

	Name	Response
1	Tony Ashley	<p>1. Reading licensed PH cars should be allowed bus lane useage. A conversation I have had many times Customer "So why aren't you using the bus lane? You're a taxi. Driver "No I'm a Reading PH. The council won't let me" C. "But that cars using it and that's not a black cab" D. "That's a out of town hackney plated UBER they're allowed" C. Ok next time I need a car I know who to call</p> <p>2. PH access to hotels, restaurants, bars in the town centre. Ridiculous that if pick up or drop someone and they have to walk 200m with their luggage because I'm not allowed to drive into the town centre. Have you tried finding a legal parking space to go and help them? Complaint after complaint from customers about this</p> <p>3. Clampdown on out of town cars New Forest Fareham London PCO all working Reading with impunity.</p> <p>4. A review of the executive car list. A new E class Mercedes is nearly £25000 more than it was pre covid. 3 year old ex London PCO ones are selling at auction for nearly £5000 more than my 2018 car was new.</p> <p>5. Going Green ensuring there are enough accessible charging points. Maybe dedicated to HC and PH vehicles Pointless putting them in the town centre and car parks</p> <p>6. Proper PH drop off pick up points at the railway stations and hospitals. Not to ply for hire but many people use PH because they cannot get in or out of a black cab. And they can order a PH when they need one.</p>
2	Name withheld	<p>The Reading Brough Council released too many vehicle license in order to punish the Pakistani community because they make up the majority.</p> <p>As a result the massive hit on their income has caused extreme hardship on their families.</p>

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		<p>The Reading Council showed their hate towards Pakistani community when they hid away the taxi ranks so they would not be seen from the station entrance.</p> <p>There is no source of income with flag downs in Reading unlike London. This is Reading not London (a tourist city).</p> <p>The Reading Council licensing staff and a certain councillor hates the Pakistani community so much, they do not allow bus lane on A33 to be used by hackney Carriage vehicles , so even the Passengers suffer the morning traffic which they do not need to.</p> <p>The hate demonstrated towards Pakistani community means that the Reading council has had a negative effect on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer focused: high levels of customer service, accountable operators and drivers and a service which provides value for money. • Safe: the sector is trusted; passengers are confident in using the services and vehicles are modern and accessible for all. • Clean: the fleet is greener and cleaner helping to deliver services with a low environmental impact. • Well regulated: the Council has an effective regulatory framework to administer and enforce statutory and local requirements, to benefit both the trade and customers. <p>I have presented a thought-out logical argument and I bet you cannot challenge it logically and win the argument.</p>
3	Alice Carter	<p>I am responding to the consultation as the parent of a disabled teenager who struggles with taxi provision because she needs to travel in her wheelchair.</p> <p>For reasons best known to the NHS, my daughter's NHS powered wheelchair is large and heavy and only just within the national framework standards for a chair that fits on public transport. We therefore struggle to get into a normal black cab.</p> <p>The school transport taxi that takes her to school is a diesel WAV van and I am sure you are aware that the number of WAVs available that are hybrid is very small and there is only one fully electric WAV available to purchase based on the Mercedes EV van and it costs nearly £100k. The technology is not yet present to make greener WAVs possible yet and while I completely support the need to make transport greener, it is not fair on disabled people to reduce their options because of the lack of appropriate vehicles.</p>

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		I urge you strongly to ensure that there are appropriate vehicles available on the market before imposing restrictions on taxi and school transport providers.
4	Elise Feider Bolt Public Policy Manager	<p>I see that the consultation on the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2023-2028 has now been published. Will there be any public or trade meetings to discuss its content in the coming weeks? If so, we would be keen to get involved.</p> <p>Are you also able to share whether following this consultation there will be a review of the existing Private Hire Operator Conditions?</p>
5	Mohammed Afsar	<p>Thank you for the report that has been published to the trade in respect of the hackney carriage and private hire vehicles strategy policy.</p> <p>Having read the policy there are few important factors that need to be looked into,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I find that this report is targeting hackney carriage vehicles more than the private hire trade, there is no mention on when the private hire vehicles fleet will need to change to electric fleet. 2. It says in the report that you would like electric vehicles for the hackney carriage trade, in 2019 when the emissions policy was introduced, there has been a significant number of electric cabs bought into the fleet, rbc has not provided any charging points for these vehicles. 3. There is no transparency between rbc and the hackney trade, we are not being given enough information, no one is listening to our issues, the rta don't discuss important issues with its members. 4. In 2019 the emissions policy was drawn up as a climate emergency, rbc has allowed older polluting vehicles to be carried on being used on the fleet, euro 5a and 5b and euro 6 vehicles should have been given more time until at least 2030 as we now have more cleaner and better vehicles and having gone through covid. 5. Bus lanes, hackney carriage taxis should be allowed to use all bus lanes in around Reading and the A33 bus lane as a way to get our passengers quicker to their destination like the buses, green park station and madjeski stadium are two key areas that we need this excess to. 6. Taxi ranks, hackney carriage trade have not been given extra ranks spaces to work from, nor have they had any extra spaces added to the existing ranks. 7. CCTV, is reading borough council going to fund this. If not then this should be the drivers choice.

