

Aberdeen City Council introduced a policy in 1994 which required all new applications for a taxi operator's licence to be in respect of a wheelchair accessible vehicle. An exemption was granted to existing licence holders at that time which allowed them to continue to licence a saloon vehicle. This exemption is due to expire in June 2019. This in turn means that the entire fleet requires to be wheelchair accessible from that date. This consultation exercise has been instructed following a proposal that a mixed fleet is considered.

It is important to note that the policy relates to **the taxi fleet only** and not to private hire vehicles. Taxis are vehicles that can be hired off a rank whereas private hire vehicles require to be pre-booked.

The policy to make the taxi fleet 100% wheelchair accessible resulted from the local authority's obligations in terms of the Equality Act 2010, particularly the Public Sector Equality Duty which includes:

*(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—*

*(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*

*(3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—*

*(a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;*

*(4) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.*

Bearing these factors in mind, please provide your opinion on the following questions, together with any evidence you have to support your decision.

1. Do you think the taxi fleet should be comprised of 100% accessible vehicles? Y/N

Reasons for this answer

2. If "No", what percentage of vehicles should be accessible vehicles, and why?

3. How would that percentage be maintained without discriminating against identical applications?

