



Liverpool City
Council
case study

How we implemented a
seamless DBS system

personnel
checks

Introduction

Liverpool City Council's Licensing Department commissioned Personnel Checks to implement an online DBS checking system that would replace its face-to-face, paper-based appointment process – improving the efficiency of the Council's Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Licensing process.



The challenge

- Increasing efficiencies and saving money

Each year the Licensing Department at Liverpool City Council processes new licence applications and renewals for approximately 5,000 taxi driver licences. However, local authority budget cuts had placed a huge strain on resources and resulted in delays in the process. The Council had previously issued temporary licences as an interim measure, but due to the increasing importance of safeguarding measures, it wanted to move to a best-practice model.

Following initial discussions with the Taxi Licensing Team Leader, the Personnel Checks team reviewed the Council's current DBS checking procedure to determine how the process could be streamlined.

As a result, the team identified key critical areas where a range of tangible benefits would be achieved through outsourcing particular services, including:

- DBS disclosure application completion.
- Taxi driver eligibility and suitability.
- Renewal tracking and reminders.
- Applicant queries and progress tracking.

The solution

- How we helped introduce a seamless process

Working closely with Liverpool City Council's Licensing team to fully understand the requirements, the Personnel Checks team identified a bespoke package of support that was designed and developed around saving time, money and offering a value-added service. This involved delivery of the following:

- Implementing an innovative online DBS checking system.
- Introducing a bespoke online portal to cover all the required checks needed to become 'application ready', quickly and effectively.
- Handling the whole DBS check process, including application completion, ID verification, application tracking and payment.
- Reviewing applicant suitability and eligibility to safeguard the general public.

In addition to the above, the Personnel Checks team also monitored licence renewals, proactively contacting applicants of future expiry dates, which helped to control flow of work resulting in accurate forecasting and better business planning.

Furthermore, the team operated a dedicated phone line to provide guidance, advice and support regarding the DBS check process.



The outcome

- Getting the results that matter

From day one, Personnel Checks' team hit the ground running and made an immediate impact. Its experts simultaneously cleared the backlog and handled the new applications, with minimal disruption and very swift results.

Maximising digital technology

The new online process made applying and renewing taxi and private hire licences faster for the Council and taxi drivers. The original paper-based system required substantial manual effort, administration and consequently time. But now, the new online system provides instant and reliable access to electronic records, at the touch of a button.

Better use of resources

A huge benefit was the significant reduction in the number of face-to-face appointments required. Personnel Checks removed time-consuming and inconvenient meetings for taxi drivers, and cut a labour-intensive process for the Council, meaning a better customer experience and better use of resources. Furthermore, a dedicated phone line for licence applicants has been cited a major success. Call handlers are highly knowledgeable and professional, and quickly address any queries, to assist the taxi drivers through the process to become 'licence ready'. All of which means taxi drivers are back on the road without delay. This also has additional 'silent' benefits in that there is a better relationship between taxi drivers and the Council's licensing team.

In addition, safeguarding is vitally important to Liverpool City Council. It wants to ensure the public is protected and safe. The new system incorporates stringent checks which makes sure all taxi drivers issued with a licence are legitimate, and prevents unsuitable candidates from working with vulnerable people.

Winning feedback

- From Liverpool City Council

“Recent cuts to local authority budgets meant we were struggling to meet the demand for both new licences and renewals. However, by discussing our requirements with Personnel Checks, we were able to implement a new innovative and more efficient system.

“The feedback from council personnel and taxi drivers has been fantastic, fully endorsing the services provided by Personnel Checks.

“And they’re always looking at ways to further improve their services and go the extra-mile to provide a value-added service. Recently, the Personnel Checks team proactively put in place the enhancements required to ensure we are fully compliant with the EU’s new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Hence, minimising any potential disruption to the system and the service to our taxi drivers.

“I would recommend the team at Personnel Checks to any other councils who want to streamline their DBS checking services. They’re always professional and efficient, offering a truly flexible and open approach.”

Yvonne Willcock, Taxi Licensing Team Leader, Liverpool City Council.

