



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Template reviewed Nov 2021

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) was introduced as part of the Equality Act 2010, which protects people from discrimination in the workplace, in the provision of services and in wider society.

The duty requires all public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people

Public bodies demonstrate this due regard in different ways, including producing robust equality impact assessments when considering changes to policies and services.

An EqIA enables us to check the potential impacts on residents and employees of our policies, services and projects. It's an opportunity to challenge how we currently do things.

Carrying out an EqIA should not create extra work; it should be part of your normal service planning process. Most of the information required should already be available to you through other work already undertaken e.g. service user monitoring, analysis of complaints and national research.

The purpose of an EqIA is to *take account* of equality as plans develop, to promote and assist the consideration of equalities issues arising in plans and proposals and to ensure that where possible adverse or disproportionate impacts are minimised and positive impacts are maximised. As such where possible an EqIA should be started at the outset of a project/proposal and continually be developed and reviewed until a final proposal is adopted. An EqIA should be used to ensure decision makers have all the information they need regarding potential impacts to ensure they have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making judgements.

Carrying out EqIAs should be an integral part of policy or service development/change and larger projects may need more than one EqIA if different areas are impacted by the change.

Any project that requires consultation will automatically require an EqIA.

All approved and signed EqIAs are recorded in a central register. Please email your completed draft EqIA to equalities@buckinghamshire.gov.uk. Previous EqIAs can be made available for information upon request. For any questions or if you require support in completing your EqIA please contact Maria Damigos and Natalie Donhou Morley directly.



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Part A (Initial assessment) - Section 1 - Background

Proposal/Brief Title: Taxi and Private hire fees and charges

OneDrive link to report/policy:

<https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s72642/Taxi%20and%20PH%20budget%20and%20fees%20report%20Feb%202024.pdf>

Related policies: **Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy and related EQIA**

Date: 14th February 2024

Type of strategy, policy, project or service:

Please tick one of the following:

- Existing
- New or proposed
- Changing, update or revision
- Other (please explain)

This assessment was created by:

Name: Lindsey Vallis

Job Title: Service Director – Transport & Regulatory Services

Email address: Lindsey.vallis@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Briefly describe the aims and objectives of the proposal below:

An annual review of fees and charges has been carried out and existing fees for driver licence fees, vehicle licence fees and operator licence fees may increase (subject to statutory advertisement/consultation and Licensing Committee decision) as a result. However, this must be balanced alongside the overriding Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy objective of protecting public safety. Case law judgments indicate that Licensing Committee's should not take financial considerations into account when reaching taxi licence decisions and that the over-riding objective must be public safety. This is of relevance here and means that whilst the Council may be mindful of fee impacts on the taxi trade, this cannot take precedence in decision making.

What outcomes do we want to achieve?

Fees and charges set that ensure the service operates at a cost neutral position at no cost to the taxpayer, as is the best practice approach and set down in statutory guidance

Does this proposal plan to withdraw a service, activity or presence? No

Does this proposal plan to reduce a service, activity or presence? No



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Does this proposal plan to introduce, review or change a policy, strategy or procedure? No

Does this proposal affect service users and/or customers, or the wider community? Yes

Please explain your answer:

The proposal to increase fees impacts existing and new licence holders.

Does this proposal affect employees? No

Will employees require training to deliver this proposal? No

Has any engagement /consultation been carried out, or is planned in the future? Yes

Please explain your answer:

Taxi and private hire fees are subject to statutory advertisement and consultation. If the proposed fees are approved by the Licensing Committee for consultation they will then be advertised in accordance with legal requirements. Feedback received as a result of this will be provided to the Licensing Committee when reaching a final decision on the level that fees and charges should be set at.

Section 2 - Impacts

Please highlight potential impacts (including unintended impacts or consequences) for each protected characteristic*/equality groups below. Where there are negative or positive impacts please give more details of the impact. Where the impacts are unclear please explain why.

Age*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Disability*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Pregnancy & maternity*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Race & Ethnicity*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details: As a high proportion of drivers and operators are from ethnic minorities any increase in fees may have a disproportionate effect on this group including their ability to continue working in this field.

Marriage & Civil Partnership*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Religion & Belief*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Sex*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Sexual Orientation*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Gender Reassignment*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Gender identity

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Carers

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Rural isolation

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Single parent families

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Poverty (social & economic deprivation)

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details: an increase in fees may have an impact on the ability of this group to start working in this field or continuing to do so where the fees are increased.

Military families / veterans

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Section 3 – Is a full assessment required?

If you have answered yes to any of the initial assessment questions in section 1 of this EqIA, or have indicated a negative or unclear impact in section 2, it is likely you will need to complete part B of the EqIA form. Should you need guidance as to whether a full EqIA is needed at this time please contact Maria Damigos or Natalie Donhou Morley before continuing.

Following completion of part A, is part B completion required?

- Yes
- No
- Not required at this time

Explain your answer:

The current recommendation is that the fees are increased, and whilst this is agreed pending consultation the final decision has not yet been taken. It is therefore possible that the fees may remain the same or reduce which is why the potential impacts are set at unclear. If fees are increased the potential unclear impacts are expected to change to negative.

Any increase in fees is however to accommodate increased costs of licensing drivers, vehicles and operators which is to ensure a regulatory regime to protect the public who use taxi and private vehicle hire services.



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Therefore, any possible financial impacts need to be balanced alongside the overriding Policy objective of protecting public safety. Case law judgements also indicate that

Licensing Committees should not take financial considerations into account when reaching taxi licence decisions and that the over-riding objective must be public safety. This is of relevance here and means that whilst the Council may be mindful of financial impacts on the taxi trade, this cannot take precedence in decision making.

In addition, as the proposed fees and charges are being consulted on there will be opportunity to receive views on the proposed increase from the taxi and private hire community as a whole.

The potential negative effect has been identified and will be taken into account in the decision making process as appropriate

Have you completed a DPIA for this project/change? No – not required

(As you are completing an EqIA, you may also require a DPIA - for more information please contact dataprotection@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

Section 4 – Sign off (Only complete when NOT completing Part B)

Officer completing this assessment: Lindsey Vallis

Equality advice sought from: Legal Services Date: 27th January 2023 (for previous annual fee review – advice remains relevant)

Service Director sign off: Lindsey Vallis Date: 14th February 2024

CMT sign off (*if deemed necessary by Service Director*) sign off: (Please insert name) Date:
(Please insert Date)

Next review Date: N/A