



Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 15 August 2018

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Meeting of the **Licensing Committee** is to be held at **Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX** on **Wednesday, 15 August 2018 at 09:30.**

BUSINESS

- 1 Sederunt**
- 2 Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests ***
- 3 Written Questions ****
- 4 Minute of Previous Meeting 16 May 2018** **5 - 6**
- 5 Minute of Previous Meeting 27 June 2018** **7 - 10**
- 6 Taxi Communications Strategy** **11 - 88**

Report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services)

- 7 Question Time *****

Consider any oral question on matters delegated to the Committee in terms of the Council's Scheme of Administration.

Summary of Licensing Committee functions:

To deal with all aspects of the issue of licenses by Local Authorities as required by Government; to deal with matters of Licensing and registration not falling within the functions of any other Committee.

Any person attending the meeting who requires access assistance should contact customer services on 01343 563217 in advance of the meeting.

* **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests** - The Chair of the meeting shall seek declarations from any individual or political group at the beginning of a meeting whether any prior decision has been reached on how the individual or members of the group will vote on any item(s) of business on the Agenda, and if so on which item(s). A prior decision shall be one that the individual or the group deems to be mandatory on the individual or the group members such that the individual or the group members will be subject to sanctions should they not vote in accordance with the prior decision. Any such prior decisions will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.

** **Written Questions** - Any Member can put one written question about any relevant and competent business within the specified remits not already on the agenda, to the Chair provided it is received by the Proper Officer or Committee Services by 12 noon two working days prior to the day of the meeting. A copy of any written answer provided by the Chair will be tabled at the start of the relevant section of the meeting. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than 10 minutes after the Council has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he or she can submit it in writing to the Proper Officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within 7 working days.

*** **Question Time** - At each ordinary meeting of the Committee ten minutes will be allowed for Members questions when any Member of the Committee can put a question to the Chair on any business within the remit of that Section of the Committee. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than ten minutes after the Committee has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he/she can submit it in writing to the proper officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within seven working days.

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THE MORAY COUNCIL

Licensing Committee

SEDERUNT

Councillor Amy Patience (Chair)
Councillor Louise Laing (Depute Chair)
Councillor James Allan (Member)
Councillor Theresa Coull (Member)
Councillor Gordon Cowie (Member)
Councillor Paula Coy (Member)
Councillor John Divers (Member)
Councillor Ryan Edwards (Member)
Councillor Donald Gatt (Member)
Councillor Aaron McLean (Member)
Councillor Maria McLean (Member)
Councillor Ray McLean (Member)
Councillor Ron Shepherd (Member)

Clerk Name: Tracey Sutherland
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MORAY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2018

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillors G Cowie (Chair), R Shepherd (Depute), G Alexander, J Allan, T Coull, P Coy, R Edwards, G Leadbitter, M Macrae and A Patience.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor R McLean

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs M Forrest, Legal Services Manager (Litigation and Licensing), Ms H Locker, Solicitor (Litigation & Licensing) as Legal Advisor to the Committee and Mrs T Sutherland, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Committee.

1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS AND MEMBER'S INTERESTS

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct there were no declarations from group leaders or spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of Member's interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

2. MINUTE OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE DATED 21 MARCH 2018

The Minute of the meeting of the Licensing Committee dated 21 March 2018 was submitted and approved.

3. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

**4. CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982 – APPLICATION FOR
GRANT OF A LATE HOURS CATERING LICENCE (Case No.
LHC/18/002)**

A report by the Acting Corporate Director (Corporate Services) invited the Committee to consider an application for the grant of a late hours catering licence received on 28 February 2018 subject to an adverse representation received on behalf of Lennox Community Council.

The Committee noted that the Applicant was in attendance.

The applicant addressed the Committee and responded to questions raised by the Committee.

Following consideration the Chair asked the applicant if they were happy with proceedings and if they felt they had had a fair hearing.

The applicant advised they were happy with proceedings and stated they felt they had had a fair hearing.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to grant the application for a late hours catering licence in respect of Case No. LHC/18/002.

5. CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982 - POSSIBLE SUSPENSION OF A TAXI DRIVER LICENCE (Case No. STD/18/001

This report was withdrawn prior to the meeting as a result of the taxi driver the report related to, voluntarily surrendering their Taxi Driver Licence.

6. CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982 - MANDATORY REVIEW OF TAXI FARES AND CHARGES

A report by the Acting Corporate Director (Corporate Services) invited the Committee to consider the responses received as part of the formal consultation carried out in relation to the review of the maximum fares and charges applicable to taxis and, in light of those responses, to agree a new fare card.

Councillor Coull proposed increasing the charge for a passenger fouling a taxi from £100 to £120, as there was no-one otherwise minded the proposal was agreed.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- (i) consider the responses received from the formal consultation process;
- (ii) adopt the fare card set out in Appendix 1 subject to the following changes:
 - Increase in the charge for a passenger fouling a taxi from £100 to £120
 - the distance fare for exclusive hire be changed from yards to miles
- (iii) the maximum fares and charges applicable to taxis in Moray to take effect from 29 June 2018; and
- (iv) instruct the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to implement the new fare card on that date.

7. QUESTION TIME

There were no questions raised.

MORAY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 27 JUNE 2018

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillors A Patience (Chair), J Allan, T Coull, G Cowie, P Coy, J Divers, R Edwards, D Gatt, A McLean and M McLean.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Laing, R McLean and Shepherd

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr S Hoath, Solicitor (Litigation & Licensing) as Legal Advisor to the Committee and Mrs T Sutherland, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Committee.

1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS AND MEMBER'S INTERESTS

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct there were no declarations from group leaders or spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of Member's interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

**2. CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982 – APPLICATION FOR
GRANT OF A PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE (Case No.
PEL/18/001)**

A report by the Acting Corporate Director (Corporate Services) invited the Committee to consider an application for the grant of a public entertainment licence received on 22 May 2018 subject to an adverse representation received on behalf of the Chief Constable.

The Committee noted that the Applicant was not in attendance and the Objector, the Chief Constable of Police Scotland, was represented by Police Constable Roy Thomson, Police Scotland.

PC Thomson addressed the Committee and responded to questions raised by the Committee.

Following consideration the Chair asked PC Thomson if he was happy with proceedings and if they felt they had had a fair hearing.

PC Thomson advised that he was happy with proceedings and stated he felt he had had a fair hearing.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to grant the application for a public entertainment licence in respect of Case No. PEL/18/001 with the following conditions imposed as per Police Scotland's representation:

- An adequate number of staff/volunteers/stewards should have knowledge of first aid procedure
- Appropriate stewarding will be in place to provide adequate control of the premises and is to be in accordance with stewarding plan submitted. The said stewarding plan must be adhered to for the duration of the event
- The applicant will comply with all reasonable/lawful requests made by authorised officers of the Local Authority and/or Police Officers
- All reasonable requests, which do not have an operational impact, made by the Police or Local Authority officials should be complied with
- The Chief Constable or the most senior officer present may, if he or she reasonably believes that there is, or is likely imminently, to be a serious threat to public safety on, or in the vicinity of the licensed event, including where a breach of licensing conditions would pose a serious threat to public safety, close the event immediately for such a period as may be necessary.

3. CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982 – APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF A PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE (Case No. PEL/18/002)

A report by the Acting Corporate Director (Corporate Services) invited the Committee to consider an application for the grant of a public entertainment licence received on 22 May 2018 subject to an adverse representation received on behalf of the Chief Constable.

The Committee noted that the Applicant was not in attendance and the Objector, the Chief Constable of Police Scotland, was represented by Police Constable Roy Thomson, Police Scotland.

PC Thomson addressed the Committee and responded to questions raised by the Committee.

Following consideration the Chair asked PC Thomson if he was happy with proceedings and if they felt they had had a fair hearing.

PC Thomson advised that he was happy with proceedings and stated he felt he had had a fair hearing.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to grant the application for a public entertainment licence in respect of Case No. PEL/18/002 with the following conditions imposed as per Police Scotland's representation:

- An adequate number of staff/volunteers/stewards should have knowledge of first aid procedure
- Appropriate stewarding will be in place to provide adequate control of the premises and is to be in accordance with stewarding plan submitted. The said stewarding plan must be adhered to for the duration of the event

- The applicant will comply with all reasonable/lawful requests made by authorised officers of the Local Authority and/or Police Officers
- All reasonable requests, which do not have an operational impact, made by the Police or Local Authority officials should be complied with
- The Chief Constable or the most senior officer present may, if he or she reasonably believes that there is, or is likely imminently, to be a serious threat to public safety on, or in the vicinity of the licensed event, including where a breach of licensing conditions would pose a serious threat to public safety, close the event immediately for such a period as may be necessary.



REPORT TO: LICENSING COMMITTEE ON 15 AUGUST 2018

SUBJECT: TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (CORPORATE SERVICES)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To present a draft Taxi and Private Hire Communications Strategy for the Committee's consideration.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Committee in terms of Section III H (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the exercise of the function of the Council as Licensing Authority for The Moray Council area.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (i) **consider and approve, with or without amendment, the draft Communications Strategy attached at APPENDIX 3; and**
- (ii) **instruct the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to undertake consultation on this as set out in section 3.13 of this report and report back to the next Committee meeting.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At its meeting on 21 September 2016, the Committee instructed a review of taxi communications and requested a report be submitted to their next meeting (para 8 of the minute refers).
- 3.2 At its meeting on 16 November 2016, the Committee reviewed current communications and instructed consultation with stakeholders, development of a draft Taxi Communications Strategy and a report back to Committee on this. During discussions the Committee also agreed that it might be possible to hold meetings with taxi drivers with a view to encouraging better communications. The feeling of the Committee was that one meeting should be held in Elgin with another being held on a circuit basis. (para 8 of the minute refers)
- 3.3 Throughout 2017 and in to 2018, various meetings and communications with stakeholders took place. Discussions took place with Police Scotland representatives and with officers within other Council departments who have a role in relation to taxi licensing. The general consensus seemed to be that

stakeholder meetings would be a good way to discuss general issues such as changes/developments that are coming up and enforcement, and that a couple of meetings each year would be appropriate. Police Scotland representatives were also keen on attending meetings that are organised with the taxi trade.

- 3.4 A communications survey was issued to all taxi/private hire licence holders. Licence holders were subsequently invited to trade meetings with some Committee members from the Fees Review Working Group to discuss fees and the opportunity was taken to discuss communications. The survey report and a compilation of comments made on communications at meetings are attached as **Appendices 1 and 2**, respectively.
- 3.5 The response rate to the survey was 4.1% or 24 responses. The attendance rate at trade meetings was 6.9% or 38 attendees. The small number of responses/attendees makes it difficult to draw representative conclusions from comments made; however, it is clear that there is no one preferred approach for communication and a variety of methods should be used.
- 3.6 Following the above consultation, work commenced on a draft Communication Strategy, which is attached at **Appendix 3** for the Committee's consideration.
- 3.7 The draft Strategy has been informed by the Committee's previous comments, by consultation comments and the Council's Community Engagement Scheme 2012 -16 and Strategy (CES). Within the CES, it is recognised that engagement can mean different things to different people and it is important to be clear about the level of engagement and the types of engagement that will be undertaken by services. The CES also sets out various principles that are intended to be used as an active tool by officers when planning engagement and as a reference to let the community know what to expect when working with the Council. These include for example, continuous improvement, ensuring actions are relevant to need and have a meaningful and clear purpose, being clear about what can be influenced and what cannot, communications that are accessible to all interested parties, where appropriate consultees are informed of and agree with the communication and feedback methods, and results of engagement are fed back to participants and the wider community. Within the CES, it is also recognised that the Council alone cannot successfully make changes as to how it engages with people and that stakeholders have a part to play to strengthen their involvement in activity.
- 3.8 The draft strategy was also informed by national research commissioned by the Scottish Government in 2012 into Taxi and Private Hire Car Market and Local Licensing Regimes across Scotland that looked at both current practice and context. This research was undertaken by Edinburgh Napier University, whose report was published in April 2013. This research was wider in scope than communications and excerpts relevant to communications are attached as **Appendix 4**.
- 3.9 The Scottish Government Guidance "Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing Best Practice for Licensing Authorities", Second Edition April 2012 is the latest and current guidance available to licensing authorities. This guidance covers a range of issues but only touches upon communication and engagement to a

limited extent. Relevant excerpts are attached as **Appendix 5**. The Best Practice Guidance suggests that licensing authorities also make use of the information contained within the Scottish Development Department Circular 25/1986 Information for Local Licensing Authorities on the Licensing of Taxi and Private Hire Cars and their Drivers. Excerpts relevant to this issue are also included within **Appendix 5**. These have also been taken into account in drafting the strategy.

- 3.10 The Scottish Regulators' Strategic Code of Practice (Feb. 2015), indicates that regulators should develop effective relationships with those they regulate and have clear two-way communication in place as well as more generally pursue continuous improvement. Regulators are expected to: communicate effectively with those they regulate, to build relationships and mutual understanding; have in place a range of appropriate communication mechanisms; be clear about the purpose of interactions; and allow for and gather regular feedback. This has also been taken into account in drafting the strategy.
- 3.11 Over the years there developed a variety of methods of communication at different times, for different purposes with different stakeholders, all as set out within the report to Committee on 16 November 2016. Working and communication methods have been evolving and the tools available now are very different from the past. There is a greater drive for electronic communications and the ever present need for efficiencies in how services operate. The draft Taxi Communications Strategy will make it clear going forward, when and how The Moray Council licensing team and the Committee will communicate with and carry out engagement with the licensed trade and partners in the regulatory process in relation to taxi and private hire licensing. The aim is to ensure that activity reaches and engages the stakeholders that it needs to, and to strengthen their involvement in activity to help inform practices and service delivery, whilst also balancing activity with the wider work undertaken by the licensing team against the background of reduced resource to make the best use of limited resources.
- 3.12 The draft Strategy was issued to Council Staff stakeholders and Police Scotland as detailed within the consultation section below and comments received incorporated.
- 3.13 Consultation on the draft Strategy is yet to take place with the trade and Moray Community and this is recommended for a 1 month period with feedback received being reported back to the next Committee on 10 October 2018. It is proposed that community and trade consultation on the draft Strategy take place as follows:- by email/letter to Community Councils and Local Area Forums; by contact by the Equalities Officer with Equality groups; by email/letter to the trade with the opportunity being taken by the Licensing Standards Officer to raise this and seek feedback when out and about; postings on the Council's website and social media pages and TellmeScotland portal.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Regulating taxi vehicles and taxi drivers through the licensing system contributes to a safer community by ensuring they provide safe services for the public. Taxis are a valuable part of a growing and diverse economy. They provide employment opportunities and support the tourism and night economies. Taxis also promote health and independence by providing mobility for the whole community and access to resources.

