/25

Quarter					Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	
1 and 2					0
3	2		1		3
4					0
TOTAL	2		1		3

Summary of Successes for the Year 2024/25

The new Climate Change Strategy 2025-2030 has been approved by SBC and is in place setting a clear agenda. The Strategy is supported by the SBC Action Plan and a new governance structure chaired by the Cabinet member for Climate Change and Green Recovery.

Summary of Slippage as at the end of 2024/25

There is still a need to complete the officer recruitment to support the delivery of the Strategy, Action Plan and new governance model.

Priority 3 - Climate Change

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Climate Change Strategy	Revised Climate Change Strategy developed and in place			X		The Joint Climate Change Strategy 2025-2030 was approved by Cabinet on the 10/04/25	
	Recruitment of staff to support delivery of strategy and monitor operational delivery			X		The two proposed roles are going through the Job Evaluation Process recruitment will take place as soon as this process is completed.	
	New Governance Structure in place to track operational delivery			X		New Governance Structure was approved by Cabinet 10/04/25	

Priority Delivery Plan for 2024-25

Priority 4 - The Council

Summary of Progress for the year 2024/25

Quarter					N/A	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	No longer applicable	
1&2	7	1				8
3	2	1			1	4
4	1	1	2		1	5
TOTAL	10 (59%)	3 (17%)	2 (12%)		2 (12%)	17

Summary of Successes for the Year 2024/25

Three sets of accounts have been successfully closed and published this year, bringing the Council up-to-date.

Transformation and digital strategies have been prepared and approved. However, the Government's proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) will have an impact on the delivery of these. Consideration is currently being given to what the Council can realistically achieve over the next 3 years alongside the need to prepare for abolition of the Council and the transfer of services to a new Council. A report is to be prepared for Cabinet setting out a revised approach to transformation and the preparatory work needed for LGR.

Summary of Slippage as at the end of 2024/25

There has been some minor slippage in starting the installation of the new switches as part of the Council's IT infrastructure, this is in part due to competing work priorities. All preparatory work has been completed and the installation will start in early May.

Priority 4 - The Council

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Closure of the Accounts	Closure of the accounts 23/24				X	Completed end of February 2025	
	Catch up on closure of previous years accounts			X		The accounts for 2021/22 and 2022/23 have been completed	
Transformation Strategy and Plan	Approval of the Transformation Strategy and Plan		X			The strategy has been approved by Cabinet (5 December 2024)	
	Brief Senior Management Team on the strategy		X			Completed	
	Complete scoping work to support development of the Transformation work programme			X		Work has paused whilst we consider the implications of Local Government Re-organisation (LGR) on our proposed transformation work.	N/A
	Develop the Transformation work programme				X	A report is to be prepared for Cabinet setting out a revised approach to Transformation in light of LGR.	N/A
Digital Strategy	Finalise the digital technology strategy		X			The strategy has been approved by Cabinet (5 December 2024)	
	Procurement of switches for Infrastructure Upgrade	X				Procurement completed.	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Plan for installation of new switches		X			Planning and preparation work is complete. This has taken slightly longer than anticipated, but this is partly due to other work taking precedence.	
	Installation of new switches				X	Installation will commence in early May.	
	Identify IT systems in need of replacing over next 3 years		X			Completed - systems have been identified	
	Assessment and prioritisation of systems to be replaced		X			The list of systems to be replaced has been reviewed and priorities agreed for the next 3 years.	
	Technology Board to approve systems to be replaced			X		A preliminary discussion has taken place with Leadership Team but the proposals need to be revisited as part of our consideration of the implications of Local Government Re-organisation. Report going to Leadership Team in April 25.	
	Note - Project plans will be developed for each system once prioritisation has been agreed and the PDP will be updated accordingly						

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Strategic asset management including the review of key assets	Corporate Assets ICT System						
	Research Systems available		X			Alternative systems are being explored - 2 systems demos have been completed	
	Draft specification for new system				X	Action on hold - due to capacity issues and budget not secured	
	Insurance Reinstatement Valuations						
	Secure Budget			X		Budget approved 18.03.2025.	
	Commission Service Provider to complete Valuations				X	Three quotes to undertake the valuations are being progressed.	

Summary of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2024/25

Symbol	Description	The Economy	The Community	The Council	Total
★	Performance exceeds target	5	6	9	20
✓	Performance on target		1	1	2
▲	Performance < 5% below target	2	6		8
✗	Performance > 5% below target		1	2	3
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable		5	1	6
	TOTAL	7	19	13	39

KPIs for Business Objective 1 - The Economy

Symbol	Description	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
★	Performance exceeds target	5	4	5	5
✓	Performance on target			1	
▲	Performance < 5% below target	1	2	1	2
✗	Performance > 5% below target	1	1		
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable				
	TOTAL	7	7	7	7

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Planning									
Major Planning Applications determined within time	91.89%	60%	80%	87.5%	100%	100%	93.3%		
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time	78.56%	70%	87.3%	86.1%	82.2%	85.5%	85.3%		
Major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined	New	< 10%	1.7%	1.5%	1.4%	Not yet available	Forecast < 10%		Calculation is rolling 2 year period and is published by MHCLG a quarter in arrears
Non-major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined	New	< 10%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	Not yet available	Forecast < 10%		Calculation is rolling 2 year period and is published by MHCLG a quarter in arrears
Building Control									
Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	98%	95%	94%	92%	90%	93%	93%		Performance was affected by staff absences.
Full plans applications with initial full assessment within 15 days of valid receipt	85%	80%	78%	87%	62%	85%	79%		Performance was affected by vacancies

Appendix 2

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Customers satisfied or very satisfied with the service	85%	90%	100%	80%	89%	100%	92%		

KPIs for Business Objective 2 - The Community

Symbol	Description	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
★	Performance exceeds target	5	7	6	6
✓	Performance on target	3	3	1	1
▲	Performance < 5% below target	4	1	2	6
✗	Performance > 5% below target	1		2	1
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	6	8	8	5
	TOTAL	19	19	19	19

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Operations - Waste and Recycling									
% collections completed first time	NEW	99.90%	99.96%	99.97%	99.98%	99.95%	99.97%		Completed above target.
Number of missed bin collections (including assisted)/100,000/qtr.	NEW	<40 per 100,000	44 per 100,000	36 per 100,000	22 per 100,000	49 per 100,000	38 per 100,000		An increase in quarter four after good progress had been made throughout the year to reduce missed collections.
% Household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	45.4%	48%	51.16%	48.61%	45.20%	39.96%	46.23%		Quarter 4 figures are estimated as we are awaiting confirmed figures from the County Council.
Amount of household residual waste collected per household (Kgs)	109.68 kgs / per qtr.	<448 kgs or 112 kgs / qtr.	115.52 kgs	113.32 kgs	109.54 kgs	110.67 Kgs	449.05 Kgs Ave. 112.26 kgs		Quarter 4 figures are estimated as we are awaiting confirmed figures from the County Council.

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Operations - Streetscene									
% residents' satisfied with the appearance of town centres (Stafford/Stone)	97%	90%	95%	93%	93%	98%	95%		Survey results taken from customers calling into the Council with an enquiry and agreeing to undertake a short customer satisfaction survey
Environmental Health									
% of food businesses inspected	New	100%	27%	45%	73%	99%	99%		Of 361 inspections due, 358 have been completed. Of the 3 outstanding, all are home caterers (not commercial premises), who do not regularly trade. These will be completed by end April 25.
% of food businesses inspected which are broadly compliant (rating of 3 or better)	New	N/A	95%	95%	93%	95%	95%	N/A	This is a measure, not a target

Appendix 2

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
% of service requests responded to within target (all service areas)	New	95%	92%	90%	95%	95%	93%		Year-end figure shows the average over the year.
% Environmental Protection Act permitted processes inspected in line with risk rating	New	100%					100%		All scheduled permit inspections have been completed
% Taxi/PHV fleet inspected	New	90%	27%	41%	79%	100%	100%		
% Taxi/PHV fleet compliant	New	90%	82%	86%	83%	80%	83%	N/A	This is a measure, not a target
% of eligible private water supplies tested and follow up actions completed	New	100%					91%		A delay in engaging the contractor contributed to a small shortfall. Also, we were made aware in Dec 2024 of some supplies that had previously not been included in our records. These supplies will be risk assessed and sampled in Q1 2025.

Appendix 2

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Leisure									
Annual Report from Freedom Leisure setting out the performance of all facilities, including comparison to previous years as well as narrative on the wider wellbeing work and events they facilitate.								N/A	The Annual Report is being finalised and will be reported separately to the relevant Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Committee.
Housing Assistance									
No of DFGs completed		125	21	42	42	55	160	★	The service, now at the end of its second year in-house, is fully established, high performing, running at capacity and with early implementation issues resolved. The target was exceeded.
Strategic Housing and Homelessness									
% households had a positive outcome and secured accommodation for 6 + months	New	41%	57%	60%	67%	62%	62%	★	

Appendix 2

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Delivery of affordable housing per year working with Registered Providers, Developers and Homes England		210 homes					200 homes		The situation is kept under constant review. Good working relationships with Registered Providers are important and will continue to be prioritised. When development as a whole starts to slow down, this will inevitably impact on the delivery of affordable housing, therefore delivery performance can be beyond the control of the local authority.
Community Safety and Partnerships									
Number of residents/cases dealt with via the CAB	New	N/A	689	656	649	736	2,730	N/A	Contextual information only
Total value of financial outcomes achieved as a result of the CAB contract	New	N/A Measure only	£1,476,609	£1,056,239	£804,491	£1,459,778	£4,797,117	N/A	Contextual information only

Appendix 2

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Community Safety Partnership Hub referrals and case closures within 3 months	New	90% closed within 3 months	32 referrals 91% closed	31 referrals 85% closed	42 referrals 93% closed	48 referrals 83.4% closed	153 referrals 88.1% closed		High closure rates can indicate effectiveness - as a resolution has been achieved or managed risk has been obtained. Some cases however, by nature, take more significant work and may need to remain open longer.

KPIs for Business Objective 4 - The Council

Symbol	Description	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
★	Performance exceeds target	3	4	6	9
✓	Performance on target		1	1	1
▲	Performance < 5% below target	3	1		
✗	Performance > 5% below target	1	1		2
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	6	6	6	1
	TOTAL	13	13	13	13

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Local Taxation and Benefits									
Days taken to process new HB/CT Claims	29.1	20 days	27.6	20.8	16.1	14.3	19.3		Significant improvement on the previous year and target achieved.
Days taken to process new HB/CT change of circumstances	7.1	9 days	8.3	3.3	4.3	3.6	4.9		Significant improvement on the previous year and target exceeded.
% of Council Tax collected annually	97.6%	98% by year end	28.8%	55.8%	83.1%	97.8%	97.8%		Marginally below target but the best return since before the pandemic and therefore a pleasing result.
% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected	97.9%	98% by year end	31.2%	59.1%	83.0%	98.6%	98.6%		Better than target and the best performance since 2018/19.
Transformation and Assurance									
% of calls answered	92%	94%	95.8%	97.8%	97.2%	96%	96.7%		The target has been exceeded, despite the significant increase in the number of calls in Q4 due to the annual renewal of garden waste subscriptions.

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Average call wait time	1.42	2 min	1.07	0.38	00.40	00.53	0.59		
Number of calls answered	New	N/A	14,747	14,134	14,438	18,328		N/A	This is not a measure but gives context to the performance in call handling
Law and Governance									
FOI requests within time i.e. 20 working days	New	85%	77%	76%	78.1%	86.5%	79.4%		Recent vacancy affected central FOI team capacity. Times are also affected by number and complexity of requests.
Corporate Assets									
% of buildings with a valid annual landlord Gas Safety Record	New	100%					100%		
% of buildings with a valid Electrical Certificate (within 5 years)	New	100%					100%		
% of passenger lifts that have a valid 6 monthly thorough examination record	New	100%					100%		

Appendix 2

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
% of buildings that have a current Legionella risk assessment	New	100%					100%		
% of buildings that have a current Fire risk assessment	New	100%					0%		Budget allocated 18.03.2025 and work will be programmed in for QTR 1-2 2025/26

Agenda Item 4(a)iii

Updated Strategic Risk Register

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 7 July 2025

Report of: Head of Transformation and Assurance

Portfolio: Resources Portfolio

The following matter was considered by Audit and Accounts Committee at its meeting on 25 June 2025 and is submitted to Cabinet as required.

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out details of the Council's Strategic Risk Register as at 1 April 2025 and to provide an update to Cabinet on the implementation of the new Risk Management Framework

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve the new Strategic Risk Register.

Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.2 Cabinet are required to approve the Strategic Risk Register.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Council has adopted a new Risk Management Framework from 1 April 2025. This has led to a fundamental review of the Strategic Risk Register which is enclosed.
- 3.2 All strategic risks and associated action plans have been reviewed, and the Council's risk profile is summarised in the table below:

Risk Status	Number of Risks at 30 September 2024	Number of Risks at 1 April 2025
Red (High)	3	5
Orange (Medium)	5	4
Yellow (Moderate)	N/A	0
Green (Low)	0	0
Blue (Negligible)	N/A	0
TOTAL	8	9

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 Risk Management as a process supports the Council's Effective Council priority
- 4.2 The Risk Register supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:
 - (i) Risk management is a systematic process by which key business risks/opportunities are identified, prioritised, and controlled so as to contribute towards the achievement of the Council's aims and objectives.
 - (ii) The strategic risks set out in the Appendices have been categorised against the Council's priorities.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 state that:

“A relevant body must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control which:-

- (a) facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and the achievement of its aims and objectives;
- (b) ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective; and
- (c) includes effective arrangements for the management of risk.”

- 5.2 Risk can be defined as uncertainty of outcome (whether positive opportunity or negative threat). Risk is ever present and some amount of risk-taking is inevitable if the council is to achieve its objectives. The aim of risk management is to ensure that the council makes cost-effective use of a risk process that has a series of well-defined steps to support better decision making through good understanding of risks and their likely impact.

Management of Strategic Risks/Opportunities

- 5.3 Central to the risk management process is the identification, prioritisation, and management of strategic risks/opportunities. Strategic Risks are those that could have a significant impact on the Council's ability to deliver its Corporate Priorities and Objectives.
- 5.4 A new risk management framework was approved for implementation by Cabinet on 5 December 2024 and this has been used to do a fundamental review of the Council's Strategic Risks. This has resulted in a fully revised risk register being produced for 1 April 2025 and a summary is attached as **APPENDIX 1**.

5.5 The risk summary illustrates the risks/opportunities using the “traffic light” method i.e.

Red	High risk, score 12 and above (action plan required to reduce risk and/or regular monitoring by Cabinet/Audit Committee)
Orange	Medium risk, score 6 to 9 (action plan required to reduce risk and monitored by Leadership Team)
Yellow	Moderate risk, score of 3 to 4 (risk within risk appetite, no action plan required but watching brief to ensure controls are effective and operating)
Green	Low risk, score below 3 (risk tolerable, no action plan required)
Blue	Negligible Risk, score of 1 (risk tolerable, no action plan required)

5.6 With the support of an external trainer Leadership Team have received training on the new framework and held a number of risk workshops to identify and capture the highest-level risks that the Council is exposed to. This has led to an increase in the number of residual Red Risks due to capturing a wider range of risk areas in the risk register.

5.7 Risk were first assessed for their Inherent Risk to the Council. This is the risk exposure without any controls in place assessed against the Impact if the risk occurred and the Likelihood of it occurring. The Strategic Risk Register was updated to include all identified Inherent Red Risks.

5.8 These workshops have led to the identification of 9 risks which have an inherent risk score over 12 making them Red Risks. In the workshops Leadership Team then reviewed the Residual Risk scores for these risks by taking into account the current controls in place and their effectiveness.

5.9 The full Strategic Risk Register is being presented to Cabinet for information alongside the residual risks scores showing the current position of the risk. There are 5 Red Risks and 4 Orange risks. The full risk register is attached at **APPENDIX 2**.

5.10 Cabinet approved a corporate risk appetite statement which set out that it would accept risks which have a Residual Risk Score of Yellow (4 or below). It is accepted that due to factors outside the Control of the Council or for other agreed operational reasons it may not be possible to manage all risks to this level. Where the Risk Owner does not believe it is possible to manage the risk to a Yellow on the matrix they will set an appropriate Target Score for the risk and provide an explanation as to why the Council's risk appetite cannot be achieved.

5.11 It is not possible to compare the new risk register with the previous one due to the changes in risk definitions used. However it is possible to see some consistency of topics in the key risk areas from the previous register. These include Council Finances, Capacity, Projects and Housing/Asset risks. There are also newer areas that have been identified including the recognition that Local Government Reorganisation is an area of potential risk.

- 5.12 Each April the full risk register will be presented to Cabinet. Cabinet will also receive a quarterly update on the progress of managing the risk which have a residual risk that is Red to allow them to focus on the highest risk areas and to ensure that management are working towards addressing the actions to reduce the risk score further if possible. Where risks are Orange or below Leadership Team will monitor the position of the risks quarterly to ensure that the controls are still effective and operating as intended, if the risk score worsens and becomes a Red Risk again it will be escalated for inclusion in the Cabinet report for monitoring.
- 5.13 As this is a new process and a new risk register it is anticipated that the content and detail in the risk register will develop over time. As Managers get more comfortable with the process they will identify more information to include in the reports and develop more actions to help to manage the risks.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

None

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

The Risk Management implications are included within the body of the report and appendices.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Summary of Strategic Risks - 1 April 2025

Appendix 2 - Strategic Risk Register Key Information - 1 April 2025

8 Previous Consideration

Audit and Accounts Committee - 25 June 2025 - Minute No TBC

9 Background Papers

File of papers held by the Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager.

Contact Officer: Stephen Baddeley

Telephone Number: 01543 464415

Ward Interest: All

Report Track: Cabinet 07/07/2025

Audit and Accounts Committee 25/06/2025

Key Decision: N/A

Appendix 1

Stafford Borough Council Summary of Strategic Risk Register as at 1 April 2025

Risk Ref	Risk Owner	Risk Name	Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
2025-03	Chief Executive	Local Government reorganisation	4	4	16	4	3	12
2025-09	Operations	Safe Management of Trees	4	4	16	4	3	12
2025-16	Economic Development and Planning	Delivery of Town Centre Regeneration Project	4	4	16	4	3	12
2025-02	Housing and Corporate Assets	Health and safety arrangements for properties	4	3	12	4	3	12
2025-06	Chief Executive	Corporate capacity	4	3	12	4	3	12
2025-08	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Financial Stability - SBC	4	4	16	3	3	9
2025-04	Transformation and Assurance	IT Resilience	4	4	16	4	2	8
2025-10	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Failure to deliver good governance	4	4	16	4	2	8

Risk Ref	Risk Owner	Risk Name	Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
2025-12	Chief Executive	Health and safety arrangements for people	4	3	12	4	2	8

Appendix 2

Stafford Borough Council Strategic Risk Register as at 1 April 2025

Risk Ref	2025-02
Risk Owner	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets
Risk Name	Health and safety arrangements for properties
Risk Description	Operational property procedures including CDM compliance, maintenance and management of properties is not sufficient to adequately ensure they are safe for tenants, employees, leaseholders or visitors leading to death or serious injury.
Consequences	Death or serious and minor injury and prosecution by HSE and private legal action. Reputational damage. Deterioration in condition of buildings Depreciation of buildings
Corporate Objective SBC	Effective Council
Main Risk Category	Health and Safety

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	3	12
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
Target Score	8	
Comment on Target Score: The are situations outside of the control which will lead to accidents and a large housing and property portfolio means that a risk score of 4 is unlikely as accidents and incidents will still happen.		

Controls	Assurances
Compliance data is held for all properties	Monthly data validation by managers
Policies approved by Leadership Team and published online, regularly reviewed.	Monitoring of spreadsheets by management
Updated policies and procedures for compliance areas.	Internal Audit Reviews

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Monthly validation of corporate assets data	Interim Asset Manager	Ongoing
Review of Health and Safety Compliance Records of Contractors	Interim Asset Manager	Q4 2025/26
Appoint Contractor to undertake Building Condition Surveys (prioritise top 5 - 60 in total)	Interim Asset Manager	Q4 2024/25
Appoint Contractor to undertake Fire Risk Assessments	Interim Asset Manager	Q3 2025/26
Lease and Asset Reviews	Interim Asset Manager	Q4 2025/26

Risk Ref	2025-03
Risk Owner	Chief Executive
Risk Name	Local Government reorganisation
Risk Description	The Council has to divert resources to the management of the Council's response plans for Local Government re-organisation which threatens the ability to maintain the quality of services at a time when capacity is already stretched.
Consequences	Core Services and major projects fail to be delivered
Corporate Objective SBC	Effective Council
Main Risk Category	Capacity/Service Delivery

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
Target Score		8
Comment on Target Score: As planning for LGR is still in its infancy, it is too soon to be confident that we can mitigate this risk fully and reduce it to a 4. At present it is considered we can reduce the likelihood to a 2 giving a target score of 8. As planning and work progresses, actions and the target score will be reviewed. Progress with this risk is also linked to the risk regarding capacity (ref 2025-06).		

Controls	Assurances
LGR lead officers identified	Cabinet
	Scrutiny Committee
	Leadership Team

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Work Plan to be prepared setting out the actions ready for service/function transfers	Head of Transformation and Assurance	tbc
Work plan to be prepared for LGR Submission	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	tbc
Assessment of resources needed to deliver the respective work plans	DCE Resources and Head of Transformation and Assurance	tbc
LGR work to be assessed and prioritised alongside key projects and operational service delivery	Leadership Team	tbc
Additional resources/support to be commissioned to support specific pieces of work	DCE Resources and Head of Transformation and Assurance	tbc

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Working collaboratively with other Staffordshire Councils	Chief Executive and LGR Leads	tbc
Communications and Engagement Strategy to be prepared	Communications Manager	tbc

NB - the timescales for the above actions have yet to be confirmed as the project is still in its infancy. It is anticipated that we will have a clearer understanding by the end of June and timescales will be assigned in the first progress update report.

Risk Ref	2025-04
Risk Owner	Transformation and Assurance
Risk Name	IT Resilience Risk
Risk Description	Risk of unplanned disruptions to the IT infrastructure, network and systems which prevent accessibility and service delivery. This includes but is not limited to cyber-attacks, equipment failure, natural disasters, and human error.
Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data, Systems and Applications inaccessible potentially for several months • Inability to deliver Council services including a reduction of services to the public • Cybercrime/ Fraud/ Ransom demands/Financial harm • Reputational damage locally and nationally • Data Loss causing a breach of Data Protection Act (DPA) and GDPR. Possible fine from the ICO. • Financial Loss
Corporate Objective SBC	Effective Council
Main Risk Category	IT/Technology

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	2	8
Target Score		8

Comment on Target Score:
All reasonable/affordable steps will be taken to manage this risk. However, it is only considered feasible to reduce the likelihood to a 2 giving a residual score of 8, due to the evolving nature of cyber-attacks.

Controls	Assurances
IT Policies and Procedures including the IT Security Policy	External compliance checks - PSN Certification, Cyber Essentials Plus Certification (annual IT Health Check and penetration testing conducted by GCHQ approved consultants). Internal compliance checks by Technology Team and Internal Audit
Access controls to network e.g. complex password configuration and Multi Factor Authentication	Enforced for all users and third parties.
Vulnerability Monitoring - proactive monitoring of our entire network 24/7 to alert us to any signs of threat	

Controls	Assurances
Firewall and Anti-Virus System	
Protective Domain Name Service (PDNS) - prevents access to domains known to be malicious	
Standards Group - regulate any exceptions to the standard software/hardware in use.	
Third Party Agreement - used to manage access to systems by suppliers/contractors.	
Privileged Access Controls - role based access controls (RBAC) are in place for all staff and IT administrators.	
User education and awareness training	
Incident management - response and disaster recovery procedures in place	
IT risk register - assessment, management and monitoring of IT risks	

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Replacement of network infrastructure hardware	Infrastructure Manager	Q23 2025
Data files will continue to be moved to the cloud (SharePoint) during 2025/26	Technology Service Manager	Ongoing
Decommission of on-premise exchange	Infrastructure Manager	Q2 2025

Risk Ref	2025-06
Risk Owner	Chief Executive
Risk Name	Corporate capacity is insufficient to maintain provision of core services and deliver major projects
Risk Description	The inability to recruit and retain staff particularly in statutory and other core areas threatens service delivery across the Council. This risk is exacerbated by other factors such as the number of high priority projects, large procurement exercises, demand for new software, competing priorities and Local Government Reorganisation.
Consequences	Projects are delayed or not implemented Operational services are delivered to a lower standard, backlogs arise or service not delivered at all Complaints/damage to reputation Wellbeing of staff who are under pressure to deliver
Corporate Objective CCDC	Responsible Council
Main Risk Category	Capacity/Service Delivery

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
Target Score		8
Comment on Target Score: Due to the limited market in key professions such as Finance, Legal, Planning etc and the uncertainty created by Local Government Reorganisation, it is considered that the likelihood can only be reduced to a 2, giving a target score of 8.		

Controls	Assurances
Corporate Plan sets out priorities and key projects	Performance reporting
Use of agency staff and contractors to cover posts which are difficult to recruit to	
Market supplements to enhance salary to attract candidates	
Management of absences	Oversight by HR

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Assessment of capacity, pinch points and reductions in workload consequentially	Leadership Team	Qtr 1 2025/26
Management of expectations/discussion with Cabinet	Chief Executive/ Leadership Team	Qtr 2 2025/26 and ongoing

Risk Ref	2025-08
Risk Owner	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)
Risk Name	Financial Stability - SBC
Risk Description	Internal - Poor budget planning, over commitment of financial resources or significant use of reserves to fund schemes leading to a financial shortfall, reduced financial resilience or overspends that undermine the Council's ability to deliver services or corporate priorities. External - central government policy changes which impact the councils financial position.
Consequences	Damage to reputation with stakeholders May affect ability to bid for funding Poor PR
Corporate Objective SBC	Effective Council
Main Risk Category	Financial

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
3	3	6
Target Score		6
Comment on Target Score:		Inherently uncertain environment regarding financial settlements from the government mean that it is not currently possible to reduce the risk score to 4

Controls	Assurances
Medium term financial plan in place	Council approval and s151 Officer
Working Balances maintained	S151 Officer and Deputy
Review of the capital programme is complete	S151 Officer and Deputy
Evaluation of consultations on changes to government funding regimes	S151 Officer
Financial regulations in place to be followed	Internal Audit periodic checks and Finance Team
Membership of appropriate bodies to gain insights into government funding direction	S151 Officer
Business cases required for drawdown of reserves to ensure VFM and appropriate use of monies	S151 Officer and Deputy/Leadership Team
Internal and audit review of accounts/processes and procedures	Internal Audit Reports

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Training to be delivered for Budget Managers	Deputy Chief Executive Resources (S151 Officer)	May/June 2025
Quarterly budget monitoring	Deputy Chief Executive Resources (S151 Officer)	Q1 25/26

Risk Ref	2025-09
Risk Owner	Operations
Risk Name	Safe Management of Trees
Risk Description	Risk of a tree or part of a tree falling on an individual/s causing death or serious injury. Risk of a tree or part of a tree falling onto a building causing server damage to a property or the death or serious injury of an individual/s.
Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death/Serious Injury • Damage to property • HSE Investigation/Prosecution • Corporate Manslaughter • Insurance Claims
Corporate Objective SBC	Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment
Main Risk Category	Capacity/Service Delivery

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
Target Score		8

Comment on Target Score:
Given the number of trees and the unpredictability of the weather and increase in the number of severe weather events, it is considered the residual impact sits at a 2, which will make the overall residual risk score an 8, as it is unlikely that the impact score can be reduced below a 4. Therefore, given the circumstances of the risk, while higher than preferred, an overall residual risk score of an 8 is considered as a realistic and acceptable score.

Controls	Assurances
Trained Manager, Tree Officers, and Arboriculturists.	IA Reviews.
Tree Surveys	Management Information
Policies and Procedures for Tree Management	
Trees maintained using recognised tree risk management process	
SBC - Urban Forestry Strategy	
Allocation of semi-dedicated management resource.	
Knowledge of tree locations	
Historic/recent tree inspections	
Rudimentary tree database/systems in place	

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Agree and secure long-term funding and resourcing	DCE(Resources) /Operations	Q1 2025/26
Implement new joint tree management ICT GIS based system	Natural Environment Manager	Q3/Q4 2025/26
Outsource next round of tree inspections for all trees to create new baseline data (78,000 trees)	Natural Environment Manager	Q4 2025/26
Review tree policy and procedures	Natural Environment Manager	Q3 2025/26
Implement new full risk-based tree management procedure	Natural Environment Manager	Q3 2025/26
Implement risk-based programme of tree works around inspection results	Natural Environment Manager	Q3 2025/26
Implement procedure for on-going risk-based inspections of trees	Natural Environment Manager	Q4 2025/26
Deliver and monitor tree risk-based works and ongoing inspections	Natural Environment Manager	Q1 2026/27

Risk Ref	2025-10
Risk Owner	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)
Risk Name	Failure to deliver good governance
Risk Description	The Council does not have in place or comply with Governance Best Practice processes leading to negative Annual Governance Statement, External Audit or other regulator comment, and/or Statutory Intervention. E.g. Statutory Officer Advice is not complied with, Members and Employees fail to follow Codes of Conduct and the Constitution
Consequences	Government intervention Negative PR/reputation damage
Corporate Objective SBC	Effective Council
Main Risk Category	Reputation, Customer/Public Perception

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	2	8
Target Score	4	
Comment on Target Score:		

Controls	Assurances
Code of Governance	Audit Committee
Annual Governance Review/Statement	Scrutiny Committees
Policy and Procedures e.g. Financial Regulations, Procurement Regulations, HR policies	Statutory Officers/Responsibilities
	Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Report and Opinion

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Review of Code of Governance	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 2025/26
Regular Statutory Officer meetings - golden triangle	Chief Exec/s151 Officer/Monitoring Officer/Chief Internal Auditor	Quarter 1 2025/26 onwards
Reminders and training for Leadership Team and Service Managers on key policies, processes and good governance	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)/Head of Transformation and Assurance/Head of Law and Governance	Quarter 2 2025/26

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Delivery of Governance Improvement Plan	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)/Head of Transformation and Assurance/Head of Law and Governance	Quarter 3 2025/26

Risk Ref	2025-12
Risk Owner	Head of Transformation and Assurance
Risk Name	Inability to demonstrate and implement adequate health and safety arrangements for people
Risk Description	Operational procedures and working practices are not sufficient to adequately ensure the safety of tenants, employees, leaseholders or visitors leading to death or serious injury.
Consequences	HSE Investigation Prosecution, Injury to employees, Personal Injury Claims, Corporate Manslaughter,
Corporate Objective SBC	Effective Council
Main Risk Category	Health and Safety

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	3	12
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	2	8
Target Score	4	
Comment on Target Score:		

Controls	Assurances
Health and Safety Policies	Health and Safety Officer
Health and Safety Training	Health and Safety Audits
Health and Safety Risk Assessments, COSHH, PPE etc	Accident Reports/Stats
CDM Training	
IOSH Managing Safety for Service Managers	

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
HAVS and Noise procedures reviewed and updated	Head of Operations/ Health and Safety Team	30/04/2026
Monitoring to be introduced for SBC Grounds Maintenance and Housing	Head of Operations/ Health and Safety Team	30/04/2026
HAVS testing of equipment	Head of Operations /Health and Safety Team	30/04/2026

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Health and Safety Awareness Refresher training to be delivered to all staff	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager/ Health and Safety Team	30/09/2025
Health and Safety Risk Assessment Procedures reviewed and harmonised across both Councils	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager/ Health and Safety Team	30/09/2025
IOSH Managing Safety Refresher Training to be considered for managers	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager/ Health and Safety Team	30/09/2025
IOSH Safety for Directors to be considered for Leadership Team	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager/ Health and Safety Team	30/09/2025

Risk Ref	2025-16
Risk Owner	Head of Economic Development and Planning
Risk Name	Delivery of Town Centre Regeneration Project
Risk Description	<p>There is a risk that the high profile large regeneration projects may not deliver as anticipated, to time or to budget, leading to reputational risks to the Council and creating financial risks that impact on the Council's financial position and could impact on service delivery and hinder the Council's wider ambition to secure economic prosperity for the District.</p> <p>There is a risk that either the Council may not be able to deliver the demolition phase of the project or secure a development partner to re-develop the cleared sites.</p>
Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major reputational risk for the Council in terms of not delivering the schemes that local residents expect; potential that Council may be unsuccessful with future funding bids Reduced growth and economic prosperity for local residents Decline of town centres/impact on major redevelopment proposals Council exposed to unplanned financial risks and pressure on revenue resources which impacts on delivery of core services Clawback of funding for non-delivery Increased pressure on already stretched services/functions of the council which have capacity issues. Cleared sites could sit empty for indeterminate period if developer interest doesn't materialise
Corporate Objective CCDC	Economic Prosperity
Main Risk Category	Reputation, Customer/Public Perception

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
	Target Score	8

Comment on Target Score:

Inherent nature of the risk profile of the regeneration schemes makes it difficult to reach a score of 4. External influences may affect the ability to get a long term provider.

