

London Taxi and Private Hire

Suburban Taxi Driver Licensing Provisional outcome of suburban review



Agenda

- Introductions and housekeeping
- Re-cap of aims & objectives
- Background information
- Consultation process
- Summary of items consulted on
- Summary of responses
- Provisional outcome
- Next Steps
- Questions
- Close



Introductions & Housekeeping



Aims and Objectives

- Issues facing suburban drivers remain a concern for the Mayor and TfL
- Mayor's manifesto commitment to devise a Suburban Action Plan to support drivers
- Two workshops held in late 2012 to examine all issues affecting suburban drivers
- Ultimate aim for TfL and the Mayor was to understand trade issues and seek to create a sustainable suburban licensing system that benefits the trade and the public
- Formal consultation took place earlier this year which included the suggestions raised in the workshops



Regulatory framework (1)

London Hackney Carriages Act 1843

- TfL is obliged to grant a licence to any person who can satisfy TfL of 'his good behaviour and fitness for such situation'

London Cab Order 1934

- The only grounds for refusing a licence are if the applicant is not of good character and fit to act as a taxi driver



Regulatory framework (2)

London Cab Order 1934

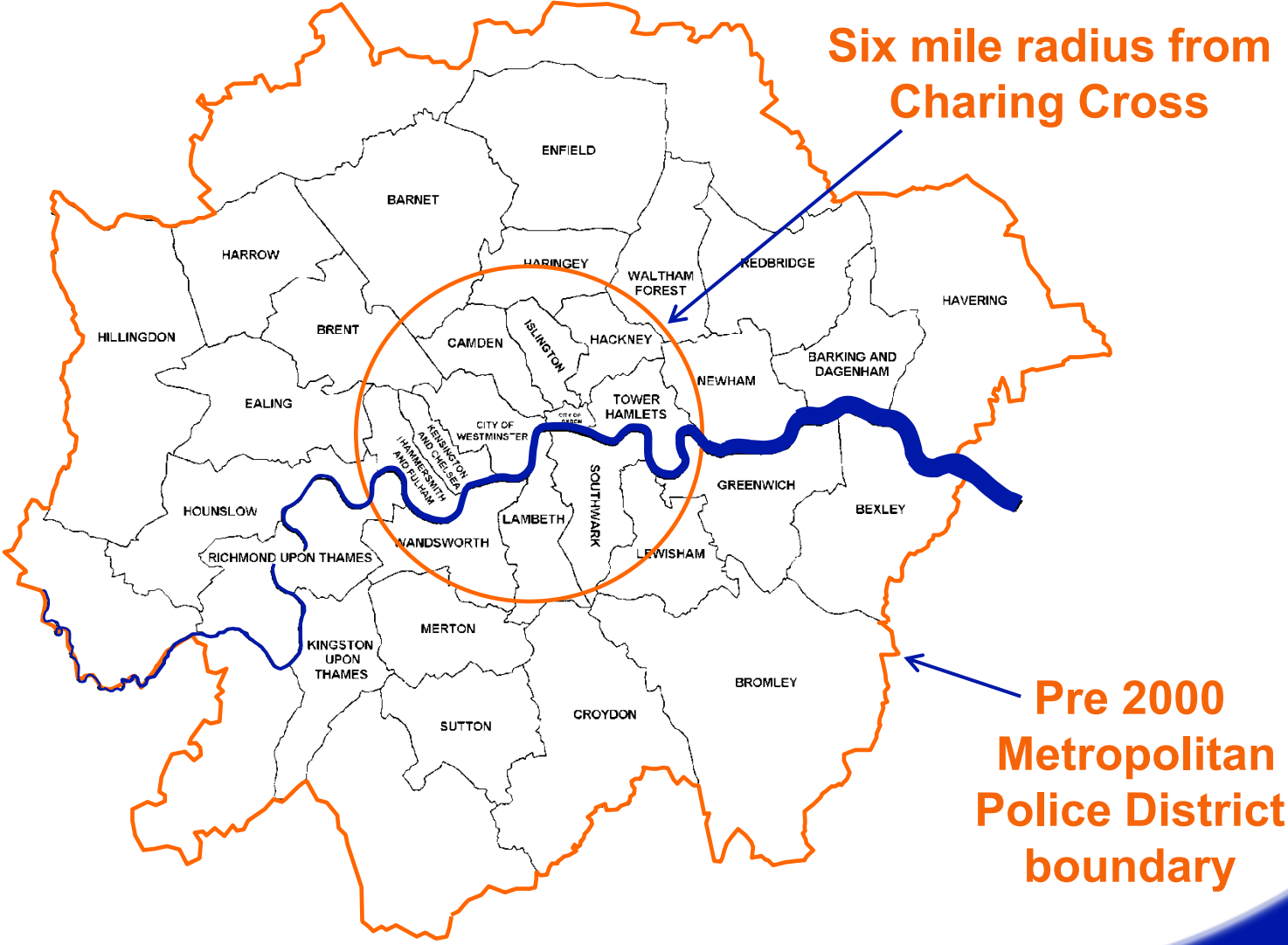


- TfL can attach a condition to a licence limiting the area in which the driver can ply for hire
- The driver must demonstrate an adequate knowledge of the area he is licensed for

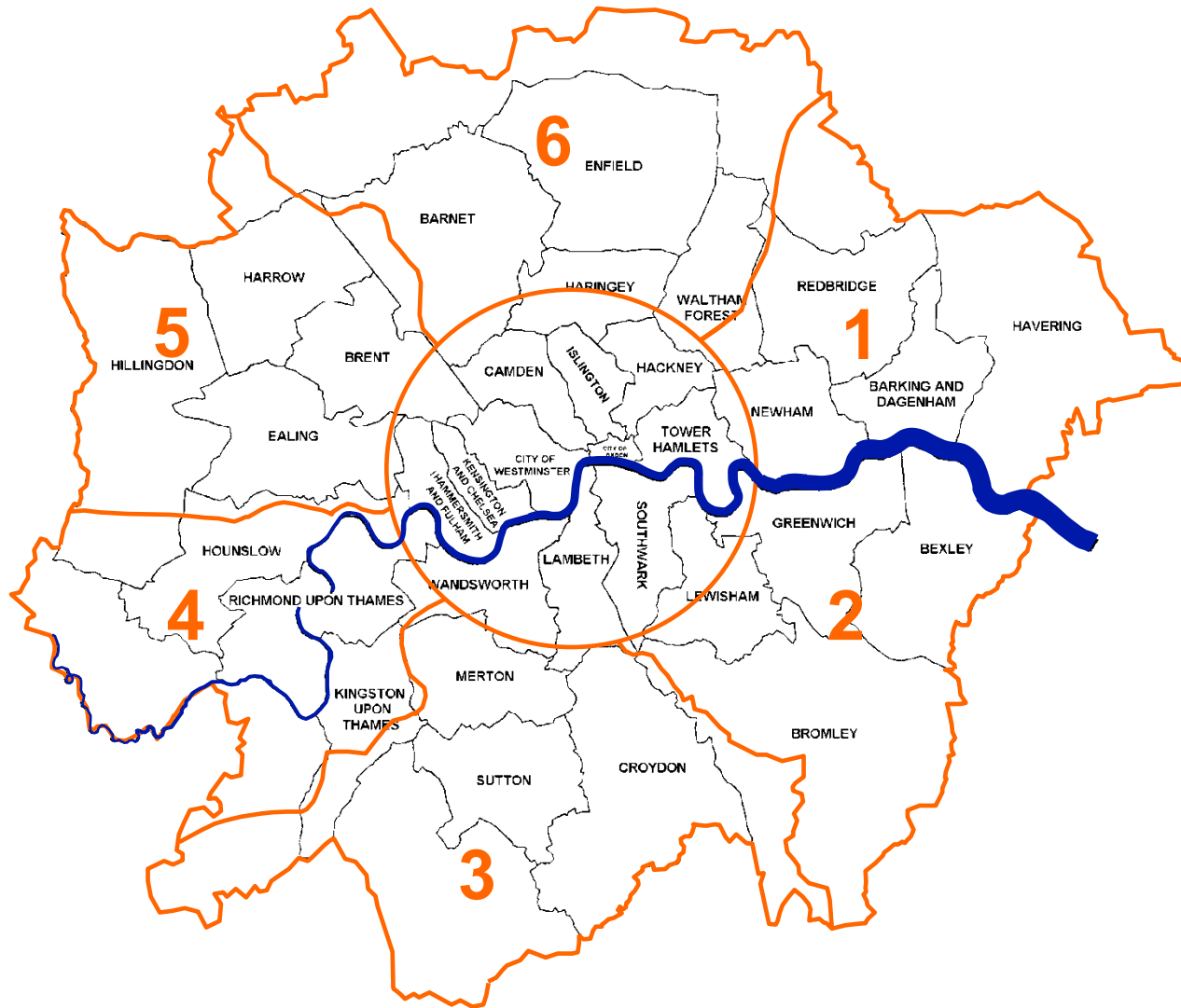
These two provisions allow for the concept of suburban licences