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		I hope the information and points raised are considered and hopefully we can work together to achieve what is best for the trade.
6	Imran Ali	<p>Reading Borough Council Civic Offices Bridge Street Reading RG1 2LU 18/09/2023</p> <p>Consultation – Reading Borough Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2023-2028</p> <p>Dear Licencing,</p> <p>Please see my comments below in relation to Reading Borough Council’s Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2023-2028</p> <p>I understand that the Council’s Hackney Carriage Vehicle Emissions and Age Policy 2019 (HCVEA Policy 2019) intends to improve the hackney carriage vehicle fleet by removing older vehicles to improve local air quality within Reading. Personally, as someone who suffers from asthma, I must say that I welcome initiatives that improve air quality.</p> <p>However, as the Council is aware that most hackney vehicle owners have already since the introduction of the HCVEA Policy 2019; invested in Euro 5b and Euro 6 diesel vehicles; and more recently EV based vehicles in order to meet the target that all hackney vehicles will be minimum ULEV by 1 October 2028 in accordance with Reading Borough Council’s HCVEA Policy 2019.</p> <p>Although, 1 October 2028 deadline gives hackney vehicle owners ample time to upgrade to ULEVs, the question is whether this is financially viable under the current economic climate, not to mention the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, financial viability is something that Reading Borough Council must review and take into consideration under the circumstances.</p> <p>The cost of these electric vehicles is also currently a major barrier to acquisition by owners, not to mention the fact that the only current EV Hackney vehicle permitted in the Borough of Reading is the Levc EV which has an approximate range of 50-60 miles from a full charge (depending on usage) and therefore may not be as practical under the circumstances.</p> <p>Furthermore, there are limited number of public charging points and the downtime in charging Levc EV taxis is an issue. The consequences are that most current owners of Levc EVs switch to petrol use, which therefore demonstrates and highlights that this technology is still in its infancy, especially in relation to Levc EVs.</p> <p>Further added problems for those hackney drivers and owners who are unfortunate enough not to have a driveway, is the running of a cable from their home across the pavement to charge their electric vehicle, which is currently prohibited, even if they are covered with cable protectors. This is because it presents a real danger to users of the footpath, as this can cause inconvenience or real harm, it is also an offence to do so without express permission. 2</p>

		<p>In addition to the above issues, the Council’s current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2023-2028 (HCPHV Strategy 2023-2028) on the face of it suggests that it is applicable to both hackney vehicles and private hire. Yet under paragraph 4.0 (Vehicle Age and Emissions) there is no express mention that the same or similar vehicle age and emissions policy will be applied to private hire vehicles. Furthermore, at paragraph 4.0 the Vehicle Emissions and Age Policy expressly states that it only intends to improve the hackney carriage vehicle fleet by removing older vehicles, with no express mention of private hire vehicles at all being part of this strategy. In fact, the only reference to private hire vehicles at all, is that mentioned at Figure 3 in relation to The Euro Emission Profile of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fleet. Creating a safer, more reliable fleet of vehicles and removing more polluting vehicles, which will improve local air quality within Reading should apply to all public transport vehicles including private hire, buses and other public transport and not limited to just hackney vehicles as suggested by the HCPHV Strategy 2023-2028.</p> <p>I also have some further concerns with regards to the information published by Reading Borough Council in the HCPHV Strategy 2023-2028.</p> <p>I take issue with the following:</p> <p>4.2 Taxi Ranks <i>“The Council will continue to consider making phased changes to the existing ranks in consultation with the trade and to prioritise Ultra Low Emission Vehicles ranks.”</i></p> <p>4.6 Highways Use Benefits <i>“The council may also consider restricting access to newer, less polluting vehicles only. “</i></p> <p>5.0 Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Standards <i>“As part of the ongoing commitment to safety, the council will consider introducing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A requirement for CCTV in Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles to protect both customers and drivers. The Council will examine how this could be achieved in consultation with the trade.”</i> <p>Dealing with each issue in turn below:</p> <p>4.2 Taxi Ranks <i>“The Council will continue to consider making phased changes to the existing ranks in consultation with the trade and to prioritise Ultra Low Emission Vehicles ranks.”</i></p> <p>This statement is vague in its entirety as it fails to state when this applies, and to which hackney vehicles? i.e., will it apply to Euro 5b and Euro 6 diesel vehicles, this issue needs to be clarified. 3</p> <p>This would be discriminating unless prioritising ultra-low emission vehicle ranks under paragraph 4.2 applies to all vehicles after the 1 October 2028 deadline in accordance with Reading Borough Council’s HCVEA Policy 2019 when all hackney vehicles must be ULEV.</p>
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		<p>If the Council is considering bringing the changes to rank usage mentioned above forwards, i.e., before 1 October 2028 deadline (that all vehicles will be minimum ULEV), this will be considered unfair and unjust to the current owners, who have invested in Euro 5b and Euro 6 hackney diesel vehicles.</p> <p>Is the council changing the goal posts so to speak, by suggesting restricting access to Euro 5b and Euro 6 hackney vehicles before 1 October 2028 deadline, effectively forcing hackney vehicle owners to prematurely dump their current investment and make further investments in purchasing an EV? As mentioned above, how will this be viewed under the circumstances, please clarify the Council's position in this regard.</p> <p>4.6 Highways Use Benefits</p> <p><i>"The council may also consider restricting access to newer, less polluting vehicles only. "</i></p> <p>Once again, clarification is required regarding the Council's proposal in restricting access to bus lanes to newer, less polluting vehicles only. If the Council is considering bringing in a restriction and limiting access to bus lanes to newer, less polluting vehicles, before 1 October 2028 deadline, will this be considered unfair, unjust, and discriminating to owners of Euro 5b and Euro 6 diesel vehicles.</p> <p>5.0 Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Standards</p> <p><i>"As part of the ongoing commitment to safety, the council will consider introducing; A requirement for CCTV in Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles to protect both customers and drivers. The Council will examine how this could be achieved in consultation with the trade."</i></p> <p>Whilst CCTV will be welcomed by most of the trade, there remains a number of issues with regards to CCTV installation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will pay for installation and why? The Council or owners • What type of CCTV will be required under the circumstances, i.e., voice, and video imaging or just video? • What consideration has been given to personal privacy and <i>The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)</i> implemented into UK law by the <i>Data Protection Act 2018</i>? <p>The above are comments that the Council should consider very carefully in terms of fairness and equality amongst the trade.</p> <p>4</p> <p>Furthermore, I would like to add that I will be making representations at any forthcoming Committee meeting in relation to the above-mentioned Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2023-2028.</p> <p>If you have any further questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.</p> <p>Kind Regards Imran Ali</p>
7	Chris Avery	<p>The emissions policy approved by the licencing committee members in October 2019 is fundamentally flawed in many ways the head of licencing is aware of this and has been since early November 2019 when he was told by the chairman of the</p>