Controls	Assurances
Monitoring / finance returns being prepared and submitted to MHCLG in line with timescales in agreed memorandum of understanding	Project Sponsor Statutory Officer Meetings
Key decisions taken by Cabinet in relation to the project with relevant	Statutory Officer Meetings Project Sponsor

Controls	Assurances
delegations and budget approvals in place	
Business cases to support key acquisition with quantification of costs and risks	Review by Statutory Officers Project Sponsor
Procurement using approved frameworks to select and appoint key contractors	SCC Procurement team Internal Audit Reviews Project Sponsor
Detailed risk registers and project plans to Operational Group	Project Board Project Sponsor Internal Audit reviews. External Audit overview Statutory Office Meetings
Governance arrangements to ensure oversight of programme delivery, spend and risks; with Programme Boards, Steering groups and project delivery meetings taking place on a regular basis	Project Board Project Sponsor Internal Audit reviews. External Audit overview. Statutory Officer Meetings External Audit
Ensure that the Council is effectively managing contractors and consultants	Project Sponsor Statutory Officer Meetings
Ensure that the Council has sufficient Programme/project management arrangements and capacity to deliver the projects	Statutory Officer Meetings Project Sponsor
Ensure that the Council's Health and Safety/CDM requirements are met, and demolition/construction works are managed safely and in line with regulations	Review by Statutory Officers Project Sponsor

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Monthly Risk Registers and Dashboards to Leadership Team and Project Board	Head of Economic Development and Planning	June 2025
Communications to stakeholders, partners and the public - development of Comms Strategy and Plan	Head of Economic Development and Planning, Communications Manager	June 2025
Finalise town centre investment prospectus to set out the Council's vision for the cleared site and undertake soft market testing/early market engagement	Head of Economic Development and Planning	May - September 2025
Agree approach to securing development delivery	Head of Economic Development and Planning	October/ November 2025

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale
Formal procurement process to appoint development partner(s)	Head of Economic Development and Planning	Quarter 1 - 2026

Agenda Item 4(b)i

Proposals for an increase in Fares: Hackney Carriage Vehicles

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 7 July 2025

Report of: Head of Regulatory Services

Portfolio: Environment Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To enable Cabinet to consider a request from Stafford Taxi Rank Association, on behalf of the Borough's Hackney Carriage Proprietors, for an increase in fares.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That:

- (a) Cabinet approve for consultation purposes the revised table of fares set out in **APPENDIX 1** for Hackney Carriages licensed by the Council;
 - (b) the revised charges be advertised in accordance with the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976; and
 - (c) the revised charges be implemented as soon as possible, subject to any objections arising.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 It is the Council's responsibility, through Cabinet, to consider the maximum tariff rates to be consulted on for Hackney Carriages, referred to in this report as Taxis, within Stafford Borough and the need to advertise them.
- 2.3 Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 states that a "...District Council may fix the rates or fares within the district as well for time and distance, and all other charges in connection with the hire of a vehicle...".

2.4 There is a clear distinction in law between Hackney Carriage Vehicles (HCVs) or 'Taxis' and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) or 'minicabs', with HCVs being permitted to wait at taxi ranks and to be hailed in the street and being required to display a 'toplight' or roof sign. Minicabs are not permitted to wait at ranks and are not permitted to take a passenger unless the journey has been pre-booked in advance. Apps such as Uber make this process almost instantaneous and in recent years competition between the two trades has significantly increased.

3 Key Issues

3.1 The Council last set the fares for licensed Taxis in 2022. Since this time there has been a significant and sustained increase in the price of fuel, cost of vehicles and other operational costs including insurance and maintenance that are associated with running a Taxi.

3.2 Historically, the Council has not taken a proactive approach in proposing any increase in the tariff, relying on the Trade to come forward when the Trade considers increased costs justify a tariff increase.

3.3 According to the Hackney Fare Table produced by the national "Private Hire and Taxi Monthly Magazine" (PHTM) the Council's tariff is currently 265th out of 341 local authorities (ranked highest to lowest). Should the proposed tariff be adopted, the maximum fare in Stafford Borough for a two-mile Tariff 1 journey would be £7.40, which would place the Council equal 144th of the 341 authorities listed.

3.4 The local Hackney Carriage trade faces increasing competition from both locally licensed Private Hire Vehicles and, increasingly, from Vehicles operated using Uber and other on-line platforms. To retain a strong local taxi trade, where all vehicles (with some exceptions) are required to be wheelchair accessible, and a specific colour (white at present) the Council must work with proprietors in assisting them to remain competitive but also to recover costs and make profit.

3.5 The number of Hackney Carriages currently licensed by the Borough Council is 57, decreasing by 5 since 2022, equating to a reduction of 8.06% compared with 95 private hire vehicles currently licensed by the Council, the numbers of which have also decreased over the same period, from 101, a reduction of 5.94%.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 Communities and Wellbeing - A safe and cohesive Borough

A viable local trade, comprised of locally licensed drivers and vehicles, contributes to the above through:

Provision of an essential service within the Borough, enabling those who do not own a vehicle to access safe and flexible transport; supporting the night time economy; promoting equality of access to services and protecting public safety, particularly of those who are, or could become, vulnerable; the policy ensures licensed drivers are fit and proper and licensed vehicles are safe and suitable.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Representatives of the Hackney Carriage trade have approached the Council and put forward a proposal for an increase in the fares that they can charge customers in response to their increased operational costs.
- 5.2 The local authority controls the maximum fares charged by hackney carriages. This is achieved using a meter for all journeys, which measures a combination of time and distance travelled.
- 5.3 Fare scales should be designed with a view to practicality. The Department for Transport (DfT) sees it as good practice to review the fare scales at regular intervals, including any graduation of the fare scale by time of day or day of the week. The DfT also suggests that, in reviewing fares, authorities should pay particular regard to the needs of the travelling public, with reference both to what it is reasonable to expect people to pay but also to the need to give taxi proprietors sufficient incentive to provide a service when it is needed. It is accepted that there may well be a case for higher fares at times of higher demand. The DfT guidance states “...Authorities may wish to consider adopting a simple formula for deciding on fare revisions as this will increase understanding and improve the transparency of the process...”
- 5.4 Members of the Taxi trade have requested that the fares be increased as set out in **APPENDIX 1**. They have requested an increase on the ‘flag’, which is the starting rate of any journey, from £3.10 to £4.00. There are no other changes requested within the mileage tariffs. Worked examples showing how the proposals will impact on a range of distances are given at **APPENDIX 4**
- 5.5 This increase will essentially give proprietors a 13-14% uplift on short journeys, which is in line with the RPI increase since 2022. The mileage is now a flat rate for the entire journey. This is why the percentage increase is higher for shorter distances and lower for longer distances; as the ‘flag’ is increased, (para 5.4) this results a proportionally greater impact on a 1 or 2 mile journey than on a 10 or 15 mile journey.
- 5.6 The current hackney tariff can be found in **APPENDIX 2**. This tariff was last increased in November 2022.
- 5.7 In order to assess the application for a fare increase, officers have carried out a fare comparison exercise with neighbouring authorities. This is set out in **APPENDIX 3**.
- 5.8 A check has also been made against the national Hackney Fare Table produced by “Private Hire and Taxi Monthly Magazine” (PHTM) every month. The calculation is based on a 2-mile hackney carriage fare on Tariff 1 and is also reflected in the ranking table on **APPENDIX 3**, the ranking rating is out of 341 authorities listed.

If the tariffs proposed by the trade are adopted, the maximum fare in Stafford Borough for a two-mile Tariff 1 journey would be £7.40, which would mean that the fares would be the same as authorities ranked equal 144th out of the 341 authorities listed.

It should be noted that quite a number of authorities have already increased their tariffs this year. Officers' understanding is that most of the other surrounding authorities in Staffordshire will also have a fare rise request from their HCV trade.

5.9 In considering any fare increase, Members should consider both the impact on the customer and the need to ensure that there is an adequate supply of taxis by ensuring that proprietors can make a living.

For the trade in general, the key costs are fuel, vehicle purchases (all HCVs must be wheelchair accessible and white in colour), maintenance, insurance, and labour. Second hand vehicles have become very expensive to buy for the trade. For Tariff 2, the hire charge ideally needs to be not so high as to deter people using taxis (the purpose being to get them safely home at night) but also set at a level which provides an incentive to proprietors plying their trade. Public safety is an important consideration in support of the night-time economy, which can be sensitive to price increases.

5.10 The Hackney Carriage trade represents an important part of the local economy of the Borough, providing employment opportunities and contributing to the efficient and safe operation of the public transport network.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The changes referred to within the report reflect charges to the public. The financial impact to the Council would reflect advertising cost of new fares in accordance with legislative requirements. This would be approximately £500 which could be contained within existing budgets.

6.2 Legal

The key legislative provisions are contained in the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (as amended) within this report.

A council may fix the rates or fares within its district for both time and distance, and all other charges in connection with the hire of a vehicle or with the arrangements for the hire of a vehicle. Such fees must be published in a 'Table of Fares'.

In summary, the Council must publish its intention to increase the tariff, and allow a period for receipt of any objections (minimum of 14 days). If no objections are received, or if any received are withdrawn, the revised tariff comes into immediate effect.

If objections are received and not withdrawn, then the proposals must be considered by Council and a determination made as to whether the proposed increase is permitted or modified.

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

There are no identified direct risks to the Council. There are implications to the Trade in either agreeing or refusing the requested tariff increase.

In terms of risk, should the Council refuse the increase, this could result in proprietors leaving the Trade, thereby reducing the numbers of Wheelchair Accessible Hackney Carriages available and a potential reduction in local drivers, although some drivers may then move to the private hire trade.

If the Council agree the increase, this will assist in supporting the Taxi Trade locally to manage the increased costs outlined in the report and may encourage proprietors to retain Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles. Conversely, an increase in the Taxi tariff may deter customers from using Hackney Carriages and result in increased use of Private Hire Vehicles/Uber etc.

6.5 Equalities and Health

None

6.6 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Recommended increase and table reflecting the increase.

Appendix 2: Current Hackney tariffs.

Appendix 3: Fare comparison and position in ranking table from PHTM

Appendix 4: Worked examples showing how the proposals will impact on a range of distances

Previous Consideration

The last request for an increase in fares was made in October 2022 and approved by Cabinet on 3 November 2022.

8 Background Papers

Comparative data as referenced in the report.

Contact Officer: Julie Wallace

Telephone Number: 01785 619605

Ward Interest: All

Report Track: Cabinet 7 July 2025 (Only)

Key Decision: Yes

Stafford Borough Council

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act

1976

PROPOSED

Hackney Carriage Fares

Notice is hereby given that the Borough Council of Stafford in the exercise of its powers under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 has made the following revised table of fares in respect of the hire of Hackney Carriages in the Borough of Stafford.

Hiring charges when the vehicle is carrying 1 to 4 persons			
	Rate 1	Rate 2	Rate 3
For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or part thereof	£4.00	£5.20	£8.00
For each subsequent 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or part thereof	£0.20	£0.30	£0.40
Hiring charges when the vehicle is carrying 5 or more persons			
(Note that for charging purposes only, two children under 10 years of age are regarded as one person)			
	Rate 4	Rate 5	Rate 6
For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or part thereof	£6.00	£7.80	£12.00
For each subsequent 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or part thereof	£0.30	£0.45	£0.60
Extra charges			
Soiling charge (when the hackney carriage must be taken off the road to be cleaned)			£60.00
Pre-booking fee (when the hackney carriage is used on a private hire journey)			£1.00

The vehicle must be fitted with a taximeter which automatically selects the appropriate rate at the start of the journey based on date and time:

Rates 1 and 4 Normal charge for all hirings where the below rates do not apply

Rates 2 and 5

- Between 00:00 and 07:00 on any day
- Between 18:00 and 23:00 hours on 24 December
- Between 18:00 and 23:00 hours on 31 December
- At any time on a bank holiday

Rates 3 and 6

- Between 23:00 on 24 December and 07:00 on 27 December
- Between 23:00 on 31 December and 00:00 on 2 January

Stafford Borough Council**Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976****CURRENT****Hackney Carriage Fares**

Notice is hereby given that the Borough Council of Stafford in the exercise of its powers under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 has made the following revised table of fares in respect of the hire of Hackney Carriages in the Borough of Stafford.

Hiring Charges	Tariff 1	Tariff 2
For the first 410 yards, or part thereof	£3.10	£4.15
For each subsequent 168.7 yards, up to 1 mile	£0.20	£0.30
After a distance of 1 mile, 227 yards up to 4 miles	£0.20	£0.30
For each subsequent 190.2 yards after 4 miles	£0.20	£0.30
Waiting Time throughout the journey (per 40 seconds)	£0.20	£0.30

Tariff 1 Normal charge (for any hiring where Tariff 2 does not apply)

Tariff 2 Only hires that start between

- Midnight and 07:00 hours on any day or
- 18:00 hours and 23:00 hours on Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve or
- Any public bank holiday

All Journeys - Extra Charges

When more than 4 persons are carried an extra 50% of the metered fare will be charged	-
On Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day, fares will have a 100% extra charge; this will also apply after 23:00 hours on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve	-
Soiling Charge	£60

RECENT RANKING IN PHTM (Private Hire and Taxi Monthly) out of 341 Councils

JUNE 2025 edition

POSITION PHTM	COUNCIL - TARIFF ONE	2 MILE FARE	LAST FARE INCREASE
180	TAMWORTH	£7.14	2022
182	CANNOCK CHASE	£7.10	2023
203	NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME	£6.90	2024
220	EAST STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.80	2022
230	SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.80	2023
236	WOLVERHAMPTON	£6.80	2022
265	STAFFORD	£6.50	2022
316	STOKE ON TRENT UA	£5.90	2022
321	LICHFIELD	£5.80	2020
333	STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS	£5.20	2015

PROPOSED CHANGES FOR STAFFORD (IF INCREASED)

POSITION PHTM	COUNCIL - TARIFF ONE	2 MILE FARE	LAST FARE INCREASE
145	STAFFORD	£7.40	-
180	TAMWORTH	£7.14	2022
182	CANNOCK CHASE	£7.10	2023
203	NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME	£6.90	2024
220	EAST STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.80	2022
230	SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE	£6.80	2023
236	WOLVERHAMPTON	£6.80	2022
316	STOKE ON TRENT UA	£5.90	2022
321	LICHFIELD	£5.80	2020
333	STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS	£5.20	2015

Current tariff

The taximeter will automatically display the highest applicable rate from the below tables.

Rates chargeable when the vehicle is carrying 1 to 4 passengers**Rate 1 - Standard tariff**

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£3.10
For each additional 168.7 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 1 mile has been reached	£0.20
For each additional 227.0 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 4 miles has been reached (approximately £1.55 per mile)	£0.20
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof for the remainder of the journey (approximately £1.85 per mile)	£0.20

Rate 2 - Standard tariff plus 33% on flag and 50% on distance

Chargeable between the hours of 00:00 and 07:00 every day;

and all day on Bank Holidays;

and after 18:00 on 24 December and 31 December.

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£4.15
For each additional 168.7 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 1 mile has been reached	£0.30
For each additional 227.0 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 4 miles has been reached (approximately £2.32 per mile)	£0.30
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof for the remainder of the journey (approximately £2.77 per mile)	£0.30

Rate 3 - Standard tariff plus 100%

Chargeable from 23:00 on 24 December until 07:00 on 27 December;

and from 23:00 on 31 December until 00:00 on 2 January

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£6.20
For each additional 168.7 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 1 mile has been reached	£0.40
For each additional 227.0 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 4 miles has been reached (approximately £3.10 per mile)	£0.40
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof for the remainder of the journey (approximately £3.70 per mile)	£0.40

Rates chargeable when the vehicle is carrying 5 or more passengers

For charging purposes only, two children under 10 years of age are regarded as one person.

Rate 4 - Rate 1 plus 50%

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£4.65
For each additional 168.7 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 1 mile has been reached	£0.30
For each additional 227.0 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 4 miles has been reached (approximately £2.32 per mile)	£0.30
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof for the remainder of the journey (approximately £2.77 per mile)	£0.30

Rate 5 - Rate 2 plus 50% (Standard tariff plus 100% on flag and 125% on distance)

Chargeable between the hours of 00:00 and 07:00 every day;

and all day on Bank Holidays;

and after 18:00 on 24 December and 31 December.

For the first 408.2 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£6.20
For each additional 168.7 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 1 mile has been reached	£0.45
For each additional 227.0 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 4 miles has been reached (approximately £3.48 per mile)	£0.45
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof for the remainder of the journey (approximately £4.16 per mile)	£0.45

Rate 6 - Rate 3 plus 50% (Standard tariff plus 200%)

Chargeable from 23:00 on 24 December until 07:00 on 27 December;

and from 23:00 on 31 December until 00:00 on 2 January

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£9.30
For each additional 168.7 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 1 mile has been reached	£0.60
For each additional 227.0 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof until a distance of 4 miles has been reached (approximately £4.65 per mile)	£0.60
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof for the remainder of the journey (approximately £5.55 per mile)	£0.60

New Proposal - Increase of flag fall from £3.10 to £4.00 and simplification of rates

The taximeter will automatically display the highest applicable rate from the below tables.

Rates chargeable when the vehicle is carrying 1 to 4 passengers

Rate 1 - Standard tariff

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£4.00
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof (approx £1.85 per mile)	£0.20

Rate 2 - Standard tariff plus 30% on flag and 50% on distance

Chargeable between the hours of 00:00 and 07:00 every day;
and all day on Bank Holidays;
and after 18:00 on 24 December and 31 December.

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£5.20
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof (approx £2.77 per mile)	£0.30

Rate 3 - Standard tariff plus 100%

Chargeable from 23:00 on 24 December until 07:00 on 27 December;
and from 23:00 on 31 December until 00:00 on 2 January

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£8.00
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof (approx £3.70 per mile)	£0.40

Rates chargeable when the vehicle is carrying 5 or more passengers

For charging purposes only, two children under 10 years of age are regarded as one person.

Rate 4 - Rate 1 plus 50%

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£6.00
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof (approx £2.77 per mile)	£0.30

Rate 5 - Rate 2 plus 50% (Standard tariff plus 95% on flag and 125% on distance)

Chargeable between the hours of 00:00 and 07:00 every day;
and all day on Bank Holidays;
and after 18:00 on 24 December and 31 December.

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£7.80
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof (approx £4.16 per mile)	£0.45

Rate 6 - Rate 3 plus 50% (Standard tariff plus 200%)

Chargeable from 23:00 on 24 December until 07:00 on 27 December;
and from 23:00 on 31 December until 00:00 on 2 January

For the first 410 yards, or 97.2 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof	£12.00
For each additional 190.2 yards, or 40 seconds, or uncompleted part thereof (approx £5.55 per mile)	£0.60

Comparison of Current and New Proposal

The below table shows the approximate cost of mileage under the tariffs listed above, along with the percentage increase compared to the current tariff.

	Current	New Proposal	
Rate 1			
1 mile	£4.90	£5.60	14.3%
2 miles	£6.50	£7.40	13.8%
3 miles	£7.90	£9.20	16.5%
5 miles	£11.30	£13.00	15.0%
7.5 miles	£15.90	£17.60	10.7%
10 miles	£20.50	£22.20	8.3%
15 miles	£29.90	£31.40	5.0%
20 miles	£39.10	£40.60	3.8%
Rate 2			
1 mile	£6.85	£7.60	10.9%
2 miles	£9.25	£10.30	11.4%
3 miles	£11.35	£13.00	14.5%
5 miles	£16.45	£18.70	13.7%
7.5 miles	£23.35	£25.60	9.6%
10 miles	£30.25	£32.50	7.4%
15 miles	£44.35	£46.30	4.4%
20 miles	£58.15	£60.10	3.4%
Rate 3			
1 mile	£9.80	£11.20	14.3%
2 miles	£13.00	£14.80	13.8%
3 miles	£15.80	£18.40	16.5%
5 miles	£22.60	£26.00	15.0%
7.5 miles	£31.80	£35.20	10.7%
10 miles	£41.00	£44.40	8.3%
15 miles	£59.80	£62.80	5.0%
20 miles	£78.20	£81.20	3.8%

	Current	New Proposal	
Rate 4			
1 mile	£7.35	£8.40	14.3%
2 miles	£9.75	£11.10	13.8%
3 miles	£11.85	£13.80	16.5%
5 miles	£16.95	£19.50	15.0%
7.5 miles	£23.85	£26.40	10.7%
10 miles	£30.75	£33.30	8.3%
15 miles	£44.85	£47.10	5.0%
20 miles	£58.65	£60.90	3.8%
Rate 5			
1 mile	£10.25	£11.40	11.2%
2 miles	£13.85	£15.45	11.6%
3 miles	£17.00	£19.50	14.7%
5 miles	£24.65	£28.05	13.8%
7.5 miles	£35.00	£38.40	9.7%
10 miles	£45.35	£48.75	7.5%
15 miles	£66.50	£69.45	4.4%
20 miles	£87.20	£90.15	3.4%
Rate 6			
1 mile	£14.70	£16.80	14.3%
2 miles	£19.50	£22.20	13.8%
3 miles	£23.70	£27.60	16.5%
5 miles	£33.90	£39.00	15.0%
7.5 miles	£47.70	£52.80	10.7%
10 miles	£61.50	£66.60	8.3%
15 miles	£89.70	£94.20	5.0%
20 miles	£117.30	£121.80	3.8%

Agenda Item 4(b)ii

Taxi Licensing Policy and Licence Conditions 2025 - 2030

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 7 July 2025

Report of: Head of Regulatory Services

Portfolio: Environment Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Cabinet is asked to consider an amended Taxi Licensing Policy and Licence Conditions 2025 ("the Policy") which sets out the Council's approach to regulating the Hackney and Private Hire Vehicle trade under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 as amended. The Policy has been updated and revised to incorporate provisions made to steer the trade towards carbon neutrality, new guidance on the determining the suitability of applicants and licensees in the hackney carriage and private hire industry and proposing an incentive to increase the number of Hackney Carriage Licensed by the Borough.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Council be recommended to:

- 2.1.1 Subject to recommendations in paragraph 2.2 below, approve and publish the revised 2025 Policy and Conditions attached as **APPENDIX 1** to this report. **(all changes to the Policy are highlighted, throughout, in red)**

APPENDIX 2 of this report is the amendment table of the changes made to this current Policy

- 2.1.2 Authorise the Head of Regulatory Services to make any amendments to the Policy required due to changes in legislation or government guidance and minor variations to the Policy in the interests of operational efficiency.
 - 2.1.3 Authorise the Head of Regulatory Services, subject to broad headline dates being agreed by Council, and any external factors beyond the Council's control, to determine the dates/timescales within the revised Policy relating to vehicle emissions, the phasing out of licensed vehicles powered only by internal combustion engines and the introduction of electric and hybrid vehicles into the licensed taxi and private hire fleet.

2.2 That Cabinet consider whether to recommend that Council approve or reject each of the three proposals from the Trade detailed in Paragraph 5.5 of this report and instruct the Head of Regulatory Services to update and implement the Policy accordingly.

Reasons for Recommendations

2.3 The Policy is usually formally reviewed at 5 yearly intervals. Due to the requirement to address vehicle emissions and the new Suitability Guidance, from the Institute of Licensing, (IoL), it has been necessary to revise the Policy sooner.

2.4 The current Policy was reviewed, revised and approved in September 2021 and published in November 2021.

2.5 The revised Policy was consulted upon, informally with the Chair of the Taxi Association and members of the taxi trade in November and December 2024 and went out for public consultation between 24 January 2025 - 14 March 2025.

2.6 The Council's primary aim in carrying out its Taxi and Private Hire licensing function is to protect and promote public safety. The Council must ensure that licensed vehicles are fit for purpose and that licensed drivers are 'fit and proper' in accordance with the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 as amended.

2.7 In order to effectively discharge these legal obligations the Council requires a policy framework to guide officers and members in making decisions concerning the trade and/or individuals. Following extensive consultation, a revised and updated 2025 Policy has been produced.

2.8 The Policy provides clear guidance on the taxi and private hire licensing process and explains how the Council will make decisions in relation to the licensing of vehicles, drivers and operators.

2.9 Changes to the Policy may be influenced by unforeseen circumstances and/or factors beyond the Council's control. There is therefore flexibility required to review/amend key dates to mitigate any risks to the trade

3 Key Issues

3.1 The Council is charged with ensuring the safety and suitability of vehicles, drivers, and operators of hackney carriages ('taxis') and private hire vehicles. The key difference between these two classes of vehicle is that taxis can stand at ranks, and can be hailed in the street, and prescribed fares for Travel are agreed by the Council. Private Hire Vehicles MUST be pre-booked (via a booking office or an App). It is illegal for a private hire vehicle to pick up a customer off the street (or from anywhere else) unless the vehicle has been pre-booked. Any such journey would not be covered by insurance. Fares for journeys in Private Hire Vehicles are not set by the Council.

3.2 The changes in the Policy are predominantly related to Vehicle Emissions and Carbon Neutrality within the Taxi trade. The main aim is to eventually phase out vehicles that are solely run on either petrol or diesel fuel by 2030. It is the intention to phase out all Euro 4 and 5 emission vehicles and ensure that, from 2028, the Council will only accept initial licence applications for vehicles which are Electric/Hybrid or use Hydrogen fuel. The Suitability Guidance from the IoL has also been updated to ensure that only “safe and suitable” drivers are licensed. The proposals regarding vehicle emissions are shown in the table below

April 2026	Stop licensing Euro 4 ICE vehicles
April 2026 to March 2027	Transition period to stop licensing Euro 5 ICE vehicles
April 2027	Stop issuing new licences for Euro 5 vehicles
April 2028	Stop licensing ICE vehicles presented for the first time
April 2030	Stop licensing all vehicles powered only by ICE

3.3 The consultation process specifically sought views on the phasing out of licensed vehicles which are powered only by an internal combustion engine (ICE) and the introduction into the licensed fleet of electric, hybrid vehicles or hydrogen fuelled vehicles. The revised Policy at **APPENDIX 1**, reflects the consultation process and responses received.

3.4 Both national government policy and global factors may influence local efforts to transition away from fossil fuels and/or ICE powered vehicles. Whilst the Council should aim to ensure the highest environmental standards are met within the fleet of licensed vehicles, there may be circumstances beyond the Council’s control which necessitate some departure from the timetable shown in 3.2 above. Should such occasions arise, members will be duly advised.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 The Revised Policy supports Priority 2 - Communities and Wellbeing, a Safe and Cohesive Borough, through provision of an essential service within the Borough, enabling those who do not own a vehicle to access safe and flexible transport; supporting the night time economy; promoting equality of access to services and protecting public safety, particularly of those who are, or could become, vulnerable;

The Policy also supports Priority 3 - Climate Change, A smaller community carbon footprint and reduced borough wide carbon emissions, through its transitioning away from fossil-fuelled vehicles, the phasing in of electric/hybrid or hydrogen fuelled vehicles for the trade and aiming for carbon neutrality.

5 Report Detail

5.1 The hackney carriage (“taxi”) and private hire vehicles inclusive of chauffeur driven vehicles trades provide a vital service to residents and visitors to Stafford Borough Council in both the day and night-time economies, particularly in areas of the Borough with limited public transport.

5.2 In order to effectively administer the licensing regime, the Council requires a policy framework. The purpose of the Policy is to:

- Ensure the safety of the public and that all prospective hirers of vehicles are treated with dignity and respect.
- Ensure that drivers are fit and proper and vehicles are safe and suitable.
- Provide a robust, and legally compliant, decision-making framework which protects the Council should decisions be challenged in the Courts.
- Provide information to the trade, elected members, officers and the wider public on how the Council administers taxi/private hire licensing.

5.3 Stafford Borough Council has been part of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board (SSB) regarding Taxi Decarbonisation with other surrounding local authorities. The aim of this group is to ensure all local authorities within Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent take a unified approach and are committed to supporting their taxi trade along the road to Net Zero.

5.4 The draft Policy went out for consultation from 24 January 2025 - 14 March 2025 and covered several key policy areas, including:

- improved air quality and vision of Taxi decarbonisation
- The phasing out of vehicles powered only by diesel and petrol engines;
- The phased introduction of electric and hybrid vehicles into the Council's fleet in order to help meet Council Carbon neutrality commitments.
- The age at which a vehicle may be presented as new to licensing.

Ages and Medical regime for Drivers

- A licence to drive a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle cannot be granted to a person who is under 21 years of age. In addition, a licence cannot be granted to anyone over 21 who has not held a full UK (not provisional) licence for a period of one year. The Council issues Driver Licences for applicants, that are valid, for three years from the date of grant. For any applicants over 65 the licence will be issued for 3 years but an enhanced regime of medical assessment is operated therefore the driver is required to have a medical every 12 months on the grounds of public safety.

DVLA Driving Licence

- Applicants will be required to provide their DVLA Driving Licence to the Licensing Section, this must be valid and in good condition. It must be legible and bear the driver's current home address. Applicants are required to sign an agreement mandate, valid for the duration of their licence with Stafford

Borough Council which will allow the Council to check, their DVLA Licence status whenever necessary.

- Those who hold a European Economic Area (EEA) member state driving licence should note that as a result of the UK leaving the EU, the driving licence requirement has now changed, and a full (not provisional) UK licence must now have been held for a period of at least one year

Consideration of the “Fit and Proper Person” test

Some additions have been added.

- Endorsements.
- NR3 NAFN register of suspensions, refusals and revocations
- In making the assessment of a driver's fitness and propriety, the Council will pose the following question.

