



# COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2017

## AGENDA ITEM (9)

### PROPOSED ADOPTION OF MANDATORY SAFEGUARDING TRAINING FOR ALL LICENSED DRIVERS IN THE COTSWOLD DISTRICT

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| <b>Accountable Member</b>                            | Planning and Licensing Committee   |
| <b>Accountable Officer</b>                           | Michelle Bignell<br>Senior Officer Business Support (Licensing)<br>01285 623000<br>michelle.bignell@2020partnership.uk   |
| <b>Purpose of Report</b>                             | To approve the imposition of a mandatory requirement for all current licensed Hackney Carriage/Private Hire drivers and new applicants to undergo safeguarding training.   |
| <b>Recommendation</b>                                | <b>That the requirement for mandatory safeguarding training for all Hackney Carriage/Private Hire drivers (new and existing) be approved</b>   |
| <b>Reasons for Recommendation</b>                    | The Council exercises control over Taxi and Private Hire operations in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to ensure that vehicles, operators and drivers meet the required standards in order to protect the public. |
| <b>Ward Affected</b>                                 | All  |
| <b>Key Decision</b>                                  | No   |
| <b>Recommendation to Council</b>                     | None   |
| <b>Financial Implications</b>                        | Any financial matters contained within this report are met through funding from Gloucestershire County Council.  |
| <b>Legal and Human Rights Implications</b>           | Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.   |
| <b>Environmental and Sustainability Implications</b> | None   |
| <b>Human Resource Implications</b>                   | None   |

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| <b>Key Risks</b>           | There are a number of risks associated with taxi licensing. The most significant risk is to public safety and the Council must satisfy itself that licensed drivers meet the required standards in order to protect the public. The proposed measures ensure that the authority is able to determine that the applicant/licensee is a 'fit and proper' person |
| <b>Equalities Analysis</b> | Not required  |

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| <b>Related Decisions</b>    | None  |
| <b>Background Documents</b> | Cotswold District Council Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (April 2011) |
| <b>Appendices</b>           | <b>Appendix 'A'</b> - Safeguarding Training - consultation responses                      |

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| <b>Performance Management Follow Up</b> | Full policy review to take place in 2017/18 |
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| <b>Background Information</b>  |  |
| 1. <u>Introduction</u>   |  |
| 1.1 The Council exercises control over Taxi and Private Hire operations in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to ensure that drivers are 'fit and proper' in order to protect the public.  |  |
| 1.2 The Council may set requirements as it sees fit (through consultation) to ascertain that an applicant is 'fit and proper'.   |  |
| 1.3 Currently, all Applicants are required to undergo:-  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a driver assessment (to test the standard of driving);</li> <li>an area knowledge test (dual licence holder drivers only);</li> <li>a Group 2 medical (to ascertain the level of medical fitness);</li> <li>a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (to check on criminal history);</li> <li>a Right to Work check (ensure that the Applicant is permitted to work in the UK);</li> <li>a DVLA licence check (to check if an Applicant has any endorsements).</li> </ul> |  |
| 1.4 It is believed that the introduction of mandatory Safeguarding Training will help to safeguard licence holders, make them aware of signs of exploitation and create more awareness of how to avoid situations which may cause implications. This training will also benefit the public and show that licence holders are more aware of the issues and that the Council promotes safeguarding.  |  |
| 2. <u>Background to Training</u>   |  |
| 2.1 Nationally, there has been a series of widely-reported cases of child sexual exploitation in various towns and cities, including Rotherham, Rochdale and Oxford. Local Adult Safeguarding Boards have identified that licensed drivers need to increase their awareness of safeguarding issues.  |  |

2.2 The Gloucestershire Licensing Officers Group (GLOG), of which this Council is a member, has been involved in discussions on the introduction of mandatory Safeguarding Training for licensed taxi drivers which has been done in other parts of the country. These discussions have been in conjunction with Gloucestershire Constabulary and Gloucestershire County Council.

2.3 In order to understand the thoughts of the licensed trade, at its Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016, the Committee agreed to consult the licensed trade on the introduction of this training (Minute PL.13 refers)

### 3. Consultation

3.1 Consultation with the licensed trade took place during the summer 2016. A total of nineteen responses were received across the three the Environmental and Regulatory Services partners (this Council, Forest of Dean District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council), which equates to less than a 1% return. A copy of the responses is attached at **Appendix 'A'**.

3.2 The main concern raised related to the cost to the licence holder.

### 4. Training Information

#### 4.1 Costs

There will be no cost to existing licence holders for this training. Funding has been provided by Gloucestershire County Council to ensure that all licensed drivers in Gloucestershire can be trained. Any new Applicants applying for licences between April and July 2017 can also benefit from this training free of charge. After this period, a nominal fee of approximately £15 per delegate will be charged.

#### 4.2 Location of Training

Arrangements have been made for training sessions to be provided at this Council's Trinity Road offices to cause minimal disruption for businesses. These sessions will be held on several dates between April and July 2017. Councillors are also welcome to attend the sessions, should they wish to do so. The dates will be notified to the licensed trade and Front of House staff will be able to book delegates onto sessions.

#### 4.3 Course Content

The courses will contain the following sections:-

- General Safeguarding;
- Risks;
- Pathways for Reporting;
- Roles and Responsibilities;
- Domestic Abuse;
- Trafficking;
- Whistle Blowing;
- Case Studies;
- Codes of Practice.

#### 4.4 Certificates/Badges

4.4.1 A formal certificate will be issued by Gloucestershire Constabulary's Child Sexual Exploitation Unit to each person completing the training.

4.4.2 Arrangements will also be made for licence holders to have the training details imposed on the back of their driver's badges to show passengers that they have completed the training.

#### 4.5 Timescale

4.5.1 All current licence holders will be required to have undergone the training by the end of July 2017. If a licence holder has a genuine reason for not attending a session, they will be required to put their reasons in writing for the Licensing Sub-Committee (Hackney Carriage/Private Hire and Street Trading Consent Matters) to determine whether or not a longer timescale can be granted.

4.5.2 Licence holders who do not undertake the training will have their licences suspended until the training has been completed.

#### 5. Alternative Options

The Committee could choose to not to agree the requirement for mandatory Safeguarding Training. However, Members should be mindful that this requirement is becoming standard practice across the country, and that all of the Gloucestershire Councils are adopting this requirement.

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