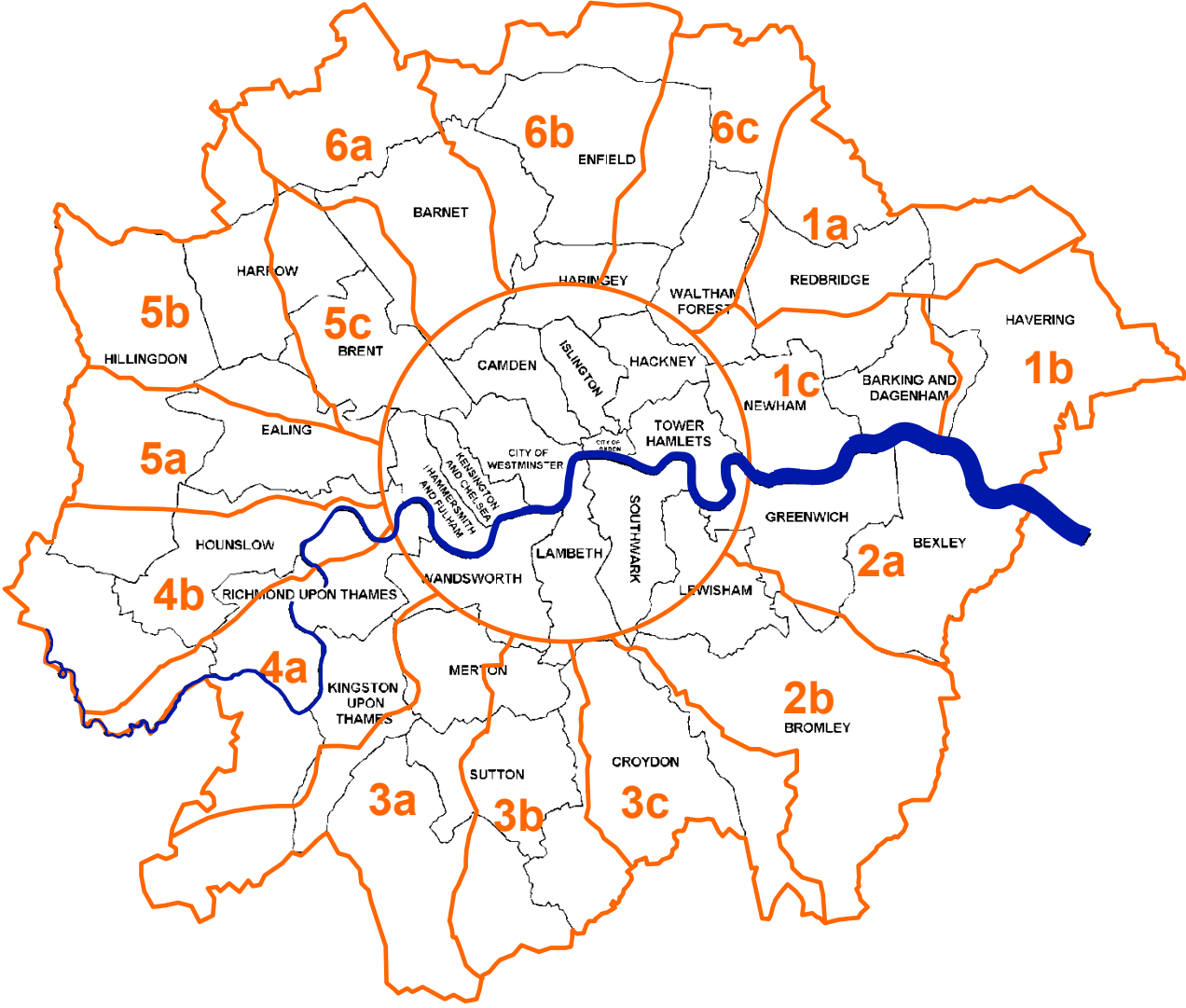
Greater London area



Suburban Sectors pre 1989



Suburban Sectors 1989-2000

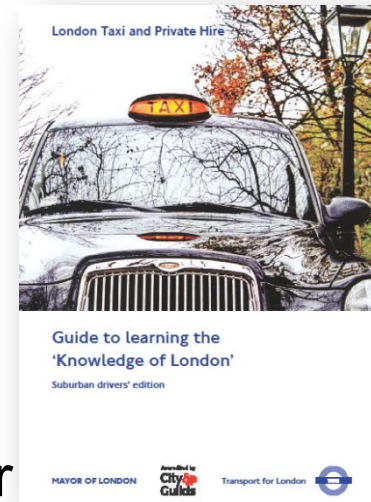


Current 9 Suburban Sectors

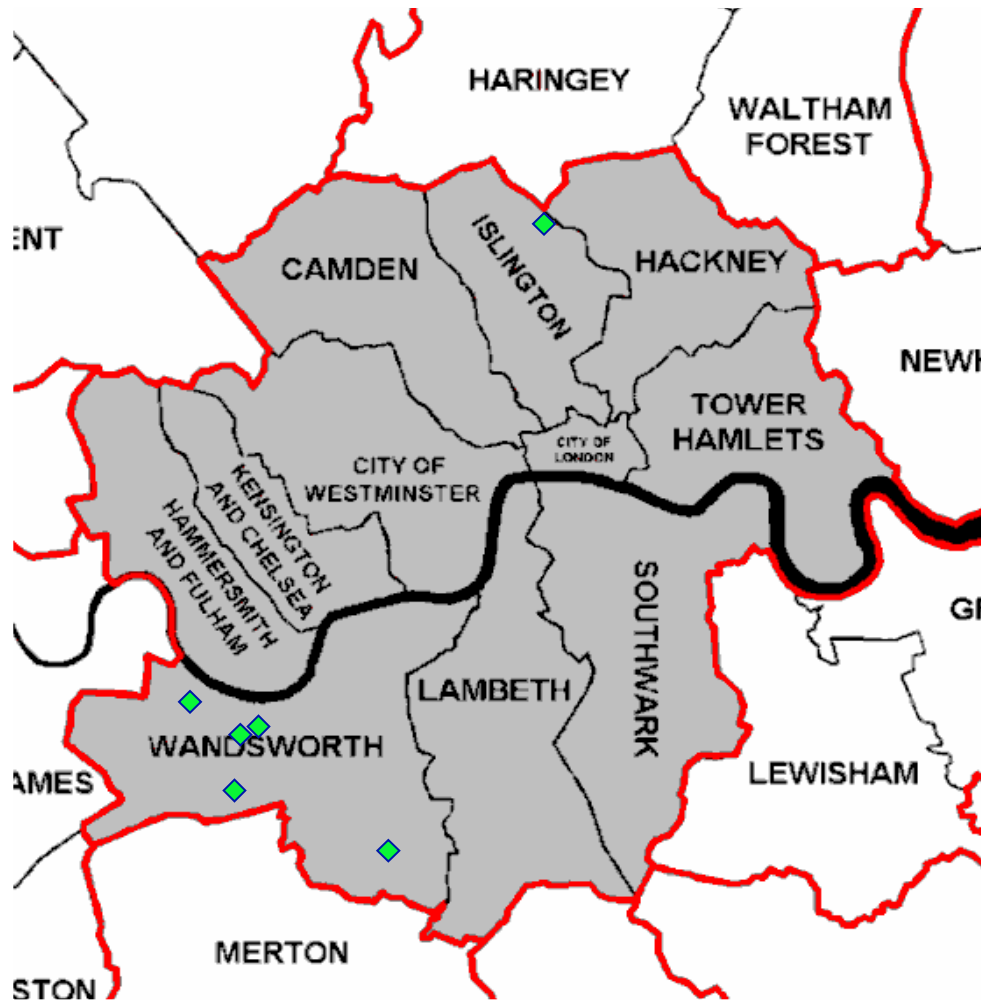


Learning the Knowledge

