

UPDATE TO LICENSING COMMITTEE ON LICENSING OF TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

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Wards Affected: All
Key Decision No

Purpose of Report

- 1 To advise and update the Licensing Committee following the amendments to the Taxi Licensing Policy following the adoption of the Statutory Standards and a general update of ongoing developments.

Summary

- 2 The adoption of the Statutory Standards has introduced several additional checks and requirements to the Licensing Team and the Licensed Trade, including the rollout of the introduction of CCTV in vehicles, additional 6 monthly DBS checks, and mandatory Safeguarding and Disability Awareness training.
- 3 From 1st October 2022, the Council Vehicle Livery Policy has come into effect for Hackney and Private Hire Vehicles, together with the rollout of Council mandated door signage for licensed vehicles.
- 4 The Department of Transport consulted on the revision of the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance, which was last issued in March 2010.

Recommendations

- 5 **The committee notes this update report.**
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Background

- 6 In respect of the introduction of vehicle CCTV, the Licensing Team have completed the Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) in conjunction with the Council's Data Protection Officer, and the specification for the system has been finalised to comply with the DPIA. The Licensing Team are identifying a range of suppliers and installers who can provide the systems to meet this specification. The suppliers list will be circulated to drivers at the end of October 2022 for the systems to be installed over a rollout period.
- 7 The Council will then become the Data Controller for all the CCTV systems fitted in Mid Sussex licensed vehicles.

- 8 Drivers are now required to subscribe to the DBS Update scheme when they apply for a new or renew their DBS certificate. The Licensing Team are carrying out 6 monthly checks on all certificates registered with the Update Scheme. This is currently in the region of 225 certificates.
- 9 Almost all licensed drivers have now completed mandatory Safeguarding training. Drivers who have not completed the training within the required time period will have their Hackney or Private Hire Licence suspended until they successfully complete it.
- 10 The mandatory disability awareness training has been rolled out and is currently being undertaken by drivers who have 12 months to complete the training satisfactorily.
- 11 The Council Livery policy has come into effect with all licensed Hackney vehicles now being white and Private Hire Vehicles not white in colour. This will help the public identify a taxi and make some enforcement activities more straightforward.
- 12 The Council mandated door signs have been rolled out. Due to the number of vehicles on the fleet these are being fixed by the Licensing Team at plating appointments, drop-in sessions and visits to the ranks. The rollout is expected to take place over a number of months.
- 13 The fare increase approved by this Committee came into effect on the 20th September 2022. The Licensing Team will next review the Tariff in May 2023, as requested by the Committee. The fare increase has attracted new applications replacing some drivers who have retired.
- 14 The current Unmet Demand Survey in respect of the current cap on licensed hackney vehicles is expected to be received from the consultants LVSA at the end of October and will be presented to this committee at the next meeting.
- 15 The Department of Transport consulted on the revision of the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance which was last issued in March 2010. The Best Practice guidance is non-statutory guidance intended to assist licensing authorities in performing their functions. The best practice guidance focuses on issues outside the scope of the statutory taxi and private hire vehicle standards, which focus on safeguarding. This consultation closed on the 20th June 2022, and the results are awaited.

Financial Implications

- 16 None.

Risk Management Implications

- 17 None

Equality and customer service implications

- 18 The policy is intended to protect the public, including those who are vulnerable owing to their age or disability.

Sustainability Implications

19 None for the purposes of this report.

Backing Papers

None