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		<p>rcda in a monthly meeting it was pointed out that tx4 taxis cannot achieve euro 5b so the minimum standard that can be achieved is euro 6 even though this was pointed and agreed with by the head of licencing his department went ahead a few weeks later and licenced a euro 5 cab in the next monthly meeting he was unaware this had happened and said he would delicence the vehicle this never happened.i then understand that a plate owner initially then had trouble licencing a euro5 cab to reading and a meeting took place between the reading taxi association.and licencing this vehicle was then licenced and so were many more after.</p> <p>In Feb-March 2023 the reading cab drivers association emailed licencing asking for the sources of information on which the policy was created an email was received back saying that they were going to contact mercedes and Iti and no further information was received back .then of course we had the pandemic .if you ask not testers they know nothing about euro 5a or euro5b .tx4 taxis are either euro 4 euro 5 euro 6 and that goes for the mercedes vito taxi aswel there are owners with mercedes Vito running cleaner than my tx4 euro 5 being told that they have to come off the road when they are 14 years old when my vehicle can go on til its 15years old .this is very unfair .and the licencing department are aware of this and have blamed the health department saying they wrote the policy .this is not true this policy was written by a person called lisa Richard's who left a few months after it was passed approximately 4months after it was passed .my concern about all this is how can we trust the licencing department to ever get it right again .this situation really needs to be looked into .</p> <p>I stand by this and if the licencing committee wants to call me to give evidence in front of everybody I am very willing to .</p> <p>Many thanks chris avery Licenced taxi driver in reading</p>
8	Johar Ali	<p>I believe the strategy is coming to early for the Hackney drivers as drivers have just committed to finance agreements and loans to buy their euro5 vehicles.</p> <p>With the ulev txe price starting at £65k before the interest rate of the finance. It will make many drivers think twice about driving in Reading.</p> <p>I know of at least of 1 driver that has recently bought at a txe who is paying £1900 per month. I don't know how he is managing to keep up. It looks as he is working just to make enough money to pay to work.</p> <p>I think incentives such as funding for charging ports at home fall way to short of what is needed. If the council is serious about giving incentives, then they should think about helping with funding for the £65k mortgage that drivers will have to take. Interest rates have gone up so has the rates of finance for the vehicles.</p> <p>I think this policy needs to be pushed to 2030 as this is not viable this soon. For example, there are electric bus technology available now yet Reading buses don't adopt it, why?</p>

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		<p>The reason is because it's not financially viable for the bus companies as they have to run a business. They have only just upgraded to euro6.</p> <p>So, I believe each taxi should be given its 15 years or they come off in 2030. Whichever comes first. Also the ulev vehicle entry age of 8 years should be scrapped and the vehicle life in Reading should be 20 years.</p> <p>Moving to ulev ranks or ulev taxi lane is discrimination at the highest level. just because a driver isn't able to afford a ulev vehicle they shouldn't be discriminated against. Just imagine the ulev taxi lane being shared with a diesel bus? We should have ranks that are inclusive of diesel and ulev vehicles. This would only create division.</p> <p>Kind regards</p> <p>Johar ali</p>
9	Salik Ghick	<p>I read through all. We standing behind RTA.what is best for trade and driver also owner.but I have some questions for license team and committee.</p> <p>1:why council what chane strategy when council not support for drivers who is renting for long time.</p> <p>2:we already following the plan which council agree.so ours family life running according the plan.(I am renting the cab 13 year so I am expecting one day I have my own one)</p> <p>3: when council make a any changes it's not just drivers affected it's whole family.</p> <p>4:did council check everything including travel history and holidays.wrok time been on renk.because when you work for long time period it's possible as humans.we made mistake.</p> <p>5:is council going to help with electric cab to buy.</p> <p>6: we already have a hard time with prices rise and living standards.we request to council support us as much as possible.i am looking forward to hearing from you soon.</p> <p>Many thanks Regards Salik Ghick Badge 8016</p>
10	Glen Reynolds	<p>I writing this email to express my feelings and frustrations around the driving situations in and Reading.</p> <p>As a private hire driver through Reading borough council it is becoming more and more difficult to do this role over the past few years not just for myself but also my clients also.</p>

