

## Consultation Questions and Responses

Q1. Are you responding as:

A licensed hackney carriage / private hire driver	12
A user of taxi and / or private hire vehicles	1
A trade association	0
A local group	0
A local Councillor	5
Other (please specify)	4

Others specified:

Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia
Police and Crime Commissioner
I don't think it is necessary
Police Licensing Officer

Q2. Are you responding on behalf of a group or organisation?

<b>YES</b>	3	13.6%
<b>NO</b>	19	86.4%

If you have answered YES, please provide details of the group or organisation you are responding on behalf of:

Police and Crime Commissioner, West Mercia
Barnt Green Parish Council
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia

Q3. Do you agree that all those who are licensed by Bromsgrove District Council to drive hackney carriage (taxi) and private hire vehicles should have to undergo mandatory refresher training on safeguarding awareness each time they renew their licence (every three years)?

<b>YES</b>	9	40.9%
<b>NO</b>	12	54.6%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	1	4.5%

Please provide an explanation for the answer you have given:

<p>We have done the course once, no need to do it again. It's like asking us to all re-do our GCSE's again as a refresher course. Only new drivers should be doing this.</p>
<p>Taxi drivers of any kind of taxis are in a position of responsibility, they need to be aware of safeguarding issues and the risks their customers are/can be exposed to, they need to know how to what to look out for and how to help if needed.</p>
<p>There is no need for mandatory training for the renewal of licensing drivers. Give the drivers a bit of credit.</p>
<p>Although this seems a good idea, I would be curious to know does attendance at mandatory refresher training on safeguarding improve safeguarding, is there evidence for this, or does it just seem a good idea to be doing something?</p>
<p>I think it is extremely unnecessary</p>
<p>Drivers who have been doing their job for a long time should know their job and what is required by the customer in helping them whenever possible</p>
<p>I think it is not necessary because in my 16 years driving taxi it's not been required.</p>
<p></p>

Licensed Taxis are a trusted method of transportation, where drivers have a position of trust with customers who may be vulnerable. Safeguarding training, refreshed regularly, not only upholds the high standards expected, but also ensures the taxi driver would have the necessary understanding to act when required to ensure a passenger is safeguarded.

It is important they know how to help and how to report things.

Safeguarding is a crucial issue both for children and vulnerable adults, remembering that the situation may be the determinant of vulnerability (e.g., under influence of drink or drugs).

I am committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all residents across our region. In alignment within my new West Mercia Safer Communities Plan, I strongly support Bromsgrove District Council's proposal to implement mandatory safeguarding training for all licensed taxi drivers. Here's why I believe that this initiative is crucial:

#### Enhanced Public Safety

- **Vulnerability Awareness:** Our taxi drivers often interact with vulnerable groups, such as children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and those under the influence of substances. Safeguarding training will equip them with the skills to recognise signs of abuse, exploitation, or distress, ensuring that help can be provided promptly and appropriately.
- **Crime Prevention:** Trained drivers will be better prepared to identify and report suspicious activities, such as human trafficking and sexual exploitation, directly contributing to the prevention of these heinous crimes within West Mercia.

#### Improved Driver Responsibility and Professionalism

- **Increased Accountability:** By mandating safeguarding training, we ensure that all drivers are fully aware of their responsibilities towards their passengers, promoting a higher standard of professional conduct across the taxi industry in West Mercia.
- **Confidence in Handling Situations:** This training will give drivers the confidence to manage sensitive situations effectively, reducing the likelihood of incidents escalating into more serious problems.

#### Public Trust and Confidence

- **Reassurance to the Public:** When the public knows that taxi drivers are trained in safeguarding, it reinforces their trust in the safety of using taxi services.
- **Positive Image of the Taxi Industry:** Our commitment to safeguarding enhances the reputation of the taxi industry, demonstrating that we prioritise the safety and well-being of all passengers.

#### Legal and Ethical Obligations

- **Compliance with Regulations:** Safeguarding training ensures that taxi services comply with both local and national regulations concerning the protection of vulnerable individuals, minimising legal risks for drivers and licensing authorities.
- **Moral Duty:** We have an ethical responsibility to protect the vulnerable members of our community. Supporting mandatory safeguarding training aligns with our moral standards and commitment to public safety.

#### Community Engagement and Partnership

- **Strengthening Community Relations:** Trained taxi drivers can act as the eyes and ears of the community, providing valuable information to law enforcement and helping to maintain a safe environment.
- **Partnership with Law Enforcement:** A collaborative relationship between taxi services and law enforcement enhances our community safety efforts, creating a united front against crime and exploitation.

#### Long-term Cost Efficiency

- **Preventative Measure:** Investing in safeguarding training is cost-effective in the long run, preventing incidents that could lead to costly investigations, legal actions, and a loss of public trust.
- **Resource Allocation:** Early identification and reporting of safeguarding concerns enable law enforcement and social services to allocate resources more effectively, addressing issues before they escalate.

#### Conclusion

Supporting mandatory safeguarding training for all licensed taxi drivers is a key component of the new West Mercia Safer Communities Plan. It enhances public safety, builds trust in our public services, meets legal and ethical obligations, strengthens community partnerships, and promotes cost-effective preventative measures. This initiative not only benefits the immediate community but also contributes to a safer and more responsible West Mercia as a whole.

Q4. Do you agree that this requirement should come into effect on 1st April 2025 and apply to any licence holder who is applying to renew their licence after that date?

<b>YES</b>	9	40.9%
<b>NO</b>	10	45.5%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	3	13.6%

If you have answered "NO" when do you think the requirement should come into effect?

New drivers only
Never
When this question is answered. Although this seems a good idea, I would be curious to know does attendance at mandatory refresher training on safeguarding improve safeguarding, is there evidence for this, or does it just seem a good idea to be doing something?
Never
Not at all
Never
Never
Never

If you have any other comments or observations in relation to the proposal please provide these here:

Although this seems a good idea, I would be curious to know does attendance at mandatory refresher training on safeguarding improve safeguarding, is there evidence for this, or does it just seem a good idea to be doing something?

I would like to see evidence for the policy

None

No

I think there is nothing required about this issue.