(b) Policy and Legal

As set out within this report.

(c) Financial implications

There may be some costs involved in consulting on the draft Strategy. There may also be costs involved in implementing the Communications Strategy. These are not likely to be great and it is anticipated that they would be able to be met from current budgets.

(d) Risk Implications

Without a clear and consistent approach to communications there is a risk that the Council does not engage appropriately with stakeholders.

(e) Staffing Implications

It will take staff time to consult on the draft strategy and thereafter to communicate and engage with stakeholders on an ongoing basis. It is anticipated that at current resource levels, implementation of the strategy can be met from existing resources. Licensing officers will also liaise with the Council's Corporate Communications section to draw upon available expertise and resources as required.

(f) Property

There are no anticipated property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The strategy recognises the need to identify and overcome the barriers to communication and engagement for all stakeholders.

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been started and the further consultation recommended will feed in to that.

(h) Consultations

Consultation on this report, including the draft Strategy has taken place with the following officers: the Equal Opportunities Officer; Carl Bennet, Research and Information Officer; Peter Jones, PPR and Communications Officer; the Community Support Manager; and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer and comments received have been incorporated.

Consultation on the draft Strategy has taken place with Kenny McGeough, Inspector, Police Scotland; Head of Legal and Democratic Services; the Licensing Standards Officer; Customer Contact Manager; Fleet Service Manager; Manager Development Management; Elaine Penny Engineer Traffic

and Ken Major Senior Engineer Traffic and comments received have been incorporated.

It is proposed that community and trade consultation on the draft Strategy take place as set out within section 3.13 of this report.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 There is a need to improve communications with all stakeholders and the draft strategy sets out an approach to this going forward.

Author of Report: Margaret Forrest, Legal Services Manager (Litigation & Licensing)

Background Papers:

Council's Community Engagement Scheme 2012 -16
(<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file85646.pdf>) and Strategy
(<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file85645.pdf>)

Report by Napier University for Scottish Government in relation to Taxi and Private Hire Car Market and Local Licensing Regimes across Scotland, April 2013:
<http://www.gov.scot/resource/0041/00419531.pdf>

Scottish Government Guidance "Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing Best Practice for Licensing Authorities", Second Edition April 2012:
<http://www.gov.scot/resource/0039/00391287.pdf>

Scottish Development Department Circular 25/1986 Information for Local Licensing Authorities on the Licensing of Taxi and Private Hire Cars and their Drivers
(<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2012/04/2261/1>)

Scottish Regulators' Strategic Code of Practice (Feb. 2015)
<https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwiuk6nowZ7bAhUFa1AKHT5UDQIQFgggMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fbeta.gov.scot%2Fpublications%2Fscottish-regulators-strategic-code-of-practice%2FScottish%2520regulators'%2520strategic%2520code%2520of%2520practice.pdf&usg=AOvVaw37fzdqo69gsh7Z3DfufD9T>

Ref: MAF

Moray Council Licensing Service

Taxis/Private Hire Customer Communications Survey Results



18th October 2017

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The 2017 Moray Council Licensing Service - Taxis/Private Hire Customer Satisfaction and Communications Survey was undertaken during the period 30 June – 7 August 2017. A survey comprising a total of 56 questions was issued electronically using a link to the “SurveyMonkey” web-site, and paper copies sent by post to a total of 583 individuals. The first 12 questions sought the views of users on the level of service they received from Moray Council Licensing Services, and their satisfaction with the service provided, while the next 44 questions asked respondents to indicate their current methods the Council communicated with them and if they had any preferences for different methods. A list of all the questions is included at Annex A; not that the Communications Survey starts at question 13.
- 1.2 The survey resulted in 24 responses, a response rate of 4.1%. Some respondents provided additional comments of their experiences with Licensing Services, and their views on communication between themselves and the Council. However, the limited number of comments meant there were few representative themes, so all comments have been included in the report.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The small number of returns makes it difficult to draw representative conclusions from the comments made. However, there is enough data to be able to provide an indication of how the service provided by Licensing Services is perceived by taxi-drivers and taxi-operators.
- 2.2 For the communications aspect of the survey, people were generally satisfied with the information they received on licensing and that Moray Council seeks their views on matters that affect them. However, there was a significant minority who were dissatisfied with this aspect of Licensing Services’ performance and in particular that the council did not listen to the views of taxi-drivers and taxi-operators.
- 2.3 The most popular response to the question on which items taxi-drivers and operators want information on was the application process, followed closely by updates on changes to licensing conditions, laws, fares and charges and policy. Respondents also requested more information on police checks and monitoring of regulations, and better face-to-face communications.
- 2.4 Most drivers and operators said they obtained licensing information through word-of-mouth, Council e-mails and letters, and then from the Moray Council web-site. Council e-mails and letters are the 2 sources depended on by most respondents for staying informed about licensing matters. People who preferred e-mails liked their convenience and the ability to retain a record, while those who preferred letters liked the formality of written correspondence, especially for important information. Since there is no one common, preferred approach Licensing Services may have to consider a tailored approach suited to individual preferences. In response to the 3 questions on e-mails, of the 57% that received them, most read them in full, thought the content was about

right, but were equally split on whether the frequency was about right or not frequent enough.

- 2.5 The most popular method for being consulted on issues was by e-mail or letter, with newsletters/leaflets and SMS texting next. There was relatively little support for meetings or using the Council's website. The majority of respondents used e-mails and texts for communicating, and just under half used social media. LinkedIn and twitter were not commonly used, and neither were visits to the Moray Council's website. Visitors to the Licensing pages were rare and the few comments received on the value of the page were mixed. Half the respondents offered suggestion for improving the page including providing a way to contact staff along with more regular updates. One person suggested using the website as a way of making complaints, and another as an anonymous tip-off line to report unlicensed or over-charging operators.
- 2.6 The Tellmescotland portal and the Public Access part of the Licensing System were relatively unknown by respondents (particularly the Tellmescotland site). Of the very few who had used the Public Access element half found it useful.
- 2.7 Despite the lack of support for meetings as a way of consulting on new issues there was very strong support (79%) for trade meetings, although only half the respondents thought they would be able to attend.

3. Overall Survey Responses

- 3.1 The chosen methodology was to use an online survey to enable as wide a range of service users to be contacted as well as paper-based questionnaires for those without e-mail addresses, or who preferred a paper-based survey.
- 3.2 Other formats, such as face-to-face interviews were not considered appropriate for this type of survey. The standard Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tool¹ issued by The Improvement Service was consulted, but the format was not compatible with the scope of the survey that Licensing Services required.
- 3.3 The majority of responses to the electronic version of the survey were received during the first week of the survey (10 responses), and responses to the paper copies of the survey were mainly received during the third week (also 10 responses). The numbers dropped off rapidly thereafter. Based on previous experience with other surveys this is a typical response profile.

¹ Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tool, User Guide, May 2010, *The Improvement Service*

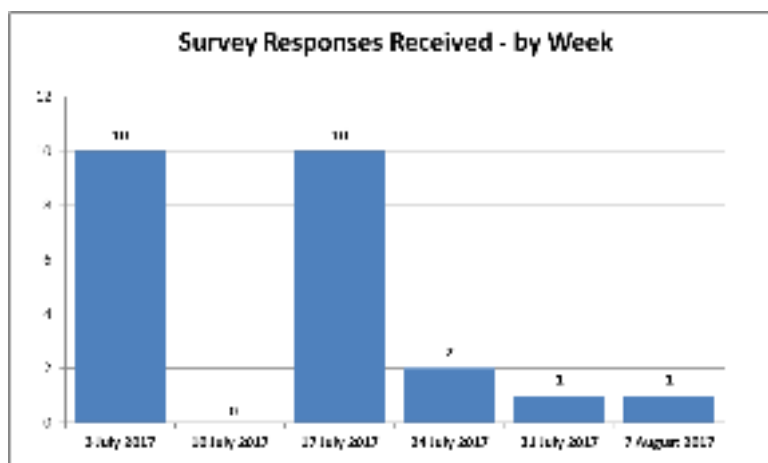


Figure 1: Responses Received by Week

4 Communications Survey

4.1 In general, how satisfied are you with the Council's efforts to keep you informed about licensing?

- 4.1.1 The 22 people who responded to this section of the survey were generally satisfied that Moray Council kept them informed about licensing matters. Note that for this set of 5 questions respondents only had one negative option: “dissatisfied”. They were not given the option of selecting “very dissatisfied”.
- 4.1.2 Staff having sufficient knowledge to deal with an enquiry scored highest with an overall score of 3.5 out of a total of 5, equivalent to 69% (Figure 30), while licensees’ views being listened to by the Council scored lowest at 3.1 out of 5, equivalent to 61% (Figure 31).
- 4.1.3 Relatively few licensees responded “very satisfied” to any of the questions in this section. There were 3 such responses to the question on the ease of finding answers to questions on licensing (Figure 28), while there were 2 responses of “very satisfied” to the other 4 questions. Generally, the majority of respondents were “satisfied” with the exception being the response to satisfaction that the Council listened to licensees’ views. The highest proportion (41%) were dissatisfied with this aspect of the Council’s performance (Figure 31).
- 4.1.4 Dissatisfaction scored between 23% and 33% for the other 4 questions indicating a sizeable minority of licensees were not happy with the information on licensing being supplied by Moray Council.

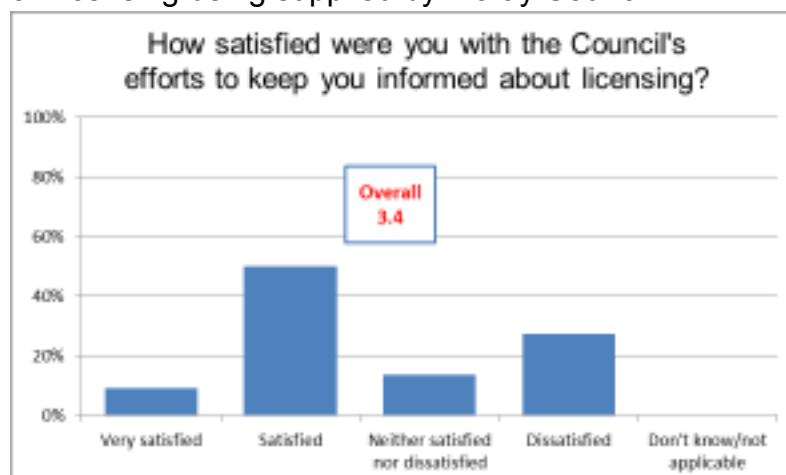


Figure 2: Satisfaction with Council's efforts to keep licensees informed about licensing



Figure 3: Satisfaction with the ability to easily answers to questions about licensing

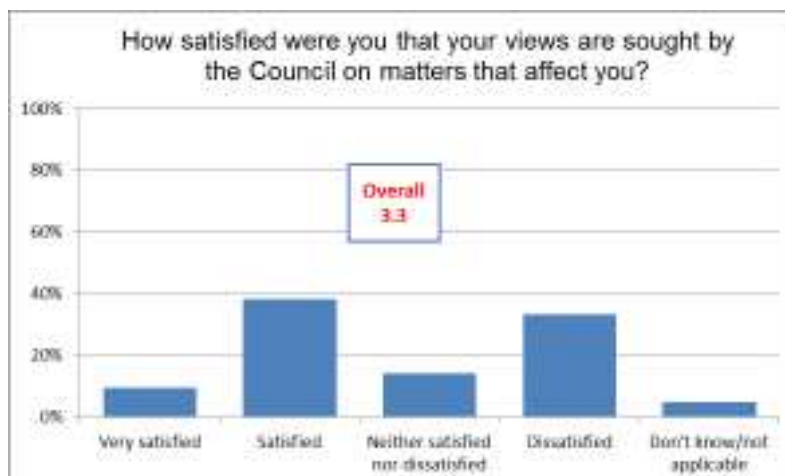


Figure 4: Satisfaction that Moray Council sought views on matters that affect licensees



Figure 5: Satisfaction that staff had sufficient knowledge to deal with an enquiry

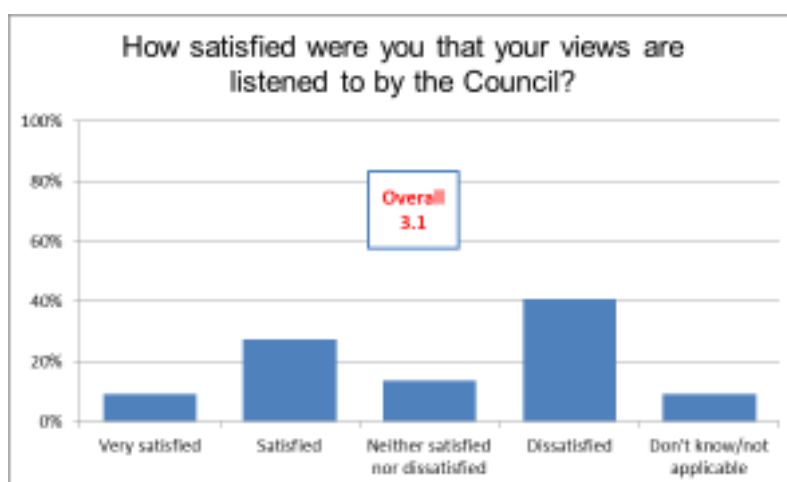


Figure 6: Satisfaction that licensees' views are listened to by the Council

4.2 For which items do you believe it is important that you receive information/communications? Please rate the importance of each item on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "not important at all" and where 5 means "very important".

4.2.1 The application process was almost unanimously selected as the most important topic that licensees wanted to be kept informed about. Nineteen people gave this item a maximum score of 5 (very important) with the other 2 respondents scoring this item a 4. The next 4 items (changes to licensing conditions, changes to licensing law/new requirements, changes to fares and charges, changes to application processes and changes to licensing policy) were seen as equally important. Information and communications on taxi stances was considered a slightly less important item (Figure 32).

