

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Licensing Committee

## Agenda Item 22 (a)

**Subject:** Petitions

**Date of meeting:** 13 February 2024

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**Ward(s) affected:** All

### **1. Purpose of the report and policy context**

1.1 To receive any petitions submitted directly to Democratic Services or any e-Petition submitted via the council's website.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 That the committee responds to the petition either by noting it or where it is considered more appropriate, calls for an officer report on the matter.

### **3. Context and background information**

3.1 To receive the following petition signed by 549 people at the time of publication:

[https://www.change.org/p/penalty-points-system-opposes-against?source\\_location=search](https://www.change.org/p/penalty-points-system-opposes-against?source_location=search)

#### **(1) Petition to oppose Penalty Points for Brighton & Hove Taxi Drivers:**

Dear Brighton & Hove city council,

We are writing to express our deep concern and disappointment regarding the proposed penalty points system proposed for taxi drivers in Brighton and Hove. It has come to our attention that this system could cause significant challenges and hardships for many hardworking taxi drivers in our community.

While we understand the importance of maintaining high standards and ensuring passenger safety, we believe that the proposed penalty points system may be excessively punitive and does not take into account the unique circumstances that taxi drivers often face. As members of our local community, taxi drivers provide an essential service, and they play a crucial role in our city's transportation network.

Our concerns and those of many others in our community are as follows:

1. Driver Shortage: We are facing a shortage of new taxi drivers joining in Brighton & Hove, and imposing penalty points could discourage individuals from entering or staying in the profession.

2. Complex Violations: Some violations by taxi drivers may involve complex circumstances or disputes that are better addressed through arbitration or mediation rather than a straightforward penalty points system.

3. Economic Impact: Considering current economic impact on taxi drivers and council itself, this will cost money to implement, plus the excessive use of penalty points could lead to financial hardship for drivers.

4. Focus on Core Issues: Councils may prioritise addressing more significant

issues in the taxi industry, such as safety concerns, vehicle standards, or customer service, and may choose to allocate resources accordingly.

5. Enhancing vehicle standards: By applying Vehicle suitability test every 6 months, rather than waiting for the driver to commit an offence and issue him a penalty point.

6. It is already implemented in the British Law: If a driver commits a driving offence, he will be issued with penalty points and if it is serious, driver will lose his driving licence and taxi licence at the same time.

7. Monitoring and Improvement: Councils may opt for continuous monitoring and improvement programs for taxi services, where they work closely with drivers to identify and rectify issues without resorting to penalty points.

8. Educate and do not prosecute: Educating taxi drivers effectively by training courses, communication, online seminars and support do not wait till the driver makes a mistake to be prosecuted.

9. Inconsistent Enforcement: The application of penalty points appears to be inconsistent and sometimes arbitrary. Drivers often receive points for minor infractions that do not necessarily pose a threat to passenger safety.