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		<p>As a driver in Reading it is becoming more and more difficult every day to get around Reading and the surrounding parts due to the amount of restrictions that prevent us from doing mine and so many like me role.</p> <p>Every year we grow in numbers using the roads and finding the daily commutes are becoming longer and longer with a lot more stress and accidents involved.</p> <p>I have been thinking about this for a long time now of ways to improve this matter and one of the ideas I have come up with is opening up all bus lanes in Reading to all licensed taxi drivers from Reading borough council black cabs, Hackney carriage and private hire/ executive drivers only no other council licensed drivers.</p> <p>This will remove high volume of drivers of the main road lanes and push them into the bus lanes where appropriate to aid in the continuing flow of traffic this will also improve customer satisfaction and confusion as to why some taxi drivers can use certain lanes and others can not. It will improve there commuting time which will the improve air pollution as well because less taxi vehicles are sat idling in stationary traffic.</p> <p>Now I know they are bus lanes and some are bus and taxi lanes but if we open them up we will make it mandatory which also follows the Highway Code the buses will still get priority in those lanes above taxi drivers.</p> <p>I hope you think about this idea of mine and hope to hear your thoughts on this idea as I have many other ideas and suggestions to help improve the Reading roads for all who use them.</p>
11	Helen Bryant Access Officer	<p>Here are my thoughts about the Strategy which is out for consultation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I like the MaaS Scheme idea. 2. It's well-known that there aren't enough wheelchair accessible cabs at the moment. However, not all disabled people prefer to use Hackney Carriages, partly because of the lack of headroom. There will always be a need for saloon cars. Maybe these could be allowed to use bus lanes too. 3. Cashless payment is becoming the norm everywhere, and is fine for most people, but those who are blind or visually impaired can find such systems difficult or impossible to use – how do you know if the right sum of money is on the display, for example? Some older people may not be familiar with such technology. 4. School transport using taxis often means that wheelchair accessible taxis are not available for wheelchair users during the school run times, which restricts people. 5. People might welcome more information about taxi apps and the companies which use them.

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		<p>6. People should be encouraged to compliment drivers, as well as complain.</p> <p>7. People still report that they are charged more for using a cab as wheelchair users, despite the new Act. How could this be tackled?</p> <p>This may not fit into the strategy, but as I've said to officers before, I have often been refused service in the past, because many drivers consider my powerchair to be "too big" or "too heavy". However, this doesn't happen in London, with, I'm sure, the same Hackney Carriages available. There needs to be more education. I would be happy to assist, although maybe not directly, as I've had some issues in the past with some drivers. I know I should report it, but sometimes I just want to forget the whole thing. I CAN get home from the centre of town in my powerchair, but I don't always want to, if it's cold or wet, for example. I couldn't do that in the snow.</p>
12	Asif Rashid Reading Taxi Association	<p>We have the following points to make in respect of the consultation on behalf of the Hackney Carriage (HC) trade:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One of the biggest barriers to owners switching to ULEV/electric taxis is the costs involved. Currently the ULEV taxi costs £74,000.00 and a Government grant of £7,500.00 is available, taking the cost down to £66,500.00. However, this Government grant is due to end on 1st April 2024. We have been requesting grants/interest free loans (being offered in Scotland by the EST) from RBC for a few years now but nothing has been forthcoming. We believe that if these incentives were to be provided then the changeover to ULEV taxis would happen much more quickly. At the present time there are no fully electric taxis. 2. There are no charging points for ULEV/electric taxis for the HC trade. We had previously been informed that contracts had been agreed for charging points on Gun Street and the Cattle Market specifically for the HC trade. We have not seen anything materialise. The number of ULEV's are increasing on a weekly basis (currently 40 plus - 20% of the fleet). This matter needs to be resolved as a matter of urgency. 3. As well as HC and PH vehicles, buses and school transport vehicles should also be required to be ULEV/fully electric by 1st October 2028. 4. RBC is proposing App based booking systems. Who will run these Apps? How will jobs be allocated to drivers? When and how will drivers be paid? What charges will be deducted? 5. In order for this policy to be effective, more enforcement against illegal activities by RBC licensed private hire drivers as well as out of borough taxis/private hire needs to be taken. Currently there is enforcement but not enough. Enforcement needs to be done on a weekly basis throughout the year.

		<p>6. HC trade provides a vital public hire service to the residents and visitors of Reading. In order for us to be able to do this effectively we need access to all of RBC's bus lanes. We can use bus lanes, however we are also excluded from others. This particularly applies to the bus lanes on the A33, to which we need full access at the earliest opportunity. We do not see any legitimate reasons as to why private hire vehicles should be allowed to use bus lanes following consultation with our members. Our members believe that allowing private hire vehicles into bus lanes would have a negative impact.</p> <p>7. Review of taxi ranks in the town centre should be completed in consultation with the trade within the next six months.</p> <p>8. A number of bus stops around the town centre become part time taxi ranks between 23.00-05.00 hours. On a daily basis we are facing problems with bus drivers parking on these taxi ranks as well as abusing our drivers. We have been complaining about this issue to Licensing and Transport for more than a year now and no action has been taken. This needs to stop and bus drivers need to follow TRO's just like we do.</p> <p>ACTION PLAN: 8.0</p> <p>7.0 "Implement mandatory English tests for drivers on application" - Will this be for new drivers only or will this also be for renewal applications? Will the tests be online or at the Civic Offices? Cost of test? Tests oral or written or both?</p> <p>10. "Review the type of HC vehicle permitted on the fleet to increase wheelchair accessibility" - The HC fleet is 100% wheelchair accessible and all types of wheelchairs can be safely transported.</p> <p>11. "Reduce the age limit policy for PH vehicles" - PH vehicles should have the same emissions/age policy as the HC vehicles. School transport vehicles as well as buses should also be included in this.</p> <p>12. "Facilitate customer choice to book an ultra low emission/electric vehicle" - how will this be done? Through an App based system?</p> <p>13. "Facilitate customer choice to book a wheelchair accessible HC and PH vehicle" - how will this be done? Through an App based system?</p> <p>15. "Conduct feasibility study to introduce CCTV in HC and PHV's in compliance with data protection legislation" - will RBC pay for this? HC drivers are already struggling particularly with having to change our vehicles. We can do without having another additional cost(s) being imposed on us.</p>
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		<p>16. "Review taxi rank positions and capacity and consider ULEV only ranks" - We are totally against this proposal. This will create division and resentment amongst the trade. Not everyone's financial situation is the same. Rather than encouraging owners to purchase ULEV's by having ULEV only ranks you will be punishing them. How can this be right?</p> <p>We look forward to discussing the above in more detail in the coming months and ensuring that any policy not only benefits the public and RBC but also HC owners/drivers.</p> <p>Regards</p> <p>Asif Rashid</p>
13	Farhan Afzal	<p>Subject: Thank You for Seeking Input on the 2023-2028 Strategy</p> <p>I hope this message finds you well. I would like to express my appreciation to the Council for actively seeking the views of stakeholders regarding the upcoming Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy for 2023-2028.</p> <p>It is encouraging to see the Council's commitment to inclusivity and collaboration in shaping the future of our industry. The proposed strategy holds significant importance for all involved, from drivers and operators to passengers and the community at large.</p> <p>However, considering the comprehensive nature of this strategy and its potential impact over the next five years, I kindly request the Council to consider extending the deadline for input submission. The current timeline appears rather short, and many drivers may require additional time to provide thoughtful feedback and insights. Extending the deadline would ensure a more inclusive and comprehensive representation of views from the industry.</p> <p>Furthermore, I would like to request the opportunity to present specific data, facts, and figures related to our local market. I believe that sharing this information with the Council will greatly assist in the development of a well-informed and effective strategy. I am confident that by working collaboratively and leveraging valuable data, we can contribute to the creation of a strategy that not only addresses current challenges but also anticipates future developments in our industry.</p> <p>I am looking forward to the possibility of meeting to discuss this matter in more detail.</p> <p>Once again, thank you for involving stakeholders in this process, and I am eager to contribute to the development of a strategy that benefits our community and aligns with the Council's vision for a sustainable and thriving transport sector.</p>