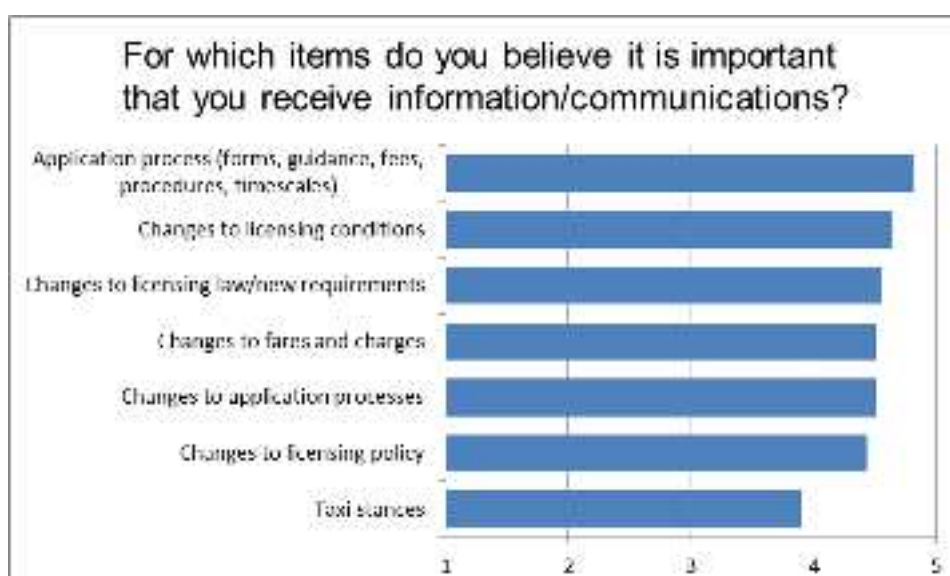


Figure 7: Relative importance of receiving information/communications on particular items

4.2.2 Respondents were asked to provide examples of other topics that they believed were important to know about. The responses are shown at Table 6 with 3 concerned about taxi ranks/taxi stances and 3 about police checks and monitoring of regulations. The other 3 comments were of a more general nature.

What other topic do you think it is important to know about?	Relative importance
How taxis actually work!	5 (very important)
More taxi ranks	5 (very important)
Monitoring of, and response to complaints about, unlicensed/un-plated vehicles	5 (very important)
Improvement's to taxi stances in Moray	5 (very important)
VOSA test. If your old MOT runs out but you have a 6month taxi test certificate, which say runs out 2 months after VOSA MOT, would you be MOT illegal?	5 (very important)
Taxi rank policing	5 (very important)
What's done about un-plated vehicles taxiing?	5 (very important)
The police checks on taxi drivers over the past 5 years I've seen a difference	4
Everything that changes that concerns us as taxi drivers	5 (very important)

Table 1: Other topics that taxi licensees think is important to know about

- 4.2.3 Four respondents provided further topics that they considered were important for licensees to know about (Table 7). The comments about issuing a newsletter and better face-to-face communications are discussed in more detail in the paragraphs that follow.

Is there a further topic you think it is important to know about?	Relative importance
Who is on the short list to get the job?	5 (very important)
There should be a newsletter issued to the trade - by email - to keep people more up-to-date	5 (very important)
We need better face to face communication with the council and a discussion platform where everyone's views can be considered a more collaborative arrangement needs to be setup to better represent the trades interests not the council's	5 (very important)
Are Taxis licenced by Moray council allowed to use bus lanes in Aberdeen for example?	3

Table 2: Further topics that taxi licensees feel it is important to know

4.3 How do you currently receive information about what is going on?

- 4.3.1 The most common source of information for taxi operators is the grapevine (45%) closely followed by Council e-mails, letters and the Moray Council website (Figure 33). Three respondents stated other but only one provided details, which was that information on changes was only received when a new

application for a driver or car was submitted and the forms were returned advising that changes had been made.

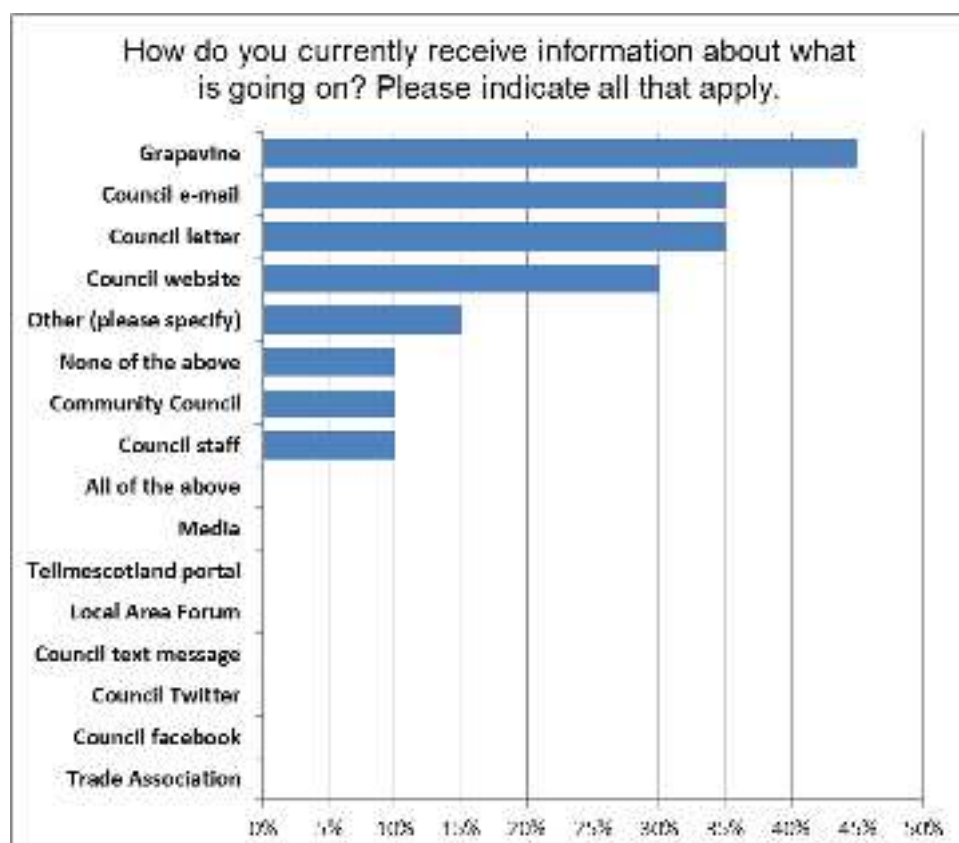


Figure 8: How licensees currently receive information

4.4 What single source of information do you depend on most to stay informed about licensing?

4.4.1 Only 16 responses were received for this question with the majority depending upon letters and e-mails from the Council (60%) to stay informed about licensing matters (Figure 34). The Moray Council web-site and word of mouth were the next most popular sources, although due to the small number of responses (3 for website and 2 for word of mouth) these cannot be taken as representative of all licensees. The reasons for preferring sources are given at Table 8. Typically, e-mails are seen as more convenient, although some people preferred letters. Three comments related to topics of interest and included costs, fees and general guidance.

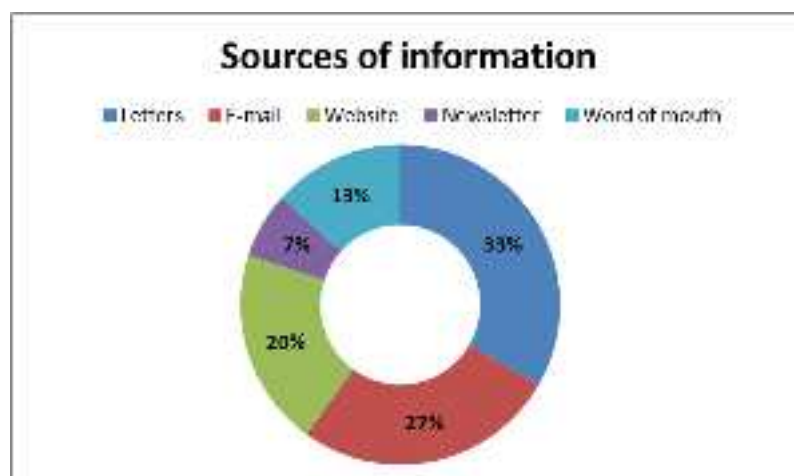


Figure 9: Sources of information most depended upon by licensees

Source of information depended upon most to stay informed about licensing?	Reason
Council letters	Do not always have time to go online
Council letter	-
Letter	Half a chance of getting it
Letter, if they are sent	Guaranteed to get relevant information
Letter	-
E-mail	Convenience
E-mail	-
E-mail	-
E-mail or website	It is easier when you are driving customers about and you don't have time to "pop in" to the Council Offices
Website	I can read and understand myself
Website or Taxi newsletter	It's the only way
Word by mouth from other licence holder.	-
Word of mouth	-
Other comments	
All of it is important to one degree or other	-
Costs	Costs need to be covered.
General guidance and fees etc	To keep us 'in the loop'

Table 3: Sources of information most depended upon by licensees

4.5 In future, how would you prefer to receive information about what is going on?

4.5.1 There was an almost equal split between people wishing to receive e-mails and those who preferred letters. Only 4 respondents (19%) wished to be invited to a meeting (Figure 35).

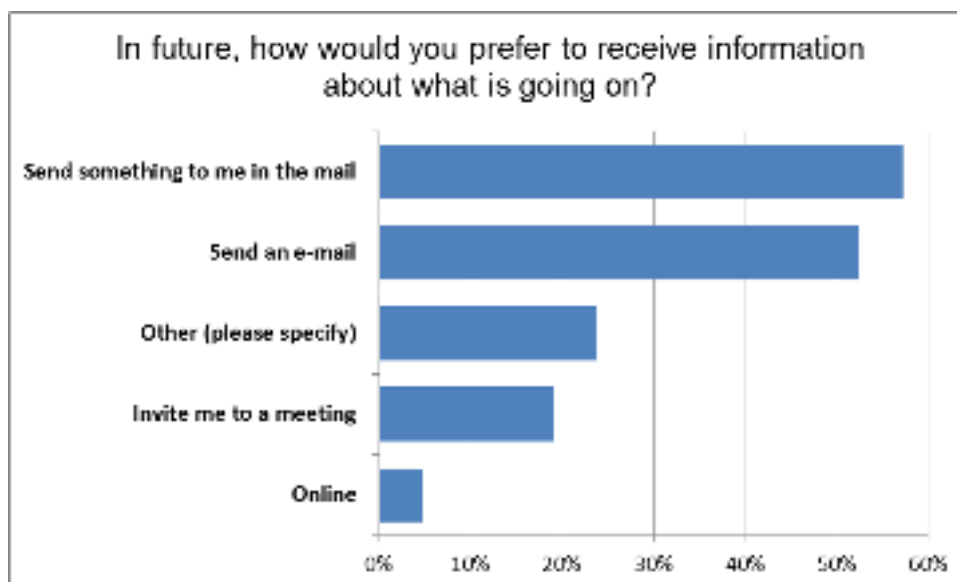


Figure 10: Preferences for receiving information in the future

- 4.5.2 The main reason for preferring e-mails was the convenience and also the ability to retain the information. Letters were seen as more formal and preferred by some for important information. Meetings, including drop-in clinics, were favoured by a minority as they allowed an exchange of views and were more personal. Care must be taken when interpreting these responses due to the limited numbers, but the conclusion that can be drawn is people have different preferences and the Council needs to be able to respond in a variety of ways, perhaps considering tailored responses to individuals to meet their different expectations (Table 9).

Preferences for receiving information in the future	Reason
A telephone call to a registered telephone number would be the quickest way to communicate with me personally	If I am out driving it would come through on the hands free system, and enables me to action the information at that time.
An 'open session' where a member of staff can be chatted with face-to-face at Council HQ (eg in the meeting room just inside the main entrance. It could take the form of a 'drop-in' clinic, where members of the trade can voice concerns/complaints/ideas etc with no prejudice. I am sure this could take place once a month	More personal than email etc
Invite me to a meeting	It gives us a chance to have a say
Invite me to a meeting ; More than one way	Cause they say sent emails in past but never got them said same about letters so it's no win
Invite me to a meeting ; Send an e-mail ;	Read emails every day before starting work
Invite me to a meeting ; Send something to me in the mail	If the letter is important it should be sent by mail as emails do go missing

Preferences for receiving information in the future	Reason
Send an e-mail	Easiest
Send an e-mail	Work does not always allow time for meetings
Send an e-mail	Easier
Send an e-mail	I can keep it with me forever
Send an e-mail	-
Send an e-mail	-
Send something to me in the mail	It's more official to get a letter.
Send something to me in the mail	Work away from home
Send something to me in the mail	Because I prefer to have it on paper
Send something to me in the mail	Guaranteed to get relevant information
Send something to me in the mail	-
Send something to me in the mail	-
Send something to me in the mail	-
Send something to me in the mail	-

Table 4: Preferred methods for receiving information in the future

4.6 What is the most helpful way for us to consult you on an issue?

4.6.1 Following on from the previous question asking for the preferred method of receiving information in the future, licensees were asked about their preferred method for consultation on issues in the future. The response was similar to the previous section with the vast majority preferring e-mails or letters (60% and 65% respectively). Figure 36 indicates some support for SMS texts, meeting and use of the website when undertaking consultations in the future.

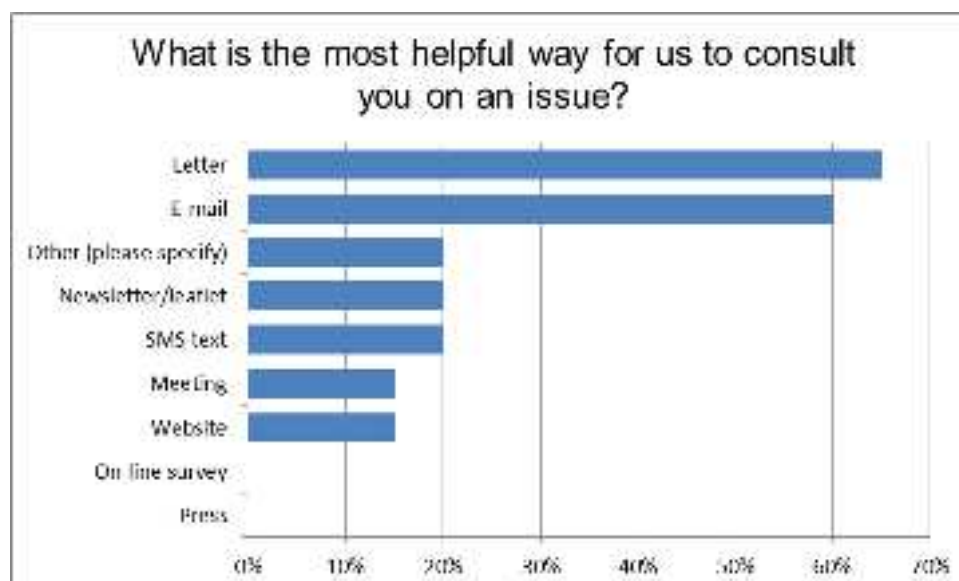


Figure 11: Most helpful way for Moray Council to consult on licensing issues

4.7 Internet, social media and e-mails

4.7.1 The next set of questions was designed to help understand the licensees' views on electronic means of communication, such as social media, websites and e-mails. Figure 37 illustrates that the majority of respondents used e-mails (85%) and texts (70%), while a much lower proportion (45%) used social media (including facebook). Twitter and LinkedIn were only used by 3 of the 20 respondents to this question. A relatively large minority (38%) stated that they would follow a dedicated Moray Council Licensing facebook page or twitter account (Figure 38).