“Without prejudice and based on the information available, would you allow a person for whom you care, including a child, regardless of their condition to travel alone in a vehicle driven by this person at any time of day or night?”

- If on the balance of probabilities, the answer to the question is “no” the individual should not be given the benefit of the doubt and should not hold a licence.

Private Hire Operators

Sub-contracting

- Sections 55A and 55B of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allow a Private Hire operator to sub-contract bookings to another licensed operator.
- If this practice is operated, it is mandatory that operators must:
- Keep records of any jobs that are subcontracted to another Private Hire operator in a separate register with that operator's licence number and issuing authority.
- Furthermore, operators are required to notify passengers clearly if their driver and vehicle are not licensed by Stafford Borough Council. The notification must also include a specific statement that the council has no authority to take licensing action against the driver or vehicle in the event of a complaint, directing customers instead to the authority that issued the licence.
- Private hire operators will be issued with 5-year licenses to operate vehicles within the following bandings: -
 - one to four vehicles
 - five to fifteen vehicles; or,

- over fifteen vehicles.
- This will allow for greater flexibility in adding vehicles to the Operators' licence at any time.
- Operators must ensure that they provide the Licensing Section, on a quarterly basis, with an up-to-date list of their drivers and vehicles.

Ages of Vehicles and Inspection and Testing of Vehicles

- in line with the phasing out of ICE vehicles.

Wheelchair Access

- Clarification provided on space and equipment required within a wheelchair access vehicle.

Appendix 4 - General Vehicle Conditions

- Licence plates reduced from two plates to only one on the back of the vehicle. - *Stafford Borough Licensed vehicles have adhesive Plate Numbers affixed to each side of their vehicles to also aid identification.*

Appendix 8 - Guidance on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades.

- This is new guidance updated from the Institute of Licensing (IoL) and clarifies, if/when or not, a potential applicant or current driver may not be a suitable person for licensing purposes.
- Explanations of Spent Convictions/Minor and Major traffic offences.

Appendix 11 - Idling Vehicles Contribute to Air Pollution.

- Putting a stop to the idling of engines.

5.5 There were no consultation responses received from any other consultees apart from the taxi trade itself. The consultation responses from the trade have highlighted three proposals that need to be considered by Council on 22 July 2025 (*notes in italics provide context*):

- That the date of 2030 for all vehicles to be either hybrid/electric or hydrogen fuelled be pushed back to 2035. Please refer to the consultation response notes, first consultation response from the trade (3.4)

The UK government has confirmed the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars has been brought forward to 2030 - but full hybrid vehicles can still be sold until 2035 (note: new mild hybrid vehicles will not be permitted to be sold after 2030). As the revised Policy contains no end date for licensing of hybrid vehicles of whatever type, the 2030 date for ending the licensing of vehicles powered solely by internal combustion engines (ICE) is considered

reasonable and proportionate, both minimising disruption to the local trade and in assisting the Council in meeting its net zero ambitions. Members may wish to note that the emissions criteria imposed on vehicles licensed with the Borough Council will neither apply to, nor be enforceable against, vehicles trading in the Borough (for example via the Uber App) which are licensed by other local authorities.

- That Hackney Carriages can now be black as well as white; white is the only choice currently.

This is because white vehicles are becoming harder to come by and waiting lists can be up to 12-15 months, thereby presenting a barrier to the Trade.

- Proprietors of wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages (WAVs) will, once the vehicle has been licensed by Stafford Borough Council for a period of eight consecutive years to that proprietor, be permitted to license a saloon vehicle as a Hackney Carriage if they wish to do so.*

***this clause shall come into effect from the commencement date of the 2025 revised Policy i.e. will not be backdated for current WAV vehicles**

The reason behind the last proposal is that Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs) are very expensive to buy so result in prospective Hackney Carriage Proprietors becoming Private Hire Drivers. This proposal aims to give proprietors/drivers some incentive to initially purchase and license WAVs with the option then of looking forward to having a saloon vehicle, if they so wish, after the first 8 years and staying in the trade. From a Licensing perspective the merit of this proposal is twofold, it will hopefully attract more Hackney Carriage Proprietors, which are currently declining quite rapidly, whilst retaining enough WAVs within the Trade for those customers who require them.

- 5.6 A summary of the consultation responses, together with officer appraisals and suggested Council response are attached to this report as **APPENDIX 3**
- 5.7 A complete set of consultation responses is available in the Licensing Section should Members wish to view these.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications to the Council at this stage. Taxi and Private Hire licensing fees are regularly reviewed. The outcomes of such reviews are considered as part of the budget/fees and charges process.

6.2 Legal

The revised Policy ensures the Council discharges its statutory licensing functions effectively and that decisions made by Officers and Members are transparent, proportionate and comply with Human Rights and Equalities legislation. The Policy provides assurances that decisions in relation to the grant, renewal, suspension or revocation of licences can withstand challenge and scrutiny by outside bodies including the Courts.

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

The Policy ensures the Council is able to effectively discharge its statutory licensing functions and minimises the risk of reputational damage to the Council arising from the licensing of unsuitable persons or unsafe vehicles.

6.5 Equalities and Health

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out for the Policy. The Policy Document will be made available in large print, Braille and as an audio version, on request.

The Policy confirms that the Council is committed to a Health in All Policies (HIAP) approach. This will help identify how best to tackle the health inequalities within our Borough and ensure that all our policies and services include consideration of the health impact.

6.6 Climate Change

Should Council determine that the 2030 deadline for all vehicles being either hybrid/electric or hydrogen fuelled be pushed back to 2035, as per the request from the Trade in paragraph 5.5, this may have an impact on total local emissions.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Revised Taxi Licensing Policy and Licence Conditions 2025-2030

Appendix 2 - Taxi Licensing Policy amendment table

Appendix 3 - Consultation Response Notes

8 Previous Consideration

Taxi Licensing Policy and Licence Conditions November 2021

9 Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: Julie Wallace

Telephone Number: 01785 619605

Ward Interest: All

Report Track: Cabinet 7 July 2025

Council 22 July 2025

Key Decision: Yes

Taxi Licensing Policy and Licence Conditions 2025



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1 Foreword by Councillor Ian Fordham, Cabinet Member

Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles are an important mode of local transport, and as such, have a specific role to play in an integrated transport system. They are able to provide safe, secure and comfortable transport, providing an on-request door-to-door service in various circumstances such as those with mobility difficulties or people living in very rural areas where public transport may not be available.

The aim of the Policy is to regulate the provision of a robust Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing system, which ensures that the public travel safely, receive a good level of service and drivers and operators are not overly burdened by unnecessary conditions.

In setting out its Policy, the Council seeks to promote the following objectives:

- The safety and health of drivers and the public.
- Vehicle safety, comfort and access.
- To prevent crime and disorder and to protect the public.
- To encourage environmental sustainability through improved air quality and aiming for carbon neutrality by setting vehicle emission standards.
- Equality and accessibility in service provision.
- To ensure a professional and courteous Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle service.

Public safety is paramount, and this Licensing Authority seeks to ensure through its licensing regime that all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles are fit for purpose and that their drivers and/or operators are fit and proper persons.

This Policy provides information and guidance to licence applicants, clarity for licensed vehicle owners, drivers and operators and the public as to the way that the Council will undertake its licensing functions.

This Policy will be kept under review to take into account changes in legislation and best practice.



Councillor I Fordham
Cabinet Member for Environment

2 Background

Why we have a policy

- 2.1 Parliament regulates hackney carriages, private hire vehicles, their drivers and their operators through licences issued by the Council under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 as amended.
- 2.2 This policy sets out the requirements and standards that must be met and maintained and provides guidance to both the trade and members of the public, in relation to Stafford Borough Council's aim of protecting public safety through the licences it issues for taxis, private hire vehicles, drivers and operators.

3 Introduction

Public Protection

- 3.1 In the Borough of Stafford, the Council has the responsibility for ensuring the public travel in safe, well-maintained vehicles driven by competent drivers; as well as providing a fair and reasonable service for the taxi trade.
- 3.2 Protecting Public Safety is the paramount consideration of the Council in terms of taxi licensing and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 this placed a duty on local authorities to work together with key partner agencies and organisations to develop and implement local crime reduction strategies. These partners work together to ensure that Stafford Borough remains a safe place to work, visit, live and socialise.
- 3.3 The Statutory Taxi and private Hire Vehicle Standards, issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) in July 2020, assert that taxis and private hire vehicles are a high-risk environment and that minimum standards are required to regulate the taxi and private hire sector. Stafford Borough Council will have regard to these national Standards within its revised Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver, Vehicle and Operator Licensing Policy.

Although the said standards focus on protecting children and vulnerable adults, all passengers will benefit from the recommendations contained within the DfT document and the DfT expects the recommendation

contained within the Statutory Taxi and private Hire Vehicle Standards document to be implemented unless there is a compelling local reason not to.

A link to the Statutory Taxi and private Hire Vehicle Standards, can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-standards

The Council will also have regard to the Best Practice Guidance which is issued from time to time by the DFT:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance-for-licensing-authorities-in-england

The Policy should also be read in conjunction with:

[Suitability Guidance \(Institute of Licensing\) 2024](#)

Relationship to the Council's Corporate Priorities

3.4 This Policy supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows: -

To improve the quality of life of local people by providing a safe, clean, attractive place to live and work and encouraging people to be engaged in developing strong communities that promote health and wellbeing.

In ensuring public safety and protection by requiring vehicles to be serviced and maintained regularly and using monitoring and enforcement practices to ensure that all conditions are complied with. Provision of essential local transport within the Borough, supporting in particular the night-time economy; implementing risk-based, proportionate controls; ensuring all licence holders are treated equitably; ensuring non-compliance does not lead to unfair competitive advantage.

Health and Well-being of residents and visitors has been factored into this policy by requiring that vehicles comply with the emission regulations and ensuring that the fleet is at minimum Euro 6 compliant, that those vehicles solely fuelled by petrol or diesel are phased out. This will contribute towards the Borough's aim for carbon neutrality. The Policy also provides for relevant safeguarding training thus ensuring our drivers, private hire operators and those working within any operator's base are all fit and proper persons.

The Council's Core Licensing Functions

3.5 The Councils' core functions for taxi licensing are:-

- setting the local framework, which can include safeguarding standards, fares and vehicle standards.
- considering applications and safeguarding the public by issuing, reviewing or revoking licences.
- undertaking inspection and enforcement activities to ensure the required standards are being maintained and imposing controls or sanctions in the interests of public safety.

Policy Objectives

3.6 The Council's Policy objectives are:-

Public Protection - ensuring that the public can travel safely - that licensed drivers, vehicle licence holders and operators are "fit and proper" persons, and that vehicles are safe.

Improving Quality - ensuring that drivers are good, reputable drivers with up-to-date knowledge and training.

Promoting High Vehicle Standards - Ensuring that vehicles are clean and in good condition, comfortable and accessible for all passengers. Ensuring, that vehicles are subject to regular checks to ensure safety and compliance with emissions standards.

Improving Access for All - Encouraging a good level of service for the public and supporting vital transport links for the community, enabling visitors to move quickly and safely through Stafford Borough.

Improving Public Confidence - Ensuring that driver badges are worn. Ensuring that licence plates are properly displayed with signage, where applicable, to show the vehicle is licensed by the Council. Taking measures to ensure that public feel safe when travelling with a driver licensed by the Council.

Supporting the Safety and Success of the Night-Time Economy - ensuring the public can return home safely, helping crowds to disperse quickly and peacefully after events, or during busy times.

Improving Air Quality and aim for Carbon Neutrality

Appendix 1

Ensuring that vehicles which are new to licensing with the Council meet a minimum of Euro 6 Emission Standard by 2028 and ensuring that by 2030 all vehicles are hybrid, electric or Hydrogen fuelled only.

3.7 As this document forms part of your licence conditions, the Council expects all new applicants and existing drivers, proprietors and operators to be aware of, and demonstrate commitment to, promoting these objectives and to recognise that the protection of the public is the paramount consideration of the Council in terms of taxi licensing.

Consultation

3.8 The Council carried out a consultation from 24 January - 14 March 2025 and shared the revised policy with the following:

Staffordshire County Council, Transport for England, Stafford Borough Council's Planning Section, Stafford Borough Council's Environmental Health Section, Stafford Borough Council's Corporate Business Section, Stafford Borough Council's Licensing Public Appeals Committee Chairperson and Members. The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade including all licensed Operators and drivers within the Borough. Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Staffordshire County Council Trading Standards, Staffordshire Safeguarding Board, Stafford and District Access Group, Town Centre Partnership and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, to seek contributions, feedback and comments.

3.9 The Policy will be placed on the Licensing page on the Council's web site.

3.10 A Community Impact Assessment for this policy has been carried out.

Commencement

3.11 This policy, if approved by Council on 22 July 2025, will be implemented from 28 July 2025.

Future Changes

3.12 The Council will monitor the effectiveness of the policy in terms of promoting public safety and public confidence but, in any case, will review it every 5 years. The Council will also have to consider the Policy in the light of any further developments in the law and changes in government policy and guidance. The Council will review this Policy as appropriate and will consult with stakeholders at the time it is considering substantial changes to this policy.

3.13 **Stafford Borough Council are aiming for Taxi Decarbonisation within the trade by 2030 to reduce the impact on the environment, in line with the Council's objectives - please see Appendix 10**

3.14 Drivers are advised to keep themselves apprised of His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) tax conditionally requirements which introduced from 4 April 2022 a tax check into the licensing process for applications/renewals for taxi, private hire drivers and private hire vehicle operators.

Information Sharing

3.15 The Council shares information with partner organisations including the Police, Environmental Health, Home Office, Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), The National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) Staffordshire County Council, Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) in the interests of crime prevention and enforcement.

3.16 Council officers meet regularly with these other organisations in order to ensure effective regulation of the hackney carriage and private hire trade. The Police have powers to disclose information about relevant investigations even before an arrest or conviction is made.

Data Protection

3.17 When an individual or an organisation provides information to the Council, this data is held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. This legislation provides exemption from the rights of data subjects for the processing of personal data in connection with regulatory activities. This includes taxi and private hire vehicle licensing. Data that is provided to the Council is used for processing applications, recording details of successful applicants, and for enforcement and crime prevention purposes.

3.18 The Council may share data with other services and with partners of the Council where required by licensing procedures and for enforcement and crime prevention purposes, but data will not otherwise be passed on to any other party.

3.19 While certain information may be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act, personal data will be protected unless it is also official business data (e.g., a licensee whose registered business address is also their home).

Equality and Inclusion

3.20 Through the Council's policies and service delivery the Council's main aims for equality and inclusion are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between diverse communities.

3.21 A link to the Council's Equalities and Inclusion Policy can be found here www.staffordbc.gov.uk/equalities-and-diversity

3.22 The Council will carry out a Community Impact Assessment of this Policy, which assesses how it affects people with protected characteristics and other equality groups.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act

3.23 Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the Council is required to promote the prevention of crime and disorder within its area and we work with our partners to introduce innovative ways of working together to ensure we continue to reduce all criminal activity and improve the general wellbeing of residents. This Policy will contribute to this objective.

3.24 The Council will ensure that travelling passengers and the public have a clear mechanism for compliments, comments or complaints about drivers and vehicles to the Licensing Unit. This can be done by calling or emailing the Licensing Unit, from information supplied on the sticker inside the vehicle, or by visiting the Council's website www.staffordbc.gov.uk/licensing1.

Area of Primary Use to be Stafford Borough

3.25 Hackney Drivers and Hackney Vehicles licensed by Stafford Borough are expected to operate within Stafford Borough.

3.26 When the Council considers Hackney Carriage Licence applications it will have regard to where the vehicle to be licensed will be used. The Council may, in the proper exercise of its statutory discretion conferred upon them by section 37 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, refuse to grant or renew a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence where that vehicle is not intended to be used within Stafford Borough, or is used predominantly in another area.

- 3.27 All drivers of Stafford Borough Council licensed hackney carriages and private hire vehicles ('Drivers') must hold a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers' (Dual Badge) Licence issued by Stafford Borough Council.
- 3.28 Private Hire Operators must be licensed by the Council as must the driver and the Private Hire Vehicle. The Operator must have a base within Stafford Borough and must be responsible for taking the bookings. All three licences must be issued by the same Council.
- 3.29 Hackney Carriages (Taxis) must be licensed with the Council as must the driver, therefore both to be licensed with the same Council.

Contact Us

- 3.30 The Licensing Section can be contacted at ehlicensing@staffordbc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01785 619745 Postal Address: Regulatory Services, Licensing, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ.

4 Basics of Taxi Licensing

Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles - Differences

- 4.1 Hackney carriages are permitted to park on taxi ranks to wait for customers and can be hailed. Hackneys can also be booked in advance.
- 4.2 Private hire vehicles have to be booked in advance by customers via a licensed operator. Private hire vehicles are not permitted to wait for passengers at taxi ranks or to stop for passengers who try to hail them.
- 4.3 Vehicles will be licensed either as hackney carriages or private hire vehicles - vehicles cannot be licensed under both regimes.
- 4.4 The term "Taxis" is used throughout this Policy to refer to both Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles.

4.5 The table below is a quick reference guide to the differences between hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.

Differences	Hackneys	Private Hire
Ply for hire	✓	✗
Pre booked	✓	✓
Operating from a rank	✓	✗
Fare meter required	✓	✗
Fare tariff set by council	✓	✗
Number of vehicles may be restricted by councils	✓	✗

Hackneys require two types of licence:

- Hackney carriage proprietors (vehicle) licence
- Hackney carriage driver's licence

The provision of a private hire service requires three types of licence:

- Private hire Operator's licence
- Private vehicle licence
- Private hire driver's licence

Number of Passengers

4.6 The Council is only responsible for the licensing of vehicles with up to eight passenger seats. Vehicles with a seating capacity of 9 or more passenger seats are licensed by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.

Dual Badges for Licensed Drivers

4.7 The Council issues a “dual badge” for licensed drivers that permit them to work as hackney carriage drivers and private hire drivers.

Fit and Proper Person

4.8 The Council will not licence a driver or a private hire operator unless satisfied that the applicant is a “fit and proper person”

5 Vehicle Emissions and Carbon Neutrality

Note; The Policy changes on vehicle emissions and the licensing of Electric and Hybrid vehicles may be subject to future review and change because of unforeseen circumstances and/or factors beyond the Council’s control.

5.1 In order to promote public safety, reduce environmental impact, improve quality and increase public confidence, diesel or petrol vehicles must be less than 6 years old when they are first licensed with the Council and at minimum Euro 6 Compliant.

5.2 London cab-style vehicles and Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV's) that are diesel or petrol, which are new to licensing with the Council must be less than 8 years old and at minimum Euro 6 Compliant.

5.3 All Electric and Hybrid saloon type vehicles which are presented, as new to licensing, will be no more than 6 years old.

5.4 All Electric or Hybrid wheelchair accessible type vehicles, which are presented as new to licensing, will be no more than 8 years old.

5.5 With effect from 1 April 2026 the Council will stop licensing vehicles which are of Euro 4 emissions standard and are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) internal combustion engines (ICE). This will not affect electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.

5.6 From 1 April 2026 until 31 March 2027 the Council will accept renewal applications for the last time in connection with vehicles which are of Euro 5 emissions standard and are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquefied petroleum gas internal combustion engines. This will not affect electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel

5.7 From 1 April 2028 the Council will stop accepting new licensing applications for vehicles which are powered solely by petrol diesel or liquefied petroleum gas internal combustion engines (ICE). This will not affect the renewal of ICE vehicles already licensed by the Council. Further it will not affect new applications or renewals for electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.

5.8 From 31 March 2030, the Council will stop the licensing of all vehicles which are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquified petroleum gas internal combustion engines. This will not affect electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.

5.9 Summary of key dates in proposed transition to end licensing of ICE only powered vehicles.

April 2026	Stop licensing Euro 4 ICE vehicles
April 2026 to March 2027	Transition period to end licensing of Euro 5
April 2027	Stop licensing Euro 5 ICE vehicles
April 2028	Stop licensing ICE vehicles presented for the 1 st time
April 2030	Stop licensing all vehicles powered only by ICE

6 New Applicants for Dual Badge Drivers' Licences

Application Process

6.1 To apply for a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver's Licence contact ehlicensing@staffordbc.gov.uk.

6.2 Applicants are expected to complete the application process expediently and normally within three months of the initial application being submitted. Where applications are withdrawn a partial refund will be considered.

Drivers Must Be “Fit and Proper Persons”

6.3 The Council will not grant a licence to a new applicant for a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver's Licence, unless satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person. In order to assess the suitability of an applicant, the Licensing Authority will undertake whatever checks and apply whatever processes it considers necessary to ensure that licences are not issued to, or used by, unsafe or unsuitable people who are not 'fit and proper' Licence Holders must ensure they remain 'fit and proper' at all times to ensure that they retain their licence. The applicant is assessed as per the criteria set out in Section 7.

Ages of Drivers

6.4 A licence to drive a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle can only be issued to persons over 21 years of age and who have held a full UK (not provisional) driving licence for at least 12 months. The Council issues Driver Licences for applicants, that are valid, for three years from the date of grant. For any applicants over 65 the licence will be issued for 3 years but an

enhanced regime of medical assessment is operated therefore the driver is required to have a medical every 12 months on the grounds of public safety.

Right to Work in UK

6.5 The Council requires all applicants to provide documents to prove that they may legally work in the UK. The Council will also verify an applicant's right to work in the UK by making the relevant checks.

Medical Examination

6.6 Applicants shall submit to a medical examination upon their first application for a drivers' licence. Applicants must arrange the medical with the Council's approved medical examiner via the Occupational Health Unit at Cannock Chase Hospital. DVLA Group 2 medical certificates obtained from other medical examiners will not be accepted by the Council. Applicants asking for an exemption from the requirement to carry assistance dogs or an exemption to the requirement to assist wheelchair passengers on medical grounds or where the drivers physical condition makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult form to comply with the duties set out in section 165 of the Equality Act 2010 should make this issue known to the Occupational Health Unit and the Licensing Section at the earliest stage and provide supporting information/documentation from your GP. Giving false information on any medical form could lead to prosecution.

6.7 Where a medical certificate has been produced or not, applicants may be required to arrange a further medical with the Council's approved medical provider to assess their fitness as a driver. The Council to bear the cost.

Training

6.8 On implementation of this policy, all new applicants will be required wherever possible to successfully complete appropriate training prior to being licensed. In any case the training should be completed within 6 months of being licensed for the first time. Training will include such matters as Safeguarding, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), County Lines, which is compulsory every 3 years, and the prevention of terrorism (Prevent). Training will also include Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) and Dementia Awareness training.
www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/safeguarding/ or
www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/disability-awareness-main/

Knowledge Test

6.9 All new applicants must pass the Council's written and oral Knowledge Test before they can be licensed. The Knowledge test covers areas that include:

- The Highway Code
- Safeguarding
- Ability to read, write and speak English
- Driving routes in Stafford Borough; and
- Location of popular destinations

Failure of Knowledge Test

6.10 Where an applicant fails three tests then a period of at least 1 month must elapse before another test is taken. If the applicant fails the fourth test, then they will not be able to make a further application for a licence for 12 months from the date of the last knowledge test.

Future Changes to the Knowledge Test

6.11 The Council reserves the right to introduce specific requirements in relation to the assessment of applicants' ability in English, Mathematics and in relation to awareness of Equality and Disability, Safeguarding, CSE and the prevention of terrorism (Prevent).

Photographs

6.12 Photographs provided for new applications must meet the criteria required by the Passport Office in respect of the background, colour, quality and size and **must** also be up to date i.e., taken within the last 3 months. It is recommended that photographs should be obtained from photograph machines or photographic retailers.

DVLA Driving Licence

6.13 Applicants will be required to provide their DVLA Driving Licence to the Licensing Section, this must be valid and in good condition. It must be legible and bear the applicant's current address. Applicants are required to sign an agreement mandate, valid for the duration of their license with Stafford Borough Council which will allow the Council to check, their DVLA Licence status whenever necessary.

6.14 Those who hold a European Economic Area (EEA) member state driving licence should note that as a result of the UK leaving the EU, the driving licence requirement has now changed and a full (not provisional) UK licence must now have been held for a period of at least one year. Further information on this can be found online at www.gov.uk/exchange-foreign-driving-licence

Previous Licence at another Council

6.15 The Council will not licence a vehicle for hire and reward which is licensed by another local authority **or allow or permit an identification plate issued by another authority to be displayed on the vehicle.**

Where an applicant has previously been licensed with another Council, they will be required to sign a consent form permitting the Licensing Section access to their licence records at the other Council. Where such agreement cannot be reached, then the application may not proceed. Failure to declare the existence of a previous licence with another authority regardless of whether there is any history of non-compliance will lead to consideration of suspension or revocation of a licence that is granted. Applicants must also disclose, at application stage, any previous refusals/suspensions/revocations by any other Local Authority.

Disclosure and Barring Service

6.16 An Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is required upon initial application. Applicants are required to sign up to the DBS Update Service within 30 days of receipt of their DBS Certificate, **this is mandatory and must remain subscribed to the service for the duration of their licence.** The Council will check the online DBS, routinely for new information, at 6 monthly intervals, in line with the statutory standards, or at any time where deemed necessary to ensure public safety. If applicants do not sign up to the update service, or allow the subscription to lapse, they will still be subject to completing a full DBS application form every 6 months at their own cost and action will also be taken for being in breach of this Policy which may result in suspension or revocation of the new licence.

6.17 It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all bank and contact details are current and updated with the DBS directly. Every lapse in the subscription will result in an assessment of being a fit and proper person and result in suspension or revocation of licence.

6.18 It should be noted that the DBS service cannot access criminal records held overseas, only foreign convictions that are held on the Police National

Computer may, subject to the disclosure rules, be disclosed, therefore a DBS check may not provide a complete picture of an individual's criminal record where there have been periods living or working overseas: the same applies when an applicant has previously spent an extended period (three or more continuous months) outside the UK therefore applicants are required to provide criminal records information and a 'Certificate of Good Character' from overseas, in these circumstances, to properly assess risk and support the decision making process. Each case will be considered on its own merits. For information on applying for overseas criminal record information and 'Certificates of Good Character' please use the following link www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants

Human Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation

6.19 All new applicants must inform the Council, in writing, including on the application form, if they have ever been questioned, interviewed or arrested for any offence connected to child sexual exploitation or human trafficking.

Public Protection and the Fit and Proper Person Test

6.20 The Council will not grant a Driver Licence unless it is satisfied that the applicant is a "fit and proper person" - see Section 7.3 - 7.11 below, the paramount consideration is the protection of the public.

7 Requirements for All Dual Badge Drivers

Application and Renewal Processes

7.1 An application form for new applicants can be requested from ehlicensing@staffordbc.gov.uk. Licences are granted for three years. For any applicants over 65 the dual badge licence will be issued for 3 years but an enhanced regime of medical assessment is operated therefore the driver is required to have a medical every 12 months on the grounds of public safety.

7.2 For renewals the application form will be sent out a month in advance of the licence expiry date and electronic documents are acceptable, by return, excluding a driving licence, hard copy, and current passport photo.

7.3 Drivers Must Be "Fit and Proper Persons"

7.4 The Local Government Association has stated: “Passengers should be at the centre of a licensing authority’s taxi licensing policies and processes, and there is no area where this is more important than in the application of the ‘fit and proper person’ test.

7.5 The Council will not process a licence application unless it is satisfied that a driver is a “fit and proper person”. The Council will use the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) register of drivers (NR3) which holds records of drivers who have been refused or had revoked a taxi or PHV driver licence. Suspensions for certain allegations in relation to safeguarding or road traffic concerns will also be added. We will record any cases within Stafford Borough and check the database for all licence applications and renewals. The Licensing Authority will record the reasons for any refusal or revocation and upon appropriate request, we will provide those details to other authorities on a confidential basis.

7.6 The key reason for applying the “fit and proper” test is the protection of the public. If the Council is not satisfied that a driver is a “fit and proper person” then it must not grant a driver licence. All decisions on the suitability of an applicant or licensee will be made on the balance of probability which means that a border line case applicant or a border line case licensee will not be ‘given the benefit of doubt’ the licence will either be refused or revoked.

Consideration of the “Fit and Proper Person” test

7.7 Factors that are considered include: -

- The right to work in this country
- Criminal record (both current and spent convictions) which includes overseas convictions.
- Mental and physical fitness.
- Valid DVLA Licence
- Conduct, attitude and behaviour.
- Driving record, experience **and endorsements**.
- Complaints about conduct or customer service.
- Previous breaches of licence conditions.
- Sobriety.

- Knowledge test, including Safeguarding.
- Ability to read, write and speak English.
- **NR3 NAFN register of suspensions, refusals and revocations**
- Any other information the Council considers relevant.

7.8 Information used to judge ‘fit and proper’ will not be confined to issues which occurred while the applicant was engaged in a professional driving role as the intention is to consider patterns of behaviour and conduct that could indicate that the safety and welfare of the public may be at risk from the applicant.

7.9 In order to assess the suitability of an applicant, the Licensing Authority will undertake whatever checks and apply whatever processes it considers appropriate to ensure that licences are not issued to or used by people who are not fit and proper.

7.10 The onus is on the applicant to satisfy the Council that they are ‘fit and proper’ at the time of application. Simply being free from convictions is not enough. Licence holders must ensure that they remain ‘fit and proper’ for the duration of their licence. Failure to do so may result in sanctions and the likelihood that the licence will be reviewed and may be subsequently suspended or revoked.

In making the assessment of a driver’s fitness and propriety, the Council will pose the following question.

“Without prejudice and based on the information available, would you allow a person for whom you care, regardless of their condition to travel alone in a vehicle driven by this person at any time of day or night?”

If on the balance of probabilities, the answer to the question is “no” the individual should not be given the benefit of the doubt and should not hold a licence.

7.11 Applicants are referred to the Council’s Guidance on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades see **Appendix 8**.

7.12 The determination of applications will be made by licensing officers under delegated powers unless they cannot be satisfied as to the applicant’s ‘fitness and propriety’. If this is in question, the application will be referred to the Council’s Public Appeal’s Committee for their determination

Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced Disclosure

7.13 An Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is required upon initial application. New applicants are required to subscribe to the DBS Online Update Service as part of this process and **existing drivers** are required to subscribe to this service when they next make application for a manual DBS Enhanced Disclosure, the sign up is required, to be done, within 30 days of receipt of the certificate, this is mandatory and all must remain subscribed to the service for the duration of their licence. The Council will check the online DBS, routinely for new information at 6 monthly intervals, in line with the statutory standards, or at any time where deemed necessary to ensure public safety. If there are no changes recorded on the DBS certificate, then a full DBS check will not be required on renewal. If drivers do not sign up to the Update Service, on application or upon renewal, they will be required to submit a further DBS at their own cost every 6 months and further action will be taken for being in breach of this Policy which may lead to suspension/revocation of their licence. The Council has a policy which provides guidance on the relevance of convictions which are not spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Refer to **Appendix 8** of this document.

7.14 It should be noted that the DBS service cannot access criminal records held overseas, only foreign convictions that are held on the Police National Computer may, subject to the disclosure rules, be disclosed, therefore a DBS check may not provide a complete picture of an individual's criminal record where there have been periods living or working overseas: the same applies when an applicant has previously spent an extended period (three or more continuous months) outside the UK therefore applicants are required to provide criminal records information and a 'Certificate of Good Character' from overseas, in these circumstances, to properly assess risk and support the decision making process. Each case will be considered on its own merits. For information on applying for overseas criminal record information and 'Certificates of Good Character' please use the following link www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants. A full written explanation must be provided to the Licensing Unit if no such information or certificate can be obtained.

