

TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE CAR CONSULTATION GROUP

ABERDEEN, 24 September 2025. Minute of Meeting of the TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE CAR CONSULTATION GROUP. Present:- Councillor Al-Samarai, Chairperson; and Councillors Clark, Delaney, Henrickson and Lawrence; and David Alaita (LeadRyde Booking Office), Alan Catto (Independent), Doug Cowie (ComCab Booking Office), Chris Douglas (Aberdeen Taxis Booking Office), Craig Falconer (Aberdeen International Airport Booking Office), Matthew Freckelton (Uber Booking Office), Luke Hulse (Independent), Hussein Patwa (Disability Equity Partnership), Peter Campbell (Unite Union) and Iain Hamilton (Airport Taxi Drivers).

In attendance:- Sandy Munro, Alexa Last, Dave McKane, Nikki Kirkland and Daniel Wright (Licensing Team); Kevin Flannigan (Fleet Services); and Mark Masson and Gogo Okafor (Committee Services).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Russell McLeod and Michell Burr.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 30 APRIL 2025 - FOR APPROVAL

2. The Consultation Group had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 30 April 2025.

The Consultation Group resolved:-
to approve the minute.

REMIT AND MEMBERSHIP - FOR INFORMATION

3. The Consultation Group had before it their updated remit and membership for information.

The Consultation Group resolved:-
to note the document.

ENFORCEMENT OFFICER REPORT

4. The Consultation Group had before it a report by the Enforcement Officer and Civic Licensing Standards Officer in relation to general Taxi/Private Hire Car issues and information.

TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE CAR CONSULTATION GROUP
24 September 2025

The report provided details of (a) the current numbers of licensed vehicles and drivers compared to August 2023; (b) street knowledge test statistics during the period 10 December 2024 to 2 September 2025; and (c) other items deemed relevant to the trade.

Dave McKane provided a summary of the report and responded to questions from members.

He also made reference to the number of complaints received in relation to drivers refusing to accept card payments, although it was acknowledged that this could not be enforced. However he suggested that all drivers should re-consider accepting card payments for reasons of public safety and noting that many people do not carry cash these days.

The Consultation Group resolved:-

- (i) to note that Mr McKane would circulate information relating to (1) the number of drivers failing each section of the new Street Knowledge Test; and (2) statistics relating to the number of licensed vehicle and drivers per year, dating back to 2019; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the report.

CCTV POLICY

5. The Consultation Group had before it correspondence from Chris Douglas in relation to the CCTV Policy.

The correspondence advised (a) that the current CCTV policy for taxi and private hire vehicles allowed for approved type CCTV systems to be fitted to vehicles along with an approved data controller; (b) that the trade agreed that the cost of the approved type systems were limiting the uptake of installation for CCTV systems into drivers vehicles but agreed that CCTV systems were an excellent choice for driver and passenger safety; (c) that the current policy in place was the correct one for the local authority, but suggested that a discussion could be opened up to explore more cost effective solutions in keeping with the legislation; and (d) that the trade respected the policy in place but agreed that technology had moved on in terms of dashcams etc.

During discussion, the following was noted:-

- that in terms of General Data Protection Regulations, CCTV systems and Dashcams were treated the same; and
- that the current Council CCTV policy could be looked at to determine whether any changes could be made, following which details could be circulated to all drivers to keep them informed and to increase awareness.

The Consultation Group resolved:-

to note the information provided.

TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE CAR CONSULTATION GROUP
24 September 2025

LICENSING ISSUE TIMES

6. The Consultation Group had before it consultation from Matthew Freckelton in relation to Licensing Issue Times.

The correspondence advised (a) that he was interested in having a greater understanding of the processes in issuing licences, specifically one of his own drivers had passed a vehicle test but was told a licence would not be issued for another 2-3 weeks; and (b) that in theory this meant he would be unable to work for 2-3 weeks, although he was able to contact the Council directly and confirm the vehicle was licensed and the driver would be able to be on the Uber platform.

Sandy Munro indicated that although drivers were advised that the vehicle was licensed, the paperwork may take 2/3 weeks to be issued to them due to other workplace pressures, however in future a line would be added to the usual email to tell drivers that the vehicle could be driven straight away.

The Consultation Group resolved:-

- (i) that officers from the Licensing Team would circulate to members for information, a copy of the updated email template sent to drivers advising that they have passed the test; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the information provided.

STREET KNOWLEDGE TEST

7. The Consultation Group had before it correspondence from Matthew Freckelton in relation to Street Knowledge Test Reporting.

The correspondence (a) sought an update on the number of tests that had been sat since 1 January 2025 to date including the pass rate, number of passes, number of resits and any other relevant data points the Council holds; (b) requested whether a comparison date period could be made from the previous version of the test to the new version of the test that was introduced recently; (c) sought clarification from the Council whether it still held the view that the stringency of the test does reflected the complexity or otherwise of the local geography and whether the test would not create barriers to entry that were unnecessarily high, as per section 8.38 of the Best Practice Guidance 2023.

It was acknowledged that (a) and (b) above had been considered and dealt with earlier in the meeting.

The Chair advised that in relation to (c) above, it would be for the members of the Licensing Committee to determine whether any changes were required as part of the review of the overall policy.

TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE CAR CONSULTATION GROUP
24 September 2025

The Consultation Group resolved:-
to note the information provided.

2026 MEETING DATES

8. The Consultation Group had before it their meeting dates for 2026 for information.

The meeting dates all commencing at 10am in the Town House were:-

- Wednesday, 21 January 2026;
- Tuesday, 19 May 2026; and
- Monday, 5 October 2026.

The Consultation Group resolved:-
to note the meeting dates for 2026.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 8 DECEMBER 2025

9. The Consultation Group had before it a note of its next meeting date.

The Committee resolved:-

to note that the next meeting would be held at 10.00am on 8 December 2025, in the Town House.

- **COUNCILLOR GILL AL-SAMARAI, Chairperson.**