



LICENSING COMMITTEE

Monday, 14 February 2022

Subject	DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT STATUTORY TAXI & PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE STANDARDS AND REVIEW OF EXISTING POLICY
Report by	Councillor Mary Rudd – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health
Supporting Officer	Martin Clarke Licensing Manager and Housing Lead Lawyer 01502 523226 Martin.clarke@east Suffolk.gov.uk

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
-------------------------------	------

Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

For the Licensing Committee to clarify and approve the Safeguarding training required for Private Hire Operators following the review in 2021 of the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing policies, guidance and conditions as a result of the Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards published in July 2020.

Options:

- 1) To approve the proposal for Safeguarding training for Private Hire Operators.
- 2) Not to approve the proposal for Safeguarding training for Private Hire Operators.

Recommendation/s:

That the Committee :

- 1) Considers the new updated Safeguarding training for Private Hire Operators
AND
- 2) Approves the new updated Safeguarding training for Private Hire Operators.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

Licensing is a Council function exercised by Licensing Committee and Licensing Sub-Committees.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

Taxi and private hire licensing policy

Safeguarding policy

Criminal convictions policy

Environmental:

No impact

Equalities and Diversity:

No impact

Financial:

The safety of the travelling public and drivers must always be prioritised but the imposition of standards to address the identified risk should be proportionate to the level and nature of the identified risk and the costs which would be incurred in complying with the standard is a relevant consideration here. There is a cost to the Safeguarding training.

Human Resources:

No impact

ICT:

No impact
Legal: No impact
Risk: The licensing authority needs appropriate standards and conditions for taxi and private hire drivers, vehicles and operators to protect the public and drivers.

External Consultees:	None
-----------------------------	------

Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: <i>(Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)</i>		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How does this proposal support the priorities selected?

Licensing plays an important role in the themes in the Council’s Strategic Plan of growing our economy and enabling our communities. The proposal in this report seeks to clarify and, where appropriate, raise the standards to which private hire operators are subject. Hackney carriage and private hire vehicles are a key part of the public transport system, enabling people without their own private transport or without easy access to other means of public transport to travel for education, employment, and entertainment, to shop and to attend medical appointments or deliver/receive care.

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	The Council is responsible for licensing hackney carriage and private hire drivers and vehicles, and private hire operators. In undertaking those responsibilities, the Council has regard to the legislation in place including case law, relevant guidance, best practice documentation and its own policies and procedures.
1.2	On 21 July 2020 the DfT published ‘Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards’. The Standards are applied to local authorities having regard to the Policing and Crime Act 2017 which enables the Secretary of State for Transport to issue statutory guidance to local authorities as to how taxi (hackney carriage) and private hire licensing should be undertaken to protect children and vulnerable adults when using taxis and private hire vehicles. Attached as Appendix A .
1.3	The new DfT Standards were presented to the Licensing Committee on 25 January 2021 where it was agreed to consider all of the DfT proposals and look at the Council’s existing policies, guidance and conditions regarding hackney carriage and private hire licensing.
1.4	At its meeting in April 2021 the Committee considered proposed actions to amend, update and improve a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and agreed to undertake a consultation with the trade and other stakeholders. At its meeting in October 2021 the Committee considered responses to the consultation and agreed to implement the proposed actions.
1.5	The new DfTLi Standards very much focus on protecting children and vulnerable adults and many recommendations were made with regard to licensing drivers, vehicles and private hire operators. However, there were no

	specific details regarding Safeguarding training for private hire operators or what form that should take.
--	--

2 Current position

2.1	Currently, the Council requires private hire operators to undertake the online Barnardos Safeguarding module, the same as hackney carriage and private hire drivers. Under the new policy which the Committee has approved and is due to be published in March 2022, new driver applicants will be required to undertake a two day college course 'Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver' (Level 2) and existing drivers will be required to undertake a half day refresher course (based on the two day course). An important part of this course is safeguarding and disability awareness.
2.2	The new policy does not include an update to specify what form Safeguarding training will take for private hire operators.

3 How to address current situation

3.1	In order that the Council can maintain the requirement for private hire operators to undertake safeguarding training, the new policy should state what form this will take.
3.2	It is proposed that private hire operators will be required to undertake a half day college course which will be based on the two day course, at their own cost, which will cover safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. The Council should not go backwards and not include safeguarding training for private hire operators and since the online Barnardos training will cease, a new training course should be approved.

4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	It is important to maintain high standards in the district for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, drivers and operators to protect the travelling public and drivers.
4.2	To ensure that private hire operators are subject to safeguarding and awareness training.

Appendices

Appendices:	
Appendix A	DfT Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards

Background reference papers:		
Date	Type	Available From