



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

# Joint Meeting of the Environment and Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Tuesday, 24 February 2026

Report of Councillor Philip Knowles,  
Cabinet Member for Corporate  
Governance and Licensing

## Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

### Report Author

Karen Whitfield, Assistant Director (Leisure, Culture and Place)

✉ [karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:karen.whitfield@southkesteven.gov.uk)

### Purpose of Report

To consider a proposal to amend the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy to mandate the need for all vehicles licensed to have an appropriate CCTV monitoring system installed.

### Recommendations

**The Joint Committee is asked to consider whether the mandatory installation and use of CCTV cameras should be included in the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Vehicle Licensing Policy.**

**Should the proposal be supported, the Committee is requested to make a recommendation to Full Council that consultation should be undertaken prior to a final decision being made.**

## Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Effective Council
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

## 1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

- 1.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. The fees have been set for 2026/27 by Council on 29 January 2026. Whilst the outcome of including mandatory CCTV will not affect the charges there could be an impact on income received should drivers chose to apply for their licence from alternative authorities.

*Completed by: David Scott, Assistant Director of Finance, and Deputy s151 Officer*

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 Legal Services Lincolnshire ('LSL') have been consulted on the contents of this report.
- 1.3 LSL have advised that in order to comply with the Department for Transport ('DfT') Guidance, the Council would be expected to consult locally to determine whether local circumstances would justify mandating CCTV. The DfT's statutory guidance states that authorities "should consult to identify if there are local circumstances which indicate that the installation of CCTV... would have either a positive or an adverse net effect on the safety of taxi and PHV users..." and must also consider privacy issues. If CCTV is mandated within a policy without consultation this would not be lawful.
- 1.4 LSL have confirmed that the Council cannot take action to enforce the use of CCTV in relation to vehicles which have had licenses issued by another authority. As drivers would not be bound by local conditions, the Council would have no enforcement powers in this regard.

- 1.5 The Joint Committee's role is advisory only. Taxi licensing policy is a non-executive function. Any proposal arising from this report would need to be referred to Full Council to consider whether to undertake consultation and to determine any subsequent policy change.

*Completed by: Graham Kitchen, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer*

### **Community Safety**

- 1.5 The use of CCTV, where operated appropriately and lawfully, can provide evidence for police investigations, offer some protection to drivers against false allegations, and provide a level of reassurance for vulnerable passengers. However, it would only apply to SKDC's licensed Hackney and Private Hire Vehicles and may cause an increase in private hire vehicles choosing to operate in South Kesteven but be licensed out of the area by an authority where CCTV is not mandated. In addition, the driver/ operator would need to adhere to data protection legislation. As the use of CCTV should be proportionate and necessary, a consultation should be undertaken, to determine this, before any change in Policy is made.
- 1.6 The Council currently has no evidence from either a public protection or safeguarding perspective that indicates that mandating CCTV in hackney carriages and private hire vehicles licensed by the Council is required. Following consultation with safeguarding colleagues it was observed that, potentially, the greater safeguarding risk is not from the drivers licensed by South Kesteven (as the Council ensures compliance with all licensing requirements which includes safeguarding and disability awareness training), but from those who are licensed outside of the area but legally able to operate within South Kesteven.

*Completed by: Ayeisha Kirkham, Head of Service (Public Protection).*

### **Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion**

- 1.7 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached to this report at **Appendix One**.

## **2. Background to the Report**

- 1.1. At a meeting of Council held on 29 January 2026 Members received a report which requested the consideration and adoption of a refreshed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (the Policy). (See Background papers for report and details of the work undertaken to respond to feedback).
- 1.2. Consultation has been undertaken on the proposed changes to the Policy at a number of Committees during December 2025 and January 2026. In addition two workshop sessions had been held for taxi and private hire drivers in October 2025. It was clear from the feedback received that there are significant challenges facing

drivers and operators in South Kesteven, particularly in relation to the cost of a licence. The Policy addresses some of the concerns raised including the difficulties being experienced in recruiting and retaining drivers and operators in South Kesteven.

- 1.3. At the meeting of Council on 29 January 2026 an amendment was proposed to the Policy. It was proposed that the following section of the policy which states:

**Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy - Part 2, Point 8 – Driver Safety and CCTV – further point 2.8.3.**

“Measures such as CCTV are not required as part of the licensing regime, as it is considered that they are best left to the judgement of the owners and drivers themselves.”

**Be replaced with:**

*“All private hire limousines, taxis and hackney carriages licensed by South Kesteven District Council must be fitted with an approved CCTV system”*

*- Any CCTV system must be installed and maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation and with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) Guidance*

*- Be operational at all times when the vehicle is being used as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle*

*- The purpose of this requirement is to enhance passenger and driver safety, support safeguarding obligations, deter criminal and inappropriate behaviour, and assist investigations where allegations are made.”*

- 1.4. As the proposed changes to the Policy detailed in paragraph 2.3. had not been part of the consultation undertaken, advice was provided that it would not be appropriate to make a decision at the meeting of Council on 29 January 2026. Consultation would be required on the proposed change to the Policy, and it would also be necessary to ensure that any proposed changes were in accordance with the Guidance provided by the Department for Transport. The motion was therefore withdrawn.

