

## **HAMBLETON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report To:** Licensing Committee  
30 July 2019

**From:** Principal Licensing Officer

**Subject:** **HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY – SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

All Wards  
Scrutiny Committee

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### **1.0 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider introducing a requirement for hackney carriage and private hire drivers to undergo safeguarding training prior to obtaining a licence.

### **2.0 INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS**

2.1 The hackney carriage and private hire industry can play an important role in spotting and reporting the abuse, exploitation or neglect of children and vulnerable adults. However, this is only the case if they are aware of and alert to the signs of potential abuse and know where to turn to if they suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger.

2.2 The Department for Transport recommends that licensed drivers are required to undertake safeguarding training in order to help drivers and operators:

- provide a safe and suitable service to vulnerable passengers of all ages;
- recognise what makes a person vulnerable; and
- understand how to respond, including how to report safeguarding concerns and where to get advice.

2.3 In November 2017, the Independent Chair of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board wrote to the council to request that safeguarding awareness training be offered to licensed drivers. A copy of the letter is attached at **Annex A**.

2.4 Hambleton District Council offered some optional safeguarding awareness training to all licensed drivers in December 2018. 41 (approximately 25%) of the drivers attended but there is currently no mandatory requirement to undertake any training in this regard prior to obtaining a licence.

2.5 Barnardo's have developed an e-learning programme specifically for the hackney carriage and private hire trade. The programme is intended to enable licensed drivers:

- to enhance their knowledge and awareness;
- to apply their knowledge to practical day-to-day situations;
- to understand their roles and responsibilities; and
- to know how to respond and report.

- 2.6 The programme is currently being used by a number of licensing authorities (including several of Hambleton's neighbouring authorities) as a means of ensuring that licensed drivers have received adequate training.
- 2.7 It is proposed to require all new hackney carriage and private hire drivers to undertake the Barnardo's online safeguarding training course prior to being granted a licence with effect from 1st January 2020. Alternative training may be approved by officers on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.8 All existing licensed drivers have already been deemed suitable to hold a hackney carriage and/or private hire driver licence and therefore it would not be appropriate to require all drivers to undertake the training. However, if a policy amendment is approved in this regard, all existing drivers would be invited and encouraged to do so.

### **3.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

- 3.1 There are no equality issues in connection with this report.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND EFFICIENCIES**

- 4.1 The proposals should have no significant financial implications for the council. The cost of the consultation process will be recovered from licence fees in the normal course of business.
- 4.2 The proposals may have a financial impact on new applicants for hackney carriage and private hire driver licences.
- 4.3 The programme is available to local authorities with two cost options:
- £7,320 plus VAT to purchase the programme for one year with up to 2,000 licences;
  - £2,120 plus VAT to purchase the programme for one year, with drivers paying £18 (inclusive of VAT) directly online to undertake the course.
- 4.4 Any costs associated with the training would ultimately be covered by the fees paid by applicants and therefore the first option would only be financially viable for authorities expecting at least 289 drivers to undertake the course each year. 170 drivers are currently licensed by HDC and, based on recent trends, approximately 40-50 new drivers are expected each year. On that basis, the second cost option would be the most effective.

### **5.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 Members are asked to authorise a full consultation to be carried out in relation to mandatory safeguarding training on the understanding that the matter will return to the Committee for consideration of any responses.

GARY NELSON  
DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE (MONITORING OFFICER)

**Background papers:** Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (January 2019)  
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Independent Chair – NYSCB

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Date 13/11/2017

Dear Licencing Officer,

Re: Safeguarding Training for Licenced Drivers

Following an audit of the safeguarding arrangements surrounding licenced taxi drivers in 2016, NYSCB found that there were a variety of different arrangements in place amongst the district councils. In light of varying arrangements, North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board attended the North Yorkshire and York Licencing Officers Network to facilitate a discussion and seek views to develop a consistent package that can be delivered locally and embedded in to local licencing arrangements.

In conjunction with partners, NYSCB have created a standardised Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Safeguarding training package. I would like to ask that arrangements are made available in District Councils to explore how this training could be offered and embedded in your licencing arrangements.

Enclosed are the training slides which have been approved by the Learning and Improvement Subgroup of the NYSCB, with thanks to Scarborough Borough Council who have kindly allowed us to enhance their current training package.

If you require any additional information please contact James Parkes, NYSCB Policy and Development Officer [james.parkes@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:james.parkes@northyorks.gov.uk) 01609 533932.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof Nick Frost,

Independent Chair

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board.