

Title of Report:	Disability Awareness, Safe Transportation and Child Sexual Exploitation Prevention Mandatory Training
Report to be considered by:	Licensing
Date of Meeting:	22 September 2015
Forward Plan Ref:	n/a

Purpose of Report:

To inform Members of the requirement for mandatory training on disability awareness, safe transportation of wheelchair passengers and child sexual exploitation prevention and the need for a consultation on the introduction of this training with all stakeholders

Recommended Action:

To consider the report and approve the consultation

Reason for decision to be taken:

If adopted this training will form a condition for the issue of a licence

Other options considered:

None

Key background documentation:

Committee Report and Minutes March 2010

Published Work

Equality Act 2010

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aims:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BEC – Better educated communities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	P&S – Protect and support those who need it
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HQL – Maintain a high quality of life within our communities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MEC – Become an even more effective Council
The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	P&S1 – Good at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy aims and priority by:	
Ensuring that all taxi and private hire drivers are trained to an approved standard in disability awareness, safe transportation of wheelchair passengers and child sexual exploitation prevention.	

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Keith Chopping - Tel 07825 733280
E-mail Address:	kchopping@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	Copied to Councillor Chopping 11 September 2015

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Brian Leahy
Job Title:	Team Manager Licensing
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Implications

Policy:	The Council currently has a policy for the training of all new taxi drivers
Financial:	None
Personnel:	None
Legal/Procurement:	None at this time
Property:	None
Risk Management:	None

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:			
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)			
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at http://intranet/EqIA			<input type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary and Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council currently has a policy requiring all new taxi drivers to attend a disability awareness course operated by council officers. The training is required to be undertaken prior to a new licence being issued.
- 1.2 Members decided to introduce a condition in March 2010 requiring all existing taxi drivers, at that time, to undertake disability awareness training as a condition of licence. [Licensing Committee Agenda – 30 March 2010](#) and [Minutes](#).
- 1.3 Driver licences are issued for a three year period and this meant that all drivers would have attended training within a three year period from March 2010.
- 1.4 The training consists of a half day attendance at a venue selected by the Council where instruction in general disability awareness is given. This instruction is presented by the Council's Access Officer and covers a wide range of disability issues.
- 1.5 During the same training session, instruction is given by the Council's Transport Officer (Education) through a hands-on demonstration of the correct way to load and secure wheelchair passengers in taxis. There are currently no completion exams at the conclusion of the training.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 It is proposed to consult with the taxi and private hire trade, the general public and disability lobby groups to elicit their views on the introduction of mandatory disability awareness and safe transportation training and add child sexual exploitation awareness training for all taxi drivers. Private hire drivers would only be required to attend the disability awareness training and that for child sexual exploitation unless they either regularly drive or own a public hire vehicle which is wheelchair accessible.
- 2.2 The child sexual exploitation prevention session is a suggestion from Thames Valley Police who are undertaking a national campaign to raise awareness.
- 2.3 This complete training package would be mandatory for all drivers and would only be completed by being examined at the conclusion of the course.
- 2.4 It is anticipated that the training will be carried out for all existing and new drivers on a three year cycle.
- 2.5 Where any person applies to renew a licence or be issued with a new licence such licences would not be issued until the training has been completed other than in exceptional cases, where a delay in attending training may be considered.
- 2.6 There will be a cost for the training to cover the hire of the venue and to pay for the time of the trainers. This cost will be borne by the drivers themselves and is expected to be in the region of £50 per driver for each training session. i.e. circa £50 every three years. There would be a lesser charge for private hire drivers due to the reduced training content.

- 2.7 A final fee for the hire of a venue has not yet been agreed however it should not raise the fee greater than the figure quoted
- 2.8 The fee would be added to the fee charged for application for all new licences. There would have to be an exception for existing drivers who would be charged at the time of booking the training during the first phase.
- 2.9 It is anticipated that all existing drivers would be required to attend a training session within 1 year of a Member decision to implement as a condition of application, should such a decision be made.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 This item is not relevant to equality at this time.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 A consultation letter will be sent to all drivers and operators of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles asking them their views on the introduction of the training.
- 4.2 The question would be “Are you in favour of all driver’s being required to attend training sessions every three years in the subject matter of disability awareness, safe handling and transportation of passengers in wheel chairs and child sexual exploitation”.
- 4.3 The letter will explain that the training will carry a fee of circa £50 which will be charged alongside any application for renewal or for a new licence, other than for existing drivers who must attend during the period of their existing licence”.
- 4.4 The letter will expand on what the training entails and the duration of the training which will be not greater than one half day.
- 4.5 All consultation responses will be collated and presented for Member consideration at a future meeting.

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: To be consulted

Officers Consulted: Julia O’Brien Principal Licensing Officer

Trade Union: N/A