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		<p>Warm regards, F.B.M Afzal</p>
14	ABC Travel	<p>Please see below our views:</p> <p>We believe the Council need to update their policies and action what they say.</p> <p>Hybrid and electric cars are operating all over UK. However in Reading , not so prominent.</p> <p>The size and criteria is a barrier to entry.</p> <p>We will appeal to Reading Council to review their dates policies and let common sense apply.</p> <p>In operating School Transport. We can go to a Wokingham and get a Mercedes Citan or VW Touran 7 seater licensed for 6 passengers. However Reading contrary to its manufacturer's spec will only license for 4.</p> <p>Many cars have grown in size since launch and are actually more spacious than perhaps the Peugeot 305 that would have been licensed years ago. However when you ask Licensing, they will say Nicop rating!! This is not a fair and just way. Why in other Borough, Bracknell, Wokingham and West Berks policies differ?</p> <p>The. You have the actual Hackney Carriage mafia , who are actually selling plates for £100k! Due to Reading licensing giving them a monopoly! This again needs to be updated and plates should he open to all.</p> <p>Governments shouldn't create black markets.</p> <p>School plate should have more flexibility on vehicles and smaller vehicles, due to the nature of the business. You may just transport two children. So why use a large car, more emissions and carbon footprint. I see up both they have Nissan Leafs electric cars. We would consider if they could be licensed.</p> <p>Reading Council are creating barriers for operators to go greener as they restrict cars that can be licensed.</p> <p>ABC Travel will request this barrier be lifted in favour of greener cars.</p>

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15	Shahbaz Quadri	<p>With reference to the current consultation regarding Hackney Carriage vehicles in Reading. I believe that the transition period to introduce electric vehicles should be increased to October 2032 instead of 2028. This is to allow other manufacturers to enter the market and develop future electric vehicles. The present LEVC electric taxi is unreliable expensive and unfit for purpose. I hope my comment will be considered in deciding Reading Borough Council's strategy for the implementation of electric vehicles in Reading.</p> <p>Yours Faithfully SHAHBAZ QUADRI</p>
16	Muhammad Chisti	<p>I am writing to propose a change that could have a significant positive impact on our environment and our community. It's clear that environmental concerns are becoming increasingly urgent, and I believe we have an opportunity to address these concerns by making a change to our current policy.</p> <p>Currently, Reading Borough Council allows only vehicles that are less than five years old to be registered for the first time. While this policy has its merits, I strongly recommend reevaluating it in light of the environmental challenges we face and the importance of promoting a pollution-free environment.</p> <p>With the introduction of Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) regulations, we are feeling the effects in our area. I suggest that Reading Borough Council takes inspiration from the policies that were in place in London until December 2022 (which allowed thousand of hybrid vehicles registered and running in London) and extends the authorization for hybrid/petrol/electric vehicles to be registered for a period of 8 to 10 years. This adjustment has the potential to address environmental challenges, create a safer and cleaner environment, and set a pioneering example for other councils to follow.</p> <p>As a concerned citizen and PHD who has personally experienced the challenges involved, I can empathise with the need for this change within our Reading Borough Council (RBC). While I understand the current five-year limit for first-time vehicle registration in RBC, I strongly believe that RBC should contemplate extending this limit exclusively for hybrid/petrol/electric vehicles with an age range of 8 to 10 years for initial registration. These vehicles are more budget-friendly in comparison to those within the five-year range, making them accessible to a wider spectrum of drivers. Implementing this change would not only have a positive impact on the environment but also invigorate our local economy and promote the adoption of eco-friendly driving practices.</p>