- 30 – 51 'Blue Book' runs depending on size of sector
- Maximum 12 months to learn the runs
- No written examination
- 56, 28 and 21 day appearances
- Final exam that tests ability to travel from sector to major points in central London and to Heathrow and City airports
- On average it takes approximately 29 months and 13 appearances



Island ranks



Ranks under-used
by All London
drivers

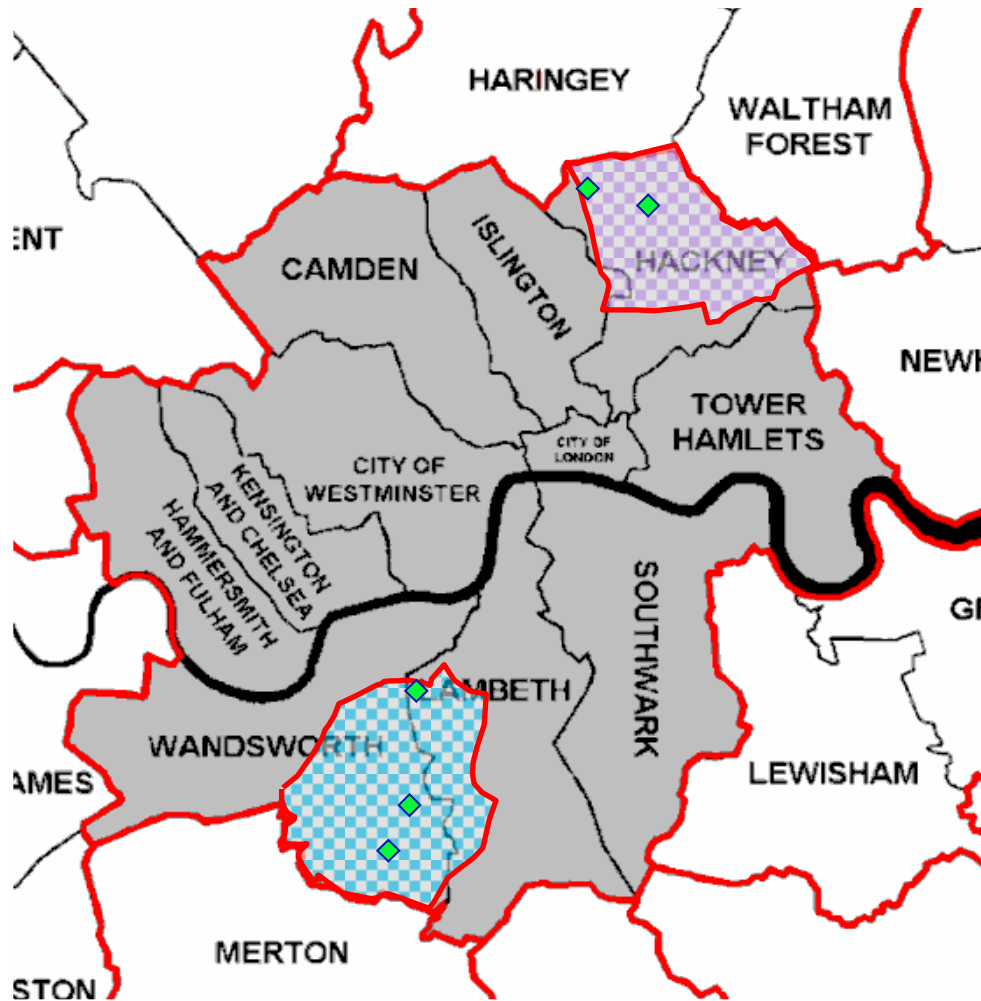
Un-met demand for
taxis

Usually close to
suburban sector
boundary

Designated by TfL



Extensions



 Clapham extension (2003)