7.15 The law requires the Council to consider an Applicant's spent and unspent convictions, as relevant to the question of whether the applicant is a fit and proper person, because taxi drivers are exempted from the requirements of the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974. In general, the Council will have regard to the type, age, frequency and/or seriousness of the offence and whether

there is any pattern of behaviour shown. Further information is set out in **Appendix 8** of this document.

DVLA Licences

- 7.16 Drivers are required to sign an agreement mandate, valid for the duration of their licence, which will allow the Council to check their DVLA Licence status whenever necessary.
- 7.17 Any driver who permits their DVLA licence to expire or does not keep it updated with a current address may have their Driver's Licence suspended or revoked if the Council is not satisfied that the driver has a valid DVLA licence.
- 7.18 A licence to drive a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle cannot be granted to a person who is under 21 years of age. In addition, a licence cannot be granted to anyone over 21 who does not hold a full UK driving licence or has not held such a licence for a minimum of 12 months.
- 7.19 Those who hold a European Economic Area (EEA) member state driving licence should note that as a result of the UK leaving the EU, the driving licence requirement has now changed and a full (not provisional) UK licence must now be held. Further information on this can be found online at www.gov.uk/exchange-foreign-driving-licence

DVLA Licences and Changes of Address

- 7.20 Drivers must notify the Council of any change of address within **7 days** and then either present their DVLA Driving Licence to the Council or send it in electronically showing the new address details within **28 days** of the change of address. Drivers have a statutory obligation to notify the DVLA of their new address.

DVLA Licence Penalty Points

- 7.21 Any driver who, at any time, has 7 or more 'live' points upon their DVLA Driving Licence or has served a driving ban or has been convicted of a driving offence such as driving without due care and attention will be required to undertake a driving assessment with a relevant provider. This assessment must be undertaken at the driver's own expense but the initial process and contact with the relevant service provider will be facilitated by the Council's Licensing Section. If concerns are raised by the Driving Assessor about the proficiency of the driver during the driving assessment, the Council may require additional training or further assessments to be carried out. Multiple motoring convictions are strong indicator that a driver may not be a fit and

proper person to drive professionally, especially where any convictions have been incurred whilst driving in a professional capacity. The driver may have their Dual Badge Licence revoked if their driving is deemed dangerous.

- 7.22 If a driver continues to have DVLA penalty points imposed upon their licence after their driving has been assessed by a relevant service provider, that driver may be referred to the Council's Public Appeals Committee so that their fitness and propriety can be assessed.
- 7.23 Any driver who has 12 penalty points or more upon their DVLA Licence may be referred to the Council's Public Appeals Committee. The Committee will decide whether the driver remains a fit and proper person to hold a licence, or whether the licence should be suspended or revoked. This determination is separate from any determination of financial hardship made by the courts.

Up to Date Contact Information.

- 7.24 Licensed drivers must be contactable at all reasonable times and the Council expect that all contact details provided such as telephone number, home addresses and email addresses are correct and up to date. Where drivers cannot be contacted after reasonable attempts have been made by the Licensing Unit, drivers may have formal action taken against them and their Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Drivers' Licence may be suspended or revoked.

Assessment of Medical Fitness

- 7.25 Drivers shall submit to a medical examination when they make their first application and also on every renewal date (usually every three years) up to the age of 65 years. Giving false information on any medical form could lead to prosecution.
- 7.26 On reaching the age of 65 drivers are required to have an annual medical.
- 7.27 In addition to the above the Council requires more frequent medicals for drivers with certain medical conditions, such as diabetes, which will require a subsequent diabetology report to confirm medical fitness, this will usually be required annually and must be done before the medical appointment at the Council's Occupational Health Unit, the result must then be taken by the driver to their medical appointment in Cannock. The cost of which will be incurred by the driver.

- 7.28 Applicants must pay the medical fee before being able to book the medical examination. The Licensing Section will issue the applicant with the application form upon receipt of payment. The current fee can be found at www.staffordbc.gov.uk/licensing1 (click onto Fees)
- 7.29 If the Council is concerned as to an applicant's medical fitness, which includes suspected drug use, whether a medical certificate has been produced or not, applicants may be required to arrange a further medical with the Council's approved medical provider in order to assess their fitness as a driver. The cost of which will be incurred by the driver.

Medical Conditions Affecting Ability to Drive

- 7.30 If an already licensed driver has any medical condition which may affect their ability to drive safely, the driver must cease driving licensed vehicles and contact the Council immediately to report the medical condition.
- 7.31 The Council may suspend a driver where it considers it is in the interests of Public Safety to do so.
- 7.32 Further testing or examination may be required if recommended by the Council's medical examiner. Any costs are to be covered by the driver. However, dependent on the severity of illness, the driver's own GP may certify fitness to return to work as a licensed driver. Each case will be considered on its own merits. The Licensing Officers may decide to refer the driver to the Public Appeals Committee for determination.

Medical Exemption from Carrying Assistance Dogs

- 7.33 Drivers who wish to claim a medical exemption to the requirement to carry assistance dogs must apply for such an exemption through the medical assessment process, at Cannock Chase Hospital, at the earliest possible stage, taking supporting information/documentation from your GP with you. Drivers will need to supply supporting information/documentation at every medical thereafter to support the continuing exemption. Evidence must be supplied by Occupational Health to the Licensing Section before any exemption will be allowed. The Council reserves the right to verify any such evidence. Any costs will be incurred by the driver.

Medical Exemption from Assisting Wheelchair Passengers

7.34 Drivers who wish to claim a medical exemption to the requirement to assist wheelchair passengers must apply for such an exemption through the medical assessment process, at Cannock Chase Hospital, at the earliest possible stage, taking supporting information/documentation from your GP with you. Exemption can only be claimed on medical grounds or where the driver's physical condition makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for them to comply with the duties set out in section 165 of the Equality Act 2010. Any costs will be incurred by the driver. Drivers will need to supply supporting information/documentation at every medical thereafter to support the continuing exemption. Evidence of this must be supplied by Occupational Health to the Licensing Section before any exemption will be allowed. The Council reserves the right to verify any such evidence. Any costs will be incurred by the driver.

Training

7.35 All licensed drivers will be required to successfully complete appropriate training within 6 months, from when first licensed. Training will include such matters as Safeguarding, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), the prevention of terrorism (Prevent) and Dementia Awareness. Failure to attend or complete the training may result in the licence holder being suspended or revoked. Such training will be renewed every 3 years.
www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/safeguarding/ or
www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/disability-awareness-main/

7.36 Drivers of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) must always be competent in assisting wheelchair passengers and must comply with their duties under the Equality Act 2010. If the Council has concerns in relation to such competency or the driver receives complaints regarding failures to comply with the duties under the Act the Council may require the licensed driver to attend and complete an approved WAV training course at their own expense. In the event of serious failures to comply the Council may suspend or revoke the driver's licence. www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/disability-awareness-main/

Disclosure of Convictions, Cautions, Fixed Penalties Etc

7.37 Failure to notify the Council of any arrest and release, charge, conviction, caution or fixed penalty may result in the suspension or revocation of the licence

7.38 All licensed drivers are required to give written notification to the Licensing Section within 48 hours of any of the following: -

- Being questioned, arrested, released, and/or charged or convicted in connection with any sexual offence.
- Being questioned, arrested or charged with any offence involving dishonesty or violence.
- any other offence with which they are charged.
- any pending court appearances.
- all convictions which postdate the most recent renewal of licence.
- the acceptance of a fixed penalty notice for any offence.
- all endorsements for any motoring offences.
- their acceptance of a speed or other awareness course; and,
- all cautions, including those commonly referred to as “simple” “formal” or “police” cautions issued by the police or any other prosecuting authority.

7.39 The driver shall specify the nature of the offence, the date of the offence, the date of conviction or caution and the penalty imposed. For the avoidance of doubt the date of caution is the date on which the driver accepts and admits that the offence was committed.

7.40 All hackney/private hire drivers must inform the Licensing Section as soon as possible and in any event **within 24 hours**, if they have been questioned, interviewed, arrested and/or released or charged in connection with: -

- touching a child or young person unnecessarily or inappropriately
- making offensive or inappropriate comments
- misusing or attempting to misuse personal details obtained as part of a fare or booking
- sexual activity with a child or vulnerable person
- inappropriate relationship with a child or vulnerable person
- violence, coercion or intimidation of a child or vulnerable person

- trafficking a child or vulnerable person.

Notification to Insurers

7.41 Drivers must ensure that they notify the insurer(s) of their vehicle(s) of any convictions or motoring fixed penalty notices.

Conditions

7.42 Drivers must comply with the conditions attached at **Appendix 1** at all times.

Surrender of Licence

7.43 The licence badge remains the property of the Council at all times and upon revocation, suspension, expiry or surrender of the licence, the driver must return the badge, immediately, to the Council.

8 Private Hire Operators

Public Safety

8.1 The objective in licensing private hire operators is ensuring the safety of the public who may be using operators' premises, vehicles and drivers arranged for them. It is important therefore that licensing authorities are assured that those that are granted a private hire vehicle operator's licence also pose no threat to the public and have no links to serious criminal activity. Although private hire vehicle operators may not have direct contact with passengers, they are still entrusted with customers' personal details and sensitive information and expected to ensure that their vehicles and drivers are appropriately licensed maintaining the safety benefits of the licensing regime.

8.2 Any person(s) wishing to apply for an Operator's licence within Stafford Borough must have sought the relevant planning permissions, **have a base within the geographical area of the Borough with a minimum of one car and driver to also be licensed by Stafford Borough Council.**

Sub-contracting

8.3 Sections 55A and 55B of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allow a Private Hire operator to sub-contract bookings to another licensed operator.

If this practice is operated, it is mandatory that operators must:

- Keep records of any jobs that are subcontracted to another Private Hire operator in a separate register with that operator's licence number and issuing authority.
- Furthermore, operators are required to notify passengers clearly if their driver and vehicle are not licensed by Stafford Borough Council. The notification must also include a specific statement that the council has no authority to take licensing action against the driver or vehicle in the event of a complaint, directing customers instead to the authority that issued the licence.
- No sub-contracted vehicles are permitted to sit on any of Stafford Borough Council's taxi ranks.

8.4 In relation to an Operator's Licence section 62 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the suspension and revocation of an operator's licence for:

Section 62(1)(c) any material change since the licence was granted in any of the circumstances of the Operator on the basis of which the licence was granted

If the operator's licence is issued to a person or company and there is then a sale of that business then that would amount to a material change of who the licence was issued to, therefore there is no right to transfer the operator's licence.

All private hire operator licences are issued to an individual, partnership or company once all those named on the application have been vetted through the strict application process. As a result, private hire operator's licences are not transferable if the owner(s) of the business change.

Application Process

8.5 To apply for a Private Hire Operator's Licence please apply to ehlicensing@staffordbc.gov.uk.

Period of Licence

8.6 A private hire operator licence will normally be valid for five years from the date of issue though the Council reserves the right to issue such licences for shorter periods where it is deemed appropriate to do so.

8.7 Private hire operators will be licensed to operate vehicles within the following bandings: -

- one to four vehicles
- five to fifteen vehicles; or,
- over fifteen vehicles.

This will allow for greater flexibility in adding vehicles to the Operator's Licence at any time.

Full year reimbursement of private hire operator fees may be considered where an operator stops trading or operating for business reasons. Fees will not be reimbursed where an operator's licence is revoked.

8.8 Operators must ensure that they provide the Licensing Section, on a quarterly basis, with an up-to-date list of their drivers and vehicles.

Operators to Be Fit and Proper Persons

8.9 The Council will not grant a licence for a Private Hire Operator unless satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person.

8.10 Applicants for a Private Hire Operator's licence must provide Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) see paragraphs 8.13 and 8.14 below.

Consideration of the “Fit and Proper Person” test

8.11 Factors that are considered include:-

- Immigration status
- Criminal record (both current and spent convictions) which includes overseas convictions.
- Mental and physical fitness.
- Conduct, attitude and behaviour.
- Complaints about conduct or customer service.
- Previous breaches of licence conditions.
- Sobriety.

- Ability to read, write and speak English.
- Ability to keep accurate records
- Assessment of how the Applicant will ensure drivers employed by them are fit and proper and suitably trained
- Assessment of how the Applicant will ensure customer safety and safeguarding
- Assessment of how the Applicant will ensure vehicles are safe, adequately maintained and insured
- Assessment of how the Applicant will handle customer information and personal data
- Assessment of how the Applicant will ensure drivers do not work excessive hours
- Any other information the Council considers relevant.

Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced Disclosure

8.12 Where an existing or prospective Operator is not a licensed Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver and has not provided an Enhanced Disclosure with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) then a Standard Disclosure must be obtained from Disclosure Barring Service prior to any licence being issued and every year thereafter. Online applications can be made at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service

8.13 It should be noted that the DBS service cannot access criminal records held overseas, only foreign convictions that are held on the Police National Computer may, subject to the disclosure rules, be disclosed, therefore a DBS check may not provide a complete picture of an individual's criminal record where there have been periods living or working overseas: the same applies when an applicant has previously spent an extended period (three or more continuous months) outside the UK therefore applicants are required to provide criminal records information or a 'Certificate of Good Character' from overseas, in these circumstances, to properly assess risk and support the decision making process. Each case will be considered on its own merits. For information on applying for overseas criminal record information or 'Certificates of Good Character' please use the following link www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants.

Criminal Record and Convictions

8.14 Applicants are referred to the Council's Guidance on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees and Relevance of Convictions, see **Appendix 8**.

8.15 All licensed operators must give written notification to the Licensing Section as soon as possible of:-

- any offence with which they are charged.
- any pending court appearances.
- all convictions.
- all cautions, including those commonly referred to as "simple" "formal" or "police" cautions issued by the police or any other prosecuting authority.

8.16 The operator shall notify the Council's Licensing Section by e-mail or letter within **48 hours** of accepting one of the above or receiving one of the above at court.

8.17 A private hire vehicle operator licence may be applied for by a company or partnership; the Licensing Authority will apply the 'fit and proper' test to each of the directors or partners in the company or partnership. In consequence, private hire operators must advise the licensing authority of any change in directors or partners. The operator is also expected to inform the Council of any convictions relating to business partners or company directors.

Duties of Operators to Ensure Drivers are Fit and Proper

8.18 Operators must ensure that persons who are recruited to be drivers are fit and proper persons.

Duties of Operators to Ensure All Staff are Suitable Persons

8.19 Operators must ensure that all support staff, whether directly employed by the company or not, are properly trained and suitable persons to undertake work which requires dealing with sensitive personal information and the maintaining of customer confidentiality.

8.20 Operators must keep a register for dispatch staff and are required to evidence that they have had sight of a Basic DBS check on all individuals listed on that register.

Online applications can be made at
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service

- 8.21 Operators must provide a policy on the employment of ex-offenders and ensure that Basic DBS checks are conducted on any individual added to the register and that the result of the Basic DBS check is compatible with their own policy on employing ex-offenders.
- 8.22 The Operator must ensure that sensitive personal information, such as the holiday plans or movements of customers, will not be used or passed on for criminal or unacceptable purposes. The Operator must comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR).

Duties to Ensure Vehicles are Safe and Insured

- 8.23 The Operator must ensure that vehicles that are booked for private hire work are safe, mechanically sound and maintained in a good and clean condition.
- 8.24 The Operator must ensure that the Base and vehicles are properly insured for private hire work. This includes ensuring so far as possible that private hire vehicles do not ply for hire. **Public Liability Insurance for £5,000,000 as well as Employer Liability Insurance for a minimum of £1,000,000 is required.**
- 8.25 Operators must ensure that all staff, themselves included, whether directly employed or not, are suitably trained regarding how to recognise and report child sexual exploitation.
- 8.26 **Private hire vehicle operators must accept bookings for, or on behalf of, any disabled person if a suitable vehicle is available, Operators/Proprietors are strongly encouraged to make provision for the legal transportation of a minimum of one wheelchair at all times.**

Disability Equalities Training

- 8.27 Operators must ensure that all staff, whether directly employed or not, are suitably trained in order to understand how best to assist passengers and to comply with the duties to assist wheelchair passengers as per the Equality Act 2010.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Training

- 8.28 Operators must ensure that all staff, including themselves, whether directly employed or not, are suitably trained regarding how to recognise and report child sexual exploitation (CSE). www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/safeguarding/

8.29 Operator licences may be suspended or revoked in cases where the operator's conduct falls short of the conduct expected of a fit and proper person. This would include cases where operators were convicted of offences relating to sexual exploitation, dishonesty and violence. It would also include breaches of licensing conditions and failure to keep accurate records.

Conditions

8.30 Operators must always comply with the conditions attached at Appendix 5.

9 Vehicle Licences

Two Types of Vehicle Licence

9.1 The licence required for a Hackney Carriage Vehicle is called a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence. The licence required for a Private Hire Vehicle is called a Private Hire Vehicle Licence. The requirements of this section apply to both types of vehicles.

Hackney Carriages.

These shall be White or Black in colour only and must be Wheelchair Accessible.

9.2 Proprietors of wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages (WAVs) will, once the vehicle has been licensed by Stafford Borough Council for a period of eight consecutive years to that proprietor, be permitted to license a saloon vehicle as an HCV if they wish to do so.*

***This clause shall come into effect from the commencement date of the 2025 revised Policy i.e. will not be backdated for current WAV vehicles.**

9.3 In order to qualify for licensing as a Hackney Carriage, the vehicle **must** be **white or black** and wheelchair accessible. The Vehicle Registration Document (V5) must outline WHITE or BLACK as the vehicle colour. No other colour will be permitted for Hackney Carriage Vehicles except for London style cabs which may be of another colour, with written permission from the Council.

9.4 The Policy regarding licensed vehicles and wheelchair accessibility is set out in Section 10, below.

Private Hire Vehicles - Not White or Black

9.5 Private Hire Vehicles (PHV's) must not be white or black. There will be a gradual phasing out of black PHV's meaning that once the age limit of the current car has been reached and needs replacing the drivers next vehicle should not be black nor white.

Main Location for Use of Hackney Carriages

9.6 When the Council considers Hackney Carriage Licence applications it will have regard to where the vehicle will primarily be used. The Council may, in the proper exercise of its statutory discretion conferred upon them by section 37 of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, refuse to grant or renew a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence where that vehicle is not intended to be used within Stafford Borough, or is used predominantly in another area.

Application Process

9.7 To apply for and renew Vehicle Licences contact ehlicensing@staffordbc.gov.uk.

9.8 As part of the application process, Applicants for all Vehicle Licences shall book an inspection of the vehicle they propose to license or provide detailed photographs to the Council's Licensing Section.

9.9 The Council requires Applicants/Licence Holders to present a Vehicle Registration (V5) document or bill of sale in the name of the Applicant, failing which the Council may refuse the application.

9.10 The Council requires Applicants/Licence Holders to have arranged, and provide evidence of, sufficient motor vehicle insurance for the vehicle they propose to licence, prior to application, failing which the Council may refuse the application.

9.11 The Council requires Applicants to produce a valid MOT Certificate plus the Compliance Checklist provided by the MOT provider(s) unless it will be provided electronically by the garage. New vehicles shall be subject to the requirement for an MOT 12 months after date of first registration.

Vehicle Specifications

9.12 The Council requires vehicles new to licensing to have engines rated at not less than 999 cc, and at minimum to be Euro 6 compliant, to have at least four doors and to be capable of carrying four passengers and equal amount of

luggage, or a folded wheelchair. The vehicle must be a saloon or hatchback type vehicle so is large enough to meet the criteria.

9.13 The Council requires vehicles to have seat belts fitted, available for all passenger seats, and fully compliant with British National Standards except where the law specifically provides an exemption.

Vehicle Registration Marks (Number Plates)

9.14 The content and layout of vehicle registration marks is set out by The Road Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations 2001 (as amended). A failure to comply with the requirements results in the vehicle registration mark being illegal and subject to an MOT failure and in breach of the terms of your hackney carriage/private hire licence which will result in immediate suspension and you will be put before the Public Appeals Committee.

Regulation 11 of the Road Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations 2001 imposes further requirements for registration plates therefore stating that the appearance of the characters should not be altered.

11(1) No reflex-reflecting material may be applied to any part of a registration plate and the plate must not be treated in such a way that the characters of the registration mark become, or are caused to act as, retroreflective characters.

11(1A) The surface of a registration plate must not comprise or incorporate any design, pattern or texture, or be treated in any way which gives to any part of the plate the appearance of a design, pattern or texture.

11(2) A registration plate must not be treated in any other way which renders the characters of the registration mark less easily distinguishable to the eye or which would prevent or impair the making of a true photographic image of the plate through the medium of camera and film or any other device.

11(3) A registration plate must not be fixed to a vehicle;

- (a) by means of a screw, bolt or other fixing device of any type or colour,
- (b) by the placing of a screw, bolt or other fixing device in any position, or
- (c) in any other manner;

which has the effect of changing the appearance or legibility of any of the characters of the registration mark, which renders the characters of the registration mark less easily distinguishable to the eye or which prevents or impairs the making of a true photographic image of the plate through the medium of camera and film or any other device.

Period of Licence

9.15 A vehicle licence is renewable annually, from date of issue.

Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced Disclosure

9.16 Where an existing or prospective Vehicle Licence Holder is not a licensed Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver and has not provided an Enhanced Disclosure with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) then a Standard Disclosure must be obtained from the Disclosure Barring Service prior to any licence being issued. Online applications can be made at www.gov.uk/request-copy-criminal-record or phone 03000 200 190.

9.17 It should be noted that the DBS service cannot access criminal records held overseas, only foreign convictions that are held on the Police National Computer may, subject to the disclosure rules, be disclosed, therefore a DBS check may not provide a complete picture of an individual's criminal record where there have been periods living or working overseas: the same applies when an applicant has previously spent an extended period (three or more continuous months) outside the UK therefore applicants are required to provide criminal records information or a 'Certificate of Good Character' from overseas, in these circumstances, to properly assess risk and support the decision making process. Each case will be considered on its own merits. For information on applying for overseas criminal record information or 'Certificates of Good Character' please use the following link www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants.

Vetting of Applications

9.18 The Council will need to be satisfied as to the applicant's good character before granting a vehicle licence. The Council will have regard to the disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service when it considers such applications. If the Council is not satisfied as to the Applicant's good character, then the application will be refused. Applicants are referred to the Council's Guidance on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees and the Relevance of Convictions, **See Appendix 8**

- 9.19 Bankrupt persons are prohibited from becoming or remaining proprietors of licensed vehicles.
- 9.20 The Council retains the complete discretion to refuse to grant a vehicle licence.

Ages of Vehicles

- 9.21 When licensing a vehicle for the first time the Council encourages proprietors to review the Euro NCAP safety rating of the proposed vehicle to consider the safety benefits to passengers, drivers, pedestrians and drivers of other vehicles by licensing a higher rated vehicle. More details can be found at: www.euroncap.com/en
- 9.22 In order to promote public safety, environmental impact, improve quality and increase public confidence, diesel or petrol vehicles must be less than 6 years old when they are first licensed with the Council and at minimum Euro 6 compliant. **Refer to Section 5.**
- 9.23 London cab-style vehicles and Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV's) that are diesel or petrol, which are new to licensing with the Council must be less than 8 years old and at minimum Euro 6 compliant. **Refer to Section 5**
- 9.24 All Electric and Hybrid saloon type vehicles which are presented, as new to licensing, will be no more than 6 years old. **Refer to Section 5**
- 9.25 All Electric and Hybrid wheelchair accessible type vehicles, which are presented as new to licensing, will be no more than 8 years old. **Refer to Section 5.**
- 9.26 **Electric/Hybrid and Hydrogen fuel vehicles will have no end date providing the vehicle fits policy standards and remains safe and fit for purpose under the licensing regime.**

Inspection and Testing of Vehicles

- 9.27 All vehicles must only be tested at one of the Council's approved testing facilities prior to first licensing unless the vehicle is new from purchase. New vehicles shall be subject to the requirement for an MOT 12 months after date for first registration with the DVLA.

Petrol or diesel only vehicles will be required to have 2 MOT tests per year (every 6 months) when they are 9 years old from the date of registration.
(Refer to Section 5)

All Electric/Hybrid or Hydrogen fuel vehicles are required to have 2 MOT tests per year (every 6 months) when they are 9 years old from the date of registration and from 14 years old 3 MOT's a year (every 4 months).

The age of the vehicle shall be determined by reference to the date of the first registration recorded in the vehicle registration document (V5). This is in order to ensure that older vehicles continue to meet the Council's vehicle standards, particularly in terms of safety. The cost of each test or any re-tests will need to be met by the applicant.

A Compliance test pass certificate will also be required each time, from one of the approved testing facilities, (such a Certificate should normally be dated no more than 28 days old at the time that the application is made to the Licensing Authority).

- 9.28 The Council will use the national inspection standards contained within the Freight Transport Association's "FTA Best Practice Guide to Inspection of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles" published in August 2012.
- 9.29 In the event of a vehicle being suspended due to not being fit for purpose, it will be issued with the relevant notice and the vehicle will be required, after having the necessary repairs/work completed, to be booked in at any of the approved MOT testing stations for the work to be inspected. Any costs to be incurred by the driver. A Taxi Vehicle Endorsement form will be completed by any of the approved MOT testing stations; this must be returned to the Licensing Section for inspection before the plates will be returned.

Safety Screens

- 9.30 Stafford Borough Council have no objections to the use of partitions/safety screens, provided that:
 - The screen must comply with government and industry regulations and Stafford Borough Council's requests as the Licensing Authority.
 - Be clear and transparent and fit across the rear of both front seats, creating a partition between the front and rear cabin area of the vehicle.

If any driver wishes to fit a protective screen, they must first notify the Licensing Authority in writing, either by email or by letter, including confirmation that the vehicle's insurance will be amended to include the protective screen as fitted. These must be genuine screens and should be fitted by a professional in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Please access this link for all information www.staffordbc.gov.uk/use-partitions-or-screens-taxis-and-private-hire-vehicles

Wheels and Tyres

- 9.31 Vehicles must have four road wheels fitted with tyres of the same size as were originally fitted to the vehicle when new.
- 9.32 The tread pattern shall be a minimum of 1.6mm in depth throughout the complete circumference and breadth of the tyre.
- 9.33 The replacement of using part worn tyres is not allowed and prohibited as protection of the public is paramount.
- 9.34 The fitting of tyres which are more than 10 years old is prohibited.
- 9.35 A spare wheel and tyre in good condition, properly inflated and suitable for the vehicle, together with sufficient tools for fitting same shall be provided unless the proprietor can comply with the following: -

The proprietor or operator of the vehicle shall take all reasonable steps to ensure, in the event of vehicle breakdown, that appropriate contingency arrangements are in place to enable passengers to complete their journeys safely and in good time to anywhere in the UK. Such steps may include carrying and use of a spare wheel and tools; if the vehicle is not designed to carry a spare, fitting run flat tyres all round or carrying puncture repair/inflation kit; vehicle breakdown cover which includes taking the passengers and their luggage to their intended destination anywhere in the UK; agreements with other proprietors/operators to provide assistance in emergencies etc. In any event, responsibility for ensuring the safety and welfare of passengers in such circumstances rests with the said proprietor or operator.

Insurance Write-Offs

- 9.32 Insurance write-offs rated A and B are not suitable for repair and will never be accepted for licensing purposes. However, it is quite legal for category S and N vehicles (formerly C and D category vehicles) to be fixed up and sold on - provided the buyer is informed of the car's history.

Category A - Scrap only. For cars so badly damaged they should be crushed and never re-appear on the road. Even salvageable parts must be destroyed.

Category B - Body shell should be crushed. This signifies extensive damage although some parts are salvageable. They should never re-appear on the road, although reclaimed parts can be used in other road-going vehicles.

Category S (formerly Category C) - www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/know-how/what-does-cat-c-car-insurance-mean

The new Category S means the vehicle has suffered structural damage. This could include a bent or twisted chassis, or a crumple zone that has collapsed in a crash.

Category S damage is more than just cosmetic, therefore, and the vehicle will need to be professionally repaired. Also, it won't be safe to drive until then.

Category N (formerly Category D)

Vehicles graded accordingly haven't sustained structural damage, so the issue may be cosmetic, or a problem with the electrics that isn't economical to repair.

Don't assume such vehicles are drivable, however; non-structural faults may include brakes, steering or other safety-related parts.

For more information visit www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/know-how/what-is-an-insurance-write-off/

- 9.33 When undertaking the MOT and Taxi Test at one of our approved MOT providers you need to inform the garage that the car is within one of these categories and highlight the damaged area(s) to the mechanic before its inspection.
- 9.34 It must be demonstrated that the vehicle is safe for use as a licensed vehicle before the application will be considered. A category S or N vehicle may only be presented to licensing with written evidence that the vehicle is safe. Such evidence must include a written damage and repair engineers report from the insurance company or its agent and must be provided to Licensing before the vehicle is presented for inspection and test.
- 9.35 The vehicle will also need to comply with our age and type of vehicle requirements as detailed within this Licensing Policy before consideration of it being licensed.

Other Safety Issues

- 9.36 Seats that are accessed through the tailgate must not be used to carry passengers and must be removed prior to licensing.
- 9.37 Items such as DVD players, laptops, clipboards and newspapers etc shall not be positioned on vehicle dashboards. Such articles are potentially dangerous in the event of a road traffic collision.
- 9.38 Children should not be transported in pushchairs or prams placed within Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV's). It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that all passengers use seatbelts/restraints in line with current legislation. With respect to persons under 18 it will be the parent/responsible person's responsibility to ensure that child seats, if used, are fitted correctly. If a driver is not satisfied as to the safety of a child being transported without a child seat, they may lawfully refuse the carriage of that child/ young person.

Tinted Windows/Privacy Glass

- 9.39 All glazing shall comply with the Road Vehicle (construction and use) Regulations 1986 as amended. Vehicles fitted with tinted glass at manufacture, are permitted, however they must allow 70% of light through the front and two front side windows therefore this excludes manufactured tints of more than 30% on all windows.

Signage and Advertising

- 9.40 There are different requirements on signs and notices for Private Hire vehicles and Hackney Carriage vehicles. (See **Appendices 2 and 3** to ensure you meet the correct requirements.)

CCTV in Licensed Vehicles

- 9.41 Stafford Borough Council encourages the use of CCTV systems within licensed vehicles. CCTV can help to reduce crime and can provide evidence to support prosecution. This approach benefits both passengers and drivers, who can equally be the subjects of assaults, abuse or fraud. **Dashcams are not suitable for this purpose; they will not be classed as a CCTV system.**

- 9.42 No installation of a CCTV system shall take place within licensed vehicles without prior notification and agreement with the Council's Licensing Section. Notwithstanding the above, CCTV systems should only be installed with the prior and ongoing agreement of vehicles' insurers.
- 9.43 All CCTV systems which are installed into licensed vehicles must be compliant with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018. The system must also be compliant with the Information Commissioner's requirements in respect of registering the system and the capturing, storing, retaining and using any recorded images. For all information on installing and using CCTV refer to ico.org.uk and www.staffordbc.gov.uk/licensing1.

