

# Central Bedfordshire Council

LICENSING COMMITTEE

5 October 2018

## Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver and Private Hire Operator Conditions

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**Responsible Director(s):** Marcel Coiffait ,  
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This report relates to a decision that is **Key**

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### Purpose of this report

To consider the combined hackney carriage and private hire driver and private hire operator conditions following consultation with the trade.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

1. **Require all new drivers and all new private hire operators to attend Child Sexual Exploitation awareness (CSE) training in advance of first being licensed as a combined hackney carriage/private hire driver or private hire operator.**
2. **Require all existing combined hackney carriage/private hire drivers and private hire operators to be required to attend the CSE training.**
3. **Require that the cost of the CSE training become the responsibility of the applicant.**
4. **Require that driver applicants living outside the Central Bedfordshire Council area who require additional checks in order to assess their applications incur an additional fee.**
5. **Recommend that Full Council adopts the conditions.**

### Issues

#### Current Policies and Conditions

1. The current guidelines, policies and conditions for combined hackney carriage and private hire drivers and private hire operators were adopted on 01 May 2016.

2. We currently offer free CSE training to all drivers and operators.

## **Options for consideration**

3. The council takes the threat of child sexual exploitation and the general vulnerabilities of children and young people very seriously. Along with many other councils it considers that the hackney carriage and private hire trade can play a critical role in reporting signs that child sexual exploitation is or could be taking place.
4. In September and October 2016 in-house CSE training was offered free of charge to all licensed combined hackney carriage/private hire drivers and private hire operators. A total of 83 drivers attended the training. A copy of our letter to the trade dated August 2016 is attached at Appendix A.
5. In May 2017, a further 320 places for in-house CSE training was offered free of charge for a variety of times and dates during the year. A total of 153 drivers attended the training during 2017. A copy of our letter dated May 2017 inviting the trade to attend the training is attached at Appendix B.
6. In July 2018, a letter was sent to the trade offering a further 600 free places. At the time of writing this report few of the places have been taken up. A copy of our letter to the trade is attached at Appendix C.

## **Consultation**

7. Our letter to the trade dated July 2018 also requested comments on the following three proposals:-
  - All new driver applicants be required to attend the CSE training in advance of first being licensed as a combined hackney carriage/private hire driver or private hire operator;
  - All existing combined hackney carriage/private hire drives and private hire operators be required to attend the CSE training;
  - The cost of the training become the responsibility of the applicant.
8. Our letter also invited the trade to comment on the following fourth proposal:-
  - That driver applicants living outside the Central Bedfordshire Council area incur an additional fee to cover the cost for the additional checks required.
9. One response was received from a Private Hire Operator. A copy of the operator's comments is attached at Appendix D.
10. Currently both Bedfordshire Borough Council and Luton Borough Council use the company NYP First to carry out their CSE Training. The company hold training sessions throughout the year at alternate locations in the Luton and Bedford areas. If we use the same company, not only will we be able to ensure a consistent Pan Bedfordshire approach, we will be able to share the costs of providing a venue and the training. Drivers for all three authorities will also be able to take advantage of attending a training session at the most convenient time and location.
11. Bedford Borough Council currently charge £20 to cover the cost of the training.
12. Luton Borough Council anticipate putting the matter before committee in 2019.
13. This authority already requires driver applicants to provide information about any licences they hold or have held with other authorities. Unfortunately applicants do not

always give us the correct information and it is sometimes necessary to make further enquiries with the authority where they live.. We would like the option of charging an administration fee to cover the cost for these additional checks.

## **Council Priorities**

- Great resident services
- Improving education and skills
- Protecting the vulnerable; improving wellbeing
- Creating stronger communities

## **Corporate Implications**

### **Legal Implications**

14. In England and Wales, outside London, taxis are licensed by district councils under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 or that Act as amended by the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

### **Financial and Risk Implications**

15. Fees are payable for hackney carriage and private hire licences. The fees charged represent the cost of the council administering the service. The proposed changes have no additional financial implications.

### **Equalities Implications**

Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The proposed changes support the protection of vulnerable groups.

### **Conclusion and next Steps**

16. Should the revised conditions be recommended to Council they will be considered at the 15 November meeting.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix A: Copy of our letter to the trade dated August 2016**  
**Appendix B: Copy of our letter to the trade dated May 2017**  
**Appendix C: Copy of our letter to the trade dated August July 2018**  
**Appendix D: Copy of Private Hire Operator's Comments**

## Background Papers

None

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