

The introduction of a standalone Convictions Policy and revised Enforcement Management System

To:

Licensing Committee – 7th September 2026

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All

Director Approval: Director Sam Scharf confirms that the report author has sought the advice of all appropriate colleagues and given due regard to that advice; that the equalities impacts and other implications of the recommended decisions have been assessed and accurately presented in the report; and that they are content for the report to be put to the Licensing Committee for decision.

1.	Recommendations
1.1	It is recommended that members of the Licensing Committee: 1. <i>Approve the introduction of the standalone Convictions Policy as detailed in Appendix 1.</i> 2. <i>Approve the changes made to the Enforcement Management System as detailed in Appendix 2.</i>
2.	Purpose and reason for the report
2.1	A standalone Convictions Policy based on Section 10 of the Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards is proposed to be incorporated into Appendix S of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Handbook.

	The Enforcement Management System contained in Appendix D of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Handbook has been reviewed with input from enforcement officers and the necessary amendments have been proposed to reflect recent policy changes. The three level enforcement structure has also been revised to five levels to provide enforcement officers with greater flexibility and ensure that only the most serious cases are referred to Licensing Sub-Committee.
3.	Alternative options considered
3.1	If the introduction of a standalone Convictions Policy and recommended changes to the Enforcement Management System are not made, enforcement officers will continue using the existing EMS contained in Appendix D of the current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Handbook without a standalone Convictions Policy.
4.	Background and key issues
4.1	While Cambridge City Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy state that consideration should be given to an applicant's history of convictions and cautions, it does not provide the same level of detail as described in Section 10 – assessment of previous convictions of the Department for Transport's Statutory Guidance Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards, which can be viewed in Appendix 3 of this report. The proposed Convictions Policy is based on Section 10 of the Statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards. These are minimum standards set to better regulate the taxi and private hire vehicle sector. The recommendations contained in the standards are the result of detailed discussion with the trade, regulators and safety campaign groups. The DfT expects these recommendations to be implemented. These standards recommend that the period given for each conviction should be taken as a minimum in considering whether a licence should be granted or renewed. Each case must also be considered on its own merits. The current Enforcement Management System contained in Appendix D of Cambridge City Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Handbook, in Appendix 4 of this

	report, has been reviewed with input from enforcement officers and the necessary amendments have been proposed to reflect recent policy changes, including the introduction of CCTV, daily vehicle checks, and the wider use of reminders or warnings for low level offences. The current three levels of enforcement will be expanded to five levels. The proposed enforcement options range from Level 1, for minor contraventions, to Level 5, where the most serious cases are referred to the Licensing Sub-Committee. The proposed EMS also removes the need for cases going to Licensing Sub-Committee where there is an absolute breach, such as points on a driver's DVLA licence. Under the proposed changes, these cases will be referred to the Strategic Environmental Health and Public Safety Lead or the Commercial and Licensing Team Manager for a decision.								
4.2	These two proposed changes to the Cambridge City Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Handbook needed to be consulted on. All the responses received to the consultation can be viewed in Appendix 5 of this report.								
4.3	These changes have been anticipated as minor changes providing clarity and greater flexibility in enforcement and are not believed to have a significant impact on the taxi trade or the public.								
4.4	The first change relates to the introduction of a standalone Convictions Policy to be inserted into Appendix S of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Handbook. The table below summarises the minimum period that must elapse for each previous conviction, before licences are granted or renewed. Each case must still be considered on its own merits. <table> <tr> <th>Previous conviction</th><th>Minimum period</th></tr> <tr> <td>Crimes resulting in death</td><td>They will not be licensed.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Exploitation</td><td>They will not be licensed.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Offences involving violence against the</td><td>A licence will not be granted until at least</td></tr> </table>	Previous conviction	Minimum period	Crimes resulting in death	They will not be licensed.	Exploitation	They will not be licensed.	Offences involving violence against the	A licence will not be granted until at least
Previous conviction	Minimum period								
Crimes resulting in death	They will not be licensed.								
Exploitation	They will not be licensed.								
Offences involving violence against the	A licence will not be granted until at least								

	person	10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.
	Possession of a weapon	A licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.
	Sexual offences	A licence will not be granted, including any applicant who is currently on the sex offenders register or on any barred list.
	Dishonesty	A licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.
	Drugs	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.
	Discrimination	A licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.
	Motoring convictions	Applicants with multiple motoring convictions may indicate that an applicant does not exhibit the behaviours of a safe