- 1.5. Following a vote, the Policy was adopted as originally drafted but it was suggested that the proposal for the Council to mandate the use of CCTV in taxis and private hire vehicles should be considered by the appropriate scrutiny committee.

### 3. Key Considerations

- 1.1. Licensing Authorities are responsible for determining their own policy and making decisions on individual licensing matters whilst applying the law and any other relevant considerations. Due regard must be given to the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards 2020 (updated 25 November 2022) and Updated Guidance (November 2023) issued by the Department for Transport (DfT), the latter being guidance rather than a statutory requirement.
- 1.2. The DfT guidance recognises that CCTV can enhance public safety, but it is not a mandatory requirement for taxis and private hire vehicles to have this installed.
- 1.3. Some licensing authorities have implemented the mandatory requirement for CCTV in taxis and private hire vehicles. This includes:
  - Brighton & Hove from 2012
  - Southampton from 2013 (currently CCTV is in the form of non-continuous recording due to an Information Commissioners review)
  - Portsmouth from 2016 citing the decision was made to enhance safety and to act as a deterrent against violence, abuse and crime for both passengers and drivers.
- 1.4. It should be noted that there are other authorities that have consulted or are considering running a limited trial (feedback pending). This includes Crawley Borough Council who undertook consultation in July 2025 on the implementation of CCTV. The subsequent consultation report (see Background Papers) shows that drivers and the public did not support the mandatory installation of CCTV in taxis.
- 1.5. When considering mandating the installation of CCTV, the DfT Guidance states that licensing authorities should consult locally to see whether this would have a positive or negative safety effect considering the protection of children and vulnerable adults, privacy implications and whether the introduction of a blanket CCTV requirement is proportionate. It is recommended a strong justification is required for mandatory CCTV and this must be kept under regular review.
- 1.6. If CCTV is installed the system must comply with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and data protection laws. This includes displaying visible signage, using secure storage and registration with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The DfT Guidance provides that cameras should be professionally installed, and if audio is being recorded it must be justified why this is the case. Audio recording is considered highly intrusive to privacy, and it should only be activated when required, for example during a dispute.
- 1.7. If CCTV is mandated within a policy, the licensing authority becomes the data controller and then must comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR. As such the authority would be responsible for compliance and risk and must consider:

- Fair and lawful processing
  - Secure storage and encryption
  - Retention and disposal policies
  - Access controls.
- 1.8. As the data controller the Council could be liable from significant fines from the Information Commissioner's Office, or receive compensation claims from affected individuals, should there be any breaches in the collection, processing or storage of recorded information.
- 1.9. Should the Policy be amended in line with the proposal it would be necessary for the Council to carry out a Data Impact Assessment (DPIA). This is required under GDPR to identify, evaluate and minimise any privacy risks.
- 1.10. The installation of CCTV and the ongoing maintenance of the system would be a cost to drivers and operators. The cost of a system typically ranges between £400 and £1000 for installation alone. Given the feedback received by the Council that it is difficult to recruit and retain drivers, this cost could be seen as a further potential barrier to the recruitment and retention of taxi and private hire operators within the district.
- 1.11. The current rules allow hackney carriage and private hire operators who have obtained a licence from an alternative authority to trade in South Kesteven. In these circumstances, due to this licensing loophole, the Council would have no means of enforcing the installation and use of CCTV for all hackney carriage and private hire vehicles operating in South Kesteven, when the respective licensing authority do not have this requirement.
- 1.12. In November 2025 the Government announced they are considering significant reforms to taxi and private hire licensing in the UK. Subsequently a consultation was launched on 8 January 2026 which is due to run until 1 April 2026. It is being proposed that the responsibility for taxi and private hire licensing be transferred to local transport authorities. For Lincolnshire this would be the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA). The Council is in the process of compiling a consultation response.
- 1.13. The consultation states that the changes aim to address safety concerns, standardise rules across different regions, and tackle the issues associated with out of area licensed drivers. The consultation does not include proposals to include the mandatory installation of CCTV cameras in taxis and private hire vehicles.

## **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1. At the meeting of Council held on 29 January 2026 the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy was adopted. This does not currently include the mandatory installation and use of CCTV in vehicles licensed by the Council.
- 4.2. As detailed within this report the Council could make an amendment to the Policy to make the use of CCTV in taxi and private hire vehicles mandatory. The implications of this and the need to consult are set out within the body of this report.

## **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 1.1. A proposal was made at the meeting of Council on 29 January 2026 to introduce the mandatory installation of CCTV equipment in all vehicles licensed to trade in South Kesteven. Although the motion was withdrawn for reasons outlined earlier in this report, the consensus was that the proposal should instead be considered via the appropriate scrutiny committee to ensure any change in the policy was lawful.
- 1.2. Should the proposed change to the Policy be supported, in line with the legal advice received, it will be necessary for Full Council to request that a public consultation is undertaken to assess whether this is supported locally and is proportionate, prior to a decision being taken.

## **6. Background Papers**

- 6.1. [Licensing Committee on Monday, 15th December, 2025](#)
- 6.2. [Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 13th January, 2026](#)
- 6.3. [Crawley Borough Council Consultation Results](#)

## **7. Appendices**

- 7.1. **Appendix One** - Equality Impact Assessment