Conditions

- 9.44 Licence holders must comply with the conditions attached at **Appendix 2** (Hackney Vehicles) and **Appendix 3** (Private Hire Vehicles) and **Appendix 4** (General Conditions) at all times.

Suspension and Revocation of Licences

- 9.45 Failure to comply with any of the conditions may result in suspension or revocation of the licence.

Transfer of Vehicle Licences

- 9.46 There are two types of transfer, that might take place in accordance with Council Policy.
- 9.47 A licence holder may transfer their Vehicle Licence from their current vehicle to a new vehicle providing it meets the council's criteria for licensing as above.
- 9.48 A vehicle, already licensed by one licence holder, can be sold and transferred to another licence holder providing the vehicle meets the council's criteria for licensing as above.

Grandfather (this is a recognised term) Rights

- 9.49 Generally, Hackney Carriage Vehicles will not be licensed by the Council unless they are wheelchair accessible vehicles. An exception to this rule is that a named holder of a "Grandfather (this is a recognised term) Rights" plate may apply to license a vehicle that is not wheelchair accessible.
- 9.50 The holders of "Grandfather Rights" plates are not permitted to give away, bequeath, swap, transfer or sell such plates to other persons.

9.51 On the death of the named holder of a “Grandfather Rights” plate, the next of kin and/or beneficiary of a will may continue to operate the non-wheelchair accessible vehicle until the change of the vehicle which is licensed against the plate; at which point the plate will no longer have a “Grandfather Right”.

Wedding Cars and Funeral Cars

9.52 Vehicles that are being used for Weddings or Funeral are not required to be licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle while they are being used in connection with a wedding, for the purposes of carrying passengers to the wedding venue and reception, or funeral, or are being wholly or mainly used by a person carrying on the business of a Funeral Director for the purpose of funerals, however if a vehicle is already licensed as either a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire, and is being used for weddings or funerals, then the licensed plate must remain on the vehicle.

Limousines and Novelty/Vintage Vehicles

9.53 Any type of vehicle may be considered for licensing by the Council however the overarching principle will be the safety of the vehicle and to ensure that public safety will not be compromised if the vehicle is licensed. Any additional testing and inspection costs must be funded by the applicant.

9.54 Novelty or Vintage vehicles are an exception within this policy for vehicle emissions, due to the age of these types of vehicles, referred to in Section 5 and **Appendix 10**.

9.55 For the purpose of licensing a limousine is described as a luxurious vehicle that has been stretched by the insertion of an additional section not exceeding 3048 millimetres to extend the length of the vehicle. The vehicle shall be capable of carrying up to, but not exceeding, 8 passengers. Vehicles must be inspected prior to licensing to ensure they meet safety standards. Vehicles are considered on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are directed towards the VOSA ‘Guidance for Operators of Stretch Limousines’ (March 2011) www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-operators-of-stretch-limousines

9.56 Such types of vehicles will only be licensed as private hire vehicles. They will be subject to the production of specific documents, in original form or as copies certified by the vehicle builder (uncertified photocopies will not be accepted). There are additional conditions that apply to these types of vehicles as well as the conditions applicable to standard private hire vehicle licensing. (See **Appendices 1, 3 and 4**)

- 9.57 On application for a Novelty or Vintage vehicle the Licensing Section must be provided with written proposals detailing how the vehicle will comply with this policy, safety, and passenger comfort requirements.
- 9.58 The decision to licence any limousines and novelty/vintage vehicles will be put before the Licensing and Public Appeals Committee for consideration.

10 Equality Act 2010

Wheelchair Access

- 10.1 The Council is committed to its objective of Improving Access for All. This means the Council seeks to encourage a good level of service for everyone, including disabled persons and wheelchair users.
- 10.2 The Council wants to ensure that there are more wheelchair accessible vehicles in use by the local licensed taxi trade.
- 10.3 The Council will consider licensing wheelchair accessible vehicles where they are capable of rear, as well as side loading. The safety and comfort of the passenger must be of paramount importance. Vehicles that provide wheelchair access will not be considered for licensing unless they are purpose built and /or specifically and professionally modified to accommodate wheelchair passengers. All vehicles must be fit for their intended purpose.
- 10.4 Vehicles shall have a designated space capable of accepting a reference wheelchair, of at least 1200mm by 700mm (measured from to back and side to side) with a minimum headroom of 1350mm measured from the floor of the vehicle for each passenger who uses a wheelchair. The space(s) shall be immediately adjacent to a vehicle door which is fitted with wheelchair access equipment so that the passenger using a wheelchair can board the vehicle and use the anchoring equipment with the minimum of manoeuvring.
- 10.5 A system for the effective anchoring of wheelchairs must be provided such that they only face forwards or rearwards when the vehicle is in motion. It is best practice to secure wheelchairs in a forward facing position.
- 10.6 A suitable safety restraint must be available to the occupant of the wheelchair.
- 10.7 A ramp or ramps, or other approved lifting device must be present and available for use to enable the safe loading and unloading of any passenger using a wheelchair, and be capable of supporting a wheelchair, occupant and helper. When deployed ramps must run flush with the vehicles interior floor level.

10.8 Any lifting device fitted must be regularly tested in accordance with any applicable Health and Safety Regulations (e.g., Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998) (LOLER) for such devices and maintained in good working order.

Designated Vehicles

10.9 After consultation with the trade the Council has published and continues to maintain a list of “Designated Vehicles”. The drivers of designated vehicles will be required to transport wheelchair passengers unless a driver holds a valid exemption certificate.

10.10 Drivers of vehicles designated under the Equality Act 2010 to carry a passenger seated in a wheelchair have several duties under the Act which are:

- To carry a passenger while in the wheelchair;
- Not to make any additional charge for doing so;
- To carry the wheelchair in the vehicle if the passenger chooses to sit in a passenger seat;
- To ensure the passenger is carried in safety and comfort;
- To provide appropriate mobility assistance to enter or exit the vehicle including to load any luggage and/or wheelchair.

11 Executive Hire Vehicles

Legislation for Executive Hire Vehicles

11.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous provisions) Act 1976 requires that a District or Borough Council must issue a private hire vehicle with an identity plate or disc and that the proprietor should not use, or permit the use of, that vehicle without displaying the plate as directed by the Council.

11.2 The Act also gives a District or Borough Council the discretion to grant a proprietor an exemption from displaying the licence plate on their licensed private hire vehicle.

11.3 Each application for exemption will be considered on its own merits. The overriding consideration will be public safety. The clear identification of a licensed vehicle is considered such a safety aspect, particularly when visiting such places as airports, seaports and the centre of large towns.

- 11.4 Exemptions will not be granted as a matter of course. A clear case for the exemption will have to be made by the proprietor to the Authority.
- 11.5 In determining an application, it will normally be the executive nature of the work that will indicate whether or not the exemption should be granted, as well as the specification and high quality of the vehicle being used.

Applicant for Executive Hire Vehicle Licence

- 11.6 If the applicant for an Executive Hire Vehicle licence has ever been cautioned or convicted by any Authority of unlawfully plying for hire, the Council may refuse to allow the applicant to have a vehicle licensed for Executive Hire.

Licensing of Executive Hire Vehicles

- 11.7 Executive Hire Vehicles are licensed separately from Hackney Carriage Vehicles and Private Hire Vehicles. Executive Hire vehicles are a special class of private hire vehicles. They are high value, prestige vehicles that predominantly should be used for purposes such as corporate bookings to transport employees and clients on business related journeys, or for transporting special guests where customers have asked to book a vehicle without obvious private hire plates or signage. Executive Hire vehicles are styled more as chauffeur driven vehicles than standard private vehicles.
- 11.8 Licensing of an Executive Hire vehicle is at the discretion of the Licensing Section and will be inspected in order to ensure it is a high-quality suitable vehicle.

Features of Executive Hire Vehicles

- 11.9 Executive Hire Vehicles should have the following features in order to be considered for licensing - this list is not exhaustive:-
 - High quality vehicle in terms of brand and condition, with no visible defects, dents or blemishes to the external bodywork or trim
 - Luxury or prestige vehicle
 - Engine size of 2000cc or greater - refer to Section 5
 - Automatic transmission
 - Minimum specification of air conditioning/climate control to front and rear seats, all electric windows, central locking and suitable front and rear headrests for all passengers

Strict Use of Executive Hire Vehicles

11.10 Executive Hire Vehicles must not be used for any home to school transport. It is important that parents, carers, and schools can immediately ascertain that a vehicle carrying children or vulnerable passengers is a properly licensed vehicle.

Executive Hire Plates

11.11 On the grant of an Executive Hire Licence the Council will issue an Executive Hire Plate and the Authority's identifying badge which must be placed inside the windscreen, on the nearside of the vehicle. These are to be displayed as per Condition 10, **Appendix 7**.

Exemption from Requirement to Display Private Hire Plates

11.12 Executive Hire Vehicles are exempted by the Council, under 75(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, from the requirements to display private hire plates. The drivers of such vehicles are exempted from the requirement to wear a driver's badge. However, the Notice of section 75(3) Exemption, the Vehicle Licence, and the driver's badge are required to be carried in the vehicle and to be available for inspection (on request) by an authorised officer of the Council, or a Police officer.

Conditions

11.13 Licence holders of Executive Hire plates must always comply with the conditions attached at **Appendix 7**.

12 Decision Making and Enforcement

Decision Making

12.1 This Policy is to be considered when the Council makes decisions relating to the licensing of drivers, vehicles and operators although the Council will also have regard to legislation and government guidance. This policy is intended to show how decision making will be approached, and how the Council will work with others to ensure the protection of the public. The policy is to be considered when decisions are made by the Council, the Public Appeals Committee and Authorised Officers. Each application or case is to be considered on its own merits.

12.2 Fees setting and decisions regarding taxi ranks are matters usually decided by The Council. The Committee with responsibility for making decisions about individual licences is the Public Appeals Committee. Authorised Officers are responsible for making day to day decisions regarding licensing applications, urgent decisions for suspensions and revocations and all enforcement matters.

Enforcement

12.3 In order to ensure the protection of the public the Council carries out enforcement activity to ensure compliance with primary legislation and licensing conditions.

12.4 Enforcement activity is carried out in order to satisfy the policy objectives of:-

- Public Protection
- Improving quality
- Promoting high vehicle standards
- Improving access for all
- Improving public confidence
- Supporting the safety and success of the night-time economy

12.5 Enforcement activity includes the bringing of prosecutions in respect of statutory offences such as illegally plying for hire and refusal to take a fare without good reason. Enforcement also includes taking action in respect of breaches of licensing conditions and taking action in cases of poor conduct or following complaints from the public.

12.6 Enforcement in cases other than prosecutions includes cases where the Council decides to suspend or revoke drivers, operators and vehicle licences. Enforcement action also includes lesser sanctions such as formal written warnings.

12.7 Operator licences may be suspended or revoked in cases where the operator's conduct falls short of the conduct expected of a fit and proper person. This would include cases where operators were convicted of offences relating to sexual exploitation, dishonesty and violence. It would also include breaches of licensing conditions and failure to keep accurate records.

12.8 The Council may suspend or revoke vehicle licences in cases relating to unsafe vehicles or breaches of licensing conditions.

Appendix 1

- 12.9 A guidance matrix of suspension and other penalties for offences committed by drivers over a two-year rolling period is attached as **Appendix 9** to this document.
- 12.10 Licence holders are strongly encouraged to cooperate with officers of all other local authorities. Failure to cooperate may lead to the suspension or revocation of their driver's licence.
- 12.11 Complaints, possible offences and contraventions of conditions/ policy may be investigated by way of an interview under caution in compliance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.
- 12.12 Private hire and hackney carriage drivers are professional drivers and must always be aware of the safety of their passengers and the safety of their vehicles. Any traffic offences show a lack of responsibility whilst driving either due to the maintenance and safety of their vehicles or in the manner of their driving. The Council expects licence holders to adhere to the highest standards and existing drivers can expect any misconduct to be fully investigated and appropriate action taken in line with this breach of trust.
- 12.13 Applicants are referred to the Council's Guidance on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and licensees in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trades, **see Appendix 8**.

APPENDIX 1: Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver Conditions

These conditions must be read in conjunction with all relevant provisions of:-

- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
- Town Police Clauses Act 1847
- Transport Act 1980

1. The driver shall within **7 days** notify the Council of any change of their name or home address.
2. All drivers must inform their licensing authority within **48 hours** if they are arrested, questioned, or interviewed voluntarily under caution by the police in respect of a criminal offence. For full requirements refer to Page 24 for Disclosure of Convictions, Cautions, Fixed Penalties etc.
3. If asked about your employment you must inform the police that you are a licensed driver.
4. If the driver ceases to drive for any reason they must inform the Licensing Department within 7 days.
5. The driver shall notify the Council of any accidents or damage caused to the vehicle as soon as is practicable but, in any case, **within 72 hours**.
6. The driver shall, always, when the vehicle is available or being driven for hire, be clean and respectable in their appearance and dress in accordance with the Council's approved Dress Code.
7. The Council's Dress Code for drivers of both hackney carriages and private hire vehicles is attached as **Appendix 6** to this document.
8. Licensed drivers shall not conduct themselves in any way, or act in a manner, which might be perceived as discriminatory or infringes equality legislation. For the avoidance of doubt, no driver shall discriminate against fellow drivers, passengers, members of the public or Council employee's contrary to the Equality Act 2010.
9. Licensed drivers must comply with the Rules of the Rank, always. (See **Appendix 12**)

10. The driver shall behave in a civil, friendly and helpful manner at all times and take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of passengers and other road users. For the avoidance of doubt this includes ensuring the proper restraint of wheelchair passengers.
11. All drivers shall maintain high standards of driving; be polite and courteous, as well as being helpful in assisting passengers to enter and alight from the vehicle and stowing/carrying luggage. Drivers must comply with any duties under Equality Act 2010, and ensure they assist wheelchair passengers.
12. The driver shall not use or hold any handheld device or eat or drink in the vehicle whilst it is moving.
13. The driver shall not, except with the express consent of the hirer, convey any other person other than the hirer in the vehicle.
14. The driver shall not allow or permit their vehicle to carry a greater number of passengers than the number prescribed on the licence.
15. The driver shall not cause or permit the noise emitted by any radio equipment or sound reproducing equipment installed in the vehicle to be a source of nuisance or annoyance to any persons whether inside or outside of the vehicle.
16. The driver of the vehicle should attend punctually at the time and place appointed for hire unless delayed or prevented by some reasonable cause.
17. **The driver must be able to take a card payment, for use within the vehicle, with no minimum limit, this is mandatory and should be used as necessary.**
18. The driver shall ensure, that the vehicle always has a receipt book, within the vehicle.
19. The driver shall, if requested by the hirer, provide them with a written or electronic receipt for the fare paid specifying the driver's name, badge number and plate number.
20. At all times that the vehicle is being used or is made available for customers the driver shall ensure that the vehicle is kept clean and tidy, inside as well as the exterior. In any case the plate number must always be clearly visible.

21. Daily checks must be undertaken before the first use of the vehicle each day. All daily checks should be recorded on a pre-printed form or electronic “app” specifically designed for such purposes. These checks should be retained for a minimum of 6 months. Any defect rectification should also be recorded and evidenced. Daily checks should include all items recommended by the DVSA in their Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness. The driver shall also ensure that the tyres are not worn below the legal limit and that the licence plates are properly positioned, secured permanently and can be clearly seen from the front and rear of the vehicle.
22. The driver shall, always, when a vehicle is hired take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of passengers when entering and alighting from the vehicle.
23. **Smoking in the vehicle and the use of electronic/vape cigarettes are strictly prohibited**, at any time, this applies to both drivers and passengers.
24. Drivers shall not at any time sound the vehicle’s horn to attract the attention of customers, e.g., where they are waiting for the hirer outside a public house etc.
25. Assistance Dogs (Guide Dogs and Hearing Dogs) **must** be carried free of charge unless the driver has applied for and been granted an exemption certificate, the allergy exemption must be clearly displayed within the vehicle.
26. The driver must not carry any animal in the vehicle, whilst the vehicle is in the course of trade, including their own or the operator’s/proprietor’s animal **except that:**

The driver may at their discretion carry the animal of a fare paying passenger, but the animal must be carried in the rear of the vehicle.
27. The Council shall issue a badge to all drivers detailing their name and driver number. This badge shall remain the property of the Council and shall be immediately returned to the Council should the driver cease to hold either a Hackney or Private Hire driving licence.
28. The driver shall at all times, when working, wear the driver’s Identification badge, issued by the Council, in such a position and manner so that it is plainly and distinctly visible. If any driver contravenes this provision, they shall be guilty of an offence.
29. The licence badge always remains the property of the Council, and upon revocation, suspension, expiry or surrender of the licence, the driver shall immediately return the badge to the Council.

30. The Driver must deposit their Private Hire/Hackney carriage driver's licence with the Private Hire Operator or Hackney Carriage Proprietor for which the vehicle is being used during the time it is being used for that person's business.
31. The driver shall, as soon as is practicable, after the termination of any hiring, search the vehicle for any property which may have been left behind.
32. The driver must report any items found to the Operator (if applicable), then take any lost property left in the vehicle to the Reception at Stafford Borough Council as soon as possible but within 72 hours. You will be required to complete the details on the evidence bag provided and place any items within.
33. The driver shall undertake appropriate training as required by the Head of Regulatory Services which will also include Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Safeguarding and Wheelchair Access Vehicle (WAV) where appropriate.
34. The driver must subscribe to the DBS Online Update Service and set up automatic renewals when first joining the service and must remain subscribed to the service for the duration of their licence.
35. Drivers must turn off their engines whilst stationary. This is in order to reduce any potential pollution as well as saving money on fuel costs. Vehicle idling is an offence against the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002.

36. The driver must ensure that the 'Compliments/Comments/Complaints' sticker, provided by the Council, is permanently affixed on the inside of each of the rear passenger windows.

Whilst driving a private hire vehicle

37. It is illegal to ply for hire with a Private Hire Vehicle to do so is an offence and may also negate insurance cover. Every passenger journey must be pre-booked through and recorded by a person separately licensed by the Borough Council as a Private Hire Operator.
38. Drivers cannot sub-contract a booked journey that has been dispatched to them by the Private Hire Operator to another private hire driver, therefore if a driver cannot fulfil the journey, they must refer it back to the Private Hire Operator who will decide how to fulfil the booking.
39. For the avoidance of doubt; if there is no prior booking, there can be no 'ride' for the passenger. A booking cannot be taken by the driver at the point of hiring.

40. The driver shall only carry up to the maximum permitted number of passengers as specified by the Private Hire Vehicle License and Plate.
41. Whilst driving or in charge of a Private Hire Vehicle (PHV), the driver shall not:
 - Permit the vehicle to stand or park in a manner which might suggest that the driver is plying for hire.
 - Solicit on a road or other public place any person to hire or to be carried for hire and reward in their PHV (or any PHV under their control or responsibility); or,
 - Cause or procure any other person to solicit or procure on a road or other public place any person to hire or to be carried for hire and reward in any PHV under their control or responsibility.
 - Overcharge passengers at any time.
 - Seek to charge additional rates to wheelchair/disabled passengers or refuse to take them without an exceptional reason.

Whilst driving a licensed hackney carriage vehicle

42. The taximeter shall be activated in accordance with current legal requirements and must not be operated until the passenger is seated in the vehicle; the driver is seated and ready to drive off.
43. The taxi meter must always be used in a Hackney Carriage Vehicle, including when using the vehicle in a Private Hire capacity, unless a set price has been agreed.
44. Ensure that the Table of Fares can be clearly seen by passengers.
45. The driver must ensure that passengers are not overcharged at any time. The driver must not seek to charge additional rates to wheelchair/disabled passengers or refuse to take them without an exceptional reason.
46. Obey the Rules of the Rank given at **Appendix 12** of this document.
47. Fulfil bookings punctually and use the shortest available routes, unless directed otherwise by the hirer.
48. Only carry up to the maximum permitted number of passengers as specified by the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence and Plate.

Appendix 1

DO NOT: tamper or allow anyone else to tamper with the taximeter or its fittings or any seal and only demand the authorised fare, giving a receipt if requested.

APPENDIX 2: Hackney Carriage Vehicle Conditions (also see Appendix 4 for General Vehicle Conditions)

1. The Licence Holder shall ensure that the licensed vehicle is used primarily within Stafford Borough and is not used predominantly in another area. The Council may revoke or refuse to grant or renew the vehicle licence if this condition is breached.
2. All Hackney Carriage Vehicles must be **WHITE OR BLACK**. No other colour will be permitted unless it's a London style cab which may be of another colour with written permission from the Council. The Vehicle Registration Document (V5) must outline **WHITE or BLACK** as the vehicle colour.
3. The vehicle must be Wheelchair Accessible, unless Grandfather (a recognised term) Rights apply, capable of conveying a wheelchair with the occupant in it or London Cab style - the driver must know how to strap the wheelchair and the occupant within it into the vehicle and fit both with the seatbelts.
4. If a V5 in the Licence Holder's name was not provided on application then the Licence Holder must **either** bring the V5 to the Licensing Section for inspection **or send in electronically**, within 7 days of receiving the V5.
5. The Licence Holder shall produce all insurance documents either in **person or electronically** for inspection by the Council on demand.

Signage and Notices

6. The roof of the vehicle shall be fitted with an illuminated sign bearing only the word **TAXI**, the light of which is capable of being extinguished when the taxi meter is switched on. This should be at the **FRONT** of the vehicle roof and permanently affixed. **Panoramic roofs will only be accepted if you can correctly permanently affix the illuminated taxi sign. It is not acceptable for the Taxi sign to be in the window.**
7. During the hours of darkness, the taxi sign shall be illuminated only when the carriage is standing or plying for hire within the Borough and shall be extinguished as soon as the vehicle is hired. For the purpose of this condition 'the hours of darkness' shall be the hours of lighting up time.

8. It is mandatory for Hackney Carriages to have door signage on the front body panel, in the middle of each door, on each side of the vehicle, these are adhesive stickers, magnetic signs are not allowed and will display your plate number. These are provided, once only, by Stafford Borough Council, if any further ones are required, they can be obtained at a cost to the driver. If any further information, by owner/operator, is required then it must be pre-approved. Stafford Borough Council will only allow the following information with the regulation maximum size of 600 x 300 mm (24" Width x 12" Deep) and must be fixed onto the body panel on each side of the vehicle.
 - (a) Telephone number
 - (b) Email address or website of the proprietor's taxi business (where applicable)

Please note it is optional to have the further information put onto the vehicle it is the signage provided by Stafford Borough Council that is mandatory.

9. If the door signage is damaged, ripped, washed off or lost then they must be replaced, at a cost, within 7 days by applying to the Council.
10. No other advertisements, logos, or signs shall be displayed on, in or from the vehicle without the prior written approval from the Council.
11. The vehicle proprietor shall ensure that a copy of the relevant "table of fares" is exhibited in the vehicle in such a position that hirers can see it.

Taxi Meters and Fares

12. An approved, sealed, calibrated, and illuminated taximeter must be used to calculate and display the maximum fare for all journeys inside the Borough of Stafford in all hackney carriages. It must not be operated until the passenger is seated in the vehicle and the driver is seated and ready to move the vehicle to commence the journey. Once the journey is concluded by reaching the destination requested by the customer or passenger the fare displayed on the taximeter should be stated to the passenger and they or the customer should be requested to pay no more than the fare displayed. The Council will support licensed drivers who have reasonable cause to request payment of the appropriate fare prior to the journey taking place.

13. The Council's is the only tariff permitted on the meter. It must state the maximum fare that can be charged by drivers for journeys within the Borough. Lesser fares can be negotiated. The hirer may also agree a fare for a journey which ends outside the Borough.
14. A table of fares will be provided to each Hackney Carriage Proprietor, which must then be clearly displayed in each vehicle so that it is visible to all hirers.
15. The Council reserves the right to inspect a licensed vehicle's taxi meter and carry out spot checks at any time.
16. You must not allow anyone to drive your vehicle for hire purposes until you are satisfied that they know how to properly use the taxi meter.

Grandfather (this is a recognised term) Rights

17. Generally, vehicles will not be licensed by the Council unless they are wheelchair accessible vehicles. An exception to this rule is that a named holder of a "Grandfather Rights" plate may apply to license a vehicle that is not wheelchair accessible.
18. The holders of "Grandfather Rights" plates are not permitted to give away, bequeath, swap, transfer or sell such plates to other persons.
19. On the death of the named holder of a "Grandfather Rights" plate, the next of kin and/or beneficiary of a will may continue to operate the non-wheelchair accessible vehicle until the change of the vehicle which is licensed against the plate; at which point the plate will no longer have a "Grandfather Right".

APPENDIX 3: Private Hire Vehicle Conditions (also see Appendix 4 for General Vehicle Conditions)

1. All Private Hire Vehicles must **NOT** be **WHITE or BLACK**.

There will be a gradual phasing out of black PHV's meaning that once the age limit of the current car has been reached and needs replacing the drivers next vehicle should not be black nor white.
2. If a V5 in the Licence Holder's name was not provided on application then the Licence Holder must bring the V5 to the Licensing Section for inspection, within 7 days of receiving the V5.
3. The Licence Holder should always keep a valid certificate of motor vehicle insurance for production to an authorised officer when necessary and once expired the Licence Holder must retain for inspection by the Council for 12 months after its expiry date.

Signs and Notices

4. The vehicle shall not display a roof sign whether illuminated or not, and the vehicle shall not display any illuminated signs on or from within the vehicle.
5. The following shall be displayed on each side of a private hire vehicle (on a body panel and not a window): -
 - (a) the words "PRIVATE HIRE".
 - (b) Operator Name
 - (c) the words "ADVANCED BOOKINGS ONLY".
 - (d) the telephone number of the vehicle operator (**fixed landline**).
6. The words "PRIVATE HIRE", "OPERATOR NAME", "ADVANCED BOOKINGS ONLY" and the telephone number of the vehicle operator shall: -
 - (a) be clearly and permanently affixed (subject to prior written permission from the Council, the signs could be (magnetic or of other removable signage) and displayed in a clearly contrasting colour in letters and numbers not less than 65mm in height and not less than 8mm width and,
 - (b) be positioned together in a manner previously approved in writing by the Council.

7. In addition to the above private hire vehicles must also display a plate identification number adhesive sign, magnetics are not allowed, which will be provided by Stafford Borough Council detailing that the vehicle is licensed by the Council. These must be placed in the middle of the rear passenger doors of the vehicle where practicable.
8. If this door signage is damaged, ripped, washed off or lost then they must be replaced, at a cost, within 7 days by applying to the Council.
9. All signage and plates need to remain affixed to the vehicle whether on duty or off unless you are going on holiday for a week or more then the signage maybe removed, not the plates, however you must seek approval from the Licensing Section first before removal.
10. Private Hire Vehicles shall not have the word “Taxi” displayed anywhere on the vehicle.
11. No other advertisements, signs, notices, numbers, marks, etc shall be displayed on, in or from the vehicle without the prior written approval of the Council.
12. Any advertising on the vehicle shall be restricted to the name or trading name of the private hire operator of the vehicle and the operator’s logo or insignia, address, web site or e-mail address and must have the prior approval of the Council. The advertising of other businesses, products or services is not permitted.

Vehicle Testing

13. All petrol or diesel only vehicles shall be tested at one of the Council’s approved testing facilities prior to first licensing unless the vehicle is new, any new registered vehicle is required to produce an MOT certificate after 12 months from date of registration.

Vehicles will be required to have 2 MOT tests per year (every 6 months) when they are 9 years old from the date of registration

All Electric/Hybrid vehicles are required to have 2 MOT tests per year (every 6 months) when they are 9 years old from the date of registration and from 14 years old 3 MOT’s a year (every 4 months).

14. The age of the vehicle shall be determined by reference to the date of the first registration recorded in the vehicle registration document (form V5).

Additional Conditions for Limousines, Novelty Vehicles Only:

- 49 The tyres must be of an appropriate weight loading for the limousine, novelty vehicle.
- 50 Any type of vehicle may be considered for licensing by the Council however the applicant must demonstrate to the Council that the overarching principle of public safety will not be compromised if the vehicle is licensed. The applicant must fund any additional testing and inspection costs.
- 51 Exemption from the requirement to display private hire licence plates and livery will not be granted to some novelty vehicles such as old fire engines etc.
- 52 The sale of alcohol in the vehicle must be covered by a separate licence in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003.

Additional Documentation required for Limousines, Novelty Vehicles Prior to Licensing:

- 53 Evidence of compliance through the Individual Vehicle Approval Scheme (IVA) or a Qualified Vehicle Modifier (QVM) certificate; this is issued by the vehicle builder.
- 54 Public Liability Insurance documentation for a minimum of £5,000,000 and, where drivers other than the proprietor are used, Employer Liability Insurance documentation for a minimum of £1,000,000.
- 55 Documentation recording the overall weight of the vehicle (as displayed on the vehicle)

APPENDIX 4: General Vehicle Conditions

Safety Equipment

1. Provide an efficient 1 Kg fire extinguisher and suitable first aid kit which shall be carried in such a position as to be readily available for use and conforms to the British Standard for both pieces of equipment BS8599-2:2014 for First Aid Kits and BS5423/EN3 for Fire Extinguishers.
2. The fire extinguisher will be inspected annually and shall be marked with the date of its last test. You will be asked to replace it if is too old for efficiency reasons.
3. The container for the first aid kit and the fire extinguisher shall be marked with the vehicle plate number and registration number with an indelible ink or a form of permanent tamperproof mark.
4. It is not expected that the driver will administer any First Aid unless they hold the relevant training and are competent to do so.

Plate and Identification of Vehicle

5. All vehicles shall always clearly display the one licence plate, issued, on the exterior of the vehicle supplied by the Council, the form and content of which shall also be prescribed by the Council.
6. For reasons of security, the printed licence plate issued by the Council must be placed within the backing plate provided by the Council and at all times be fixed securely to the rear of the vehicle on the offside or centre of the vehicle at bumper height. The licence plate must be horizontal. The use of magnets to fix the plate to the licensed vehicle is not acceptable.
7. The plate shall not be affixed to any vehicle other than the one identified in the vehicle licence application form.
8. The plate shall always remain the property of the Council, and the vehicle proprietor shall not cause or permit the information displayed upon the plate to be altered, removed or obscured in any way. The plate must be returned to the Council on the sale or the transfer of the licensed vehicle (or in the event of revocation or suspension of the licence).
9. The plate number must not obscure the registration plate of the vehicle.

10. The vehicle shall, always, display the identification stickers supplied by the Council. These stickers shall be displayed on the inside of the windscreen, at the bottom, on the nearside, so that the sticker is visible to the passengers within the vehicle.
11. The Council must be notified, within 14 days, when the licensed vehicle is sold to a non-licensed driver or is taken off the road/out of the taxi business and the plates returned to the Council.

Accidents or Damage to Vehicle

12. The Licence holder shall notify the Council of any accidents or damage caused to the vehicle as soon as is practicable but, in any case, **within 72 hours**.

