

Report of **Head of Elections, Licensing and Registration**

Report to **Licensing Committee**

Date: **3 April 2018**

Subject: **Taxi and Private Hire Licensing: Taxi Watch scheme**

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 type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" 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 informs Licensing Committee of the joint plans between British Transport Police, Network Rail and Unite for a Taxi Watch scheme to discourage anti social behaviour directed at taxi drivers.
- 2 Details of the proposed Taxi Watch scheme are attached.

Recommendations

- 1 That Members note the information in this report.
- 2 To seek Members' response to the Taxi Watch scheme and approval of the proposed stickers for rear passenger windows and proposed leaflets when distributed in taxi vehicles.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To inform members of Taxi Watch scheme.
- 1.2 To seek member support for the proposed additional vehicle stickers and leaflets.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Taxi Watch is a joint initiative between Network Rail, British Transport Police and Unite the union Cab section.
- 2.2 The initiative aims to raise awareness and thereby reduce and prevent anti social behaviour and abuse of taxi drivers.
- 2.3 The council has been aware that each year there are hundreds of incidents reported to the police about violence, abuse, theft or criminal damage against taxi and private hire drivers. In recent months the council has worked with West Yorkshire Police to tackle and reduce criminal damage and thefts from taxi and private hire drivers. This is an opportunity for the council to demonstrate support for a similar initiative with British Transport Police and Network Rail.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Unite the Union has been in touch with Taxi and Private Hire Licensing with details of the initiative, and seeking support for the additional stickers and leaflets which participating vehicles would be required to carry to support the initiative.
- 3.2 Details of the additional stickers and leaflets are attached at **Appendix 1**. If approved, the stickers would draw attention of passengers and other members of the public of the Taxi Watch initiative, for taxi vehicles throughout Leeds, not just those using the taxi rank at the railway station.
- 3.3 The dimensions of the window stickers would be approximately 3 inches by 8 inches, large enough to draw attention to the initiative, but not so large as to hamper visibility into and from the rear of the vehicle.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The service consults and engages regularly with the hackney carriage and private hire trade. The services holds forum meetings three times a year, with the private hire operators and separately with recognised hackney carriage associations/groups, and issues a newsletter three times a year.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Not applicable.

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.

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; and
- 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; and
- Improving customer satisfaction.

4.3.2 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;
- Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

4.3.3 Leeds City Council has both a moral and legal obligation to ensure the duty of care for both children and vulnerable adults across all of its services. This cannot be achieved by any single service or agency. Safeguarding is ultimately the responsibility of all of us and depends on the everyday vigilance of staff, who play a part in the lives of children or vulnerable adults.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 There are no resources or value for money implications.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no legal implications arising from these proposals, and they are not subject to call in or publication.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.2 There are no risk management implications arising from these proposals, and they are not subject to call in or publication.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Taxi Watch initiative draws attention to the work between Network Rail, British Transport Police and a trade union representing many taxi drivers.
- 5.2 In recent months, the council has sought to work more closely with West Yorkshire Police to tackle anti social behaviour against taxi and private hire drivers. The council can demonstrate support for the initiative by approving the stickers and leaflets for the initiative.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Members note the information in this report.
- 6.2 To seek Members' response to the Taxi Watch scheme and approval of the proposed stickers for rear passenger windows and proposed leaflets when distributed in taxi vehicles.