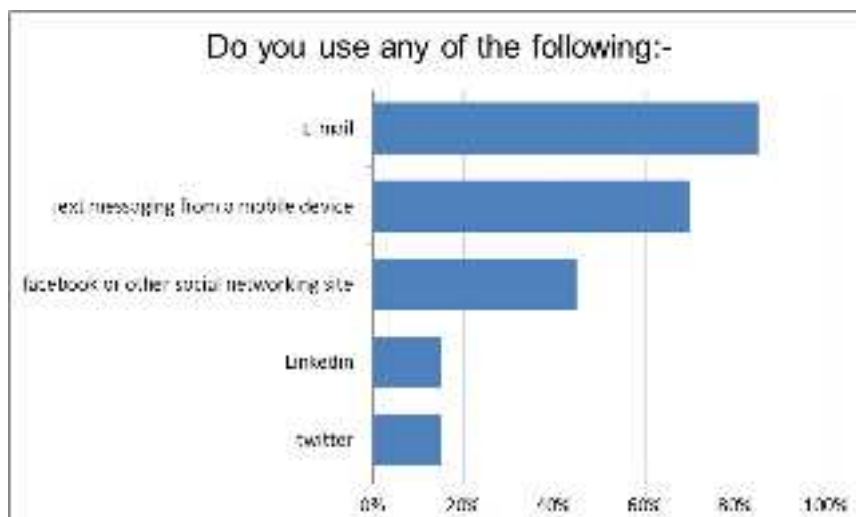


Figure 12: Electronic media used by licensees

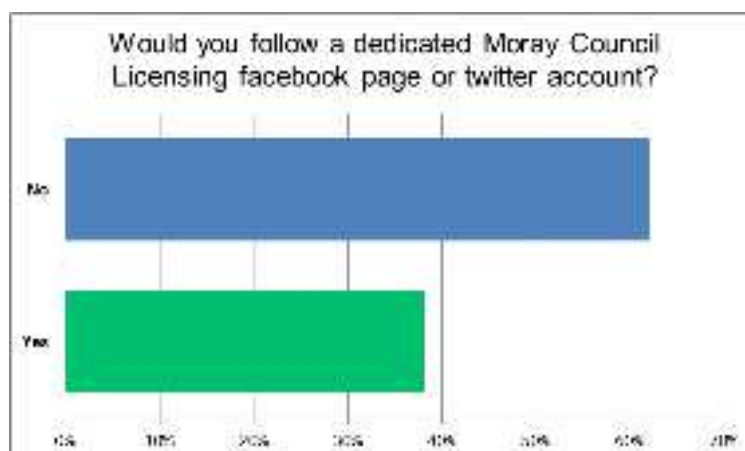


Figure 13: Would licensees follow a dedicated Licensing facebook page or twitter account?

4.7.2 Visits to the Moray Council's website are relatively infrequent, with no-one stating they look at the site daily. 35% visited monthly and the same proportion even less frequently, while a quarter of respondents never visited the site (Figure 39a). Visitors to the licensing pages on the Moray Council's website were even less frequent with 57% stating they only looked at the site rarely and 24% had never visited the licencing pages (Figure 39b).

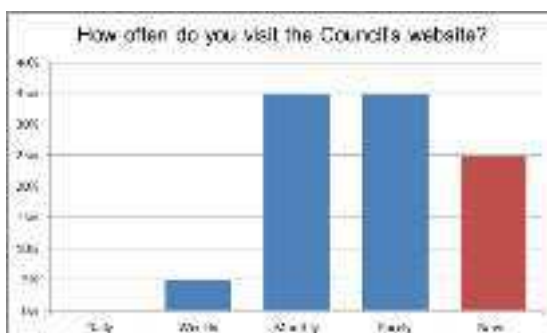


Figure 14a: Frequency of visiting Moray Council's website

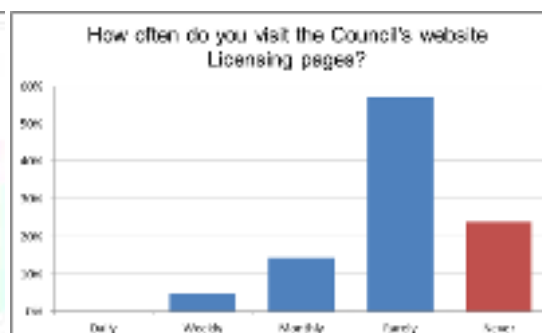


Figure 39b: Frequency of visiting Licensing pages

4.7.3 Only 5 people answered the question on which content they used on the website. From such a small sample it is not possible to generalise and identify trends, but 2 comments concerned fee information and costs. A summary of the responses is at Table 10, which suggest less than total enthusiasm for the licensing information on the Council website and the licensing pages.

Content used	Value
Checking any new promise is going	Not much
Costs	Valuable if it was updated regularly
Fee information as the councils own employees now refer us to the website to find out costs	It's all we have
Licensing but only when I need to	It's ok
Not stated	Very valuable

Table 5: Content used on Moray Council websites and the perceived value

4.7.4 The question on what would make the website more useful was answered by 13 people who mostly wanted the site to provide a way to contact staff (62%) and wanted the information to be updated more often (also 62%). Two people wanted the site to be updated to be more user-friendly and there was a single request for a new page and FAQs to be included (Figure 40).

4.7.5 Three of the respondents identified the additional information they would wish to be provided on the site:

- Ability to make complaints
- Any new changes or new points of contact
- I would like to have found that plates were now changed to Ashgrove instead of having to ask "where's my plates?"

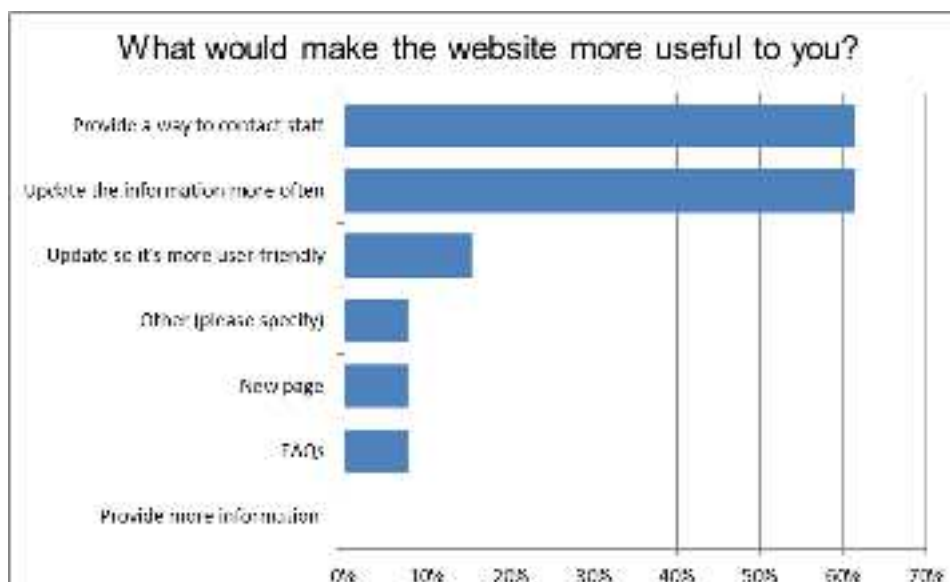


Figure 15: What would make the website more useful to you?

4.7.6 There were 3 suggestions on improving the Licensing web pages:

- The layout is awful and difficult to navigate
- Have an anonymous tip off line for unlicensed/over-charging operators
- Make sure websites work correctly

In addition there was a general observation:

- Only drivers that have never been in trouble with the police

4.8 Tellmescotland portal – if you have used it did you find it useful?

4.8.1 Of the 5 people who had used the Tellmescotland portal² only one found it useful (Figure 41). If this response rate is representative of the level of awareness amongst licensees generally then more work is required to make the site better known.

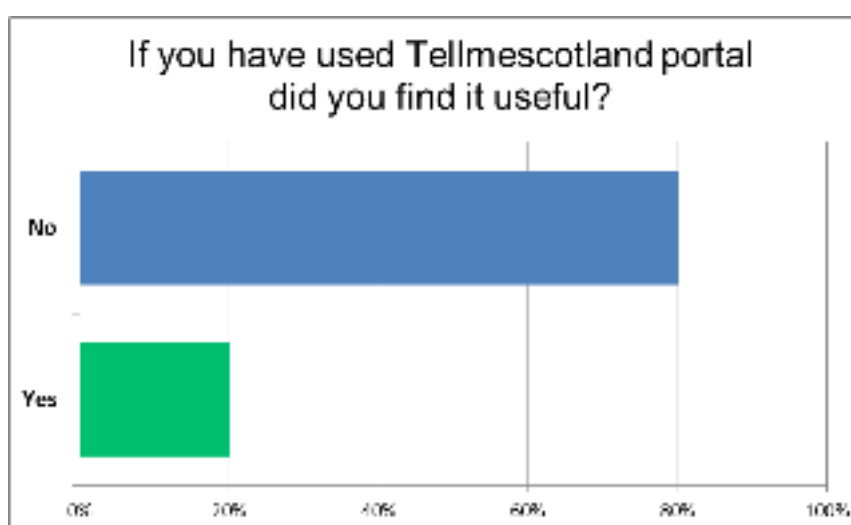


Figure 16: Usefulness of Tellmescotland portal

4.9 Public Access part of the Licensing System

² <https://www.tellmescotland.gov.uk>

4.9.1 Accessed from the Council's web pages, this enables applicants to track the progress of their application online. In addition the web page enables the public to view the Statutory Public Registers for information about licences being processed so that they can comment on them, and also enables the public to access information on licences that have been granted. Eight people only were aware of this web page (44% of responses) and 6 skipped the question indicating a low level of awareness. However, of those who had used it half (4 respondents) found it useful (Figures 42a and 42b).

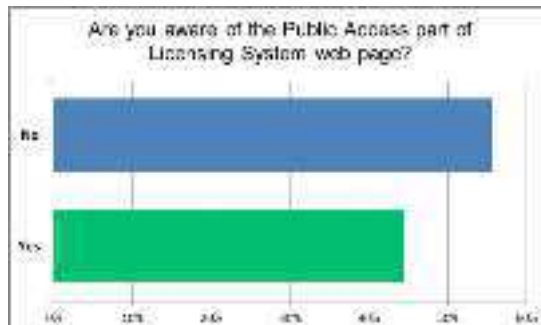


Figure 17a: Awareness of Public Access part of Licensing System

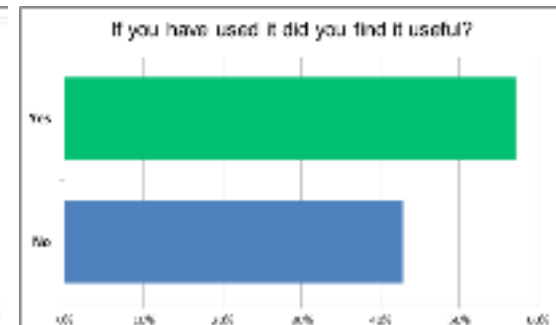


Figure 42b: Was it useful?

4.10 Responses to e-mails

4.10.1 The next set of questions concerned e-mails sent by the Licensing Service to find out more about how they were received by licensees. It was heartening to see that no-one who responded deleted Council e-mails without opening them (Figure 43). Almost half the respondents (43%) did not receive e-mails and the same proportion read their e-mails in full (9 respondents). Three people skimmed their e-mails to find out what was important. Six respondents (29%) felt that Licensing Services did not send e-mails frequently enough (Figure 44), while 5 people thought the frequency was about right (24%). The majority of respondents (55%) were happy with the content of e-mails, or had no strong opinion (Figure 45).

