

Agenda Item

REPORT OF LEAD LICENSING OFFICER

To: LICENSING COMMITTEE

Subject: REVIEW OF TAXI POLICY

Date: 27 OCTOBER 2021

Reference:

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To present to the Committee the response to the formal consultation as part of the review of the Council's Licensing Policy for Taxis and Private Hire Licences.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Council commenced a review of the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy in February 2021. This report details the response to the final stage of the review.

2. REPORT

An informal consultation with the taxi trade to detail the recommendations included in the statutory standards and to invite suggestions for any inclusion or amendments to the existing policy was undertaken during February 2021. In March 2021 the Licensing Committee reviewed these responses and agreed a wider formal consultation would be undertaken.

Due to the on-going coronavirus pandemic the formal consultation was delayed. The formal consultation took place between Monday 16th August 2021 and Friday 8th October 2021. The consultation document is included in Appendix A. The results from the consultation including those previously received in March, are included in Appendix B.

There has been a low response to the consultation but this is not unusually compared with previous consultations.

The majority of amendments put forward for inclusion in the Policy were recommendations put forward in the statutory standards produced by the Department of Transport. Paragraph 1.3 of the statutory standards states:

*Whilst the focus of the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards is on protecting children and vulnerable adults, all passengers will benefit from the recommendations contained in it. There is consensus that common core minimum standards are required to regulate better the taxi and private hire vehicle sector, and the recommendations in this document are the result of detailed discussion with the trade, regulators and safety campaign groups. **The Department therefore expects these recommendations to be implemented unless there is a compelling local reason not to.***

There does not appear to be any compelling reasons not to implement the statutory standards.

3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

Although there is no legal duty on the Authority to publish a licensing policy for hackney carriage and private hire licences, the absence of a robust policy would leave the Authority open to legal challenge.

Financial Implications

None

Human Resources Implications

None

Sustainability Implications

None

Equality/Diversity

None

Risk Management

As legal implications

Compliance with Policies and Strategies

The policy will be reviewed in conjunction with the Council's Carbon Reduction Plan

Data Protection (GDPR) Implications

Any amendments to the policy will comply with data protection requirements

Climate Change

The policy will seek to implement measures to reduce the effects of climate change and will be in accordance with the Council's Carbon Reduction Plan

Lead Member Views

Councillor McKenzie, Chair, has been consulted.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The consultation process has been completed and members are asked to approve the revised policy.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that members approve the revised policy in accordance with the officer comments provided in Appendix C and the new policy to come into effect from 1 December 2021.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Consultations:	In accordance with the agreed schedule
Contact Officer:	Chris Parkhouse
Background Papers:	Licensing data area/files