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		<p>Furthermore, this policy adjustment would lead to a reduction in the number of environmentally harmful vehicles on our roads, encouraging more environmentally conscious driving habits. Ultimately, it would contribute to a cleaner and more sustainable Reading, enhancing the well-being of our community.</p> <p>I would like to highlight the success of several councils (there may be more across the UK, but I'll provide examples of two) that have implemented similar changes and offered financial incentives for transitioning to hybrid/petrol/electric vehicles:</p> <p>Leeds City Council permits vehicles up to 7 years old for first-time registration and provides reimbursement/support funds for individuals.</p> <p>City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council allows vehicles up to 10 years old for first-time registration and offers reimbursement/support funds.</p> <p>In conclusion, I urge you to consider my proposal during your environmental discussions. Extending the policy for registering hybrid/petrol/electric vehicles to a period of 8 to 10 years for first-time registration would be a positive step and align with your 4 key objectives for the environment, our local economy, and the promotion of eco-friendly driving practices.</p> <p>I appreciate your time in reviewing this proposal and look forward to a favorable response.</p> <p>Kind regards,</p> <p>Muhammad Chishti</p>
17	Nayyar Mohammad	<p>In regards to the below consultation, I still stand with my view that Rear council should release 12 Hackney carriage licence plates in a year for drivers that do not have one.</p> <p>https://consult.reading.gov.uk/dens/consultation-reading-borough-council-hackney-carri/</p> <p>Kind regards,</p>



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		Nayyar Mohammad
18	Mahomed Ahamed	<p>Many thanks for your email and the consultations doing about the Hackney carriage and Private hire drivers. I completely agree with Customer focused Safe Clean Well regulated But in this all where are the drivers and where is the safety of drivers when we have problems with the customers kicking the cabs refusing to pay at front and when they get sick in the cab and not paying the driver and the driver can't do anything with them. Can't hold them Can't stop them Police also say that it's a civil matter Instead we have to run away from them because we lost the fare money and we lost the sick payment and we lost the night or day work even not just that for the next week you can't handle the smell.</p> <p>There is no planing for festival time or any other event or to in courage drivers or to promote the taxi trade with the hotels hospitals or with the buses also. Buses and taxi are always in front of each other. There no equality between this two trades.</p> <p>Festival time the work was there but the traffic couldn't let us work. There was many many issues with not getting arranged things properly.</p> <p>With all this good planning we should work together and helping each other and get Reading ahead.</p> <p>Many thanks M Ahamed</p>
19	Mayuri Pandya	<p>I attach Bolt's response to your recent consultation on your Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy for 2023 - 2028.</p> <p>We are very much aligned with the principles raised in the consultation paper and would welcome a discussion to understand any proposed next steps.</p>

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		<p>Copying Mark and Clyde who I believe have spoken to Bolt colleagues in the past.</p> <p>Let me know if helpful to have a discussion and we can set something up.</p> <p>Have a good weekend,</p> <p>May</p> <p>--</p> <p>Mayuri Pandya Public Policy Manager UK</p>
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		<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Licensing Section Reading Borough Council Civic Offices Bridge St Reading RG1 2LU</p> <p>15 September 2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BY EMAIL: matthew.golledge@reading.gov.uk</p> <p>Dear Matthew,</p> <p>RE: Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy Consultation</p> <p>We recognise the priorities raised in this Strategy including the role of effective transportation in mobilising communities and boosting Reading's local economy. Bolt is aligned with themes in the Strategy and our focus is to provide efficient, convenient and sustainable solutions for the cities we operate in. One of our main operating principles is to put our customers first and we were pleased to see customer focus as an objective in this Strategy.</p> <p>Sustainability is a priority for Bolt and we are taking the transition to Electric Vehicles seriously. For example, Bolt has recently added a black cab category to its app in London, which has increased the number of fully Electric Vehicles on the Bolt platform. Additionally, we are actively exploring incentives to support driver transition to Electric Vehicles and have successfully tested this initiative in a number of cities. We are keen to explore other incentives in collaboration with Reading Borough Council.</p> <p>Safety is also of the utmost importance to Bolt. Our platform ensures that we have stringent safety measures to protect our drivers and passengers, including a 24/7 emergency safety service and complete GPS data on our drivers. We are also exploring the use of CCTV and audio recording and would welcome your thoughts on rolling safety initiatives out.</p> <p>We would be pleased to have a follow up discussion on the themes raised and the potential next steps in implementing the Strategy.</p> <p>Best regards,</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Mayuri Pandya Public Policy Manager Bolt Services UK Limited</p>
20	Graham Bates	<p>I have just read in Reading Today about a consultation over electric taxis that ended yesterday. Is it still possible to comment from a resident's standpoint? I hope so.</p> <p>Thanks in anticipation.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>