Condition and Maintenance of The Vehicle

13. The vehicle is to be maintained, in a sound mechanical and structural condition, at all times. The vehicle's fittings and equipment must be maintained in a safe and clean condition, and the fixing and routing or positioning of electric cables and wire looms are such that there is no risk of electrical fire or other accident and must be capable of satisfying the Council's mechanical inspection at all times.
14. That the roof, any sunroof or soft top is watertight.
15. The exterior of the vehicle shall be clean, free from unrepaired damage and finished to a high standard.
16. The interior of the vehicle shall be clean, tidy and free from litter and the upholstery, carpets and fittings free from significant rips and tears.
17. No material alteration or change to the mechanical or structural specification of the vehicle or its design, condition or appearance shall be made at any time without the written consent of the Council.
18. No video or recording equipment that records passenger's conversations will be permitted in any vehicle without the Council's permission. If approval is given, then it must be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.
19. All glazing shall comply with the Road Vehicle (construction and use) Regulations 1986 as amended. Vehicles fitted with tinted glass at manufacture, are permitted, however they must allow 70% of light through the front and two front side windows therefore this excludes manufactured tints of more than 30% on all windows. Passengers must not be obscured.

20. The Licence Holder shall ensure that the vehicle meets the standard of fitness specified within the latest edition of the Freight Transport Association's (FTA) to Inspection of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.
21. The vehicle will have the appropriate level of Insurance at times the vehicle is in use, and the Council will undertake random inspections to ensure compliance with this, and all other aspects of the conditions attached to the Licence.
22. The Licence holder shall produce the licence upon request to any Officer authorised by the council or any Police Officer for inspection.
23. That a spare wheel (either full-size or space saver depending upon the manufacturers original equipment) is provided which is readily available for use, together with the tools and equipment required to carry out a wheel replacement. An acceptable alternative is a Foam Kit if issued as either a standard or option from the manufacturer when the vehicle was first registered. **See also point 9.32.**
24. That at least three doors are provided for the use of passengers other than the driver's door, with the exception, of a London style cab.
25. That the vehicle is provided with adequate windows and that at least one window on each side is capable of being opened and closed and all opening windows are weatherproof when closed.
26. That door hinges, locks and handrails and any grab handles fitted in the vehicle are secure and sound and not liable to injure any passengers or damage or soil their clothing.
27. That proper and efficient internal lighting is fixed to the vehicle and is functioning properly.
28. Any repairs to the vehicle must be carried out with replacement parts which meet the manufacturer's original specification.
29. Licence holders must ensure that nothing within the licensed vehicle must exhibit any of the following:-
 - Offensive language
 - References to drunkenness or reference the use of recreational drugs
 - Anything racist, sexist, discriminatory or otherwise offensive.

30. The Licence Holder of more than 1 vehicle shall keep comprehensive written records of day-to-day fares and bookings, e.g., date, time, pick up and drop off locations, fare etc. so as to ensure that sufficient information can be retrieved from the said records in order to assist any authorised officer of the Council or Police Officer in any investigation they may need to undertake. These records must also be stored and kept securely for 18 months.
31. A vehicle that fails the MOT test, due to serious faults, may have its Licence revoked, and the plates removed, until such time the Council is satisfied that it meets the standards of the MOT test.
32. The Licence Holder shall use a suitable complaints procedure through which they will record and investigate all complaints made in relation to any driver or vehicle which is controlled by them. The complaints procedure must also record the outcome of any investigation. The said complaints procedure will be inspected as appropriate by the licensing authority and details of all recorded complaints and investigations shall be made immediately available on request.
33. A licence may be revoked, suspended, or not renewed in accordance with statutory provisions.

Renewal of Licence

34. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that a renewal application is made in good time, before expiry of the current licence. Failure to renew licenses in good time without reasonable excuse will result in the expiry of the existing licence and will require a new application to be made. No application will be prioritised because it is late. Under no circumstances will a renewal be issued without satisfactory completion of all required checks.

Transfer of Vehicle Licences

35. There are 2 types of transfer, with one exception, that might take place in accordance with Council Policy.
36. A licence holder may transfer their Vehicle Licence from their current vehicle to a new vehicle providing it meets the council's criteria for licensing as above.
37. A vehicle, already licensed by one licence holder, can be sold and transferred to another licence holder providing the vehicle meets the council's criteria for licensing as above and that the existing plate number is transferred to the new owner.

38. Upon application of transfer from one licence holder to another, a transfer document provided by the Council must also be completed by the original licence holder and signed consent given.
39. Both types of transfers are subject to a New Vehicle Licence fee and the Vehicle's Licence duration will begin from the date of transfer, but a further MOT inspection may not be required depending on the age of the vehicle
40. **Where the named individual licence holder has Grandfather Rights, a non-wheelchair accessible vehicle **CANNOT** be transferred **at any time**. The Hackney Carriage Plate must remain in the current licence holder's name.**

APPENDIX 5: Private Hire Operators' Licence Conditions

1. The Operator must operate from only one address which is identified and specified on the Operator's licence, referred to as the "Operator's Base" which must be within the licensable area of Stafford Borough. The Operator's base must have planning consent. The day-to-day business of the Operator must be carried out at the Base. It is a requirement that the base must have a fixed landline number for a customer to call on even if other electronic methods for bookings are also used, for example, an app, website, or email, for the taking and recording of bookings. If using other methods of electronic means, you must be able to produce the booking records on request from an authorised officer.
2. All licensed private hire operators must keep a register of all staff that will take bookings or dispatch vehicles and are required to evidence that they have had sight of a Basic DBS check on all staff members listed on that register.
3. The Operator shall employ a suitable complaints procedure through which they will record and subsequently investigate all complaints made in relation to any driver or vehicle which is operated by them. The complaints procedure must also record the outcome of any investigation. This complaints procedure will be inspected as appropriate by the licensing authority and details of all recorded complaints and investigations shall be made immediately available on request. These records must be stored and kept securely for a minimum of 18 months.
4. The Operator must ensure that vehicles that are booked for private hire work are safe, mechanically sound and maintained in a good and clean condition. Daily checks must be undertaken before the first use of the vehicle each day. Operators must ensure that daily checks are undertaken and recorded on a pre-printed form or electronic "app" specifically designed for such purposes. These checks should be retained for a minimum of 6 months. Any defect rectification should also be recorded and evidenced. Daily checks should include all items recommended by the DVSA in their Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness.
5. The Operator shall check the DVLA licenses for drivers, at least three monthly online, to ensure that their driving entitlement is still valid, and that there are no penalties or driving convictions unreported to the Council. Operators shall inform the Council of any driver convictions.

6. All licensed operators must give written notification to the Licensing Section as soon as possible of:-

- any offence with which they are charged.
- any pending court appearances.
- all convictions.
- all cautions, including those commonly referred to as “simple” “formal” or “police” cautions issued by the police or any other prosecuting authority.

The Operator shall notify the Council’s Licensing Section by e-mail or letter within **48 hours** of accepting one of the above or receiving one of the above at court.

Where the operator’s business is a partnership or limited company, the Operator shall inform the Council of any convictions relating to business partners or company directors in writing or via email.

7. The Operator shall ensure that before the commencement of each journey, which includes school contract journeys, the following is recorded in a record book (which may be electronic) the particulars of every booking of a private hire vehicle invited or accepted by the operator, whether by accepting the same from the hirer or by undertaking it at the request of another operator, and shall retain and produce such record on request to any Officer authorised by the Council or to any Police Officer for inspection:-

- (i) the name of the driver who undertakes the booking.
- (ii) the driver’s licence number.
- (iii) date and time booking made.
- (iv) date and time booking made for.
- (v) vehicle registration number and private hire vehicle licence number
- (vi) full details of journey (from where and to)
- (vii) name and address of hirer or passenger.
- (viii) name of any individual that responded to the booking request.
- (ix) name of the individual that dispatched the vehicle

(x) method by which booking communicated to driver

8. The Operator shall keep a record of any private hire vehicle operated by them showing the following details:-

- (a) Name and address of the vehicle owner
- (b) make type and colour of the vehicle.
- (c) model of the vehicle.
- (d) manufacturer of the vehicle.
- (e) registration number of the vehicle.
- (f) private hire vehicle licence number.
- (g) the issuing authority of the licence.
- (h) the date of expiry of the private hire vehicle licence.
- (i) Copy of the current Insurance Certificate.
- (j) Copy of the vehicle licence.
- (k) Copy of MOT certificate
- (l) Confirmation of payment of road tax

and the Operator shall produce this record of private hire vehicles operated upon request to any Officer authorised by the Council's Proper Licensing Officer or to any Police Officer for inspection. These details must be kept up to date.

9. The Operator shall record particulars of any property accidentally left in a vehicle that was reported to them by the driver of such vehicle before the driver delivers the property to the Reception at Stafford Borough Council offices.

10. The Operator shall not assign or in any way part with the benefit of this Licence.

11. The Operator shall notify the Council of any change of circumstances relating to the business including changes of vehicles and the engaging or discharge of drivers.

12. The Operator shall be responsible for every contract for the hire of a private hire vehicle and shall ensure that:-
 - (a) every private hire vehicle, whether the Operator provides the vehicle or not, is in possession of a current licence granted under the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
 - (b) every private hire driver is in possession of a current licence granted under the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
13. The Operator shall not operate any Private Hire Vehicle of such design and appearance as to lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a licensed hackney carriage.
14. The Operator shall produce the licence upon request to any Officer authorised by the Council or any Police Officer for inspection. The Operator shall ensure that the licence is displayed in a prominent public position within the Operator's Base.
15. The Operator shall ensure that records of bookings taken and of vehicles and drivers carrying out the bookings are to be kept available for inspection for not less than a period of 12 months.

16. Sub-contracting

Sections 55A and 55B of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allow a Private Hire operator to sub-contract bookings to another licensed operator.

If this practice is operated, it is mandatory that operators must:

- Keep records of any jobs that are subcontracted to another Private Hire operator in a separate register with that operator's licence number and issuing authority.
- Furthermore, operators are required to notify passengers clearly if their driver and vehicle are not licensed by Stafford Borough Council. The notification must also include a specific statement that the council has no authority to take licensing action against the driver or vehicle in the event of a complaint, directing customers instead to the authority that issued the licence.

17. Any Operator that is sub-contracting and using licensed vehicles from another area to undertake fares within Stafford Borough shall ensure that the driver of the vehicle, who is working for them, is displaying livery of the Stafford licensed operator on the vehicle.
18. The Operator shall comply with all the requirements of the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy.

APPENDIX 6: Dress Code

Licensed drivers are required to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene and cleanliness.

Drivers shall, as a minimum, wear a shirt, T-shirt or blouse and smart presentable shorts, trousers or denim jeans or skirt. The shirt or T-shirt shall cover the shoulders and be capable of being worn inside the shorts or trousers or skirt.

To avoid any doubt, tracksuits and denim shorts shall not be permitted.

- For safety reasons, footwear for all drivers shall fit around the heel by an enclosed or sling back. To avoid any doubt, mules, or beach “flip flops” shall not be permitted. Trainers are permitted but they must be clean and smart.
- All clothing shall be clean, free from holes, rips and snags and fastenings shall be in good order.
- Drivers shall not wear any item of clothing or apparel which exhibits any of the following:-
 - Offensive language
 - References to drunkenness or the use of recreational drugs
 - Anything racist, sexist, discriminatory or otherwise offensive
 - Any advertising that does not conform to the relevant codes of advertising practice

Some examples of unacceptable standards of dress would include bare chests or shoulders, dirty, ripped, or damaged clothing.

APPENDIX 7: (also refer to Appendix 4 for General Vehicle Conditions) Executive Hire Conditions

Please refer to the policy for the list of factors indicative of an Executive Hire Vehicle.

Conditions

1. An Executive Vehicle will be subject to inspection before it is licensed to ascertain whether the vehicle meets the relevant standards.
2. New applications will not be accepted for vehicles over 6 years old.
3. Executive Hire Vehicles that are solely petrol or diesel will not be licensed once they are 12 years old or by 2030 whichever is sooner (see Section 5 and Appendix 10)
4. Executive Hire Vehicles that are Electric/Hybrid will no longer be licensed once they are 16 years old.
5. Electric or Hydrogen fuel Executive Hire Vehicles can operate for as long as they are roadworthy, safe and fit for purpose and compliant with the licensing criteria within this Policy.
6. Executive Hire Vehicles must not ply for hire.
7. Executive Hire Vehicles must not park on any of the Council's taxi ranks.
8. Executive Hire Cars to be used only for Executive Hire and must not be used for any home to school transport.
9. When customers make a booking, the Operator must ensure that the customers are given the registration number of the vehicle and the name of the driver.
10. Customers who wish to travel in an Executive Hire Vehicle must make a prior booking with the Operator.
11. The Licence Holder shall keep comprehensive written records of day-to-day bookings, including name and address of hirer, date, time, pick up and drop off locations, so as to ensure that sufficient information can be retrieved from the said records in order to assist any authorised officer of the Council or Police Officer in any investigation they may need to undertake. All records must be retained for not less than 18 months.

12. Executive Hire Vehicles are to display the Executive Hire Plate, fixed to the inside of the boot lid of the vehicle, and display the Authority's identifying badge, inside the windscreen, on the nearside of the vehicle, at all times that the vehicle is transporting passengers.
13. Executive Hire Vehicles do not have to display any external markings, such as advertisements, unless they wish to do so, or give any indication that it is a Private Hire Vehicle other than the Authority's identifying badge affixed to the front inside windscreen.
14. Executive Hire Vehicles shall carry a copy of their Vehicle Licence, and a copy of the Exemption Notice issued by the Council under 75(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, for inspection (or request) by an authorised officer or Police officer, at all times that the vehicle is used for Executive Hire work.
15. The driver shall always, when hired, have their drivers badge available to identify them to the hirer.
16. All other private hire conditions and General Vehicle Conditions as per **Appendices 3 and 4** including the cost of licensing the vehicle, shall apply to Executive Hire Licences, save that Executive Hire Vehicles can be white if required.

APPENDIX 8: Guidance on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades

This guidance must be read in conjunction with the Department for Transport (“DFT”) Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards and the Institute of Licensing (“IoL”) Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants and licensees in the hackney and private hire trades.

Both hackney carriage and private hire drivers are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that there are no “spent” convictions and that any and all criminal convictions (apart from “protected convictions” and “protected cautions” where they have been declared) can be taken into account by the local authority in assessing safety and suitability, but only relevant spent convictions should be considered by the decision maker.

Applicants

All applicants for Hackney Carriage/Private Hire driver licences and/or an Operator’s Licence are required to declare any convictions or cautions, fixed penalty notices and DVLA licence endorsements - including any pending convictions and investigations. All applicants must also submit to Disclosure and Barring Service checks. The Council will deal with all information provided in strict confidence. Any information will be retained for no longer than is necessary for the purposes of processing the application for the Licence.

Driver’s Duty to Inform the Council

Once a Licence has been granted, drivers and Operators are required to inform the Council in writing and within 48 hours of any offence with which they are charged; any pending court appearances; any convictions; the acceptance of a fixed penalty notice; any endorsements for motoring offences; the acceptance of a speed or other awareness course and all cautions imposed on them since the grant of the Licence. In addition, Drivers or Operators are required to inform the Council in writing and within 48 hours of becoming aware of any pending criminal investigation that concerns them.

Consideration of Applications

Each case will be decided on its own merits and in accordance with this policy.

Public Safety is the Primary Concern

Public safety is the primary concern for the licensing of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers as well as Private Hire Operators. The Council has a duty to ensure, so far as possible, that Drivers and Operators are “fit and proper” persons to hold licences. The Council must consider whether Drivers and Operators are fit and proper when they apply for licences, and it also must consider whether they remain fit and proper throughout the time that the licence remains in force.

Drivers

1. As the criteria for determining whether an individual should be granted or retain a hackney carriage driver’s licence are identical to the criteria for a private hire driver’s licence, the two are considered together.
2. A driver has direct responsibility for the safety of their passengers, direct responsibility for the safety of other road users and significant control over passengers who are in the vehicle. As those passengers may be alone, and may also be vulnerable, any previous convictions or unacceptable behaviour will weigh heavily against a licence being granted or retained.
3. As stated above, where an applicant persistently offends, which shows a pattern or tendency irrespective of time since the convictions, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are a safe and suitable person.
4. In relation to single convictions, the time periods detailed in the following paragraphs should elapse following completion of the sentence (or the date of conviction if a fine was imposed before a licence will be granted).
5. As stated above, the categories of behaviours described below are introduced as “offences” which may or may not lead to convictions. Any such behaviours will be taken into account, whether or not it resulted in convictions or other sanctions.

Barred Lists

6. A licence will not be granted to a person who is on any barred list.

Offences resulting in death

7. Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime which resulted in the death of another person or was intended to cause the death or serious injury of another person they will not be licensed.

Offences involving Exploitation and Criminal Harassment

8. Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime involving, related to, or has any connection with abuse, exploitation, use or treatment or criminal harassment of another individual irrespective of whether the victim or victims were adults or children, they will not be licensed. This includes slavery, child sexual exploitation, grooming, psychological, emotional, or financial abuse, stalking without violence, but this is not an exhaustive list.

Offences involving violence, against persons, property animals or the State

9. Violence includes situations where the victim is put in fear, alarm or distress without any physical contact. It is accepted that the concept of “violence” is wide, but any such behaviour will be of concern. This guidance does not differentiate between different levels of violence.

Where an applicant has a conviction for an offence of violence, or connected with any offence of violence, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed. Where the offence of violence was committed against a child or vulnerable adult a licence will never be granted.

Offences involving Public Order

10. Where an applicant has a conviction for a public order offence or similar that is not in itself an act of violence, a licence will not be granted for a period of 5 years.

Offences involving Possession of a weapon

10. Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of a weapon or any other weapon related offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

Offences involving Sex, indecency or obscene materials

11. Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence involving or connected with illegal sexual activity or any form of indecency, a licence will not be granted. This includes any sexual harassment.

In addition to the above, the licensing authority will not grant a licence to any applicant who is currently on the Sex Offenders Register.

Offences involving Dishonesty

12. Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence of dishonesty, or any Offence where dishonesty is an element of the offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

Offences involving Alcohol abuse, Misuse or Dependency

13. Where an applicant has any conviction for, or related to drunkenness not in a motor vehicle, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the completion of the sentence imposed. If the applicant has a number of convictions for drunkenness and or there are indications of a medical problem associated with possible abuse, misuse of, or dependence on alcohol, the applicant will also be subject to additional medical testing/assessment before the application is considered. If the applicant is found to be dependent on alcohol, a licence will not be granted unless at least 5 years have elapsed since the dependency ceased.

Offences involving Drugs abuse, Misuse or Dependency

14. Where an applicant has any conviction for, or related to, the production, import, trade in or supply of drugs, or possession with intent to supply or connected with possession with intent to supply, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of drugs, or related to the possession of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed. In these circumstances, any applicant will also have to undergo drugs testing at their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.

If there are indications that an applicant or licensee has, or has had a history of, a medical problem associated with possible abuse, misuse of dependence of drugs, the applicant will also be subject to additional medical testing/assessment before the application is considered. If the applicant is found to be dependent on drugs, a licence will not be granted unless at least 5 years have elapsed since the dependency ceased.

Offences involving Discrimination

15 Where an applicant has a conviction involving or connected with discrimination in any form, including non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed. This includes e.g. refusals to carry assistance dogs or to provide mobility assistance.

Offences involving Regulatory non-compliance

16 Regulatory crimes include local authority offences, licensing matters, and other offences prosecuted by other authorities. It also includes matters relating to the administration of justice such as failing to surrender to bail, and any other matter where regulations or requirements have been ignored or broken. These offences demonstrate a lack of compliance with legal requirements which would clearly be a worry in relation to taxi and private hire licensees. Serious consideration will be given as to whether they are a safe and suitable person to hold a licence.

Motoring Offences

17 Hackney carriage and private hire drivers are professional drivers charged with the responsibility of carrying the public. Any motoring conviction can demonstrate a lack of professionalism and will be considered seriously. A single occurrence of a minor traffic offence may not prohibit the grant of a licence or result in action against an existing licence. Subsequent convictions suggest the fact that the licensee may not take their professional responsibilities seriously and may therefore not be a safe and suitable person to be granted or retain a licence.

Where an applicant has a conviction for drink driving or driving under the influence of drugs or failing to provide a specimen in relation to a driving matter, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence and/or driving ban imposed. With drug offences, any applicant may also have to undergo drugs testing at their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.

Where an applicant has a conviction for using a hand-held mobile telephone or handheld device whilst driving, a licence will not be granted until at least 3 years have elapsed since the conviction or completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed, whichever is the later.

Penalty points applied to a DVLA driving licence remain active for either 3 or 10 years, which may be from the date of the offence or the date of conviction depending upon the offence as detailed in **Penalty points (endorsements)** www.gov.uk/penalty-points-endorsements/how-long-endorsements-stay-on-your-driving-licence. They may be removed from the licence after 4 or 11 years. That action does not negate the offence that led to the points being imposed. Penalty points (and the underlying offence) will be relevant and taken into consideration for 4 or 11 years from the date of conviction, or the date of the offence depending on the type of offence. (see link above)

By attaining 7 or more penalty points on their DVLA licence a driver is demonstrating they may not be fit and proper and the authority will assess their suitability.

Any driver who gets 7 DVLA points will be asked to undertake the driving assessment test to continue to drive or be issued a driver's licence, otherwise they will be referred to the Public Appeals Committee.

If any driver accrues 9 penalty points on their DVLA driving licence they will be referred to the Public Appeals Committee for a review of their driver's licence.

Any offence which resulted in injury to any person or damage to any property (including vehicles), or any insurance offence then a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence.

Any driver who has accumulated 12 or more points on their DVLA licence and has not been disqualified under the totting up procedure by a court as a result of making exceptional hardship arguments will not be able to advance such arguments before the licensing authority as they are not a relevant consideration in determining what action the authority should take. Any such driver will not be licensed for a period of 5 years from the date of the accumulation of 12 or more points.

Any driver who has been disqualified as a result of "totting up" which erases the points when the licence is restored, will not be licensed for a period of 5 Years from the date of the disqualification. Other disqualifications will need to be investigated, the reasons ascertained, and a decision will be based on the results of that investigation.

Drivers who commit parking, obstruction and other such motoring offences that do not attract penalty points are not displaying a professional approach to their work. Persistent offenders should be reported to their licensing authority who may consider a period of suspension depending on the severity and frequency of the incidents reported.

Behaviours

18 Driver behaviours that fall short of criminal behaviour but are indicators of more sinister behaviour need to be addressed to maintain confidence in the taxi trades and to stop unwanted behaviours before they evolve into criminal acts.

Behaviours such as

- Asking a passenger for their contact or social media details
- Asking personal or intimate questions
- Inappropriate physical contact with passengers or invading their personal space
- Inappropriate conversations, questions or behaviour

This is more serious if the passenger is a lone vulnerable individual.

Except in the most serious of cases, drivers will be given a warning in the first instance. If appropriate they will be sent on refresher safeguarding training to be made aware of how the behaviour maybe perceived by a vulnerable passenger.

If the behaviour, on the balance of probability, is repeated and considered to be predatory in nature then the driver's licence will be revoked.

Where an applicant or licence holder has a conviction for an offence contrary to any legislation relating to taxi or private hire activity not covered elsewhere, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

Private Hire Operators

19 A private hire operator ("an operator") does not have direct responsibility for the safety of passengers, other road users or direct contact with passengers who are in the private hire vehicle (except where they are also licensed as a private hire driver). However, in performing their duties they obtain and hold

considerable amounts of personal and private information about their passengers which must be treated in confidence and not revealed to others or used by the operator or their staff for criminal or other unacceptable purposes.

As stated above, where an applicant has more than one conviction, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are a safe and suitable person.

Operators must ensure that any staff that are used within the business (whether employees or independent contractors) and are able to access any information as described above are subject to the same standards as the operator themselves. This can be effected by means of the individual staff member being required by the operator to obtain a basic DBS certificate. If an operator is found not to be applying the required standards and using staff that do not meet the licensing authority's overall criteria, that will lead to the operator's licence being revoked.

As public trust and confidence in the overall safety and integrity of the private hire system is vital, the same standards will be applied to operators as those applied to drivers, which are outlined above.

Vehicle proprietors

20 Vehicle proprietors (both hackney carriage and private hire) have two principal responsibilities.

Firstly, they must ensure that the vehicle is maintained to an acceptable standard, always.

Secondly, they must ensure that the vehicle is not used for illegal or illicit purposes.

As stated above, where an applicant has more than one conviction, serious consideration will need to be given as to whether they are a safe and suitable person to be granted or retain a vehicle licence.

As public trust and confidence in the overall safety and integrity of the private hire system is vital, the same standards will be applied to proprietors as those applied to drivers, which are outlined above.

Spent Convictions

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 convictions become spent as defined below:

Those 18 or over on the date of conviction:

Sentence	Rehabilitation Period
Prison sentence for life, public protection sentence, preventive detention, sentence at HM pleasure, sentences for specified offences.	Never spent
Prison sentence over 48 months (not for a Schedule 18 offence)	7 years from the end of the sentence (inc. time on licence)
Prison sentence more than 1 year and up to, or consisting of 4 years	4 years from the end of the sentence (inc. time on licence)
Prison sentence of 1 year or less.	12 months from end of sentence (inc. time on licence)
Probation Order, Supervision Order	The end of the order, or where the last such day is not specified, 2 years from the date of conviction.
Community order	The end of the order, or where the last such day is not specified, 2 years from the date of conviction
Fine	1 year from the date of conviction
Conditional Discharge Order, Referral Order, Community and Rehabilitation Order, Care Order, Bind Over, Hospital Order, Reparation Order, earlier Statutory Order and any Order imposing a disqualification, disability prohibition, penalty requirement or restriction or is otherwise intended to regulate the behaviour of the person convicted.	The end date given by the Order or, if no date given, 2 years from the date of conviction unless the Order states 'unlimited' 'indefinitely' or 'until further Order' as in these cases it will remain unspent.

Sentence	Rehabilitation Period
Compensation Order	The date on which the payment is made in full
Simple Caution	No rehabilitation period.
Conditional Caution	3 months or when caution ceases to have effect if earlier.
Absolute Discharge	No rehabilitation period

This table has been amended to give effect to the changes made by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 and the Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

Drivers are exempt from the provisions of The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 2002, Part 1 of Schedule 1, Paragraph 12(e).

This means that:

New applicants and existing licence holders must disclose all previous cautions and convictions whether they are spent or not.

Those 17 or under on the date of conviction:

Sentence	Rehabilitation Period
Prison sentence for life, public protection sentence, preventive detention, sentence at HM pleasure, sentences for specified offences.	Never spent
Prison sentence: over 48 months (not for a Schedule 18 offence)	3 and a half years from the end of the complete sentence (inc. time spent on licence)
Prison sentence of more than 1 year and, up to, or consisting of 4 years	2 years from the end of the complete sentence (inc. time spent on licence)
Prison sentence of 1 year or less.	6 months from the end of the complete sentence (inc. time spent on licence)

Sentence	Rehabilitation Period
Community Order/Youth Rehabilitation Order	The end date of the Order, and where the Order does not specify the last day, 2 years from the date of conviction
Referral order	The last day on which the order has effect
Fine	6 months from the date of conviction
Conditional Discharge Order, Reparation Order, Engagement and Support Order, Action Plan Order, Supervision Order, Bind Over Order, Hospital Order, Remand (Home) Order or Relevant Order.	The last day on which the order has effect where the Order does not specify the last day, 2 years from the date of conviction.
Compensation	Once the compensation is paid in full
Simple Caution	No rehabilitation period
Conditional Caution, Diversionary Caution, Youth Conditional Caution	3 months or when caution ceases to have effect if earlier
Absolute Discharge	No rehabilitation period

This table has been amended to give effect to the changes made by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 and the Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

Drivers are exempt from the provisions of The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 1974, as amended by Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 2002, Part III of Schedule 1, Paragraph 9.

This means that:

New applicants and existing licence holders must disclose all previous cautions and convictions whether they are spent or not.

Minor Traffic Offences

CU10 Using vehicle with defective brakes

CU20 Causing or likely to cause danger by reason of use or unsuitable vehicle or using a vehicle with parts or accessories (excluding brakes, steering or tyres) in a dangerous condition

CU30 Using a vehicle with defective tyres

CU40 Using a vehicle with defective steering

CU50 Causing or likely to cause danger by reason of load or passengers

CU80 Breach of requirements as to control of the vehicle, mobile telephone etc.

SP10 Exceeding goods vehicle speed limit

SP20 Exceeding speed limit for type of vehicle (excluding goods or passenger vehicles)

SP30 Exceeding statutory speed limit on a public road

SP40 Exceeding passenger vehicle speed limit

SP50 Exceeding speed limit on a motorway

SP60 Exceeding speed limit offence

MS10 Leaving a vehicle in a dangerous position

MS40 Driving with uncorrected defective eyesight or refusing to submit to a test

MS70 Driving with uncorrected defective eyesight

MS80 Refusing to submit to an eyesight test

MS90 Failure to give information as to identity of driver, etc.

MW10 Contravention of special road regulations (excluding speed limit)

PC10 Undefined contravention of pedestrian crossing regulations

PC20 Contravention of pedestrian crossing regulations with moving vehicle

PC30 Contravention of pedestrian crossing regulations with stationary vehicle

TS10 Failing to comply with traffic light signals

TS20 Failing to comply with double white lines

TS30 Failing to comply with a „stop“ sign

TS40 Failing to comply with direction of a constable or traffic warden

TS50 Failing to comply with traffic sign (excluding “stop” sign, traffic lights or double white lines)

TS60 Failing to comply with school crossing patrol sign

TS70 Undefined failure to comply with a traffic direction sign

- Aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring- offences as coded above.
- Causing or permitting- offences as coded above.
- Inciting offences as coded above.

Major Traffic Offences

AC10 Failing to stop after an accident

AC20 Failing to give particulars or to report an accident within 24 hours

AC30 Undefined accident offences

BA10 Driving while disqualified by order of the court

BA30 Attempting to drive while disqualified by order of the court

CD10 Driving without due care and attention

CD20 Driving without reasonable consideration for other road users

CD30 Driving without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration for other road users

CD40 Causing death through careless driving when unfit through drink

CD50 Causing death through careless driving when unfit through drugs

CD60 Causing death through careless driving with alcohol above limit

CD70 Causing death by careless driving then failing to supply a specimen for analysis

CD71 Causing death by careless driving then failing to supply a specimen for drug analysis

DD40 Dangerous driving

DD60 Manslaughter or culpable homicide while driving a vehicle

DD80 Causing death by dangerous driving

DR10 Driving or attempting to drive with alcohol level above limit

DR20 Driving or attempting to drive while unfit through drink

DR30 Driving or attempting to drive then failing to supply a specimen for analysis

DR31 Driving or attempting to drive then failing to supply a specimen for drug analysis

DR40 In charge of a vehicle while alcohol level above limit

DR50 In charge of a vehicle while unfit through drink

DR60 Failure to provide a specimen for analysis in circumstances other than driving or attempting to drive

DR61 Refusing to give permission for analysis of a blood sample that was taken without consent due to incapacity in circumstances other than driving or attempting to drive

DR70 Failing to provide specimen for breath test

DR80 Driving or attempting to drive when unfit through drugs

DR90 In charge of a vehicle when unfit through drugs

IN10 Using a vehicle uninsured against third-party risks

LC20 Driving otherwise than in accordance with a licence

LC30 Driving after making a false declaration about fitness when applying for a licence

LC40 Driving a vehicle having failed to notify a disability

LC50 Driving after a licence has been revoked or refused on medical grounds

MS50 Motor racing on the highway

MS60 Offences not covered by other codes

UT50 Aggravated taking of a vehicle

- Aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring offences as coded above.
- Causing or permitting offences as coded above.
- Inciting offences as coded above.