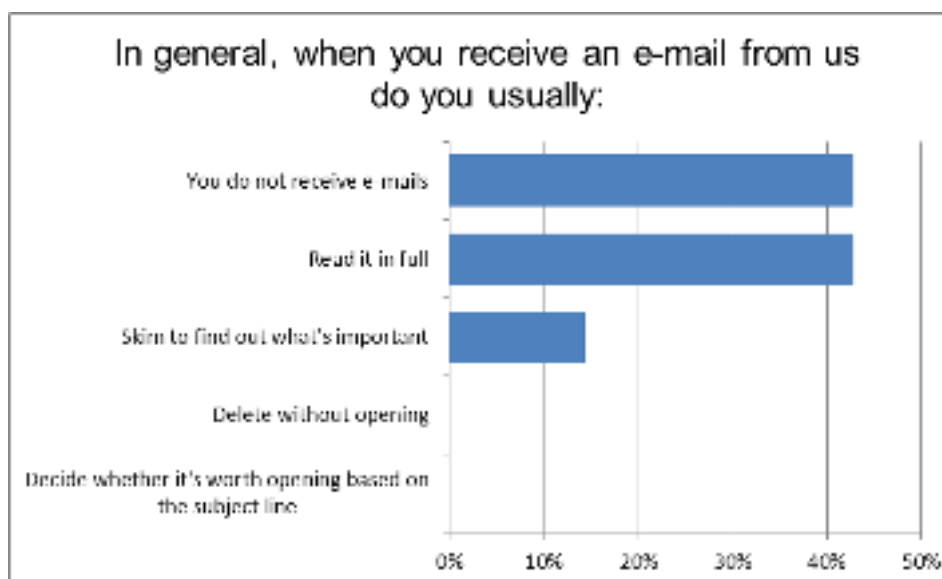


Figure 18: How licensees respond to e-mails

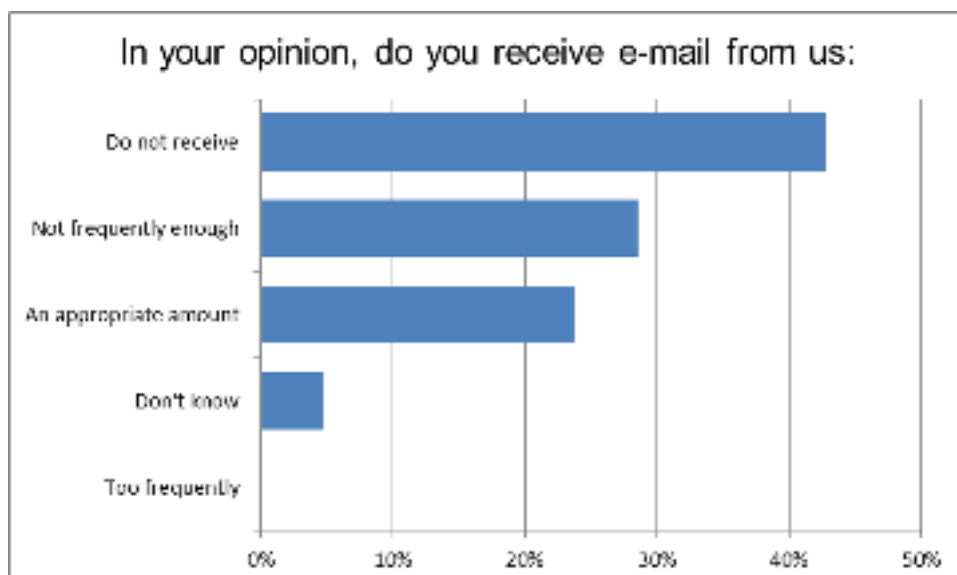


Figure 19: Opinion on frequency of e-mails

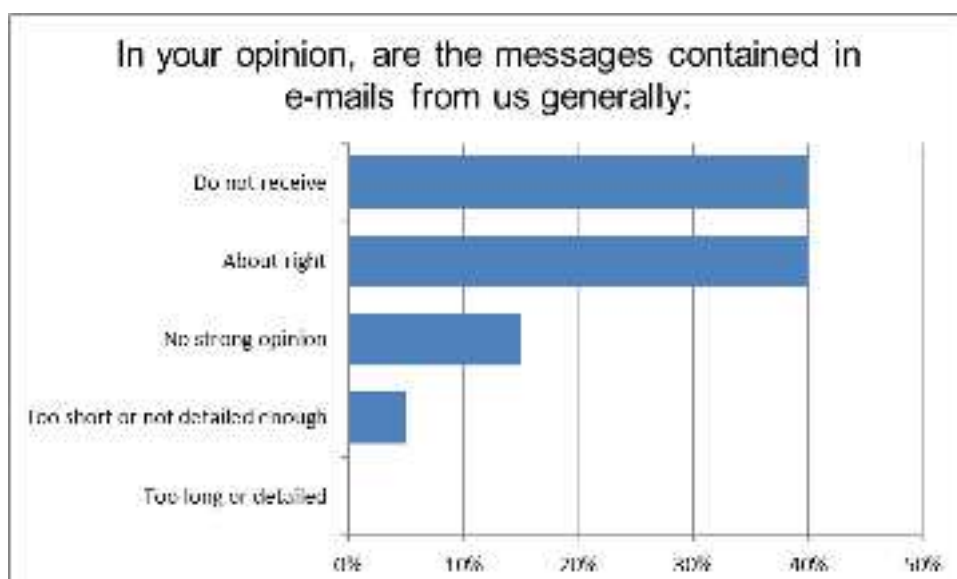


Figure 20: Opinion on the contents of e-mails

4.11 Trade Association

4.11.1 Licensees were asked whether they were members of a Trade Association. Seven people did not answer the question, but all of the remaining 17 advised that they were not members. There was a strong consensus among this group that Trade meetings should take place, with 14 of the 17 (79%) being in favour (Figure 46). However, what was less clear was the format and content of such meetings. Five respondents provided their views (or provided partial responses), which have been collected together at Table 11. There is no common consensus, but Licensing Services will be able to bear these comments in mind when they consider setting up Trade meetings.

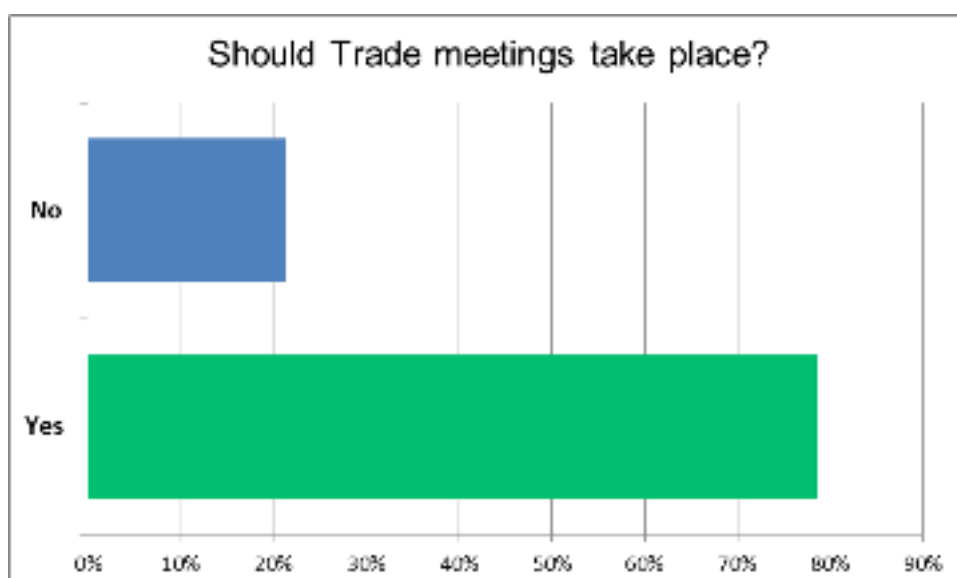


Figure 21: Should Trade meetings take place?

How should such meetings be set up?	Where?	When?	What should the trade meetings be about?	Who should attend?
Before committee meetings	Garden shed for all the good that would be done or listened to	-	THE TRADE!!!! DUH!!!!	Anyone with an interest
Open forum	One in Zone one and one in Zone 2	Couple of times a year	Issues affecting the trade might be a start	The Moray Council
Twice a year	Elgin	Monday or Tuesday	Trade specific questions	All members should be invited
-	-	-	-	License plate holders
Set up through Moray Council	Any venue	Evenings	New things to do with licensing and any matters arising with taxi companies or taxi individuals on taxi business	Representative from council licensing and taxi operators or public who have matters arising about taxis

Table 6: Views on the format and content of Trade meetings

4.11.2 Most people (9 out of 16 responses) had no preference on the frequency of Trade meetings, while 6 (37.5%) felt they should be held regularly and one person wanted them only to be held for specific issues (Figure 47). The Licensing Committee are considering holding two meetings with the trade per year: one in Elgin and one in other areas on a rota basis. Selected committee members would attend supported by Council officers. The views of licensees

do not appear to contradict this proposal, although there was one dissenter and one person suggested 3 meetings per year (Table 12). Eighteen people responded to the question on whether they would attend Trade meetings.

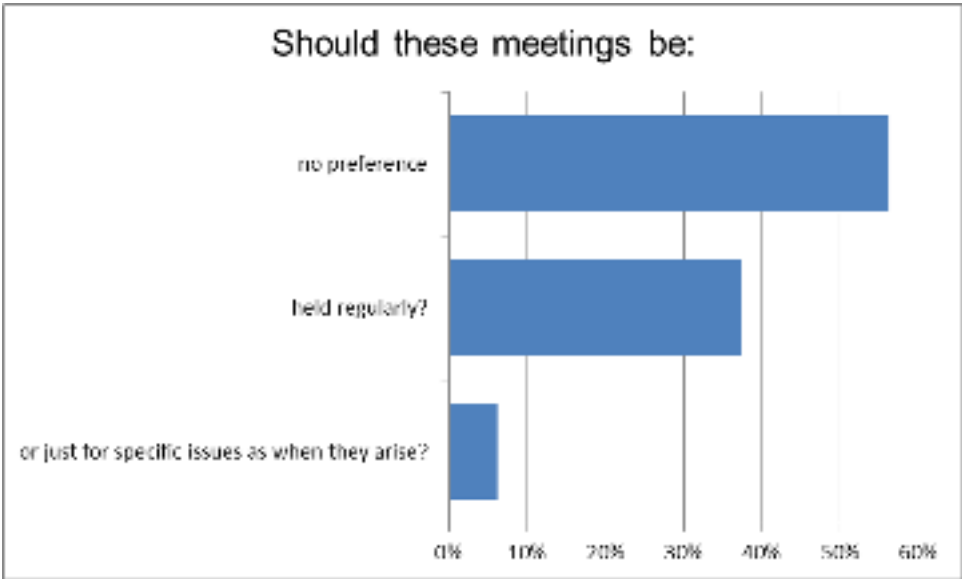


Figure 22: Frequency of Trade meetings

Views on the proposal to hold 2 Trade meetings per year
Been done before and a complete waste of time.
Cooperative discussions can only be good for the trade
No preference
OK
Sounds like a good idea.
We would like to see 3 meetings per year
Yes a good idea

Table 7: Views on the proposals to hold 2 Trade meetings per year

4.11.3 Despite the high percentage of people who felt Trade meetings should take place (Figure 46) only half of respondents would attend them (Figure 48). The reasons for non-attendance are given at Table 13, although if the meeting arrangements could be designed to cater for these particular concerns.

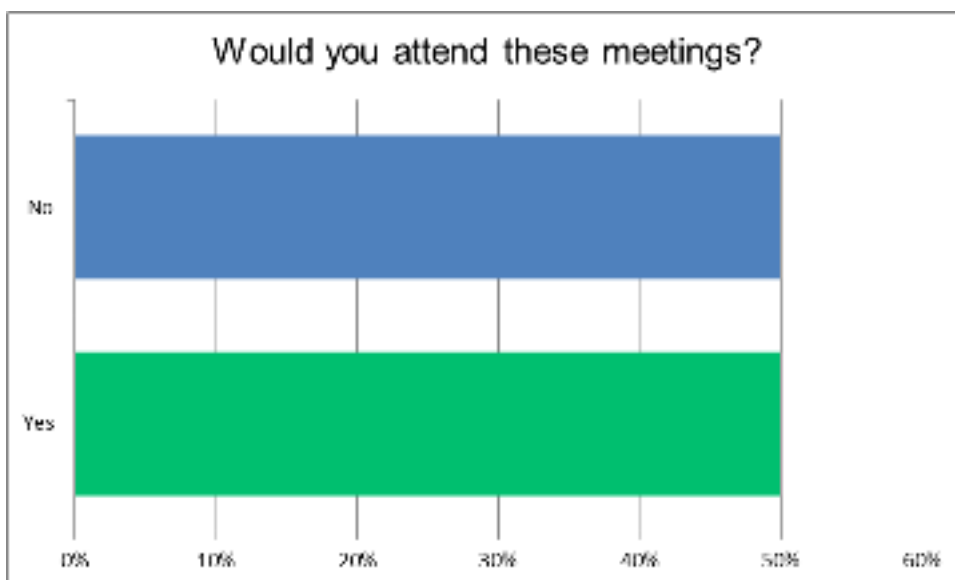


Figure 23: Would licensees attend Trade meetings?

Reasons for not attending Trade meetings
If taking place in the evening business is too busy during the day for time for lengthy meetings
I am not invited
Possibly attend
Only part time driver
Unless away on business

Table 8: Reasons for not attending Trade meetings

4.12 Effective Communication

4.12.1 This set of 4 questions were designed to find out what licensed taxi drivers and operators thought about communications from the Licensing Service and what improvements could be made. Responses to these questions were very limited, but they are included here (Table 14) so that any changes in the way the Licensing Services communicates with licensees takes heed of these points.

How can the Licensing Service ensure that information is communicated effectively?
Each Taxi operator should receive an email/letter of telephone call to advise of a meeting. He/she would then pass this information to their respective drivers so they can attend the meeting.
E-mail
E-mails
SMS text msgs
In public domain
Notification received and read emails
Recorded delivery letters
Send information to individuals and their office companies
You can't or won't

How can we ensure that we get your views on future consultations?
By attending at meetings or formal letter survey. You should not be afraid to express your opinions if you have a complaint or suggestion for improvements
E-mail
Ensure asked more than once
Recorded delivery letters
Send information direct to above and if free to attend will do so
I know you don't care
You can't or won't
Do you have any suggestions/improvement ideas for communication?
Going back to a Taxi newsletter would be a positive step
All the communication tools are in place
No point. no one has ever listened before
No
Are you aware of examples of good practice in relation to the issues raised in this survey?
No
No
No
None
Yes
Yes

Table 9: Comments from licensees on communication and consultations

4.12.2 The final question asked respondents to provide comments on any points not covered by the survey. Five comments were received and are included in Table 15. One was a suggestion to set-up an email to be used for anonymous tip-offs, while another suggested greater input from taxi drivers themselves.

Any other comment you would like to make about the Licensing Service not covered in the survey?
Anonymous tip off email address
Come to the rank and ask taxi drivers, they will explain what works let them have say
If there is staff sickness or holidays causing backlogs, would it be wiser to increase staff levels to cope with the workload??
IT'S A JOKE
Think the pricing of renewals for our badges is horrendous compared to other districts, very poor service on council side but if we fail there's no options , not sympathetic to drivers who been in trade many, many years

Table 10: Other comments about the Licensing Service not covered in the survey

Appendix A: – Copy of the Survey Questions



Moray Council Licensing Service - Taxis/Private Hire Customer Satisfaction and Communications Survey

We are carrying out a Customer Satisfaction Survey and a survey on communication preferences to help us understand how we can better serve our customers.

For the first part of this survey we would like you to answer a few questions about your recent experiences with The Moray Council Licensing Service

It should only take 5 minutes to complete and all responses will be kept completely anonymous, so please be as open and frank as possible.

For each statement you read, please tick the box that best describes how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with the service that you received from us.

You will then be asked to complete the second part of the survey, which may take a little bit longer, and involves answering a few questions about your preferred method for communicating with the Council.

A comments box is provided at the end of the survey for you to feedback any issues you feel haven't been adequately covered in the main survey.

- * 1. Many of our calls are now routed through the Moray Council Contact Centre can you please advise how satisfied you were with each of the following

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know/not applicable
The length of time you had to queue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friendliness of the member of staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helpfulness of the member of staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The member of staff had sufficient knowledge to deal with your enquiry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They understood your situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Their ability to deal with/sort out your problem/query	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You were given information in a way which was easy for you to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Were you happy with the overall resolution of your enquiry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- * 2. If the Contact Centre could not resolve your query and you were transferred to Licensing staff how satisfied were you with the following?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know/not applicable
The time taken to speak to someone about an enquiry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Someone took responsibility for your enquiry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being able to deal with someone who could help	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The quality of the information received	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff are courteous and approachable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. How satisfied are you with the way the licensing staff did their job?

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Dissatisfied
- ☐ Very dissatisfied
- ☐ Don't know/not applicable

4. What would you say about how the licensing staff did their jobs?

* 5. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know/not applicable
that licensing staff are efficient and respond within appropriate timescales	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
that licensing staff keep you informed and updated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
with the time taken to deal with the matter from start to finish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
that licensing staff did what they said they would	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
with the overall service that you received	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. It would be of assistance if you could provide details of the standard of service received, particularly if you were dissatisfied.

