

**Councillor Maya Ali
Radford Ward**

To:

Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP, Secretary of State for Transport
Simon Foster, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner
Richard Parker, Mayor of the West Midlands
Jess Philips MP, Minister for Safeguarding and Violence
Against Women and Girls

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Date:

Re: Proposed Taxi Licensing Reforms

In January 2025, a taxi driver from Coventry was jailed for sexually assaulting a woman in the back of his cab. As a result of this, the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board of Coventry City Council, agreed to establish a task and finish group to consider whether taxis licensed in Coventry should require CCTV.

However, Members were concerned that even if Coventry required CCTV cameras in taxis licensed in Coventry, this would not affect taxis operating in Coventry which are licensed with other local authorities, a consequence of “out of area” hiring.

While the task and finish group was running, the Government launched a consultation on making all local transport authorities in England responsible for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing. The task and finish group welcomed the consultation, however identified some issues and gaps within the scope of the consultation.

The consultation is limited to asking questions about cost implications to local authorities, transport authorities and taxi license holders and wider economic benefits. There are no questions about whether respondees consider that the proposals will address the issues of safeguarding raised by the National Audit on Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (Casey Report).

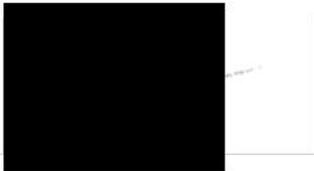
The proposals suggested in the consultation will not address the issue of “out of area” hiring, as there is nothing proposed that standardises licensing requirements nationally. For example, taxis licensed in Warwickshire could still operate in the West Midlands region with different licensing requirements. Therefore, the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board do not consider that making all local transport authorities responsible for taxi and

PHV licensing will meet recommendation 11 in the Casey report, that “*more rigorous approaches – and consistency in those approaches across local authorities – is necessary*”¹, unless national standards for licensing are introduced.

The Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board also request clear timescales for progress on this matter following the closure of the public consultation.

The Council will submit a formal response to the current consultation, but the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board wanted to take this opportunity to raise their concerns on the limitations of the proposals being consulted on.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Maya Ali
Chair of Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)

¹ Recommendation 11 - [National Audit on Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse \(accessible\) - GOV.UK](#)