APPENDIX 9: Guidance Matrix of Penalties for Licence Contraventions Within a Period of Two Rolling Licence Years

Type of Offence	First offence following warnings (where appropriate)	Second offence	Third and subsequent offences	Comments
Failure to wear badge so as to be plainly and distinctly visible	1-3 days suspension	4-10 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	Additional days may be added if the badge is not being worn at night and/or is not in the vehicle and immediately available for wearing
Breach of dress code	1-3 days suspension	4-7 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	The penalty may be increased if the breach of dress code compromises public safety. (e.g., unsuitable footwear)
Improper use of rank/leaving vehicles unattended	1-3 days suspension	7 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	
Uncivil behaviour	1-3 days suspension	7 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	

Appendix 1

Type of Offence	First offence following warnings (where appropriate)	Second offence	Third and subsequent offences	Comments
Eating, drinking or using an electronic smoking device whilst driving a licenced vehicle	1-3 days suspension	7 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	This includes any devices which are similar to electronic smoking devices
Failure to notify of change of address	1-3 days suspension	7 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	
Use of any hand-held device whilst driving a licenced vehicle	14 days suspension	28 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	
Breach of road traffic legislation	1-7 days suspension	14 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	
Overcharging	7 days suspension	14 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	

Appendix 1

Type of Offence	First offence following warnings (where appropriate)	Second offence	Third and subsequent offences	Comments
Failure to notify a Conviction, Caution or Fixed Penalty Notice or other policy notification requirements	7 days suspension	14 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	This includes all convictions, cautions and fixed penalty notification requirements save change of address notifications
Failure to pick up passengers on time	3-21 days suspension depending upon circumstances	3-21 days suspension depending upon circumstances or revocation	Referral to the PAC*	Each case will be considered on its own merit. Additional days may be added where the customer is disabled or otherwise vulnerable
Refusal to take a fare without reasonable cause (includes refusal of a guide/assisted dog and wheelchair user)	3-21 days suspension depending upon circumstances	3-21 days suspension depending upon circumstances or revocation	Referral to the PAC*	Each case will be considered on its own merit. Additional days may be added where the customer is disabled or otherwise vulnerable or the matter is of a discriminatory nature

Type of Offence	First offence following warnings (where appropriate)	Second offence	Third and subsequent offences	Comments
Failure to maintain subscription to DBS Online Update Service	Suspension/ Revocation / Referral to the PAC* depending upon circumstances	Suspension/ Revocation / Referral to the PAC* depending upon circumstances		It is essential that the Licensing Authority is kept fully informed and updated to all licence holders' DBS status to ensure public safety
Use of part worn tyres or driving with tyres below the legal limit.	7 days suspension	14 days suspension	Referral to the PAC*	Public safety.
Using Stealth/Ghost Plates on a licensed vehicle.	Immediate Suspension and Referral to the PAC*			It is illegal for these plates to be used and questions whether the Driver/Proprietor/Operator is a 'Fit & Proper' person to hold a licence.

*Public Appeals Committee

Notes:

- In cases of minor contraventions of licence conditions, the Council may decide to issue a verbal or written warning.
- The penalties shown are generally meant to be the maximum penalty for a particular offence. The penalty may be reduced where for example a full and frank admission is made at the earliest opportunity. The penalty may be increased where there are aggravating factors.
- This list of penalties is not exhaustive and other offences and/or contraventions will be dealt with accordingly.

Appendix 1

- Other offences will be dealt with in a manner which is commensurate with the above Penalty Matrix.
- Referral to the Public Appeals Committee (PAC) remains an option at any time.
- A driver who is prosecuted for an offence may subsequently be referred to the Public Appeals Committee upon conviction for that offence.
- Significant matters may result in revocation at any time.
- Legislation allows for prosecution of some offences as an option at any time.
- Officers have delegated powers to suspend or revoke licenses as well as to refer matters to the PAC or for prosecution where appropriate.

APPENDIX 10: Vehicle Emissions and Carbon Neutrality

Note: The Policy changes on vehicle emissions and the licensing of Electric and Hybrid vehicles may be subject to future review and change because of unforeseen circumstances and/or factors beyond the Council's control.

Electric and Hybrid Vehicles:

All Electric and Hybrid saloon type vehicles which are presented as new to licensing, will be no more than 6 years old. The Council will however, rely on other aspects of their taxi policy to ensure that all such vehicles which are presented as new to licensing, are of a sufficiently high standard.

With immediate effect, all Electric and Hybrid wheelchair accessible type vehicles which are presented as new to licensing, will be no more than 8 years old. The Council will however, rely on other aspects of their taxi policy to ensure that all such vehicles which new to licensing are of a sufficiently high standard.

These vehicles will be required to have 2 MOT and Compliance inspections per year (every 6 months) when they are 9 years old from date of first registration.

All vehicles will be required to have 3 MOT and Compliance inspections per year (every 4 months) when they are 14 years old from date of first registration.

Vehicle Emissions and Carbon Neutrality

With effect from 1 April 2026 the Council will stop licensing vehicles which are of Euro 4 emissions standard and are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquified petroleum gas (LPG) internal combustion engines (ICE). This will not affect electric vehicles/hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.

From 1 April 2026 until 31 March 2027 the Council will accept renewal applications for the last time in connection with vehicles which are of the Euro 5 emissions standard and are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquified petroleum gas internal combustion engines. This will not affect electric/hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.

From 1 April 2028 the Council will stop accepting new licensing applications for vehicles which are powered solely by petrol diesel or liquified petroleum

gas internal combustion engines. This will not affect the renewal of ICE vehicles already licensed by the Council. Further it will not affect new applications or renewals for electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.

From 31 March 2030, the Council will stop the licensing of vehicles which are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquified petroleum gas internal combustion engines. This will not affect electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.

Summary of key dates in proposed transition to end licensing of ICE only powered vehicles.

April 2026	Stop licensing Euro 4 ICE vehicles
April 2026 to March 2027	Transition period to end licensing of Euro 5
April 2027	Stop licensing Euro 5 ICE vehicles
April 2028	Stop licensing ICE vehicles presented for the 1 st time
April 2030	Stop licensing all vehicles powered only by ICE

APPENDIX 11: Idling Vehicles Contribute to Air Pollution

Put a stop to idling engines.

Running your engine unnecessarily while your vehicle is stationary pollutes the environment. And it is against the law on public highways.

What are the problems?

An idling engine can produce up to twice as many exhaust emissions as an engine in motion.

Exhaust emissions contain a range of air pollutants such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter. These can affect the air quality of the surrounding environment and the air we breathe.

Why is idling illegal?

Vehicle idling is an offence against the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002. The law states that it is an offence to idle your engine unnecessarily when stationary. If you fail to turn your engine off after being spoken to you may be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

Who does the legislation affect?

The legislation covers all vehicles on public roads including buses, taxis, and private cars. It does NOT apply to vehicles moving slowly due to road works or congestion; vehicles stopped at traffic lights; vehicles under test or repair; or defrosting a windscreen.

What can you do?

- You can do your bit by switching off the engine if it looks like you could be waiting for more than a minute or two. Modern cars use virtually no extra fuel when they are re-started without pressing the accelerator, so you will not waste lots of fuel switching the engine back on.
- Turn off your engine when stationary, for example - on a road at a shop, school, taxi rank and stands, whilst unloading/loading or when parked.
- Avoid idling whilst waiting in car parks, petrol stations, lay-bys, “set down” and “pick up points.”

What are the benefits?

- By turning off your engine you improve air quality, reduce fuels costs, and comply with the law.
- Reducing air pollutants can help cut heart disease, reduce lung cancer, and prevent asthma attacks.

Does starting an engine cause more pollution than idling?

No. Turning off an engine and restarting it after a minute or two (or longer) causes less pollution than keeping the engine idling and uses less fuel.

Does the engine need to stay on to keep the battery fully charged?

No. Modern batteries need less engine running time.

When it is cold I need to keep my vehicle warm or warm up my engine?

It can take up to an hour for an engine to cool down. Turning off your engine but keeping the ignition and the fan blowing will provide warm air for some time. If you are concerned about passenger comfort, keep the engine idling to an absolute minimum in warm and cold weather.

Don't catalytic converters need to be hot to work properly?

Yes, but an idling engine does not keep a catalytic converter warm. They retain their heat for about 25 minutes after an engine is switched off anyway. Some useful tips for fuel-efficient driving can be found in the low-carbon travel section at:

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

APPENDIX 12: Rules of The Rank

The driver of a hackney carriage shall, when plying for hire in any street and not actually hired:-

- (a) Proceed with reasonable speed and drive safely and promptly to the Council's taxi ranks.
- (b) If there is no available space to park on the rank, then the driver shall drive to an alternate rank.
- (c) Drivers shall park on the rank by joining the rear of the line of Hackney's already parked there, facing in the same direction.
- (d) As Hackney's drive off the rank all drivers shall move their own Hackney forward to fill the available space.
- (e) For the avoidance of doubt, private hire vehicles must not park on or near a taxi rank; it is an offence to ply for hire in a private hire vehicle.

Guidance for Drivers on the use of Taxi Ranks

Standing or plying for hire from the taxi ranks helps maintain order and public safety. Proper ranking of vehicles allows for both customers and taxis to queue up in an orderly fashion so that public hiring's can take place safely.

Standing and plying for hire on public highway near to taxi ranks is not encouraged and may be construed as queue jumping and gaining an unfair advantage over other hackney carriages. Furthermore, it confuses members of the public as to where the official taxi ranks are and this may encourage unlicensed taxis to operate in those areas.

There is nothing to stop a member of the public flagging down a passing hackney carriage where the roof sign is illuminated.

Engines on licensed vehicles must be stopped whilst standing still on the taxi ranks. Failure to do so may result in action being taken in accordance with the Matrix of Penalties for Offences given as Appendix 8 to this policy.

APPENDIX 13: Fares for Hackney Carriage Journeys

For hackney carriage vehicles (taxis) the law requires that:

- 1) For all journeys which start and finish within the boundaries of Stafford Borough, the fare charged must be no more than the fee displayed on the meter. In consequence, the meter must be used for all journeys which start and finish within the boundaries of Stafford Borough. This is the case even if they are pre-booked journeys. To charge a passenger more than is displayed on the meter is an offence.
- 2) For journeys ending outside of Stafford Borough, the law does not permit a taxi driver to charge more than the fare shown on the meter (which is calculated on the Fare Scale Card provided in each Taxi) unless the journey ends outside the boundary of Stafford Borough and the passenger and the driver have agreed a different fare BEFORE the journey commences. It remains good practice to turn the meter on, even for this type of journey.
- 3) Where hackney carriage vehicles act as private hire vehicles because the journey starts and finishes outside of Stafford Borough, the fare for that Journey can be agreed in advance. Under these circumstances, it is not necessary for a hackney carriage vehicle acting as a private hire vehicle to use the meter. A receipt for any of the above journeys must always be provided if it is asked for by the passenger.



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	Proposed Change	Current Policy	Proposed Updated Policy	Reasons for the Amendment
1.	3.3 New Suitability Guidance from the IoL included.		(link to Institute of Licensing guidance)	Updated standards for Licensing Authorities to have regard to.

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2.	Carbon neutrality deadline - Section 3.4 (ii) Relationship to the Council's Corporate Priorities	<p>Health and Well-being of visitors and residents has been factored into this policy by ensuring that we minimise pollution by requiring vehicles to comply with the emission regulations and through limiting age of vehicles for licensing purposes as well as providing relevant safeguarding training and ensuring that drivers are fit and proper persons.</p>	<p>Health and Well-being of visitors and residents has been factored into this policy by ensuring that we minimise pollution by requiring vehicles to comply with the emission regulations and ensuring that those vehicles that are solely petrol or diesel are phased out, for licensing purposes and to meet the aim for carbon neutrality, within the Borough, by 2030, as well as providing relevant safeguarding training and ensuring that drivers are fit and proper persons.</p>	<p>References the new Carbon Neutrality deadline for the taxi fleet</p>
3.	Changes in vehicle ages - Promoting High Vehicle Standards - Section 3.6 - Policy Objectives	<p>Ensuring that vehicles are clean and in good condition, comfortable and accessible for all passengers. Ensuring, that vehicles over six years old are subject to regular checks to ensure safety and compliance with emissions standards.</p>	<p>Ensuring that vehicles are clean and in good condition, comfortable and accessible for all passengers. Ensuring, that vehicles, are subject to regular checks to ensure safety and compliance with emissions standards. Ensuring that vehicles which are new to licensing with the Council meet a minimum of Euro 6 Emission Standard by 2028 and ensuring that by 2030 all vehicles are hybrid, electric or Hydrogen fuelled only.</p>	<p>Vehicle ages have been changed, steering the trade to clean emissions.</p>

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4.	Section 5 - New Section for Vehicle Emissions and Carbon Neutrality - Section 5	n/a	<p>Note; The Policy changes on vehicle emissions and the licensing of Electric and Hybrid vehicles may be subject to future review and change because of unforeseen circumstances and/or factors beyond the Council's control.</p> <p>5.1 In order to promote public safety, environmental impact, improve quality and increase public confidence, diesel or petrol vehicles must be less than 6 years old when they are first licensed with the Council and at minimum Euro 6 Mission Compliant.</p> <p>5.2 London cab-style vehicles and Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV's) that are diesel or petrol, which are new to licensing with the Council must be less than 8 years old and at minimum Euro 6 Emissions Compliant.</p> <p>5.3 All Electric and Hybrid saloon type vehicles which are presented, as new to licensing, will be no more than 6 years old.</p> <p>5.4 All Electric and Hybrid wheelchair accessible type vehicles, which are presented as new to licensing, will be no more than 8 years old.</p> <p>5.5 With effect from 1 April 2026 the Council will stop licensing vehicles which are of Euro 4 emissions standard and are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquified</p>	Steering the trade to Carbon Neutrality.
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		<p>petroleum gas (LPG) internal combustion engines (ICE). This will not affect electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.</p> <p>5.6 From 1 April 2027 until 31 March 2026 the Council will accept renewal applications for the last time in connection with vehicles which are of the Euro 5 emissions standard and are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquified petroleum gas internal combustion engines. This will not affect electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel</p> <p>5.7 From 1 April 2028 the Council will stop the new to licensing of vehicles which are powered solely by petrol diesel or liquified petroleum gas internal combustion engines (ICE). This will not affect the renewal of ICE vehicles already licensed by the Council. Further it will not affect the new to licensing or renewal licensing of electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.</p> <p>5.8 From 31 March 2030, the Council will stop the licensing of vehicles which are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquified petroleum gas internal combustion engines. This will not affect electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.</p>	
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			5.9 Summary and table of key dates in proposed transition to end licensing of ICE only powered vehicles.	
5.	Section 6.4 - Ages of Drivers	The Council issues Driver Licences for applicants less than 65 years of age, that are valid, for three years from the date of grant. For any applicant over 65 the licence is valid for 12 months from the date of grant.	A licence to drive a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle cannot be granted to a person who is under 18 years of age. In addition, a licence cannot be granted to anyone over 18 who has not held a full UK (not provisional) licence for a period of one year. The Council issues Driver Licences for applicants, that are valid, for three years from the date of grant. For any applicants over 65 the licence will be issued for 3 years but an enhanced regime of medical assessment is operated therefore the driver is required to have a medical every 12 months on the grounds of public safety.	Additional information provided and clarity on ages of granting a licence.
6.	Section 6.14 - DVLA Driving Licence requirements	Those who hold a European Economic Area (EEA) member state driving licence should note that as a result of the UK leaving the EU, those who have been residing or working in the UK must now apply to the EU Settlement Scheme	6.14 Those who hold a European Economic Area (EEA) member state driving licence should note that as a result of the UK leaving the EU, the driving licence requirement has now changed and a full (not provisional) UK licence must now have been held for a period of at least one year. Further information on this can be found online at	Updated to delete out of date information

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		<p>should they wish to remain. Under the government legislation, EU Citizens who were residing in the UK prior to 1 January 2021 will have their rights and status remain in place until 30 June 2021. Further information on this can be found online at https://www.gov.uk/right-to-reside https://www.gov.uk/staying-uk-eu-citizen and https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families.</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/browse/driving/driving-licences.</p>	
7	Driving Assessment on Application	<p>The Council requires all new applicants to pass a driving assessment carried out by the Council's nominated Assessors. During the driving assessment Applicants, where possible, must drive the vehicle that they plan to use if they are licensed. The assessment should be booked as early as possible and must be paid for by the applicant</p>	<p>The three sections of the driving assessment have been removed entirely.</p>	<p>A driving assessment is included in the DfT Best Practice Guidance. However, due to the recent guidance on determining the suitability of drivers in the HC and PH trades, it has been suggested that: "By attaining 7 or more penalty points on their DVLA licence a driver is</p>

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	<p>themselves. If an applicant fails, the assessment then a licence will not be granted. (See flow chart at Table 14)</p> <p>5.8 The Council will require either the applicant or the driving assessor to notify the Council's Licensing Section of the result of the assessment, and to forward a copy of the assessment marking sheet, before the Council issues the licence.</p> <p>5.9 If applicants already hold a driving assessment certificate that is less than FIVE years old then the Council will accept this in lieu of a driving assessment.</p>		<p>demonstrating they may not be fit and proper and the authority will assess their suitability.</p> <p>Any driver who gets 7 DVLA points will be asked to undertake the driving assessment test to continue to drive or be issued a driver's licence, otherwise they will be referred to the Public Appeals Committee." We are therefore removing the driving assessment for new applicants and only requiring a driving assessment as a consequence of accumulating penalty points.</p>
8.	Section 6 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)	n/a	<p>6.17 It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all bank and contact details are current and updated with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) directly. Every lapse in the subscription will result in an assessment of being a fit and proper person and you will be put before the Public Appeals Committee for their consideration.</p>

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9.	Section 7 - Consideration of the "Fit and Proper Person" Test	<p>Bullet points changed to 'driving record and experience'</p> <p>Extra information added</p>	<p>7.7 - Now reads' Driving record, experience and endorsements'</p> <p>Additional bullet point added - "NR3 NAFN Register of Refusals and Revocations"</p> <p>Extra information (point 7.10) - In making the assessment of a driver's fitness and propriety, the Council will pose the following question.</p> <p>"Without prejudice and based on the information available, would you allow a person for whom you care, regardless of their condition to travel alone in a vehicle driven by this person at any time of day or night?"</p> <p>If on the balance of probabilities, the answer to the question is "no" the individual should not be given the benefit of the doubt and should not hold a licence.</p>	
10.	Section 7 - DVLA Licences	<p>7.17 - Drivers are required to sign an agreement mandate which will allow the Council to check their DVLA Licence status. Drivers are required to submit their DVLA licence for inspection upon renewal to the Licensing Section.</p>	<p>7.16 Drivers are required to sign an agreement mandate, valid for the duration of their licence, which will allow the Council to check and request a sharing code, their DVLA Licence status whenever necessary.</p> <p>Plus an additional note on over 18s at point 7.19</p>	More clarity

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	Section 8 - Private Hire Operators Period of Licence	n/a	Point 8.6 - 8.7 - changing Operator's licenses from annual to 5 yearly.	
11.	Section 8 - Private Hire Operators	n/a	<p>Sub-contracting & transfer of Operator Licences.</p> <p>8.3 Sections 55A and 55B of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allow a Private Hire operator to sub-contract bookings to another licensed operator.</p> <p>If this practice is operated, it is mandatory that operators must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep records of any jobs that are subcontracted to another Private Hire operator in a separate register with that operator's licence number and issuing authority. • Furthermore, operators are required to notify passengers clearly if their driver and vehicle are not licensed by Stafford Borough Council. The notification must also include a specific statement that the council has no authority to take licensing action against the driver or vehicle in the event of a complaint, directing 	Expanded upon and clarification.

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		<p>customers instead to the authority that issued the licence.</p> <p>8.4 - In relation to an Operator's Licence section 62 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the suspension and revocation of an operator's licence for:</p> <p>Section 62(1)(c) any material change since the licence was granted in any of the circumstances of the Operator on the basis of which the licence was granted</p> <p>If the operator's licence is issued to a person or company and there is then a sale of that business then that would amount to a material change of who the licence was issued to, therefore there is no right to transfer the operator's licence.</p> <p>All private hire operator licences are issued to an individual, partnership or company once all those named on the application have been vetted through the strict application process. As a result, private hire operator's licences are not transferable if the owner(s) of the business change.</p>	Replaced and expanded upon.
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12.	Section 8 - Private Hire Operators	7.5- A private hire operator licence is renewable annually.	<p>Period of Licence 8.6 - A private hire operator licence will normally be valid for five years from the date of issue though the Council reserves the right to issue such licences for shorter periods where it is deemed appropriate to do so.</p> <p>8.7 - Private hire operators will be issued with licenses to operate vehicles within the following bandings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one to four vehicles • five to fifteen vehicles; or, • over fifteen vehicles. <p>This will allow for greater flexibility in adding vehicles to the Operator's license at any time.</p> <p>Additional note at point 8.9 - Operators must ensure that they provide the Licensing Section, on a quarterly basis, with an up-to-date list of their drivers and vehicles.</p>	<p>Moved from issuing annually to 5 yearly. Reduces workload within licensing dept. Affordability and more flexibility for the Operators. To ensure that Operators are in the correct bandings.</p>
13.	Section 8 - Private Hire Operators	n/a	<p>New point at 8.26 - Private hire vehicle operators must accept bookings for, or on behalf of, any disabled person if a suitable vehicle is available.</p>	<p>To encourage more Private Hire Operators to invest in a wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) and to alleviate some of the pressure from the Hackney Carriage Vehicles.</p>
14	Section 9 - Vehicle Licences	n/a	<p>Expansion of 9.1 and new point at 9.2 - Hackney Carriages.</p>	<p>There is a lengthy waiting list for new white Hackney</p>

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		<p>These shall be White or Black in colour only and must be Wheelchair Accessible.</p> <p>9.2 Proprietors of wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages (WAVs) will, once the vehicle has been licensed by Stafford Borough Council for a period of eight consecutive years to that proprietor, be permitted to license a saloon vehicle as an HCV if they wish to do so.*</p> <p>*This clause shall come into effect from the commencement date of the 2025 revised Policy i.e. will not be backdated for current WAV vehicles.</p> <p>9.5 - Private Hire Vehicles (PHV's) must not be white or black. There will be a gradual phasing out of black PHV's meaning that once the age limit of the current car has been reached and needs replacing the drivers next vehicle should not be black nor white.</p>	<p>Vehicles, black vehicles are easier to obtain</p> <p>To encourage more Hackney Vehicles into the trade and dilute the continual Grandfather Plate issues.</p> <p>As Hackney Vehicles will become either white or black need to phase out black PHV vehicles over time.</p>
15	Section 9 - Vehicle Licences - Vehicle Registration Marks (Number Plates)	n/a	<p>New point added 9.14 - Vehicle Registration Marks (Number Plates)</p> <p>9.14 The content and layout of vehicle registration marks is set out by The Road Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations 2001 (as amended). A failure to comply with the requirements results in the vehicle registration mark being illegal</p>

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		<p>and subject to an MOT failure and in breach of the terms of your hackney carriage/private hire licence which will result in immediate suspension and you will be put before the Public Appeals Committee.</p> <p>Regulation 11 of the Road Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations 2001 imposes further requirements for registration plates therefore stating that the appearance of the characters should not be altered.</p> <p>11(1) No reflex-reflecting material may be applied to any part of a registration plate and the plate must not be treated in such a way that the characters of the registration mark become, or are caused to act as, retroreflective characters.</p> <p>11(1A) The surface of a registration plate must not comprise or incorporate any design, pattern or texture, or be treated in any way which gives to any part of the plate the appearance of a design, pattern or texture.</p> <p>11(2) A registration plate must not be treated in any other way which renders the characters of the registration mark less easily distinguishable to the eye or which would prevent or impair the making of a true photographic image of the plate through the</p>	
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			<p>medium of camera and film or any other device.</p> <p>11(3) A registration plate must not be fixed to a vehicle;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) by means of a screw, bolt or other fixing device of any type or colour, (b) by the placing of a screw, bolt or other fixing device in any position, or in any other manner; which has the effect of changing the appearance or legibility of any of the characters of the registration mark, which renders the characters of the registration mark less easily distinguishable to the eye or which prevents or impairs the making of a true photographic image of the plate through the medium of camera and film or any other device. 	
16.	Section 9 - Vehicle Licences - Ages of Vehicles	<p>8.21 In order to promote public safety, environmental impact, improve quality and increase public confidence, vehicles must be less than 4 years old when they are first licensed with the Council except for electric vehicles which must be less than 6 years old when they are first licensed.</p>	<p>9.21 - When licensing a vehicle for the first time the Council encourages proprietors to review the Euro NCAP safety rating of the proposed vehicle to consider the safety benefits to passengers, drivers, pedestrians and drivers of other vehicles by licensing a higher rated vehicle. More details can be found at: www.euroncap.com/en</p> <p>9.22 - In order to promote public safety, environmental impact, improve quality and increase public confidence, diesel or petrol</p>	<p>Phasing out of Petrol/Diesel vehicles and to encourage more drivers to buy electric/hybrid vehicles.</p>

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	<p>8.22 London cab-style vehicles which are new to licensing with the Council must be less than 5 years old.</p> <p>8.23 All vehicles will cease to be licensed after 10 years from date of first registration. London Cab style vehicles will cease to be licensed after 14 years from the date of first registration. Electric vehicles will cease to be licensed after 12 years from the date of first registration.</p> <p>NOTE: Please refer to the Vehicle Transfer section of this Policy regarding transfer of older vehicles. (8.51)</p> <p>8.24 Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV's) that have been purchased new and the list price is over £23,000 will cease to be licensed after 12 years. Evidence to support this will be needed</p>	<p>vehicles must be less than 6 years old when they are first licensed with the Council and at minimum Euro 6 compliant. Refer to section 5.</p> <p>9.23 London cab-style vehicles and Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV's) that are diesel or petrol, which are new to licensing with the Council must be less than 8 years old and at minimum Euro 6 compliant. Refer to section 5</p> <p>9.24 All Electric and Hybrid saloon type vehicles which are presented, as new to licensing, will be no more than 6 years old. Refer to section 5</p> <p>9.25 All Electric and Hybrid wheelchair accessible type vehicles, which are presented as new to licensing, will be no more than 8 years old. Refer to section 5.</p> <p>9.26 Electric/Hybrid and Hydrogen fuel vehicles will have no end date providing the vehicle fits policy standards and remains safe and fit for purpose under the licensing regime.</p>	
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		for this exemption to be applied.		
17.	Section 9 - Vehicle Licences - Inspection and Testing of Vehicles	<p>8.25 All vehicles shall be tested at one of the Council's approved testing facilities prior to first licensing. Vehicles will be required to have 2 MOT tests per year (every 6 months) when they are 7 years old from the date of registration except for London Cab style vehicles which will be required to have 2 MOT tests per year (every 6 months) when they are 11 years old, from the date of registration. The age of the vehicle shall be determined by reference to the date of the first registration recorded in the vehicle registration document (V5). This is in order to ensure that older</p>	<p>9.27 All vehicles must only be tested at one of the Council's approved testing facilities prior to first licensing unless the vehicle is new from purchase. New vehicles shall be subject to the requirement for an MOT 12 months after date for first registration with the DVLA.</p> <p>Petrol or diesel only vehicles will be required to have 2 MOT tests per year (every 6 months) when they are 9 years old from the date of registration. (Refer to Section 5)</p> <p>All Electric/Hybrid or Hydrogen fuel vehicles are required to have 2 MOT tests per year (every 6 months) when they are 9 years old from the date of registration and from 14 years old 3 MOT's a year (every 4 months).</p> <p>The age of the vehicle shall be determined by reference to the date of the first registration recorded in the vehicle registration document (V5). This is in order to ensure that older vehicles continue to meet the Council's vehicle standards, particularly in terms of safety. The cost of</p>	To ensure the standards of vehicles remain safe and fit for purpose.

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		<p>vehicles continue to meet the Council's vehicle standards, particularly in terms of safety. The cost of each test or any re-tests will need to be met by the applicant.</p> <p>8.26 The Council will use the national inspection standards contained within the Freight Transport Association's "FTA Best Practice Guide to Inspection of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles" published in August 2012.</p>	<p>each test or any re-tests will need to be met by the applicant.</p> <p>A Compliance test pass certificate will also be required each time, from one of the approved testing facilities, (such a Certificate should normally be dated no more than 28 days old at the time that the application is made to the Licensing Authority).</p>	
18.	Section 9 - Vehicle Licences - Wheels and Tyres	n/a	<p>Point 9.35 A spare wheel and tyre in good condition, properly inflated and suitable for the vehicle, together with sufficient tools for fitting same shall be provided unless the proprietor can comply with the following: -</p> <p><i>The proprietor or operator of the vehicle shall take all reasonable steps to ensure, in the event of vehicle breakdown, that appropriate contingency arrangements are in place to enable passengers to complete their journeys safely and in good time to anywhere in the UK. Such steps may</i></p>	To ensure Public Safety

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			<i>include carrying and use of a spare wheel and tools; if vehicle is not designed to carry a spare, fitting run flat tyres all round or carrying puncture repair / inflation kit; vehicle breakdown cover which includes taking the passengers and their luggage to their intended destination anywhere in the UK; agreements with other proprietors / operators to provide assistance in emergencies etc. In any event, responsibility for ensuring the safety and welfare of passengers in such circumstances rests with the said proprietor or operator.</i>	
19.	Section 9 - Vehicle Licences - Limousines and Novelty/Vintage Vehicles	n/a	<p>New points added 9.54 - Novelty or Vintage vehicles are an exception within this policy for vehicle emissions, due to the age of these types of vehicles, referred to in Section 5 and Appendix 10.</p> <p>9.57 - On application for a Novelty or vintage vehicle you must also provide the Licensing Section with written proposals detailing how the vehicle will comply with this policy, safety, and passenger comfort requirements.</p>	These vehicles cannot comply with the Vehicle Emission Standards expected so an exception has to be made within the Policy.