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		Graham Bates
21	Farhan Afzal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Borough Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Strategy 2023-2028 • Overview • In the context of trade, the acquisition of customer data is based on both practical trade experience and individual customer engagements, aiming to formulate strategic frameworks for realizing the envisioned goals over the forthcoming five years. This will aid in guiding the development of policies during this timeframe, with all policies undergoing scrutiny against the strategic plan. • Four key objectives • Customer Focused. • Safe. • Clean. • Well Regulated • (We will also skim through other objectives related to the subject). • Customer focused • The adage 'The customer is always right' is a familiar saying. While it acknowledges the customer's perspective and rights. As traders, we also encounter instances where customers may enter our service with a preconceived negative view, perceiving the service provider Consequently, their reactions and behaviour are often negative towards the service, impacting the service provider, particularly drivers, who bear the brunt of this impact within the trade, after operators. • In Trade prospective System is placed to accountable operators and driver. It would be greatly valued to have a system in place where customers who engage in illegal activities, harm drivers, or evade fare payment are also held accountable, ensuring fair compensation for both the driver and operator. • Safe • As a customer, again system is placed. the only risk is risk of accident and I believe other Legal Authorities are working hard to bring it to minimal but there's always risk of accident. • In Trade Prospective, we are equally or more on risk then customer. As we have limited information of customers which does not help the trade to evaluate their risk.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean • As a customer, customer deserve clean hygienic service and it is also responsibility of customer to leave the car clean for others. In regards to go green, customers will get more effected more if We keep building more homes (must be discussed in depth). • In trade prospective, Its vice versa keep the vehicle clean all the time, even though it adds up as expenditure and lost in revenue. In regards to go green, trade gets more effected because of Traffic, building new houses etc. (must be discussed in depth). • Well regulated • As an customer point of view system is placed to raise an enquiry. There is a communication gap between customers and regulated authorities after Covid. • In trade prospective, Ways of communication needed to be considered as so the council frame work is more clear towards traders. (should be discussed in detail) • Other objectives – brief introduction • Technology Integration – In coming few years we can not ignore technology where world is heading towards, Block chain, Meta, Web 3. (research needed). • Geographically – We need to consider geographically such as traffic flow, public flow etc. • Fair Pricing – According to CPI reports there is massive jump on living cost but we are still not compensated. • Driver Welfare - Implement measures to protect the rights and well being of taxi drivers, including fair compensation, reasonable working hours and access to healthcare and support services.. • Support Local Economy: Encourage the use of locally owned and operated taxi services to support the local economy and maintain a strong connection between the trade and the community it serves. • Innovation and modernization : Encourage innovation within the taxi trade. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The end • Many thanks for your time. Looking forward for the feedback and available for any further support. • Prepared By : Farhan Afzal
22	Glen Reynolds	In this document are my ideas/ suggestions of ways to improve the congestion in and around the Reading area for all that use them.

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- Sidmouth Street (cycle lane)
- Allcroft Road (parking bays)
- Wokingham Road (bus stops)
- Oxford Road (bus stops)
- All Bus lanes
- Gun Street (time restriction)

The bullet points above are in my opinion are some of the worst areas/ causes of traffic issues in Reading. This is not just for taxi drivers and private hire drivers but everyone that uses them. As a private hire driver in Reading I drive around this town every day and face the same issues and as I'm sat there in traffic I try and think of ways to improve the situation for everyone involved.

Sidmouth Street Southbound Lane (cycle lane)



		<p>The first matter I would like to address is the southbound lane of Sidmouth Street. In the summer of 2020 the decision was made to close the southbound lane of Sidmouth Street and turn it into a permeant cycle lane. Ever since this decision was made it has caused more traffic to use the Queens Road that is adjacent with Sidmouth Street and forcing the vehicles to be pushed onto London Street and up Silver Street which is already very busy as it is a main bus route for many different buses leaving the town centre. In the three years since this road layout was changes I have seen very little usage of this cycle lane being used that could justify it being closed permanently to motor vehicles. Now I understand that as town we need to encourage people to cycle more however closing this lane permanently is affecting more people then it is benefitting and I'm sure re-opening this lane would reduce traffic build up in this part of town by at least 70% if not more.</p> <p><u>Allcroft Road (Parking bays)</u> https://maps.app.goo.gl/e9FMpv1ssWm5q6VVA</p> <p>Allcroft Road is the main link road between Redlands Road and Kendrick Road, it is a road that many people use especially during the rush hour period however it is also a road that suffers with delays due the volume of traffic it receives for the size of the road that it is. This matter has not been made easier since parking bays were placed on the main road for residents to use. I understand that as a town the average household owns more than one car which means residents are finding it more difficult to park their vehicles on their own drive ways which results in them using "on street" parking methods. This is the case with many roads/ Streets in Reading not just Allcroft Road and in many of these cases there is an alternative solution. Looking at the image I have provided through the hyperlink above you will see a vehicle parked in one of these bays on Allcroft Road. Now my suggestion is that instead of having these parking bays actually on the road why don't we remove the grass area parallel to the parking bays and replace it with tarmac and mark out the bay area as before on the new parking area on the now new tarmac on the path with drop down curbs allowing easy access on and off without damage to any vehicles. This new method will allow the residents to keep the same amount of parking bays and allow the road not to be obstructed allowing a continues flow of moving traffic. If this method is carried out on both sides of this road and also other similar roads in and around Reading I believe this will improve traffic build up in many areas around different parts of Reading for all Road users.</p>
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Wokingham Road (bus stops)



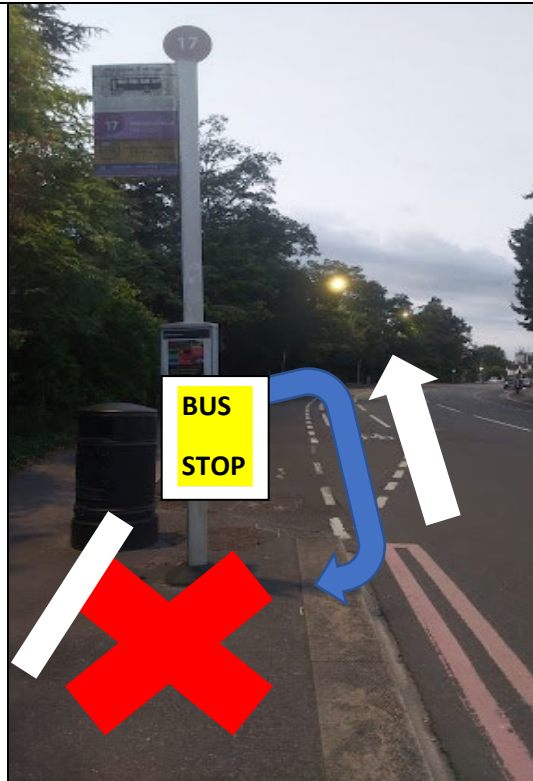
As one of the busiest roads in Reading the Wokingham Road serves a major role in linking the East side of Reading to the West side of Reading with a great reliable bus services that operates 24hrs a day seven days a week. It is a great way for people to travel from one side of Reading to the other in very little time for a reasonable price. However with any forms of public transport there is always way we can try and improve the service not just for themselves but for other road users on the same route. I have been thinking of ways to improve the traffic situation around the East side of the number 17 bus route especially from the Grange Road area till the end of the route termination point at the top of the Wokingham Road “The Three Tuns” intersection by the fire station. I believe I have come up with a solution that could help improve the traffic flow in this area that doesn’t prevent the bus company delivering their services and allowing traffic to pass while they are stationary pick up or setting down passengers.

