



Rossendale Borough Council **case study**

How we helped enhance
safeguarding and increase
taxi driver standards

personnel
checks

Introduction

Rossendale Borough Council's Licencing Department commissioned Personnel Checks to implement an enhanced online knowledge test system and strengthen their safeguarding training for taxi drivers, as part of their Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Licencing process.



The challenge

- Enhancing safeguarding for the Council

A number of formal checks and procedures must be carried out before a hackney carriage/private hire licence can be issued. In June 2017 we successfully implemented an online enhanced DBS checking system for Rossendale Borough Council, to improve the efficiency of their licencing process. As a result, the council also wanted to replace their existing knowledge test with a more comprehensive system, to include extra topics.

In addition, during recent years there have been a number of high profile cases of child sexual exploitation involving taxi drivers, which have highlighted serious gaps in the safeguarding process. Rossendale Borough Council recognises that taxi drivers play a pivotal role in safeguarding the public and wanted to further enhance their existing policies and associated systems.

Following preliminary discussions with the Public Protection Manager, a meeting was scheduled with the aim of reviewing the council's existing knowledge tests and safeguarding procedures to establish how we could ensure the new system was comprehensive and effective.

The solution

- How we helped develop stronger safeguarding

Based on the information gained through a number of meetings and telephone discussions a bespoke package was designed to include:

- An enhanced online driver knowledge and basic skills assessment package to cover a wider range of topics including basic maths and English, general licencing conditions and local knowledge, to quickly and easily assess a driver's suitability.
- Specialist classroom-based safeguarding awareness training delivered by expert trainers, highly experienced in delivering safeguarding training to taxi drivers.
- A comprehensive software support package to provide technical support as and when required.



The outcome

- Helping deliver a high standard of drivers

The expert team from Personnel Checks swiftly designed and developed a new, more comprehensive knowledge test, to ensure only the highest standard of fully-trained drivers are on our roads. The new test was expanded to cover questions on general licencing conditions and local knowledge, both of which are vital in operating a successful taxi driving business.

A new and safer digital test eliminating fraud

Crucially, the new online system provides bespoke knowledge and conditions. The system randomly generates tests from a bank of pre-loaded questions and easily allows the licencing team to add, delete and amend questions at the touch of a button. This ensures each test is unique and minimises the opportunity for taxi drivers to discuss the results which could lead to fraudulent applications.

Enhancing traceability and reducing illegal drivers

Another key factor is efficiency. The online test is easy to navigate and the answer to every question is tracked and stored within an electronic testing system. Once the tests have been completed, the drivers receive an instant pass or fail notification. All of which allows the council to swiftly and easily assess a driver's suitability to be granted a licence.

Better training to protect passengers and drivers

In addition, we worked closely with the licencing team to develop a new comprehensive package of classroom-based safeguarding training. Our 'Trust2Ride' training framework is fully accredited by the CPD, to raise awareness of safeguarding in order to protect drivers and passengers.

The two-hour sessions are delivered directly to the drivers by expert safeguarding professionals. The sessions are very interactive, using a combination of training materials including presentations, videos, role plays and group discussions.

The bespoke training provides valuable information and guidance on key topics, to raise awareness. It also helps taxi drivers recognise the signs that vulnerable people may be at risk, and importantly they know how to report these concerns and to whom. All of which underlines the importance the taxi drivers have in safeguarding their communities.

By working closely with the council we were able to efficiently introduce a new online driver knowledge and basic skills test to streamline the process. We also implemented a bespoke classroom-based safeguarding awareness training package, to help protect the general public.

A winning partnership

- For Rossendale Borough Council

“Building upon the excellent services already provided by Personnel Checks, the new online knowledge tests and classroom-based safeguarding training have been a huge success. They have transformed the process for both the licencing team and the taxi drivers.

“Ultimately, we want to ensure the highest standard of taxi drivers are operating in the Rossendale area. Working closely with Personnel Checks, we want our taxi driver community to feel part of the solution, not the problem.

“The team are extremely professional and adaptable to meet our stringent requirements. They’re always on-hand to answer any queries and instil confidence in their products and services. I would highly recommend their services to other councils, to reap the benefits we at Rossendale have done.”

Phil Morton, Public Protection Manager, Rossendale Borough Council.