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20.	Section 10 - Equalities Act 2010 - Designated Vehicles	n/a	<p>New additional point added at 10.10 - Drivers of vehicles designated under the Equality Act 2010 to carry a passenger seated in a wheelchair have several duties under the Act which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry a passenger while in the wheelchair; • Not to make any additional charge for doing so; • To carry the wheelchair in the vehicle if the passenger chooses to sit in a passenger seat; • To ensure the passenger is carried in safety and comfort; • To provide appropriate mobility assistance to enter or exit the vehicle including to load any luggage and/or wheelchair. 	To ensure drivers understand their responsibilities
21.	Appendix 1 - Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver Conditions	n/a	<p>New point added at point 17 - The driver must have a card reader for use within the vehicle; this is mandatory and use it as necessary.</p>	To futureproof the trade

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22.	Appendix 1 - Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver Conditions	n/a	<p>New point added at point 35 - Drivers must turn off their engines whilst stationary. This is in order to reduce any potential pollution as well as saving money on fuel costs. Vehicle idling is an offence against the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002.</p>	To have regard to the Anti-Idling laws
23	Appendix 3: Private Hire Vehicle Conditions.	n/a	<p>Point 1 - Changed and expanded upon. All Private Hire Vehicles must NOT be WHITE or BLACK. There will be a gradual phasing out of black PHV's meaning that once the age limit of the current car has been reached and needs replacing the drivers next vehicle should not be black nor white.</p>	Hackney Carriages will now be allowed to be either white or black which impacts on some of the Private Hire Vehicles so will gradually be phased out.
24.	Appendix 4 - General Vehicle Conditions (new section) - Plates and Identification of Vehicle	The vehicle shall always clearly display on the exterior of the vehicle two licence plates supplied by the Council, the form and content of which shall also be prescribed by the Council.	<p>Point 5 - All vehicles shall always clearly display on the exterior of the vehicle <u>one</u> <u>licence plate</u> supplied by the Council, the form and content of which shall also be prescribed by the Council.</p>	Decision taken by the Licensing Authority on simplicity for the trade

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25.	Appendix 4 - General Vehicle Conditions (new section) - Plates and Identification of Vehicle	One licence plate shall be affixed securely to the front of the vehicle and one licence plate affixed securely to the rear of the vehicle. These must be secured permanently to the vehicle. Magnetic fixings will not be accepted.	Point 6 - For reasons of security, the printed licence plate issued by the Council must be placed within the backing plate provided by the Council and then shall, at all times be fixed securely to the rear of the vehicle on the offside or centre of the vehicle at bumper height. The licence plate must be horizontal. The use of magnets to fix the plate to the licensed vehicle is not acceptable.	To ensure drivers know their responsibilities and to avoid future instances of non-compliance.
26	Appendix 5 - Private Hire Operator's Licence Conditions	Private hire vehicles may be subcontracted by the operator in accordance with the requirements of section 11 of the Deregulation Act 2015 which inserted section 55(A) and (B) into the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976). The Operator, however, must ensure that the passenger is informed in cases where the booking is sub-contracted to another taxi firm, and give them full details of the same.	<p>16. Sub-contracting. Sections 55A & 55B of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allow a Private Hire operator to sub-contract bookings to another licensed operator.</p> <p>If this practice is operated, it is mandatory that operators must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep records of any jobs that are subcontracted to another Private Hire operator in a separate register with that operator's licence number and issuing authority. Furthermore, operators are required to notify passengers clearly if their driver and vehicle are not licensed by Stafford Borough Council. The notification must also include a specific statement that the council 	Clarification given to Operator's that sub-contracting should not be the norm and to ensure that customers are notified that the vehicle being used is not one licensed by Stafford Borough Council and that complaints cannot be dealt with by SBC.

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			<p>has no authority to take licensing action against the driver or vehicle in the event of a complaint, directing customers instead to the authority that issued the licence.</p> <p>Any Operator that is sub-contracting and using licensed vehicles from another area to undertake fares within Stafford Borough shall ensure that the driver of the vehicle, who is working for them, is displaying livery of the Stafford licensed operator on the vehicle.</p>	
27.	Appendix 7 - Executive Hire Conditions	2. Executive Hire Vehicles will not be licensed once they are 12 years old.	<p>3. Executive Hire Vehicles that are solely petrol or diesel will not be licensed once they are 12 years old or by 2030 whichever is sooner.</p> <p>Additional point added at point 4: Executive Hire Vehicles that are Electric/Hybrid will no longer be licensed once they are 16 years old.</p> <p>Additional point added at point 5: Electric Executive Hire Vehicles can operate for as long as they are roadworthy, safe and fit for purpose and compliant with the licensing criteria within this Policy.</p>	<p>In line with the emissions part of the Policy.</p> <p>To encourage the switch to electric.</p>
28.	Appendix 8 - Guidance on Determining the Suitability of	Appendix 7 - replaced with updated guidance.	<p>Additional Guidance Notes added: This guidance must be read in conjunction with the Department for Transport ("DfT")</p>	Fit and Proper Guidance to ensure suitability of applicants and licensees.

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	Applicants and Licensees in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades		Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards and the Institute of Licensing (“IoL”) Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants and licensees in the hackney and private hire trades. Pages 72 - 78 have been updated in accordance with the new IoL Suitability Guidance issued in November 2024.	
Appendix 8 - Guidance on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades	Other motoring offences - Definition of Major and Minor Offences Where an applicant has 9 or more points on their DVLA licence for minor traffic or similar offences, the applicant will be required to undertake driver assessment training		Point 17 - Where an applicant has 7 or more points on their DVLA licence for minor traffic or similar offences, they are demonstrating they may not be fit and proper and the authority will assess their suitability. Upon accumulating 7 points on their DVLA licence a driver will be asked to undertake the driving assessment to continue to drive or be issued a driver's licence, otherwise they will be referred to the Public Appeals Committee. If any driver accrues 9 penalty points on their DVLA driving licence they will be referred to the Public Appeals Committee for a review of their driver's licence.	Fit and Proper Guidance to ensure suitability of applicants and licensees.

Proposed Changes - Taxi Policy and Licensing Conditions 2025

29.	Appendix 8 - Guidance on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trades	n/a	New Table of Spent Convictions and Offence Information - (see table at pages 80 - 82)	Placed in Policy for clarification.
	Minor and Major Traffic Offences	n/a	New Section here: pages 83 - 86 Codes provided for Minor and Major Traffic Offences	Explanation to provide clarity of minor and major traffic offences
30	Appendix 9 - Guidance Matrix of Penalties for Licence Contraventions within a Period of Two Rolling Licence Years.	Already within the Policy	New Contravention added into the Matrix: Using Stealth/Ghost Plates on a licensed vehicle. - Immediate Suspension and Referral to the PAC* It is illegal for these plates to be used and questions whether the Driver/Proprietor/Operator is a 'Fit and Proper' person to hold a licence.	To ensure these plates are not used and for public safety.

Proposed Changes - Taxi Policy and Licensing Conditions 2025

31.	Appendix 10 - Vehicle Emissions and Carbon Neutrality	n/a	<p>New Section here:</p> <p>Note: The Policy changes on vehicle emissions and the licensing of Electric and Hybrid vehicles may be subject to future review and change because of unforeseen circumstances and/or factors beyond the Council's control.</p> <p>Electric and Hybrid Vehicles:</p> <p>All Electric and Hybrid saloon type vehicles which are presented as new to licensing, will be no more than 6 years old. The Council will however, rely on other aspects of their taxi policy to ensure that all such vehicles which are presented as new to licensing, are of a sufficiently high standard.</p> <p>With immediate effect, all Electric and Hybrid wheelchair accessible type vehicles which are presented as new to licensing, will be no more than 8 years old. The Council will however, rely on other aspects of their taxi policy to ensure that all such vehicles which new to licensing are of a sufficiently high standard.</p>	To steer the trade towards Carbon Neutrality by phasing out solely petrol or diesel vehicles.
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Proposed Changes - Taxi Policy and Licensing Conditions 2025

		<p>These vehicles will be required to have 2 MOT and Compliance inspections per year (every 6 months) when they are 9 years old from date of first registration.</p> <p>All vehicles will be required to have 3 MOT and Compliance inspections per year (every 4 months) when they are 14 years old from date of first registration.</p> <p><u>Vehicle Emissions and Carbon Neutrality</u></p> <p>With effect from 1 April 2026 the Council will stop licensing vehicles which are of Euro 4 emissions standard and are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquified petroleum gas (LPG) internal combustion engines (ICE). This will not affect electric vehicles/hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.</p> <p>From 1 April 2026 until 31 March 2027 the Council will accept renewal applications for the last time in connection with vehicles which are of the Euro 5 emissions standard and are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquified petroleum gas internal combustion engines. This will not affect electric/hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.</p>	
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Proposed Changes - Taxi Policy and Licensing Conditions 2025

		<p>From 1 April 2028 the Council will stop accepting new licensing applications for vehicles which are powered solely by petrol diesel or liquified petroleum gas internal combustion engines. This will not affect the renewal of ICE vehicles already licensed by the Council. Further it will not affect the new to licensing or renewal licensing of electric /hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.</p> <p>On 31 March 2030, the Council will stop the licensing of vehicles which are powered solely by petrol, diesel or liquified petroleum gas internal combustion engines. This will not affect electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles or those using hydrogen fuel.</p> <p>Summary and table of key dates in proposed transition to end licensing of ICE only powered vehicles.</p>	
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Proposed Changes - Taxi Policy and Licensing Conditions 2025

32.	Appendix 11 - Idling Vehicles Contribute to Air Pollution	n/a	New Section here: Idling Vehicles Contribute to Air Pollution pages 94-95	Protection of Air Quality and pollution prevention.
33	App 12 - Guidance for Drivers on the use of Taxi Ranks	n/a	Additional Information provided page 96 - Guidance for Drivers on the use of Taxi Ranks	Extra guidance for clarification
34	Appendix 13 - Fares for Hackney Carriage Journeys	n/a	New Section here: Fares for Hackney Carriage (taxis) journeys page 95	Clarification provided on fare journeys

Taxi Licensing Policy Consultation Responses - March 2025

Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
3.4 (Trade put 5.1 which is incorrect)	Stafford Taxi Association* (*full list of names at the end of this document).	<p>Subject to Central Government Guidelines (if the government is to increase the cut off point for petrol and diesel vehicles to 2045 then we should also have the increase of the age of the vehicle to few more years (5 or more years for existing petrol and diesel licenced vehicles).</p> <p>If the government changes its stance on manufacturing or sale of diesel/petrol vehicle then the existing rule of 2030 should be reconsidered to allow the trade to adjust accordingly. The Stafford Taxi Association understands we cannot predict the future however, we would like fairness of the changes to be applied to the Taxi trade in Stafford.</p>	<p>After clarification with STA of what they were actually referring to, what they meant was they feel that the 2030 date be pushed back to 2035.</p> <p>The UK government has confirmed the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars has been brought forward to 2030 – but full hybrid vehicles can still be sold until 2035 (note: mild hybrid vehicles will not be permitted to be sold after 2030).</p> <p>As the proposed Policy contains no end date for licensing of hybrid vehicles, this is considered fair and reasonable.</p>
5.6	Stafford Taxi Association	Change dates as per government guidelines from 1st April 2027.	Not accepted, Euro 5 emissions need to phased out, there are only 10 vehicles affected by this in the whole trade and as these are the older vehicles needing to be changed regardless in line with the current Policy this will not cause any severe hardship.
5.8	Stafford Taxi Association	As the government has announced that 2050 is the target for 0 omission, why is the taxi trade is forced to do this by 2030? The Stafford Taxi Association suggested that we should be given 10 years period to consider the changes, this was suggested by the chairman in 2019.	SBC's climate change objective is 2040. The trade needs to be firmly steered towards zero emissions.
6.6	Stafford Taxi Association	The drivers should be given more choices on medical examination as the waiting time is very long and should be offered in Stafford to save travel time and money. The taxi trade have requested the medical test to be every five years.	Not accepted- we are contracted by the Council, as a whole, with Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, which includes taxi driver medicals.

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Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
6.8	Stafford Taxi Association	Please remove the driving assessment from the knowledge test for new applicants as he/she holds a full UK licence.	<p>We agree and are removing the driving assessment for new applicants and only requiring a driving assessment as a consequence of accumulating penalty points</p> <p>A driving assessment is included in the DfT Best Practice Guidance. However, due to the recent guidance on determining the suitability of drivers in the HC and PH trades, it has been suggested that:</p> <p>“By attaining 7 or more penalty points on their DVLA licence a driver is demonstrating they may not be fit and proper and the authority will assess their suitability.</p> <p>Any driver who gets 7 DVLA points will be asked to undertake the driving assessment test to continue to drive or be issued a driver’s licence, otherwise they will be referred to the Public Appeals Committee.”</p>
6.20	Stafford Taxi Association	In an event of DBS expiring, a grace period for 8 weeks should be allowed to reapply and continue to work. Proof of a new application should be submitted to the council and the driver should carry on based on previous record.	Accepted only in the case of a DBS online subscription lapse, but only for 4 weeks not 8, as this is out of our control, but not for a manual DBS lapse as the driver is notified at least 1 month prior to the expiry of their DBS which allows plenty of time for reapplication. Each case will be taken on merit.
7.10	Stafford Taxi Association	The trade unanimously disagrees with this point, let the courts decide before it can be judged by the licensing team/committee.	Not accepted. A driver is continuously assessed from first applying and whilst they are licensed i.e. if a driver regularly has complaints made against them and dependant on what they are

Taxi Licensing Policy Consultation Responses - March 2025

Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
			the appropriate tests and action will be taken.
7.22	Stafford Taxi Association	The penalty points to nine points should stay, after the 9 points the driver is referred to the committee.	Not accepted. This will be kept at 7 points-as the driving assessment on application has been removed, if the driver obtains 7 or more points they will be required to undertake a driving assessment.
7.25	Stafford Taxi Association	This should be all Council approved MOT stations (Not only county fleet care).	Accepted, Policy changed to include all testing stations.
7.28	Stafford Taxi Association	Medical should be for 5 years (unless medical condition changes).	Not accepted. This remains at renewal, in line with renewal of their badge, apart from those aged over 65 years. The Council must be satisfied of drivers' fitness prior to renewing their licences.
7.30	Stafford Taxi Association	In more frequent medical conditions, this should be considered case by case and the severity of the condition and the medical fitness should be carried out at the Councils Occupational Health unit in Stafford or locally.	Not accepted. Medical conditions need to be monitored by the current medical providers to ensure standardisation and continuity.
7.35	Stafford Taxi Association	If a medical is approved by GP, then why we need the approval of Council Committee, are they medically professionals to determine the driver's future?	This point has been misinterpreted, a driver can be referred to their GP on the basis of being fit to return to work, by the medical provider dependant of the severity of the illness encountered.
7.42	Stafford Taxi Association	Notify the council in 72 hours rather than 48 hours	Not accepted. This must be in line with the statutory standards and will not be changed.
7.44	Stafford Taxi Association	Notify the council in 72 hours rather than 48 hours	Not accepted. This must be in line with the statutory standards and will not be changed.
8.3 / 8.4	Stafford Taxi Association Khubaib Ahmed	This point should be completely removed as we will not have enough vehicles to serve the people of Stafford. People of Stafford need the Private hire Operator services, by doing this you	Accepted and removed. Bullet point 3 removed, accepted.

Taxi Licensing Policy Consultation Responses - March 2025

Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
	(Happy Cabs) Makhmood Hussain Smart Cars	<p>will be affecting three local taxi businesses directly and this will lead to closure of these businesses.</p> <p>To be fair, if you are willing to stop Uber operating in Stafford then it's only fair to target the local private hire operators otherwise let the businesses continue to serve the people of Stafford otherwise you will have no vehicles left to serve the people of Stafford.</p> <p>- As an operator we cannot notify each passenger about the vehicle being sent due to few reasons. For instance, Stafford plated driver decided to go on break on that moment when job sent to him or his car broke down whilst on the way or the pickup is opposite to where he is. Etc etc. It's a live operation and things do change quickly. Moreover, text doesn't allow to sent that long message so unfortunately its not practically possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, livery on all vehicles regardless the license should be imposed. - Sub-contracted driver cannot finish a job and then go out of Stafford and come back again. This is cause delays and frustration for passengers and drivers. This policy will favour Uber as they will be widely available in Town. So customers requiring a taxi will look for other options. If this goes ahead, Stafford operators may as well close the business down. 	

Taxi Licensing Policy Consultation Responses - March 2025

Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
8.4	Stafford Taxi Association	This information needs to be on the website to cover the terms and conditions to notify the potential customers as this is impossible to do with every customer. Due to lack of characters allowed on the SMS this is impossible to achieve.	Not accepted however this point, as a compromise but not to be relied upon, can be added to the licensing web pages if necessary for information and to aid the passenger however the onus is on the operator to ensure passengers are aware of this before they book a journey.
8.5	Stafford Taxi Association	The transfer of the private hire operator licence should be allowed by paying the transfer fees and as long as the new owner is fit and proper person.	Policy wording changed to expand and clarify this point.
8.7	Darren Meeley	5-year operating licence yes but options for shorter if required,	Already acknowledged in this revised Policy.
8.8	Stafford Taxi Association	Any new private hire operator licence application should have minimum 4 company vehicles on it before it is granted.	Not accepted. 'One-man bands' who want become Operator's would be completely barred from being allowed to set up their own business.
8.17	Stafford Taxi Association	Notify the council in 72 hours rather than 48 hours.	Not accepted. This must be in line with the statutory standards and will not be changed.
9.2	Stafford Taxi Association	We currently have the white colour as a standard colour for Hackney carriage however black is suggested by council and the trade is also happy to accept both colours which are Black and White. The private hire vehicles must not be black or white going forward however grace period should be considered for existing licenced vehicles.	Accepted; obtaining white hackney carriage vehicles is causing a significant issue in the trade, therefore we are satisfied that the HC trade can have a black or white car. The phasing out the black vehicles in the PH trade is to be implemented going forward but will take a long period of time to achieve.
9.11	Stafford Taxi Association	Most cars which are 1 litre petrol, sometimes shows on V5 as 800/850cc which equals to 1 litre engine. This should be allowed as a 1 litre engine.	Not accepted.

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Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
9.20	Craig Farwell	I would like to suggest for the taxi consultation that the taxis would allowed an extra 2 years meaning we could keep the vehicles on for 12 years not 10 years you could still keep the 2030 deadline for all taxis to be electric or hybrid. This would be very helpful for a lot of drivers in this work and cost of ling crisis. As uber have now taken all the work.	Each case will be considered on an individual basis
9.40	Stafford Taxi Association	Any sub-contracting vehicle working for a Stafford private hire operator must display the local company signage.	(NOT THE CORRECT SECTION - SHOULD BE APPENDIX 5 POINT 17) - misconstrued.
9.48	Stafford Taxi Association	All licenced vehicles should be allowed to be transferred to another driver up to the term of the vehicle licence. (including Grandfather right's vehicle).	Not accepted
10.12	Stafford Taxi Association	The holder of "Grandfather Rights" plate should be allowed to sell his vehicle with the licence as a business to the new owner. Once a vehicle is licenced as a tax then it automatically becomes a business, and any business should be allowed to be sold, regardless of its age or licence type. This will keep the existing taxis in the trade and a driver should be able to sell or transfer his business to another driver as a going concern.	Not accepted. This would eradicate all wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV's) as all drivers would be scrambling to obtain a Grandfather Right Plated vehicle. The suggestion made in the miscellaneous part at the end of this document is plausible and will likely be implemented and should negate this continuous need to obtain a Grandfather Plate.
Appendix 1, point 2.	Stafford Taxi Association	Notify the council in 72 hours rather than 48 hours.	Not accepted. This must be in line with the statutory standards and will not be changed.
Appendix 1, point 21	Stafford Taxi Association	The daily check is driver's responsibility and the checks suggested by the council in section 21 is very time consuming and completely unnecessary.	Not accepted. It is totally necessary for public safety.

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Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
Appendix 1, point 35	Stafford Taxi Association	Take the weather into consideration	Not accepted. Common sense needs to prevail.
Appendix 2, point 4	Stafford Taxi Association	The driver should be allowed to send all documents by email.	Accepted - policy wording to be amended.
Appendix 2, point 5	Stafford Taxi Association	The driver should be allowed to send all documents by email.	Drivers are already able to send insurance documents via email however wording amended to make it clear.
Appendix 2, point 6	Stafford Taxi Association	This should be acceptable to have taxi signs in front screen as lot of news vehicles are coming in with Panoramic roof.	Not accepted. Drivers get a choice of which vehicle to buy, if the panoramic roof cannot have the appropriate roof bars fitted for a taxi sign or one cannot be affixed then the vehicle does not conform to the Policy requirements.
Appendix 2, point 19	Stafford Taxi Association	Refer to point 10.12 as above	Not accepted. This would eradicate wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV's).
Appendix 3, point 1	Stafford Taxi Association	Private hire cannot have the hackney carriage colours (white and black).	Accepted - Policy wording to be changed however a phasing out period would be necessary.
Appendix 3, point 3	Stafford Taxi Association	The licensing teams hold a copy of the insurance certificate when granting the plates and as a safety precaution you should not keep any documents in the vehicle.	Accepted - Policy wording changed - to remove 'in the vehicle at all times.
Appendix 3, point 4	Stafford Taxi Association	As a safety precaution you should not keep documents in the vehicle and send it to licensing team by email.	Point has been misconstrued and has now been removed due to re-wording of App 3 point 3 above.
Appendix 3, point 8	Darren Meeley	The green door signs should go. No customer knows what the "P" number is for. But they know what company they have used. I also think that every car that is working for a Stafford base should have the name of the company they are working for.	Not accepted customers will and do notice a Plate No on the side of the vehicle and is there on the grounds of public safety.
Appendix 4, point 5	Stafford Taxi Association	All licenced vehicles should have only one rear plate.	This point has been reworded for clarity.

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Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
Appendix 4, point 30	Stafford Taxi Association	This point must only apply to private hire not hackney carriages.	Not accepted. Owners of more than one vehicle must be able to keep track of day-to-day business.
Appendix 4, point 31	Stafford Taxi Association	Serious fault i.e., steering, brakes, suspensions, headlight etc. should be changed before leaving the MOT station.	Policy wording amended.
Appendix 4, point 35	Stafford Taxi Association	Refer to point 10.12 as above	Not accepted.
Appendix 4, point 40	Stafford Taxi Association	Refer to point 10.12 as above	Not accepted.
Appendix 5, point 6	Stafford Taxi Association	Notify the council in 72 hours rather than 48 hours	Not accepted. This must be in line with the statutory standards and will not be changed.
Appendix 5, point 17	Stafford Taxi Association	This is a good idea to keep safety in mind and let the public know who your operator is.	OK.
Appendix 6	Stafford Taxi Association	Smart track suits should be allowed as drivers do long shift and you cannot expect them to stay in trousers and jeans for this long.	Not accepted. Standards ned to be maintained and drivers should only be driving for a safe number of hours before a break:
Appendix 7, point 6	Stafford Taxi Association	Notify the council in 72 hours rather than 48 hours.	Not identified incorrect section.
Appendix 8	Stafford Taxi Association	Drivers duty to inform the council should be 72 hours not 48.	Not accepted. This must be in line with the statutory standards and will not be changed.
Appendix 8, point 8/9/10	Stafford Taxi Association	Point 8, point 9, point 10, should be decided on its own merit after seeing and listening to the evidence.	Each case is always considered on an individual basis regardless.
Appendix 8, point 15	Stafford Taxi Association	Consider the offence and approve punishment to fit the crime surely a hefty fine should be considered and written final warning given rather than taking away someone's livelihood.	Always considered on a case-by-case basis
Appendix 8, point 17	Stafford Taxi Association	Holding a electronic device should be down to the court discretion, having just checked the average fine given in the courts is £200 with 3-6 penalty points. Surely 3 years blanket ban is a bit excessive, once again every case should be judged	Always considered on a case-by-case basis and any impact on family from their actions is for the driver to consider not the Council, which is concerned only with the safety of the driver, any passengers and wider public.

Taxi Licensing Policy Consultation Responses - March 2025

Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
		on its own merits and think of the impact it will have on the family.	
Appendix 8, point 17	Stafford Taxi Association	Penalty points should be 9 rather than 7 to consider livelihoods and families.	Case by case basis
Appendix 8, point 17	Stafford Taxi Association	Driving assessment should be taken when a driver gets to 9 points.	Case by case basis
Appendix 8, point 18	Stafford Taxi Association	Once again, every case should be judged on its own merits and each individual should be treated based on the evidence.	Case by case basis
Appendix 10	Stafford Taxi Association	Second paragraph: Electric and hybrid vehicle should be 6 years not 5.	Accepted and done in error, Policy amended.
Appendix 11	Stafford Taxi Association	How are we supposed to keep ourselves warm in minus temperature, a bit of latitude would be helpful.	A 'common sense' approach shall be afforded.
Appendix 12	Stafford Taxi Association	Rules of the rank, paragraph 2, should be given warning and if still occurs suspension should be given.	Consideration will be afforded in the event of this happening.
Miscellaneous comments.			
	Hackney Driver (name not given deliberately due to possible repercussions)	<p>I also hope at some point you will issue Uber an Operator's licence so independent taxis like me can join them and get some extra work as well as rank work, because Uber are already working in Stafford plated from Wolverhampton, Walsall, Stoke and other places as well so why not give them a licence and the council would benefit as they would collect the fees. To me it makes sense as they are already operating in Stafford and going nowhere.</p> <p>As much as i don't like uber and wish they were not in Stafford but this is the situation we are in.</p> <p>Uber will be here to stay unless the government change the policy.</p>	To be considered in the future if the local taxi trade continues declining.

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Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
	Darren Meeley	I suggest a badge at rear and company details on vehicle. I wouldn't want my kids getting in a car where they cannot easily identify the company. (Uber now has very few drivers using company logo) In my own opinion it's recipe for disaster.	Livery will remain on the vehicles.
	Darren Meeley	So, the question that every licenced Stafford BC want to know is what STC is/can/willing to do about this major problem? Out of town drivers are not spending money in our town. And that is taking money out of the local economy. This is a big issue for almost everyone who lives here.	There is very little that can be done to stop UBER being in the Borough, they are an App based company and are allowed to roam freely around the country. Geofencing has been introduced, to stop them loitering near the ranks. Geofencing directs the customer, when booking via the UBER App, to a collection point away from the taxi ranks.
	Darren Meeley	Vehicles ages. With the cost of vehicles going up I think it goes from 4 years to six years for newly registered vehicles. I also think that wheelchair access vehicles and only allowing them as a new Hackney is very wrong. I do see the point of making more available but it is putting local people off getting in to the trade.	Already acknowledged within this Policy. WAVs are required.
	Dusan Grujic	My concern, if I have correctly understood the proposals, is that my current vehicle can only be licenced until 2030. This retrospective, proposal would mean that my investment in a new, wav, for which I was promised 12yrs. usage would be curtailed to 7 years. This seems to me to be grossly unfair, considering	Under consideration

Taxi Licensing Policy Consultation Responses - March 2025

Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
		<p>the considerable investment that I have made.</p> <p>I propose an amendment where wavs. bought before the new regs are ringfenced and allowed to see out the agreed terms regarding g time of usage.</p>	
	Bill Armstrong	<p>The cost of WAV's is horrendous so I suggest extending the age at which a Wav can be put on to 5 or 6 years and allow waves to be traded between Stafford license drivers beyond 6 years to help attract new drivers to the work.</p> <p>EV WAVs are almost impossible to find just now and so will still be extremely expensive in 5 years' time because most will be under 3 years old.</p> <p>Mercedes make a EVITO EV people carrier that can be converted to a WAV with the addition of a lift on the back of it. It also has a 100KWh battery giving it a range of around 200 miles, which is just about OK if you have a few brain cells and know how to use a few mobile phone apps to plan your route. However, they are £70,000+ new!</p> <p>Add in the £2500 cost (at least) to put a rear lift on the vehicle and these new are way outside the range anyone can afford.</p> <p>So, my suggestion is to allow far older EV's onto the fleet than 5 or 6 years, so long as they are converted to WAV. An Alternative is for the council to find funding and lease EV Wavs to taxi drivers on a weekly basis.</p>	<p>Extra time is already being allowed for Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs) and can be transferred in this revised Policy.</p> <p>Funding not available.</p>

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Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
		<p>The advantage of leasing EV's is they hardly need any maintenance other than tyres and screen wash. A set of brake pads will last north of 300,000 miles for instance!</p> <p>There are some vehicles now coming out in 7-seater configurations as EV's however they are expensive as new and from unknown manufacturers (being new Chinese companies).</p> <p>So, most Taxi drivers are a conservative lot (with a small "c") so unless it says Ford or Vauxhall or VW they do not want to know.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the EV vehicles from all of the traditional companies are very substandard, when compared to modern Chinese companies. Except for the aforementioned Mercedes, however they did do a 60 KWh version before updating it to 100 KWh, and that is just silly with a very low range. Ideally, they need a 150 to 180 Kwh battery to give it some real mile munching range.</p>	Not practicable for the Council.
	Stafford Taxi Association - comprising of Fedayi Demir, Ahrsham Ditta, Navid Talvari, Abdul Sattar, Azher Ali, Mark Griffiths, Shabir Ahmed Khan, Itsham	<u>Business Transfer Rights</u> <p>The Stafford Taxi Association believes that the laws are not keeping up to date especially regarding the taxi plates. Once a vehicle is fitted with a licence plate then it automatically becomes a business. A taxi driver can put twenty to thirty years of blood, sweat and tears into his business but at the end of his working life he/she is not allowed to sell the business to another person to recoup a small</p>	<p>The vehicle itself, the business name and customer lists, if applicable, can be transferred/sold but NOT the grandfather plate which ultimately belongs to the Council, NOT the proprietor. This suggestion is to keep Grandfather Right plates in the trade. This would likely eradicate wheelchair accessible vehicles.</p>

Taxi Licensing Policy Consultation Responses - March 2025

Paragraph	Who	Summary of Response	Proposal
	Pevrez, Mick Mahil, Sharnna Cope, Makhmood Hussain, Sam Ashforth, Altaf Hussain, Steve Moore, Sammy Williams, Mohammad Zaheer, Avneet Singh Benning, Farak Waqas Zahid, Osman Shafik Hama, Naeem Ul- Haq, Kevin Breeze, Zafar Ali, Mohammad Manan, Andy Jones, Babar Nasim, Shahzad Khan, Phil O'Connor, Darren Tideswell, Saeed Akhtar, Kevin Hunter, Taranjit Singh Gill, Martin Dainty, Muhammad Shouqat, Chris Hanlon, Santokh Singh Kang, Ghulam Raza, Nithin Baby, Peter Groucott, Arjinder Singh Rakkar,	<p>proportion of all the effort he has put into his business over the decades. This perhaps is the only business in this country which is not allowed to be sold to recoup a small amount of money.</p> <p>Our suggestion is this, if you allow the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire plates to be transferred on the vehicles that they are fitted too, this will do two things, one it will keep this business in Stafford and more importantly keep the existing Taxis and Private Hires vehicles working within the Stafford of Borough.</p> <p>You may not know this that this is the biggest reason why half of the Hackney carriages trade has disappeared from the town centre, and this resulted in people having no access to the local taxis.</p> <p>This of course means that the taxis plates still belong to the Stafford Borough Council and they have to be transferred on the vehicle at the time of the transfer.</p> <p>Finally, surely in 2025 the council needs to be up to date and let this happen for the sake of keeping the existing taxis working and staying in the Stafford Borough and serving the local people of Stafford. By allowing this you are keeping the Stafford Borough Council plated vehicle locally to serve the people locally which they deserve.</p>	

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	Graeme Jenkins, Shahid Khan, Christopher Bailey, Timothy Davis, Majaid Benaris, Nathan Perry, Binnichan Parathara, Ghulam Abbas, Mensah Koramoah, Aelphis Geo-Jaja, Gurpal Kang		
	Stafford Taxi Association	<p><u>Regarding WAV's</u></p> <p>When a driver has completed a full term of eight years continuously then he/she should be given the choice of having another WAV or a saloon vehicle. This choice to come in force from the date of the new policy otherwise existing WAV drivers have completed the full term and this will lead to no WAV vehicles left working in Stafford.</p>	<p>Considered and accepted. Placed onto page 30 of the Policy but this will only come into effect from the commencement date of the 2025 revised Policy.</p>