		road user and one that is suitable to drive professionally.
	Drink driving/driving under the influence of drugs	A licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed.
	Using a hand-held device whilst driving	A licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the conviction or completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed, whichever is the later.
4.5	The consultation asked whether you agree with the introduction of a standalone Convictions Policy.	
4.6	There were 9 responses received from the consultation. There was no consensus from the responses received around the introduction of the Conviction Policy, but a majority of 5 agreed, 3 disagreed and 1 was unsure.	
4.7	The consultation also asked whether you agree with the proposed Conviction Policy.	
4.8	There were 9 responses received from the consultation. 2 responses agreed with the proposed Convictions Policy, 5 disagreed, 2 were not sure. Of those that disagreed or were not sure, 2 stated the policy is too harsh and 2 thought it is too lenient, whilst other comments include; • DBS is sufficient • Only serious and violent crime should be considered here, including sexual offences. In other cases where a sentence has expired the individual should be given the opportunity to make a living should he or she want to be a taxi driver. • the convictions should be handled on individual basis, especially motoring offences, dishonesty convictions, discrimination etc. A carpet application of these articles could cause injustices and the loss of jobs of some drivers	

4.9	The proposed Convictions Policy is based on Section 10 of the DfT Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards which set recommended standards for regulating the taxi and private hire sector. The periods specified for previous convictions should be treated as minimum thresholds when determining applications, with each case considered on its individual merits.
4.10	The second change relates to the Enforcement Management System review, which is expanded from three to five levels. The revised approach ranges from Level 1 for minor contraventions to Level 5 for serious cases. Under the revised system, cases involving absolute breaches will no longer be referred to Licensing Sub-Committee. Instead, they will be determined by the Strategic Environmental Health and Public Safety Lead or the Commercial and Licensing Team Manager.
4.11	The consultation asked whether you agree with the proposed Enforcement Management System.
4.12	There were 9 responses received from the consultation. 2 responses agreed with the proposed Enforcement Management System, 7 disagreed. Of those that disagreed, 4 stated the policy was too harsh or severe, whilst 2 thought it is too lenient and not harsh enough. The other comment include; • Minor traffic-related offences should not automatically be considered as grounds for licensing action, drivers should not be subject to additional punishment through the licensing process where the matter has already been dealt with under existing road traffic regulations. The Licensing process is separate from general road traffic enforcement. Cambridge City Council must be satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a licence. Cambridge City Council may take into consideration relevant driving convictions, endorsements and other conduct that may have a bearing on their suitability.

5.	Consultation, engagement and communication
5.1	A public consultation took place from 6 th July 2026 to 4 th August 2026 on the Cambridge City Council website. 9 people have responded to the consultation.
6.	Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact
6.1	The proposed Convictions Policy is based on the Department for Transport's <i>Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards</i> and will be incorporated into Appendix S of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Handbook, which provides additional clarity to Cambridge City Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy The revised five level structure of the Enforcement Management System provides enforcement officers with greater flexibility, ensuring that only the most serious cases are referred to the Sub-Committee. It also ensures the EMS reflects recent policy changes.
7.	Implications
7.1	Relevant risks
	Financial Implications
7.2	None
	Legal Implications
7.3	The Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards are statutory guidance issued to assist licensing authorities in carrying out their licensing functions. Licensing authorities must have regard to the Standards when setting policies and making licensing decisions. The Standards do not constitute a definitive statement of the law, and responsibility for individual licensing decisions remains with the licensing authority.

	Equalities and socio-economic Implications
7.4	Attached as Appendix 6 is an EqlA for the proposed introduction of the Convictions Policy and the changes to the Enforcement Management System. No risks to equality groups have been identified.
	Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications
7.5	None
	Procurement Implications
7.6	None
	Community Safety Implications
7.7	None of the changes are anticipated to have any negative impact on community safety.
8.	Background documents Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
8.1	• Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards • Cambridge City Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Handbook
9.	Appendices
9.1	Appendix 1 – Cambridge City Council proposed Convictions Policy Appendix 2 – Cambridge City Council proposed Enforcement Management System Appendix 3 – Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards Section 10 Annex Appendix 4 – Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi Handbook Appendix D Enforcement Management System

	Appendix 5 – Results of public consultation Appendix 6 - EqlA proposed Convictions Policy and EMS
	To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Sam Tai, Commercial and Licensing Team Manager, sam.tai@cambridge.gov.uk