* 7. If you attended a committee meeting how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with...

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
the administration arrangements for the committee meeting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the committee meeting itself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Did you have any problems dealing with the Licensing Service?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If "Yes" what was the nature of the problem?

9. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the way this problem was handled?

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Dissatisfied
- ☐ Very dissatisfied
- ☐ Don't know/not applicable

10. What could have been done better, if anything?

11. An issue surrounding instructions/guidance for adding a taxi or vehicle to the fleet was raised in a previous survey. As a result of this we reviewed and updated the guidance and online information. Do you feel this has improved matters?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please comment on your answer:

12. New legislation means that we will shortly be introducing a new role of Civic Licensing Standards Officer and the costs of this post will need to be met from licensing fees. This officer will act as a source of information and guidance for the trade, supervise compliance with licensing conditions, and deal with disagreements and disputes. Do you have any comments about this or suggestions?



**Moray Council Licensing Service - Taxis/Private Hire
Customer Satisfaction and Communications Survey**

Thank you for completing the first part of this survey. We would now ask you to complete the final part of the survey which will assist our current review of communications with the taxi/private hire trade and other stakeholders.

As part of this we want to find out how we can improve communications, progress relationships and ensure that future consultation activity reaches and engages everyone that it should. We would like to strengthen your involvement in the consultation process, and your feedback will help to inform what we do.

We would like your feedback via a short survey – please share your views and help us improve our communication with you.

A comments box is provided at the end of the survey for you to feedback any issues you feel haven't been adequately covered in either survey.



Questions - Overall Impressions

13. In general, how satisfied are you...

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know/not applicable
with the Council's efforts to keep you informed about licensing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
with your ability to easily find answers to questions you have about licensing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
that your views are sought by the Council on matters that affect you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the member of staff had sufficient knowledge to deal with your enquiry?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
that your views are listened to by the Council?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Questions - Communication information

14. For which items do you believe it is important that you receive information/communications?

Please rate the importance of each item on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "not important at all" and where 5 means "very important".

	1 (not important at all)	2	3	4	5 (very important)	N/A
Application process (forms, guidance, fees, procedures, timescales)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Changes to application processes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Changes to licensing conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Changes to licensing policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Changes to fares and charges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Changes to licensing law/new requirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taxi stances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. What other topic do you think it is important to know about?

16. Please rate how important it is that you know about this topic on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "not important at all" and where 5 means "very important".

1 (not important at all)	2	3	4	5 (very important)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Is there a further topic you think it is important to know about?

18. Please rate how important it is that you know about this topic on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "not important at all" and where 5 means "very important".

1 (not important at all)	2	3	4	5 (very important)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Questions - Communication types

19. How do you currently receive information about what is going on? Please indicate all that apply.

- ☐ Grapevine
- ☐ Trade Association
- ☐ Council website
- ☐ Council facebook
- ☐ Council Twitter
- ☐ Council letter
- ☐ Council e-mail
- ☐ Council text message
- ☐ Council staff
- ☐ Community Council
- ☐ Local Area Forum
- ☐ Tellmescotland portal
- ☐ Media
- ☐ All of the above
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Other (please specify)

20. What single source of information do you depend on most to stay informed about licensing?

21. What is your reason for this source?

22. In future, how would you prefer to receive information about what is going on? Please indicate all that apply.

- ☐ Invite me to a meeting
- ☐ Send an e-mail
- ☐ Send something to me in the mail
- ☐ Online
- ☐ Other (please specify)

23. Why this method?

24. Do you use any of the following:-

- ☐ E-mail
- ☐ Text messaging from a mobile device
- ☐ facebook or other social networking site
- ☐ twitter
- ☐ LinkedIn

25. Would you follow a dedicated Moray Council Licensing facebook page or twitter account?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

26. What is the most helpful way for us to consult you on an issue?

- ☐ Letter
- ☐ E-mail
- ☐ SMS text
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Press
- ☐ Newsletter/leaflet
- ☐ Meeting
- ☐ On-line survey
- ☐ Other (please specify)

27. Why this method?



**Moray Council Licensing Service - Taxis/Private Hire
Customer Satisfaction and Communications Survey**

Website

The Moray Council has its own website and part of this is dedicated to taxi/private-hire licensing. Currently this is the main location for information.

28. How often do you visit the Council's website?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

29. How often do you visit the Council's website Licensing pages?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

30. What content do you use?

31. How valuable do you find it?

32. What would make the website more useful to you?

- ☐ Update the information more often
- ☐ Update so it's more user-friendly
- ☐ FAQs
- ☐ New page
- ☐ Provide more information (please specify required information below at Q21)
- ☐ Provide a way to contact staff
- ☐ Other (please specify)

33. If you ticked "Provide more information" in the previous question please indicate what sort of information you would like to see.

34. Do you have any suggestions for improvements or changes that could be made to the Licensing web pages?



Tellmescotland portal

Tellmescotland is a national portal that has been developed as an alternative way for local authorities and other public bodies to share information via the internet. Moray Council has been using this portal since 2010 for liquor licensing notices. There is scope to use it for general information/consultation/notices.

35. If you have used it did you find it useful?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ If you answered No, what did you not like about it?



Public Access part of Licensing System

Accessed from the Council's web pages, this enables applicants to track the progress of their application online. In addition the web page enables the public to view the Statutory Public Registers for information about licences being processed so that they can comment on them, and also enables the public to access information on licences that have been granted.

36. Are you aware of this web page?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

37. If you have used it did you find it useful?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ If you answered No, what did you not like about it?



**Moray Council Licensing Service - Taxis/Private Hire
Customer Satisfaction and Communications Survey**

E-mail

38. In general, when you receive an e-mail from us do you usually:

- ☐ Read it in full
- ☐ Skim to find out what's important
- ☐ Decide whether it's worth opening based on the subject line
- ☐ Delete without opening
- ☐ You do not receive e-mails

39. In your opinion, do you receive e-mail from us:

- ☐ Not frequently enough
- ☐ An appropriate amount
- ☐ Too frequently
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Do not receive

40. In your opinion, are the messages contained in e-mails from us generally:

- ☐ Too short or not detailed enough
- ☐ About right
- ☐ Too long or detailed
- ☐ No strong opinion
- ☐ Do not receive



Trade Association

41. Are you a member of a Trade Association?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If "Yes" which one (please provide name and contact details of the Trade Association)

Trade Meetings

42. Should Trade meetings take place?

☐ Yes

☐ No

43. How should such meetings be set up?

44. Where should the meetings take place?

45. When should the meetings take place?

46. What should the trade meetings be about?

47. Who should attend?

48. Should these meetings be:

- ☐ held regularly?
- ☐ or just for specific issues as when they arise?
- ☐ no preference

49. The Licensing Committee are considering holding two meetings with the trade per year: one in Elgin and one in other areas on a rota basis. Selected committee members would attend supported by Council officers.

What are your views on this proposal?

50. Would you attend these meetings?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If no please give your reasons:



**Moray Council Licensing Service - Taxis/Private Hire
Customer Satisfaction and Communications Survey**

Questions - final thoughts

51. How can we ensure that information is communicated effectively?

52. How can we ensure that we get your views on future consultations?

53. Do you have any suggestions/improvement ideas for communication?

54. Are you aware of examples of good practice in relation to the issues raised in this survey?



**Moray Council Licensing Service - Taxis/Private Hire
Customer Satisfaction and Communications Survey**

55. Finally, is there any other comment you would like to make about the Licensing Service not covered in the survey?

56. Are you willing to be contacted regarding your responses? If so please provide your contact details.

☐ Yes

☐ No



**Moray Council Licensing Service - Taxis/Private Hire
Customer Satisfaction and Communications Survey**

57. Please enter your contact details

Name	<input type="text"/>
Email Address	<input type="text"/>
Phone Number	<input type="text"/>



**Moray Council Licensing Service - Taxis/Private Hire
Customer Satisfaction and Communications Survey**

That is both surveys now complete. Thank you for your time. Your participation is important and greatly appreciated.

All information received about communications will inform a draft Taxi/Private Hire Communications Strategy to be put forward for the Licensing Committee's consideration and for future consultation. The Strategy will make it clear going forward, when and how we will communicate with you and carry out engagement/consultation.

Please now click "Done" to submit your responses and leave the survey.

Taxi Trade – comments from meetings

Email.

Best for some.
Ok if it gets through.
okay but sometimes issues getting it or reading it
To taxi companies best. Six month update. They will pass on to drivers.

Meetings.

Good although one in the morning and one in the evening (after 6.00 pm) would be better and more flexible.
Ok if we listen.
OK.
Personal approach is better.
Wanted meetings in the past and didn't get. You only speak to us when you want to and you don't listen.

Facebook

Page for taxis – would follow this.
Use for info only and not for complaints.

Post.

Better.
Ok.

Phone

OK
When we phone, we get nowhere with the switchboard. We have to wait ages for someone to get back.

Newsletters

Good too.



Draft Communications Strategy

Taxi/Private Hire Licensing

If you would like this document in a different format, such as Braille, audio tape or large print, please contact:

如需其他格式（如盲文、录音磁带或大号印刷体）的莫瑞市议会资讯，请联系：

Jei pageidaujate tarnybos Moray tarybos teikiamą informaciją gauti kitokiu formatu, pvz., Brailio raštu, garso įrašu ar stambiu šriftu, kreipkitės:

Jeśli potrzebują Państwo informacji od Rady Okręgu Moray w innym formacie, takim jak alfabet Braille'a, kasety audio lub druk dużą czcionką, prosimy o kontakt:

Se necessitar de receber informações por parte do Concelho de Moray num formato diferente, como Braille, cassete áudio ou letras grandes, contacte:

Если вам нужна информация от «Морей Каунсл» в другом формате, например шрифтом Брайля, в виде аудиозаписи или крупно напечатанная, обращайтесь:

Si necesita información del consejo de Moray en un formato diferente, como Braille, cinta de sonido o en letra grande, póngase en contacto con:



**Licensing Team
Moray Council
Council Headquarters
High Street
Elgin
IV30 1BX**



licensing@moray.gov.uk



01343 563027

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Version	Author/reviewer	Date	Amendments
Draft	Legal Services Manager (Litigation & Licensing)	June 2018	

Foreword

As the Licensing Authority for Moray, we are responsible for regulating the taxi and private hire sector.

A taxi, or cab, is a public transport vehicle, which is licensed to 'ply for hire'. This means it can stand at ranks or be hailed / flagged down by members of the public. Fares are regulated by the council and must be displayed on a meter fitted in the vehicle.

A Private hire vehicle, is a public transport vehicle but must be 'pre-booked' in advance through an operator and cannot 'ply for hire'. Fares for private hire vehicles are not regulated by the council (unless a meter is fitted to the vehicle) - the cost of a journey will or should be agreed with the company before the journey starts.

Licences are applied for and issued in respect of a driver, a vehicle and a booking office.

Regulation is in line with national legislation – the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, to ensure that the public is protected from harm whilst using the services of taxis/private hire vehicles and to guard against the infiltration of the industry by organised crime groups and individuals.

We also recognise the importance of the taxi/private hire sector to our local economy and the essential service that they provide in Moray to both residents and visitors.

Having an informed and engaged trade and public will enable us to effectively perform our role, along with successful and positive relationships with our other stakeholders who have a role in the licensing regime.

This strategy directs how communication will be undertaken over the next few years to support our work.

The strategy will be reviewed every 3 years.

We welcome views on how it can be built on and improved.

Why we need a strategy

We need to communicate effectively and meaningfully with the trade and public, and achieve fuller involvement from them regarding issues that affect them to help inform our policies and practices, and support us in fulfilling statutory obligations. We also need to improve awareness of and understanding of our work.

We need to work with other stakeholders to progress relationships and strengthen their involvement in activity.

Working and communication methods are evolving and the tools available to us now are very different from the past. There is a greater drive for electronic communications and the ever present need to ensure that we use available resources efficiently and effectively.

Consultation and engagement can mean different things to different people, and there are challenges around meeting expectations and demands, addressing concerns over changes/new ways of working and maintaining positive relationships at a time of reducing staff resources.

It is therefore important to be clear about the level and types of consultation and engagement that will be undertaken in relation to taxi/private hire licensing.

This document outlines how we will communicate with the licensed trade, the Moray community and our partners in the regulatory process in relation to taxi and private hire licensing.

Our stakeholders

We consider our stakeholders to be:

Applicants for licences and licence holders

- Taxi/private hire drivers licence holders
- Taxi/private hire vehicle (operators) licence holders
- Booking office licence holders

Moray Community

- Members of the public
- Community Councils
- Local Area Forums
- Equalities Groups

External organisations

- Police Scotland
- Home Office

Decision makers

- Licensing Committee members
- Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Council Staff

- Licensing Standards Officer
- Licensing staff
- Customer Services staff
- Fleet Services staff
- Planning staff

These stakeholders' and details of their areas of interest in taxi/private hire licensing can be seen in the **Appendix**.

Why we communicate

We communicate with stakeholders about applications to ensure there is relevant information available for decision making and to communicate the outcome of applications.

We communicate with stakeholders about the issues that do, or that may, impact upon them and to gather views to inform our policies and practices.

We communicate to raise awareness and understanding of how we operate and changes that are coming to our processes through new legislation or policy.

Legislation places several specific duties on us to communicate and engage with our stakeholders on certain matters, for example for taxi fare reviews and for assessing the impact on groups with various protected characteristics (equalities) when developing policies.

What we mean by inform, consult and engage

It is helpful to have a shared understanding of what we mean by the terms information, consultation and engagement and to have awareness that these are progressive levels, each requiring a different commitment from those involved.

The following table demonstrates the levels of communication and range of tools that can be used.

	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	TOOLS
1	Inform (giving information)	Providing stakeholders with appropriate information about our work, processes, policies, decisions and changes that will affect them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letters/Email• Newsletters/Leaflets• Website• Social media• Telephone• Face to face meetings
2	Consult (asking opinions)	All activities designed to gather, understand and discuss the experiences, views, ideas and priorities of stakeholders. The information gathered will be used to inform decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letters/Email• Newsletters/Leaflets• Face to face meetings• Focus groups• Self-completed questionnaires• Feedback channels• Press notices/ advertisements• Social media
3	Engage (working together)	Working in partnership with stakeholders and involving them fully in the decision making process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working groups• Workshops• Forums

We communicate with stakeholders at different levels and at different times for different purposes.

Stakeholders too, may want to communicate at different levels and at different times. We recognise the importance of stakeholders having opportunities to communicate in ways that suit them and to shift between levels. For example, some stakeholders simply want to be kept informed, others want a means of sharing their thoughts and experiences with us, while some others want to be actively involved in shaping new policies.

Where we are now

Current tools that are used to communicate

There are a number of tools already in place to support communication.

