

MINUTES OF THE
REGULATORY COMMITTEE

held on 9 July 2026 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor H. Clark (Chair)

Councillors A. Davidson, S. Davis, D. Eley, J. Hawkins, R. Lee, L. Mascot, S. Manley and
S. Shah

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chambers, Pappa, Scott and Thompson. Cllr Mascot substituted for Cllr Thompson.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. **Declaration of Interests**

All Members were reminded to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary interests or other registerable interests where appropriate in any items of business on the meeting's agenda. None were made.

4. **Public Question Time**

No public questions were asked at the meeting.

Exclusion of the Public

Resolved that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for Item 5 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

5. **Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 – Review of a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Dual Driver's Licence**

Public interest statement: It is not in the public interest to disclose the content of the report because the information in it concerns the interests and circumstances of an individual who has an expectation that such information would not normally be released to the public. To do otherwise would establish a precedent for the future treatment of personal information.

The Committee was informed that under the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, a district council should not grant a licence to drive a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle unless it was satisfied that the

applicant, amongst other criteria, is a fit and proper person to hold such a licence. It was noted by the Committee that there is no statutory definition of what constitutes a fit and proper person, but that Chelmsford City Council had established its own guidelines which the Committee was required to have regard to when determining applications.

The Committee was informed that they were being asked to review the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Dual Driver's Licence held by Mr X, which had been suspended by officers in January 2025 following information disclosed from Essex Police relating to an alleged drug driving offence. The Committee heard that the licence had remained suspended pending a decision by the Committee and the matter had only come before the Committee at this later stage, because the investigation by Essex Police and subsequent court proceedings had only finalised in March 2026. The Committee were informed that a decision had been taken in March 2026 to discontinue proceedings as there was not enough evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction, but the Committee were reminded that their role was to assess a driver against the fit and proper person test, and that they were not bound by the criminal standard of proof and could take into account information falling short of a criminal conviction. The Committee also noted that Mr X had not abided by the conditions of their licence, as they had not reported being arrested to the Licensing Authority within 48 hours as required. The Committee were informed that they could decide to either lift the suspension, issue a formal written warning before lifting the suspension or to revoke the licence.

Mr X attended the meeting to speak to the Committee and answer questions, in which they stated they disagreed with the version of events from the Police, that they had not been stopped for speeding, instead undertaking, the positive drug test was from passive inhalation rather than using drugs personally, that they did not understand why the CPS had discontinued proceedings and that they didn't believe they had to report the incident that took place in their private vehicle.

RESOLVED that:

1. the dual drivers licence held by Driver X be revoked pursuant to section 61 (1) (b) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 for other reasonable cause: namely, that the Committee was no longer satisfied that Driver X was a fit and proper person to hold such licence; and
2. that the revocation shall have immediate effect - as it appears to the Committee, pursuant to section 61 (2B) of the 1976 Act, that it is in the interests of public safety that this be the case.
3. that detailed reasons for the decision be agreed with the Chair and sent to Driver X

(7.02pm to 7.42pm)

6. [Hackney Carriage \(Taxi\) Trade Tariff Review Petition Proposal by Chelmsford Taxi Drivers' Association \(CTDA\)](#)

The Committee considered a petition submitted by the Chelmsford Taxi Drivers' Association (CTDA) requesting a review and amendment of the Hackney Carriage

(Taxi) tariff and to determine whether the proposed tariff changes should be approved, modified or refused. The Committee heard that a review had not been carried out since 2022 and that the CTDA felt that significant increases in operating costs, together with changing market conditions had adversely affected the viability of Hackney Carriage operations within Chelmsford. The CTDA had submitted that the increases would support the continued viability of licensed Hackney Carriage businesses, improve driver retention, encourage continued investment in licensed vehicles, maintain service availability across Chelmsford, protect transport provision for elderly and vulnerable residents and support the long term sustainability of the trade. The Committee heard that the current fare for a standard two mile Tariff 1 Journey was below the National and Essex average.

