

Licensing Committee, Tuesday 10th June 2014

Minutes:

The Head of Licensing and Registration submitted a report which provided a review of the PHO conditions. The report put forward proposals intended to contribute and uplift the service standards and compliance across the operator licensing base and meet arising public safety challenges.

Appended to the report was a copy of the following documents:

- Existing Private Hire Operator conditions (Appendix 1 refers)
- General advice and guidance notes (Appendix 2 refers)

Des Broster, Section Head, Taxi and Private Hire Licensing presented the report and responded to Members questions and queries

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included:

- Customer focus, business improvements and best practice
- The need to be fair and proportionate
- Operator training (Expected standard of service and safety)
- Out of town drivers
- Electronic booking and despatch systems
- The recording of complaints

Commenting on “Out of Town Drivers”, Councillor Dunn suggested that any revised policy should be shared with other local authorities.

In responding Mr Broster said that any change to the Leeds Policy would be viewed with interest by other Local Authorities.

Councillor Khan asked if the conditions applicable to “Out of town drivers” were enforceable.

Referring to section 3.10 of the submitted report Mr Broster said the City Council were powerless to determine “on the spot” if such a driver or vehicle was properly licensed at any time while conducting enforcement activity on the street. Mr Broster said the emphasis was on proportionate safety and not restrictive practices

Commenting on driver welfare, Councillor Khan suggested it was important for a mechanism to be in place to guard against unjustified complaints.

In offering comment Mr Broster said that driver welfare was recognised as part of the Private Hire Driver Training.

Referring to driver protection, Councillor Bruce referred to the need for drivers to be adequately protected.

In responding Mr Broster said that some vehicles had already been equipped with CCTV equipment another option was driver safety shield, the Taxi and Private Hire Section had a budget to fund 50% of the cost but the take up was low.

It was suggested that the trade be made aware that there was financial support on offer to assist in the provision of driver safety shields

Addressing the draft policy and conditions, Councillor Hyde said it was important that the views of the trade, operators and drivers were taken into account.

RESOLVED –

- (i) To approve in principle the policy and conditions and to direct Officers to prepare a report for consideration by the Executive seeking approval of the policy

- (ii) To approve the time scales for implementation of the policy and conditions