 Hackney extension (2006)

Areas identified as having unmet demand for taxis

One-off Knowledge assessment required



Consultation review and responses



Consultation process

- Workshops held in late 2012
- Consultation ran from January to April 2014
- Wrote to all licensed drivers to get their views on the consultation
- Contained proposals suggested by trade during the workshops as well as received by individual drivers
- Received over 4,000 responses, 99% from individual drivers
- Appointed an external company to assess the responses
- Report received in summer 2014



Summary of consultation questions

- Should licence areas remain the same or be altered to have only four, two or one licence area or some other arrangement?
- Should the concept of suburban licensing be discontinued or remain in place?
- Should suburban drivers be permitted to ply for hire in adjoining sectors without a Knowledge test or should they be permitted to enter the All London Knowledge at an advanced stage of the process?
- Should suburban licences be capped or suspended and if so, what criteria should be used?
- Should there be a formal strategy for appointing island taxi ranks and if so, what criteria should be used?
- Should the existing extension areas be added to new licences as standard?
- Should we introduce or amend regulations to permit a suburban driver to accept pre-bookings when outside their area?



Summary of consultation responses

Licence areas

- Many respondents felt that the suburban taxi market is saturated however there was general support for retaining the concept of suburban licences
- Changing the existing suburban structure was popular among suburban drivers who felt they could benefit from four larger areas (NW, NE, SW & SE)
- It was recognised that just changing the existing areas would not generate more passenger demand. One driver association suggested that all parties should work together to increase demand in the sectors



Summary of consultation responses

Knowledge of London

- All London drivers were not in favour of suburban drivers entering the All London Knowledge process at an advanced stage
- Conversely suburban drivers felt there could be qualifying criteria that could enable them to “fast-track” the All London knowledge however there was no clear proposal for what this qualifying criteria could be



Summary of consultation responses

Licence numbers

- There was strong support for implementing a cap on the number of suburban licences but it was felt that this would not be effective unless a similar cap or suspension was put in place for All London licenses and private hire driver licences
- However, TfL does not have the express power to implement a cap on taxi and private hire driver licence numbers



Summary of consultation responses

Taxi ranks

- There was strong support from suburban drivers to introduce a transparent framework to determine whether a taxi rank in an All London area but close to a suburban boundary should be converted to an island rank
- Similarly for extension areas it was suggested by suburban drivers that a formal policy could be introduced to have set criteria for determining whether to allocate a new extension area
- Separately, TfL has produced a draft taxi ranks action plan which provides an increased budget to secure additional taxi ranks across the London area, including suburban areas



Summary of consultation responses

Pre-booked work

- Suburban drivers were in support of amending regulations to allow the acceptance of pre-bookings via radio circuits and apps when outside their area
- All London drivers felt this would increase the number of drivers in central London and dilute the Knowledge process, reducing customer service
- The radio circuits suggested that drivers would need to become licensed PHV drivers to accept a booking outside their area



Provisional proposals

- Taking into consideration the responses to the consultation and the needs of the travelling public, TfL proposes to explore the following areas further:
- **Taxi ranks** – Through the taxi ranks action plan TfL will work to secure more ranks, in places where there is passenger demand In suburban sectors, including night-tube stations.
- **Sector changes** – TfL will further explore the potential to create four larger suburban sectors (NW, NE, SW & SE) rather than the existing nine



Provisional outcome of consultation

- **Diary survey** – by Summer 2015 TfL will undertake a driver diary study to include a cross section of suburban drivers and passengers to understand supply and demand
- **Outside sector bookings** – TfL will further explore the concept of permitting suburban drivers to accept pre-bookings when outside their area providing the journey booking will commence in their area
- **Engagement** – TfL will seek to establish a formal engagement process with suburban drivers to ensure representation for each sector as well as the representation already provided by the driver associations



Next Steps

- We are keen to hear your views
- We will write to you with the key proposals and will seek responses by 17 January 2015 so that work can begin in earnest



Questions