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The first bus stop lay out I would change is the one parallel to the car wash on the Wokingham Road. If you were to move the bus stop sign further up the hill to where the “Red arrow” suggests and where the “Yellow Rectangle box” is marked out if a small percentage of the path was removed in a way that would allow the bus to pull in and leave safely and also allowing it to set down and pick up passengers and still allowing the other general public to still use the path this would allow other road users to get by without being held up by the bus stopping.

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Further along the route there are two bus stops on either side of the road adjacent with Melrose Avenue. Now both of these bus stops have the same layout where the bus stop protrudes the paths edge in-between a row of “on road” parking for residents and pay and display drivers. Due to this “road layout”/”pick up method” it means while the bus is stationary pick up or setting down passengers other road user find it very difficult and sometimes impossible to pass which results in traffic building up behind them. I believe I have come up with a solution to resolve this issue which enable the bus company to continue providing their service and all other road users are able to safely pass without causing build-up of traffic and causing delays and frustration to other road users. If we remove the section of path that protrudes out from the main path marked with the Red “X” and have it set back in line with the rest of the path marked by the White Rectangles and instead have it as a bus stop as highlighted with the “marked bus stop” box and blue arrow section for the bus to pull into off the

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main road the same as the parking bays either side of it. Then this will allow the bus company to continue providing their services and allow all other road users to pass by on the main road without being held up behind a stationary bus.



The final bus stop lay out I would like to change is the first bus stop where the number seventeen begins its route from the East side of Reading outside the fire station on the Wokingham Road. The same idea applies here as with the other bus stops I have mentioned earlier. If we remove a section of the path marked by the yellow box to allow the bus to access and leave safely while picking up and setting down passengers off the main road. This will move the bus marked by the Red arrow over off the main road allow the bus marked with the white arrow to pass by without being restricted as well as all other road users preventing traffic building up in this very busy area.

Oxford Road (bus stops)



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The Oxford Road in Reading in my opinion is joint top with the Kings Road as the worse roads for traffic and congestion in the whole of Reading by far. As both these roads share the same problems high demand from all motor vehicle users and also acts a major route for many bus routes entering and leaving the town centre. Due to this high volume of use no matter the time or day it suffers from heavy traffic, delays and frustrated users. There are many factors that contribute to this problem from many different businesses operating on this stretch of road which brings a lot of traffic foot and vehicle combined. It also has many bus routes using it with many bus stops along the whole stretch of the road. I believe that although the bus company provided a reliable and much needed service to the community the “position/ lay out” of the bus stop are a main factor into the build-up of traffic in both directions on the whole stretch of this road. I believe I have come up with an “idea/ suggestion” that with a slight repositioning of the bus stops we could improve the traffic congestion

	<p>immensely. My suggestion is the same as I suggested for the East side of Reading if we remove a portion of the path to allow the bus to enter and leave safely and also allow the pickup and setting down of passengers off the main road, this will allow while the bus is stationary for all other road users to continue their journeys without being held up behind the buses which allows a continues flow in traffic with minimal delays.</p> <p><u>All Bus Lanes</u></p> <p>Throughout Reading there are many “bus” and “bus and taxi” lanes across the whole town. Yet for many taxi drivers and private hire drivers that are registered with Reading Taxi license authority we are un-able to use all of them, which is not only very frustrating for us as drivers but also our clients that book us transportation around Reading to find out during busy periods that we are not allowed to use certain “bus/ bus and taxi” lanes in Reading which results in us using main routes which is very busy resulting in the customer being very unhappy and late to their destination. As a private hire driver in Reading it is still very confusing even to me why as a private hire, hackney carriage or black cab driver if we are all registered with Reading Borough Council license authority and we all sit the same interviews, training and examinations why we all are not allowed to use these same lanes. As a result of this many taxi drivers are forced to use roads are already suffering from high volumes of use adding serval hundred more drivers onto these road which could have been avoided. Forcing many taxi drivers onto the already busy road not only effects the taxi driver and his passengers but also all other road users in Reading because now there is even more traffic being used on main routes that could have been avoided with use of the “bus and also bus and taxi” lanes. My suggestion is that you open up all bus lanes to all taxi drivers including black cabs, hackney carriage and private hire/ executive drivers who are registered with Reading Borough Council License Authority only no other Council License holders. This will dramatically improve the traffic and congestion issues across the whole of Reading because we are removing serval hundreds of taxi driver off major routes and allowing them to use these priority lanes which pleases the passenger satisfaction because they don’t get held up during rush hour traffic. Also other road users now that a huge number of taxi drivers are not being added to the number of users on other major roads.</p>
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Gun Street (Time restriction)



The Gun Street time restriction has always confused many drivers in Reading regarding its operational hours resulting in many people being fined for using it during the incorrect hours. The main reason for this is that it is completely different from all the other time restricted use roads in the town centre. My suggestion is that we change this to match all the other time restriction used roads in the town i.e Broad Street, Friar Street and Market Place. This would allow easier pickups and drop-offs of customers for taxi driver especially in the evening and earlier hours of the morning when many people use establishment on Gun Street.