The Committee were also informed of a further proposal from the CTDA to introduce a Fuel Price Relief Mechanism, to essentially implement a 40p surcharge for journeys when fuel prices were above £1.60 per litre. Officers highlighted to the Committee that this proposal had raised a number of practical and administrative considerations and would require further consideration before it could be agreed or implemented. The Committee heard that legal advice had clarified that such a surcharge was technically possible as long as it was listed on an approved Hackney Carriage Tariff, but that as already highlighted it did raise practical and administrative considerations that would require further work, before any such mechanism could be implemented.

A member of the CTDA spoke in support of the petition and highlighted the importance of higher fares for the trade at a time when finances were stretched and there hadn't been an increase since 2022. They also spoke on the proposed Fuel Price Relief Mechanism and explained that they had suggested the proposal to ensure that they were only charging higher amounts whilst there was a spike in fuel prices, instead of the alternative which would have been to request an even more significant main tariff increase, instead they had preferred to suggest a more modest tariff increase. They also informed the Committee, that their preference was for the tariff increase to be agreed first and foremost and that they understood further work by officers would be required, to assess the practicality of a separate fuel-based surcharge.

In response to questions from the Committee, officers noted that the tariff increase was already clearly set out in the petition and could be promptly sent out for consultation, whereas the fuel surcharge would require further work and they were not aware of any examples elsewhere where it was already in place.

Members of the Committee expressed strong support for the proposed tariff increases, for the reasons set out in the petition and agreed that it was overdue and should be approved for consultation. Members also noted that they would not want to potentially slow down any tariff increase by trying to implement the fuel surcharge at the same time and instead agreed that officers should explore the practicalities of that separately and bring a report to a future Committee meeting instead.

RESOLVED that;

1. The proposed tariff changes be approved for public consultation
2. Officers be asked to explore the practicalities of the proposed Fuel Price Relief Mechanism and to prepare a report for a future meeting.

(7.43pm to 8.28pm)

7. Review of Taxi Licensing Policy 2026 – Approval for Consultation

The Committee's approval was sought to publish a revised draft Taxi Licensing Policy for consultation with relevant stakeholders, prior to a final policy being presented to the Committee for adoption. The Committee were informed that the review had taken account of legislative changes, national guidance, licensing practice and operational experience, to ensure that the policy remained legally robust, transparent, proportionate and effective in promoting public safety.

The Committee were informed that there were changes throughout the policy, covering areas including Governance and Decision Making, Safeguarding and Public Protection, Driver Licensing, National Register Checks, Complaints and Enforcement, Vehicle Standards, Operator Licensing and General Drafting Amendments. The Committee were made aware of more significant changes in areas including, Vehicle Age Criteria, Fully Electric Hackney Carriage Vehicles and English Language Competency. The Committee noted that a six week consultation had been proposed, following which a further report would be considered by the Committee, summarising consultation responses and identifying any recommended changes before adoption.

In response to questions and comments from the Committee, officers noted that;

- Monitoring would take place regarding the amount of Euro 6 Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles within the fleet and whether it remained sufficient in the future.
- The current age limit for vehicles was 12 years, but vehicles with exceptional circumstances could be granted extensions by the Committee and it was possible that a Wheelchair Accessible Electric Vehicle might meet that definition in the future.
- Paragraph 2.10.7 of the draft policy would be amended to replace the uses of the word 'may' with 'will' to reinforce the importance of drivers undertaking training as required by officers, especially with regard to training on women's safety.

RESOLVED that;

1. the draft Taxi Licensing Policy attached at Appendix A be approved for public consultation.
2. A consultation period of six weeks commencing on a date determined by the Director of Sustainable Communities be approved.
3. Officers be authorised to consult with licensed drivers, vehicle proprietors, private hire operators, Essex Police, neighbouring licensing authorities, disability representative groups, safeguarding partners and other interested stakeholders.
4. A further report be presented to the Regulatory Committee following completion of the consultation setting out the responses received together with any proposed amendments prior to consideration of final adoption.
5. Authority be delegated to the Lead Licensing Officer, in consultation with Legal Services, to make minor typographical, formatting and administrative amendments to the consultation draft prior to publication.

(8.29pm to 8.53pm)

8. Urgent Business

There were no matters of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8.54pm

Chair