Council website

The Moray Council has its own [website](#) and part of this is dedicated to taxi licensing. It provides instant electronic access to a variety of information e.g. application forms, guidance, fee tables, licensing processes, information about dress code, medical exams, and consultations. It has FAQ and news pages.

In addition, all Licensing Committee agendas, reports and minutes are published on the Council's website.

Council Licensing System – Public Access

This is accessed from the Council taxi web pages and is the on line public access part of the Council's licensing IT system. This enables applicants to track online the progress with their application and enables the public to view the Statutory Public Registers for information about licences being processed, comment on these and also access information about ones that have been granted.

Council Licensing System – Consultee Access

This is accessed from the Council taxi web pages and is the on line consultee access part of the Council's licensing IT system. Access is restricted to consultees and this enables them to view and comment on applications. Planning officers receive notice of all booking office applications received via this system.

Tell me Scotland

Tellmesotland is a national portal that has been developed as an alternative way for local authorities and other public bodies to share information with the public via the internet. Moray Council has been using the portal since 2010 and to date it has been well used by licensing. We have a statutory obligation to publish certain notices in the local press, and have been using tellmesotland in tandem with the press for those notices. More recently the portal has been used to advise the public of current consultations.

Tellmesotland is free to use, thereby helping the Council to reduce its spending on press advertising, and is available to all Council services, providing the opportunity to share information such as events, consultations/engagement, with customers.

Trade Meetings

Meetings between the trade and the Chair of the Council's Licensing Committee and other Committee members, supported by licensing officers, have been organised from time to time and typically to discuss such matters as dress code, medical requirements and examinations, DVLA driver records, guide dogs, unlicensed drivers and enforcement.

Other Stakeholder Meetings

Licensing officers meet quarterly with Fleet Services officers, officers from Customer Services and Licensing Standards Officers to discuss various operational issues. For example, arrangements for taxi meter checks and resealing following a taxi fare review, changes arising from new legislation such as right to work checks.

Meetings take place as needed with Police Scotland Officers to discuss such matters as complaints and local operations.

Licensing Committee Policy Working Group

A working group is set up by the Committee from time to time to meet with licensing officers and other involved parties to provide input and recommendations in respect of certain matters during the preparation and revision of various policies. Various matters have been referred to a working group e.g. a review of taxi licence conditions, a fee review, and for some matters decisions as to consultation requirements have been left to the working group.

Moray Equalities Groups

There are various groups representing the various characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010. These can be involved in consultations on policies through the Council's Equal Opportunities Officer.

Letter/Email/SMS Text Messaging

Community Councils and Local Area Forums are consulted via email and letter on various policy matters, for example, regarding taxi fare reviews.

Police Scotland is a statutory consultee for taxi licences and as such receives notice of all applications received via email. They are also advised of consultations and their views sought e.g. on the process for checking an applicant's DVLA driver record.

Within the Council, Fleet Services officers are consulted on relevant matters by email e.g. taxi fare reviews.

Work has been underway for some time to gather email addresses for licence holders to facilitate electronic communications with them. Email communications have been used for such matters as notification of forthcoming changes, e.g. an email with a message that news and information has been posted on the Council's website or that a consultation is live.

Reminders to renew licences are issued automatically to licence holders from the Council's licensing IT system by email as well as by SMS text message, and where neither email nor mobile telephone numbers are held, by letter.

Letters are also still issued to applicants for licences at various parts of the application process e.g. acknowledging receipt of an application, advising of a committee hearing/decision and to issue licences granted.

There is a dedicated email address for licensing generally:

licensing@moray.gov.uk

And a specific one for the Licensing Standards Officer:

LicStandardsOfficers@moray.gov.uk

These are used by licensing staff to send and receive electronic communications.

Telephone calls

There is a dedicated telephone number for taxi/private hire licensing generally:

01343 563027

And a specific one for the Licensing Standards Officer:

01343 563030

All calls to these numbers are received within the Council's Contact Centre. Customer Services staff will deal with the call if they can or transfer it on to an appropriate licensing staff member.

Local Media

From time to time, press notices, adverts and releases are used. For example, public notice of taxi fare reviews must be given by way of press advertisement and press releases have been issued when new information is available for viewing on the Council's website.

Social Media

The Council has a facebook page and twitter account, which have been used to promote consultations and news.

Printed Material

In addition to the material available on the Council's website, news and updates are provided to the Trade via Newsletters and Guidance Notes.
[Insights gathered from stakeholders](#)

During 2017 through to early 2018 a communications survey was issued (along with our regular satisfaction survey) to the trade and opportunities were taken at trade and other stakeholder meetings to gather comments and views on communication. The purpose was to find out how we could improve communications, progress relationships and ensure that future activity reached and engaged everyone that it should.

Trade

There was a low response rate (4.1%) to the trade survey. This makes it difficult to draw representative conclusions, but there is some data to indicate how communication is perceived by those that responded.

Respondents were generally satisfied with the information they received on licensing and that the Council seeks their views on matters that affect them. However, there was a significant minority who were dissatisfied with this and in particular that the Council did not listen to their views.

Most respondents wanted information on the application process, followed closely by updates on changes to licensing conditions, laws, fares and charges and policy. Respondents also requested more information on police checks and monitoring of regulations, and better face-to-face communications.

Most respondents said they obtained licensing information through word-of-mouth, Council e-mails and letters, and then from the Council website. Council e-mails and letters are the 2 sources depended on by most respondents for staying informed about licensing matters. People who preferred e-mails liked their convenience and the ability to retain a record, while those who preferred letters liked the formality of written correspondence, especially for important information.

In relation to e-mails, of those that received them, most read them in full, thought the content was about right, but were equally split on whether the frequency was about right or not frequent enough.

The most popular method for being consulted on issues was by e-mail or letter, with newsletters/leaflets and SMS texting next. There was relatively little support for meetings or using the Council's website. The majority of respondents used e-mails and texts for communicating, and just under half used social media. LinkedIn and twitter were not commonly used, and neither were visits to the Council's website. Visitors to the Licensing pages were rare and the few comments received on the value of the page were mixed. Half the respondents offered suggestions for improving the page including providing a way to contact staff along with more regular updates. One person suggested using the website as a way of making complaints, and another as an anonymous tip-off line to report unlicensed or over-charging operators.

The Tellmesotland portal and the Public Access part of the Licensing System were relatively unknown by respondents (particularly the Tellmesotland site). Of the very few who had used the Public Access element half found it useful.

Despite the lack of support for meetings as a way of consulting on new issues there was very strong support (79%) for trade meetings, although only half the respondents thought they would be able to attend.

Attendance at subsequent trade meetings was also low (5.3%); however comments received indicated that email communications were best for some, letters best for others, and that meetings and newsletters would be good with some saying that they would follow a dedicated licensing Facebook page for information.

We have separately received complaints for calling meetings at short notice, not giving people enough time to get organised to attend,

communication has been sent to old addresses and that our records are not up to date and sending multiple letters to licence holders where they hold more than one licence when one would do.

Other stakeholders

Police Scotland and other Council officers indicated that stakeholder meetings would be good to discuss issues, changes and developments. Police Scotland is also keen to be part of meetings organised with the trade.

Some Licensing Committee members previously indicated support for:-

- Committee and trade meetings twice per year, one in Elgin and another to circuit around Moray with consideration of evening and weekend options for timings.
- Use of a dedicated taxi licensing Facebook page.
- Looking to the Licensing Standards Officer for a communications role.

Others ...[from future consultation].

Conclusions

Activity is being undertaken but this is failing to secure the engagement of a majority of trade stakeholders. Neither is there one common, preferred approach for communications.

Where we want to be

We want to have ongoing, effective communication with our varied stakeholders.

In particular, we want to:

- Do more to understand our stakeholders who are impacted by our work;
- Keep stakeholders well informed;
- Promote understanding of our work and activities;
- Employ appropriate and varied opportunities for communication;
- Be cost effective in communications so that we can keep licence costs reasonable.
- Maintain a two-way communication with our stakeholders to ensure that feedback is consistently fed into planning and delivery;
- Promote respect and trust between the Council and our stakeholders;
- Promote trade engagement, including increased trade engagement levels with surveys and meetings; and
- Make good use of the Licensing Standards Officer to communicate with the trade and to provide advice and support.

How we will get there

What we will do

We will ensure that our communication activities are relevant and meaningful to the stakeholders taking part. With this in mind, we have adopted 3 different communication levels:

1 = Informing: Providing stakeholders with appropriate information about our work, processes, policies, decisions and changes that will affect them.

2 = Consulting: All activities designed to gather, understand and discuss the experiences, views, ideas and priorities of stakeholders. The information gathered will be used to inform decision making.

3 = Engaging: Working in partnership with stakeholders and involving them fully in the decision making process.

We recognise that different approaches will be needed to reach different stakeholders and communication methods will vary depending on the communication level, stakeholder and issue involved.

The communication levels and methods that we will adopt for each stakeholder/area of interest are detailed in the **Appendix**.

Where various communication methods are indicated we will start with the most direct, cost effective one(s), progressing on to others as needed to reach stakeholders not reached by previous means.

We will ensure that our communications are timely, clear, jargon-free, in plain English, and easy to understand and that the message is the same for all relevant audiences.

We will communicate regularly with trade stakeholders by planning a programme of trade meetings, which will include two meetings per year with the Chair of the Licensing Committee and other selected Committee members, one meeting in Elgin and another in Forres/Keith/Buckie/Losiemouth on a rota basis. We will also make use of drop in sessions to enable trade members to seek information and share their views outwith more formal meeting settings. We will seek to include other stakeholders in trade meetings/drop in sessions where appropriate.

We will make full use of the Licensing Standards Officer role to communicate with the trade and to provide information and guidance to the trade. This will involve face to face communications where possible and taking opportunities during visits to check contact details, promote use of the Council's website, particularly the news pages, and advise of upcoming meetings/events/changes and feedback from consultation and engagement.

We will plan all significant activity, including consultations and trade meetings, ensuring sufficient time is allowed for stakeholders to share their experiences, contribute their ideas, opinions and views about issues and for feedback to be provided.

We will strive to be as inclusive as possible in our reach to ensure that individuals or groups whose voices are not traditionally as strongly heard or represented are identified and involved so we do not miss out on their contribution.

We will remind all licence holders of their legal obligation to notify us of any changes in their contact details and urge them to assist us in maintaining contact with them. We will ensure that when we do receive notification of a change that our records are updated appropriately and that when issuing mail we cross check mailing lists to ensure that licence holders with multiple licences receive relevant information once.

There is scope for the Tellmesotland portal it to be used to a greater extent for general information notices. This will be used, in addition to other methods, for all public communications.

The use of social media such as Twitter and Facebook has become the norm for people of all ages and this is now a quick and efficient way to reach a large audience although we need to be mindful of inclusion and consider the needs of stakeholders who may not have access to digital channels. We will therefore continue to make use of the Council's general Facebook page and Twitter account and this will complement other additional communication methods.

[What we expect from stakeholders](#)

We alone cannot successfully make changes as to how we engage with people and stakeholders have a part to play to strengthen their involvement in activity. In particular, all stakeholders need to notify us of any changes in their contact details to assist us in maintaining contact with them and when they have something to contribute, take the opportunities available to do this.

[Conclusion](#)

This strategy provides an opportunity to clarify, simplify and reduce the costs of communications.

The delivery of this strategy is based on the required resources being in place to ensure our communication objectives can be taken forward.

To test the success of this strategy we will carry out a further communications survey in three years' time. We will also establish a set of measures to monitor take up of activity and continue to identify stakeholder engagement preferences. Communication methods will continue to be developed and improved to ensure they meet the needs of our varied stakeholders.

Actions Summary:

- Review all communication for plain English.
- Maintain and develop the Council website, including a dedicated news page, and promote its use.

- Develop annually a programme of stakeholder meetings/drop in sessions.
- Include other stakeholders in trade meetings/drop in sessions as appropriate.
- Continue to expand use of the Council's social media sites.
- Plan significant activity.
- Develop the information and guidance role of Licensing Standards Officer and wherever possible use this officer as the main conduit of information to the trade.
- Remind all licence holders of their legal obligation to notify us of any changes in their contact details and urge them to assist us in this so that we can maintain contact with them.
- Ensure that when we do receive such notification that our records are updated with the new contact details.
- Ensure that all mailing lists are cross checked to ensure that licence holders with multiple licences receive information once.
- Survey communication needs in advance of reviewing this strategy.
- Establish a set of measures to monitor take up of activity and satisfaction with this to continue to identify stakeholder engagement preferences.
- Following engagement, capture what changed as a result and feed this back to stakeholders.

Interaction with the Council's Corporate Communications Section (CCS)

We will liaise with the CCS to ensure that our activity is managed and co-ordinated to avoid duplication and will draw upon their expertise and resources. We will feed in to the Corporate Engagement calendar, which lists activity that will be hosted on the intranet and internet, co-ordinates activity and informs the community about opportunities to get involved.

Communications Matrix

Stakeholders	Areas of interest	Communication level¹	Communication method²
Trade			
Applicants for licences	Application forms, fees, process, guidance.	1	Council website. Phone. Face to face - Licensing Standards Officer.
	Progress with an application	1	Council Licensing system - Public Access. Email/letter. Phone.
	Decision on an application	1	Letter/email. Council Licensing system - Public Access.
All licence holders	Changes to fees following a fee review	1	Council website. Social media.
	Taxi stances	2	Council website. Social media. Email/letter. Trade meetings.
	Road closures/ incidents affecting taxi stances	1	Council website. Social media. Email/letter. Face to face – Licensing Standards Officers

¹ Communication levels:

1 = Informing: Providing stakeholders with appropriate information about our work, processes, policies, decisions and changes that will affect them.

2 = Consulting: All activities designed to gather, understand and discuss the experiences, views, ideas and priorities of stakeholders. The information gathered will be used to inform decision making.

3 = Engaging: Working in partnership with stakeholders and involving them fully in the decision making process.

² This will vary depending on the stakeholder and issue involved.

Stakeholders	Areas of interest	Communication level ³	Communication method ⁴
	Policy and policy changes (including changes to conditions)	2	Council website. Social media. Email/letter. Trade meetings/drop in sessions. Licensing Standards Officer visits.
	Legal changes and issues	1	Council website. Social media. Email/letter. Trade meetings/drop in sessions. Licensing Standards Officer visits.
	Complaints	1, 2 and 3	Email/letter. Phone. Face to face – Licensing Standards Officer. Licensing Standards Officer visits.
	Enforcement issues	1, 2 and 3	Email/letter. Phone. Face to face – Licensing Standards Officer. Licensing Standards Officer visits. Trade meetings.
	Renewal reminders	1	Email/letter. SMS text message.

