

MANDATORY CCTV IN TAXIS:

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

9 responses were received to the consultation.

One was from Director of the National Private Hire & Taxi Association, in which he highlights flaws in the proposed CCTV technical specifications. He happens to also be director of one of the approved suppliers for Rotherham and has provided improved specifications for consideration based on his company's experience dealing with other local authorities. Revisions to technical specifications are being reviewed to address any errors.

One was received from the Police & Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire who are supportive of mandatory CCTV and the benefits they consider it brings.

The remaining 7 were received from the private hire trade, either from operators or drivers who own vehicles. These were primarily opposed to the proposals, although two operators indicated they wanted exemptions to be considered for specific types of business.

The table below summarises the issues raised by the trade, by category, with officer comments in the final column.

Issue Raised:	No of Respondents who raised it:	Officer Comments
COST: General objection to the £500-800 cost per vehicle. Most indicated the cost is prohibitive, especially for small operators.	6	Lower cost systems will not meet the strict demands of a legally-compliant policy. It is for members to determine if the benefits of the policy justify the costs to vehicle proprietors. Options for financial support, whether internal or external, have been explored with no success.
COVID 19: Of those concerned with the cost several pointed out they are in financial difficulty as a result of the pandemic.	4	The policy is in line with statutory guidance that CCTV policies should be introduced unless good reason exists not to, and as the impact of Covid 19 is expected to be temporary it shouldn't affect the merits of the policy.

		Members may wish to take a view on whether the timing of implementation should be conditional on progress of the the post-Covid economic recovery.
<p>EXEMPTIONS: Request that executive/business operators be allowed exemptions to the policy in order to protect client confidentiality.</p>	1	<p>All licence holders are legally entitled to apply for exemptions to policy requirements. Members need to decide whether such requests should all be referred to Sub-Committee for consideration or whether the policy should set criteria for exemptions (i.e. evidence of executive-only travel) to enable officers to grant an exemption under delegated powers. NB Refusal of exemptions will be subject to the right of appeal to the Magistrates Court. If refused without adequate reasons there is a risk of costs being awarded against the Council.</p>
<p>NO BENEFITS: Objections based on a lack of need/benefit in having the policy. E.g. two respondents indicated their extensive clean record negates the need for CCTV, another pointed to a lack of need for CCTV when they perform mainly airport transfers.</p>	3	<p>Members have previously determined that there are no strong local reasons not to pursue mandatory CCTV in taxis. In considering the consultation response Members must assess whether these responses change that position. In doing so Members must take into account the number of representations and whether that renders the overall policy unnecessary.</p>