



To Members of the Licensing Committee

Governance Services

Civic Hall
Leeds LS1 1UR

Contact: Andrew Booth
Tel: (0113) 247 4325
Fax: (0113) 3951599
Email: andy.booth@leeds.gov.uk
Our Ref:
Your Ref:

11 October 2013

Dear Councillor

LICENSING COMMITTEE – 15 OCTOBER 2013

Further to the publication and despatch of the Licensing Committee agenda papers for the meeting on 15 October 2013, please find attached a copy of an additional report – ‘Information Report – Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Process for Equality Monitoring’

I would be very grateful if you could include the attached report within your agenda pack for the meeting.

Yours sincerely

Andy Booth
Governance Officer

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Report author: Kate Coldwell

Tel: 3781563

Report of **Head of Licensing and Registration**

Report to **Licensing Committee**

Date: **15 October 2013**

Subject: **Information Report – Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Process for Equality Monitoring**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

- 1 This report contains information quantifying the resources required to support the equality monitoring process, as presented previously to Members, within the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Section.

- 2 An amended version of the Equality Monitoring Form which is more specific to taxi and private hire licence holders is included.

- 3 The report aims to inform Members of the administration process and the associated costs of capturing this information.

Recommendations

- 4 That Members consider the information in this report and make any observations they may have.

- 5 That Members take a decision as to whether to direct Officers to begin capturing equality monitoring information in order to better understand the profile of service users.

- 6 Members to note that a further report will be provided after 3 months giving details of the response rates so far as requested at the last Committee meeting.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To inform Members of the administration process and the associated costs of capturing equality monitoring information.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The report presented to Members in September 2013 gave information as to how the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Section intended to capture equality monitoring information.
- 2.2 At its meeting in September 2013, Members of the Licensing Committee requested further information surrounding the resource and cost implications of implementing the equality monitoring process.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 As outlined in the previous report, this will be the first time the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Section will proactively encourage the collection of this data and there is a requirement to set a baseline over a 12 month period to cover all licence renewals.
- 3.2 Discussions with the Council's Senior Policy and Performance Officer with responsibility for Consultation, Community Engagement Research and the Citizens' Panel found that the standard response rate for surveys is 15/ 20%. Anecdotally, it is found that where equality monitoring forms are included on a separate sheet of paper to the survey they tend not to be completed.
- 3.3 In order to establish a baseline of all existing licence holders it will be necessary for an equality monitoring form to be completed by existing licence holders at the time of renewal. The form would be included within the renewal reminder letter posted out to all licence holders at no significant extra cost to the service as additional printing and postage costs for the equality monitoring form will be negligible.
- 3.4 The Council's equality monitoring guidance also states that collecting equality monitoring data should be done anonymously, as far as is possible and that if any equality monitoring information is collected and stored against a person's personal details it must be stored in hidden fields that, once entered, can only be accessed by authorised staff and that it is preferable not to attach monitoring information to personal details if possible.
- 3.5 To overcome this, staff will input equality information into a separate database that complies with both confidentiality and data protection requirements. The implementation of such a database requires skilled and dedicated resources. It is estimated that the development of a separate database will take 148 man hours at the pay scale SO2 which is a one off cost of £2,711. This additional IT resource cost can be managed within the existing budget.
- 3.6 The Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Section currently licences 5,876 drivers¹ which equates to an average of 490 renewals per month. A 20% return rate would result in 98 forms being returned. This could potentially lead to 16 hours per month required to input the returned data for the first 12 months of data collection. This

¹ August 2013

would have a substantial impact on the workload of the Officer designated to this role. A greater return rate would have a significant impact.

- 3.7 In addition, new applicants will be requested to complete and return the information. This could potentially equate to a further 52 forms being issued per month², entirely dependent upon the number of applicants. A 20% return rate would result in 10 forms being returned and an hour a month being allocated to input the returned data.
- 3.8 Moving forward, once existing licence holders have received an equality monitoring form in the first 12 months of data collection; the potential 98 returns per month will reduce significantly. The Section will continue to encourage licence holders to complete the monitoring information if they have not already done so but it is anticipated that there will be a very small return.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The information contained in this report has not been the subject of consultation with the trade as it is an information report only but if Members are satisfied with the proposed approach, information and guidance would be comprehensively supplied.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 This is an information report relating to the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing process for equality monitoring. We are using the council approach and guidance to equality monitoring and data protection requirements to inform our proposals. As such, an equality screening/ impact assessment is not required.
- 4.2.2 Information collected will be used to profile the licensed trade, identify trends and take appropriate positive action. It is anticipated that this will support the service to meet the general public sector duty within the Equality Act 2010.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The Taxi & Private Hire Licensing policies contribute to the following aims:

Best Council Plan 2013 -17

Towards being an Enterprising Council

Our Ambition and Approach

Our Ambition is for Leeds to be the best city and Leeds City Council to be the best council in the UK – fair, open and welcoming with an economy that is both prosperous and sustainable so all our communities are successful.

Our Approach is to adopt a new leadership style of civic enterprise, where the council becomes more enterprising, business and partners become more civic, and citizens become more actively engaged in the work of the city.

² 415 applications received between January – August 2013

Our Best Council Outcomes

Make it easier for people to do business with us

Our Best Council Objectives

Promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth – Improving the economic wellbeing of local people and businesses. With a focus on:

- Helping people into jobs,
- Boosting the local economy
- Generating income for the council

Ensuring high quality public services – improving quality, efficiency and involving people in shaping their city. With a focus on;

- Getting services right first time
- Improving customer satisfaction

4.3.2 The Taxi & Private Hire Licensing policies contribute to priorities:

- Reduce crime levels and their impact across Leeds
- Effectively tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour in communities

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 There are resource implications in respect of handling and storing the information but it is felt that an estimated 20% return rate in the first 12 months is manageable within the existing structure. There are no value for money issues to consider.

4.4.2 The additional IT resource costs can be managed within the existing budget with no effect on licence fees.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 All equality monitoring information is classed as personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998. The law states that we must keep the information accurate and up to date, must only keep it for as long as it is needed for a specific purpose and we must keep it secure.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 If the Section receives a greater return rate than 20%, there will be a significant impact upon the workload of the Service Development Officer responsible for storing and collating this information over the first 12 months of this process.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 That any renewed emphasis on equality monitoring must be manageable within the Section's current budget and staffing structure.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Members consider the information in this report and make any observations they may have.
- 6.2 That Members take a decision as to whether to direct Officers to begin capturing equality monitoring information in order to better understand the profile of service users.
- 6.3 Members to note that a further report will be provided after 3 months giving details of the response rates so far as requested at the last Committee meeting.

7 Background documents

Equality Monitoring Guidance

Religion or Belief	
Please indicate which best describes your religion or belief	
<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim <input type="checkbox"/> Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> Sikh <input type="checkbox"/> No religion <input type="checkbox"/> No belief <input type="checkbox"/> Other - please write below
Do you practice your religion or belief?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
I prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Where you live	
What is the first part of your postcode? (for example LS10):	
I prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for completing this equality monitoring form

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