³ Communication levels:

1 = Informing: Providing stakeholders with appropriate information about our work, processes, policies, decisions and changes that will affect them.

2 = Consulting: All activities designed to gather, understand and discuss the experiences, views, ideas and priorities of stakeholders. The information gathered will be used to inform decision making.

3 = Engaging: Working in partnership with stakeholders and involving them fully in the decision making process.

⁴ This will vary depending on the stakeholder and issue involved.

Stakeholders	Areas of interest	Communication level ⁵	Communication method ⁶
	Feedback on consultations.	1	Council website. Social media. Email/letter. Trade meetings. Licensing Standards Officer visits.
	Satisfaction with service and communications.	2	Biennial survey issued by email/letter. Trade meetings/drop in sessions. Council website.
Operators	Taxi/private hire fare review. Every 18 months.	2	Email/letter. Council website. Local media. Trade meetings/drop in sessions. Face to face – Licensing Standards Officer.
Moray community			
Public	New applications	1	Council Licensing system - Public Access, which provides our public register.
	Policy and policy changes	2	Council website. Local media. Social media. TellmeScotland
	Taxi Fare Review. Every 18 months.	2	Council website. Local media. (Press advert - statutory requirement, 1 month period). Social media. TellmeScotland

⁵ Communication levels:

1 = Informing: Providing stakeholders with appropriate information about our work, processes, policies, decisions and changes that will affect them.

2 = Consulting: All activities designed to gather, understand and discuss the experiences, views, ideas and priorities of stakeholders. The information gathered will be used to inform decision making.

3 = Engaging: Working in partnership with stakeholders and involving them fully in the decision making process.

⁶ This will vary depending on the stakeholder and issue involved.

Stakeholders	Areas of interest	Communication level⁷	Communication method⁸
	Taxi stances	2	Council website. Local media. Social media. TellmeScotland
	Road closures/ incidents affecting taxi stances	1	Council website. Social media.
	Complaints/ Enforcement issues	1, 2 and 3	Email/letter. Phone. Face to face – Licensing Standards Officer.
	Feedback on consultations.	1	Council website. Local media. Social media. TellmeScotland
Community Councils	Taxi Fare Review. Every 18 months.	2	Email/letter.
	Policy and policy changes	2	Email/letter. Face to face at meetings.
	Complaints/ Enforcement issues	1, 2 and 3	Email/letter. Phone. Face to face – Licensing Standards Officer.
	Feedback on consultations.	1	Email/letter.
Local Area Forums	Taxi Fare Review. Every 18 months.	2	Email/letter.
	Policy and policy	2	Email/letter.

⁷ Communication levels:

1 = Informing: Providing stakeholders with appropriate information about our work, processes, policies, decisions and changes that will affect them.

2 = Consulting: All activities designed to gather, understand and discuss the experiences, views, ideas and priorities of stakeholders. The information gathered will be used to inform decision making.

3 = Engaging: Working in partnership with stakeholders and involving them fully in the decision making process.

⁸ This will vary depending on the stakeholder and issue involved.

	Changes		
Stakeholders	Areas of interest	Communication level⁹	Communication method¹⁰
	Feedback on consultations.	1	Email/letter.
Equalities Groups	Policy and policy changes	2	Via Council's Equal Opportunities Officer
	Feedback on consultations.	1	Via Council's Equal Opportunities Officer.
	Taxi Stances	2	Via Council's Equal Opportunities Officer.
External Bodies			
Police Scotland	Applications	2	Email. Council Licensing system - Consultee Access.
	Decision on an application	1	Email. Council Licensing system – Consultee and Public Access.
	Licensing offences	1	Email. Telephone.
	Policy development and changes	2	Email. Stakeholder meeting.
	Taxi stances	2	Email. Stakeholder meeting.
	Issues/developments	3	Email. Stakeholder meeting.
	Feedback on consultations.	1	Email. Stakeholder meeting.
Home Office	Illegal workers	1 and 2	Email/letter.

⁹ Communication levels:

1 = Informing: Providing stakeholders with appropriate information about our work, processes, policies, decisions and changes that will affect them.

2 = Consulting: All activities designed to gather, understand and discuss the experiences, views, ideas and priorities of stakeholders. The information gathered will be used to inform decision making.

3 = Engaging: Working in partnership with stakeholders and involving them fully in the decision making process.

¹⁰ This will vary depending on the stakeholder and issue involved.

Decision makers			
Members of the Council's Licensing Committee	Applications granted under powers delegated to officers	1	Quarterly information report.
	Policy development and changes	3	Working Group and Committee meetings.
	Trade views and comments	2	Annual meetings between chair of committee and selected members with trade, supported by licensing officers. One meeting in Elgin and another in Forres/Keith/Buckie/Losiemouth on a rota basis. Notes of meetings forwarded to all members for information.
	Feedback on consultations.	1	Working Group and Committee meetings.
Chair of Committee	Press and media releases	1 and 2	An as-and-when email consulting and confirming licensing related press releases as they are sent to the press.
Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Moray Council	Press and media releases	1 and 2	An as-and-when email consulting and confirming licensing related press releases as they are sent to the press.
Moray Council staff			
Licensing Standards Officer	Application forms, fees, process, guidance.	1	Council website. Licensing staff.
	Applications.	2	Council Licensing system.
	Decision on an application	1	Council Licensing system.

Stakeholders	Areas of interest	Communication level¹¹	Communication method¹²
	Complaints/ enforcement issues	1	Email. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	General issues and updates	1, 2 and 3	Email. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Policy and policy changes.	2 and 3	Email. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Legal changes and issues.	1 and 2	Email. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Changes to fees following a fee review	1	Council website. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Taxi stances	2	Email. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Feedback on consultations.	1	Email. Quarterly Stakeholder meeting.
Customer Services staff	General issues and updates	1, 2 and 3	Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Policy and policy changes.	2 and 3	Email. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Legal changes and issues.	1 and 2	Email. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Changes to fees following a fee review	1	Council website. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.

¹¹ Communication levels:

1 = Informing: Providing stakeholders with appropriate information about our work, processes, policies, decisions and changes that will affect them.

2 = Consulting: All activities designed to gather, understand and discuss the experiences, views, ideas and priorities of stakeholders. The information gathered will be used to inform decision making.

3 = Engaging: Working in partnership with stakeholders and involving them fully in the decision making process.

¹² This will vary depending on the stakeholder and issue involved.

Stakeholders	Areas of interest	Communication level ¹³	Communication method ¹⁴
	Consultations/ surveys.	1	Email. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Feedback on consultations.	1	Email. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
Fleet Services staff	Taxi Fare Reviews	1 and 2	Email. Phone. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Policy development and changes	1, 2 and 3	Phone. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.
	Inspection information/feedback	1	Phone. Face to face - Licensing Standards Officer.
Planning staff	Booking office applications	2	Council Licensing system - Consultee Access.
	Decision on Booking Office application.	1	Council Licensing system - Consultee Access.
	Policy development and changes	2	Email. Six monthly stakeholder meetings.
Roads staff	Taxi Stances	1, 2, and 3	Email. Phone. Quarterly stakeholder meetings.

¹³ Communication levels:

1 = Informing: Providing stakeholders with appropriate information about our work, processes, policies, decisions and changes that will affect them.

2 = Consulting: All activities designed to gather, understand and discuss the experiences, views, ideas and priorities of stakeholders. The information gathered will be used to inform decision making.

3 = Engaging: Working in partnership with stakeholders and involving them fully in the decision making process.

¹⁴ This will vary depending on the stakeholder and issue involved.

APPENDIX 4

Excerpts from the Scottish Government commissioned research in to Taxi and Private Hire Car Market and Local Licensing referred to within the body of the report.

Executive Summary

- 1.13 Significant differences existed between authorities in relation to the method by which public and industry views were sought and considered, ranging between regular forum and occasional ad-hoc postal engagement, though all authorities identified a need to be aware of and consider the range of impacts that may arise from policy development. The range of stakeholders and methods of engagement are set out in subsequent text, whilst the frequency of such engagement was considered to relate to the requirements for policy development and extent to which engagement would be taken up.

Trade Structure and Representation

- 4.23 The study sought to identify the relationships between the trade and authorities across Scotland. This included the nature of the trade, its structure and representation, and the methods by which authorities developed policies in discussion with the trade and the public. Authorities were asked to identify the nature of taxi operations in their area, and the extent to which differing operating types were represented. Categories allowed for independent operation, without grouping; groups representing taxis and PHCs, and groups representing taxis or PHCs separately. The categories used were:
- Independent street taxis (without radio rings)
 - Independent radio rings with taxis and PHCs
 - Taxi Owners' Associations with radio ring
 - Taxi Owners' Associations without radio rings
 - Dispatch companies with PHCs only
 - Dispatch companies with taxis only
- 4.24 Independent taxis operate without membership of a radio circuit or company. In an urban environment this would require a dependence on street pick ups through hailing and use of ranks, giving rise to the term “street taxi” in many cities. Independent operation in a rural environment reflects differing practices, by contrast, with a larger number of sole traders operating on a stand-alone basis. Rural communities are also less likely to operate taxi ranks or have a significant hailed trade outside larger towns and conurbations.
- 4.25 Of the operating patterns indicated by responding authorities, 37% of taxis and PHCs operate independently of a central company or radio circuit. This figure falls to 33% of city based taxis operating independently, though some disparity exists between the largest cities. A far smaller number of taxis are reported to operate independently in Edinburgh (25%) than their equivalent in Glasgow (just under 50%). The difference is partially explained by the presence of a number of radio companies in Edinburgh compared to one in Glasgow.

- 4.26 Independent mixed radio rings with taxi and PHCs accounted for 37% of the Scottish market, though this fell significantly to 18% in larger cities, reflecting the distinct difference between taxis and PHCs in these markets. Taxi owners' associations (9%) and Company based dispatches of taxis only (27%) represented a small part of the total taxi market, but a more significant role in cities (42%), with a very high proportion of the Glasgow market (75% of all taxis).
- 4.27 In addition to operators and companies, a number of authorities recognised taxi trade and trade union groups. This included Taxi Owners' associations, the union Unite, and expert reference groups, the latter comprising differing trade and stakeholder participants.
- 4.28 Representation of the trade differed quite significantly between authorities communicating directly with the operators and companies, and those seeking a wider input. Patterns included the operation of general forum, working group meetings and meetings arising from specific issues. A number of locations recognised the union Unite as a representative body, though this was not seen as universal. Larger authorities tended to convene meetings with representative groups on a regular basis, though the frequency altered between locations (Glasgow and Renfrewshire every quarter, Aberdeen City, every six months), with additional meetings convened in response to specific issues. Other locations convened meetings on an ad-hoc basis. A smaller number, notably where operators are mainly independent, consulted as they felt appropriate, including consultation via letter (Dumfries and Galloway; East Lothian and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar).
- 4.29 A number of authorities highlighted that differences of opinion were often expressed at regular meetings, with little agreement between different parts of the trade. This was felt to add to the complexity of decision making.
- 4.30 The opinion of the public specific to taxi services was included directly in a number of authorities, through surveys and public participation, as well as through the committee process in all areas. Aberdeen City Council included taxi matters as part of a city voice survey, as well as including stakeholders, such as disability and older peoples representatives on their advisory panels. A small number of authorities reported direct public involvement, but the majority did not have a direct input, relying rather on objections to specific actions and a recognised complaints process.

Licensing Policies and Policy Engagement

- 5.13 Processes for involving both the trade and public in policy development varied significantly between locations. Proactive approaches including the constitution and meeting of expert panels, including a wide range of users and operator representatives, though the extent and breadth of such panels may in itself contribute to a level of disagreement within the forum. A number of authorities reported that the frequency at which expert panels were held had created difficulties in resourcing, with one moving from quarterly to twice annually. Other authorities reported an ad-hoc approach to the calling of panels, reflecting actual policy development rather than an on-going forum. A small number of authorities wrote to operators and licence holders as the basis for involvement, suggesting that a physical forum is not the only, and may not be the most appropriate, method of engagement.

- 5.14 The extent to which taxi forums appear appropriate is most likely to reflect specific policy development, or major issues affecting the delivery of services. Nevertheless, the presence of a common and repeated meeting allows for the presentation and discussion of issues arising in the supply and use of taxis that might not otherwise be considered or known about. Locations with a regular meeting convened on a quarterly or similarly frequent basis reported difficulty in resourcing these meetings. It is equally possible that repetitive meetings may lose focus or interest where new issues are not identified. A further issue is alluded to in some authorities, that attendance at the meetings may not be fully representative.
- 5.15 Representative groups, including those of public interest, such as disability action groups, groups representing particular sectors of the population, and other stakeholders do remain relevant to the development of taxi policy. Localised forum and engagement ensures that the issues presented remain relevant and in the interest of the group.

APPENDIX 5

Excerpts from Scottish Government Guidance “Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing Best Practice for Licensing Authorities”, Second Edition April 2012 referred to within the body of the report.

Role of Licensing

- 2.3. It is, of course, good practice for local authorities to consult on any significant proposed changes in licensing rules. Such consultation should include not only the taxi and private hire car trade but also customers, local businesses/organisations (public and private) dependent on or affected by the trade and organisations with a wider transport interest (e.g. Transform Scotland). Again it is particularly useful to be aware of the profile of the local market to best target consultation, ensuring groups with particular requirements (i.e. due to a disability) are represented.

Security

- 5.6. Licensing authorities should actively promote and facilitate good links between the taxi and private hire car trades and the local police force, including active participation in any crime reduction initiatives.

Excerpts from the Scottish Development Department Circular 25/1986 Information for Local Licensing Authorities on the Licensing of Taxi and Private Hire Cars and their Drivers referred to within the body of the report.

Re taxi fees (section 12 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982):

- 2.25 Differing levels of fees should bear an obvious relationship to costs incurred (for example a taxi driver's licence involving a "knowledge test" should cost more than a "private hire" driver's licence) and the Secretary of State expects that authorities will ensure that costs are kept to the minimum and that the basis for the fees charged should be explained to the local trade organisations, who should be consulted well before charges or adjustments are proposed. It may often be convenient to adjust charges at the same time as taxi fares are reviewed” and

Re taxi fares (section 19 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982):

- 2.35 Before fixing any scales or carrying out any review the licensing authority is required to undertake consultations with the taxi trade and the public and to take into account any representations received. As regards the taxi trade, consultation must be with persons or organisations appearing to the licensing authority to be, or be representative of, the operators of taxis within their area. It is open to the licensing authority to decide who are so representative but as it is open to any taxi operator to appeal under section 18 against the decision it is likely to be in authorities' interests to try to reduce appeals by as full and early consultation as possible. Public consultation must be by public notice.

