Thank you for responding to the Local Government and Regeneration Committee's Call for Evidence on the Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Bill. All submissions will be examined and considered as part of the Committee's scrutiny of the Bill.

Please be aware that questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer before you can submit the form.

Follow the Local Government and Regeneration Committee's Twitter feed - all Committee tweets on this Bill will have the hashtag #aw&lbill.

*1. Please supply your name and contact details:

<table>
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<th>Name:</th>
<th>Willie Taylor</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Organisation:</td>
<td>Dumfries &amp; Galloway Council</td>
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2. Please confirm that you have read and understood the Scottish Parliaments “Policy on the treatment of written evidence by subject and mandatory committees”:

✔ Yes

3. Please confirm whether you are content for your name to be published with your submission:

✔ Yes

☐ No

4. Which of the three categories below best describes your interest in the Bill (please tick only one)?

☐ Personal

✔ Professional

☐ Commercial

5. Do you wish your email to be added to the Committee’s distribution list for updates on progress of the Bill:

✔ Yes

☐ No
6. Invitations to give oral evidence to the Committee on the Bill will be based on the submissions received. If you wish your submission to be included amongst those considered for possible invitation to give oral evidence, please indicate here.

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. You may answer questions on the entire Bill, or on any part of the Bill. Please indicate which parts of the Bill you are responding to? (You may select as many options that apply).

☐ All of the Bill

☐ Equalities, climate change and other Scottish Government objectives

☐ Air Weapons

☐ General licensing issues

☐ Alcohol licensing

☐ Civic licensing – taxi/private hire car licensing

☐ Civic licensing – scrap metal dealers

☐ Civic licensing – theatre licensing

☐ Civic licensing – sexual entertainment venues
4. Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing

You may respond to all questions or only those you have a specific interest in. (Text boxes have no word limit, they will increase in size accordingly).

35. What benefits should the licensing of taxis and private hire cars deliver for customers?

Inclusivity, safety, affordability, customer care and effective a-b service along the shortest route.

36. In what ways do customers, providers of taxi/private hire car services and local authorities benefit from the two-tier licensing regime for taxis and private hire cars?

It is argued that one system would lead to congestion due to increased number of vehicles within town centres.

37. The Government states that a radical overhaul of the current two-tier licensing regime would “clearly require a very high level of resource and would cause significant disruption for the trade, local authorities, the police and ultimately the travelling public”. What are your views on this and would the potential costs and disruptions outweigh any potential benefits of a unified system?
This matter has been the subject of detailed consultation, collation and analysis of responses within the framework of the Scottish Government’s Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing: Proposals for Change Consultation. It has to be asked whether it is necessary or appropriate to consult on such wide terms at this late stage.

38. Do the changes made by sections 60 (overprovision of private hire car licences) and 61 (testing of private hire car drivers) of the Bill strike the right balance in terms of introducing greater consistency while maintaining justifiable differences?

Any answer must be speculative. This would be a complete innovation relating to a service which is now largely hidden: the customer calls the operator to arrange for the hire and agree the fare. Unless undertaking a hire or coming back from one the private hire vehicle need not be on the street. This contrasts with the visibility of taxis which are either on ranks or are seeking hails from the street.

Overprovision is a problem when operators are openly competing on price for fares.

39. Do you have any views on the section 62 provisions bringing vehicles contracted for exclusive use for 24 or more hours within the licensing regime for taxis and private hire cars, and should any exemptions be included in the Bill?

This is going to be a massive area of work: most operations under an exemption are likely to be well hidden: from where are they going to receive notice of the licensing requirements?

Any exemptions should be sorted out before the Bill is passed: it is recognised that Scottish Ministers would be empowered to create exemptions by Statutory Instrument but meantime those operating the hires would be breaking the law if they did not have the necessary licences.