



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Strategic Licensing Committee
21 st May 2014

<u>Item</u>
8
Public

REQUEST FOR THE REVIEW OF THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY.

Responsible Officer Mandy Beever, Team Manager Operational Community Safety
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1. Summary

- 1.1 The existing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy came into effect from 1st October 2011. The Licensing Service has undergone a number of changes since this time. As a consequence it has been identified that some areas of the policy require amendment in order to facilitate the work the service is undertaking with regard to enforcement and compliance.
- 1.2 On the 19th of March 2014 the Strategic Licensing Committee were consulted in regard to the proposal for reviewing the existing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy, since this time a number of Taxi Forums have been undertaken across the County in order to give the Trade the opportunity to identify areas of the policy that they may have suggestions for improvements which could be made. Taxi Forum Dates and Venues are listed at Appendix E.
- 1.3 A summary of the proposed improvements suggested by the Trade has been collated and is attached at Appendix C.
- 1.4 The current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy has been amended to capture the existing requirements of the Licensing Service the amended version can be found at Appendix D.
- 1.5 It is proposed that if the formal consultation is agreed the consultation will be undertaken using the Council's Website.
- 1.6 At the time of writing this report the Law Commission Consultation on Taxi Legislation had not been published and there has been no formal date released as to when the report will be available or when any changes will come into force. However if this information is released during the period of consultation proposed in this report the information will be included on the Website for consideration.
- 1.7 In addition consideration has been given to the processes followed during previous consultations and the most effective ways to consult with the

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade, resulting in the recommendations below.

2. Recommendation

That the Strategic Licensing Committee:-

- i. Consider and decide which of the improvements to the current Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy suggested by the Trade should be included in the policy review.
- ii. Consider and decide if the revised policy document (Appendix D) is suitable for formal review along with or without the improvements suggested by the Trade.
- iii. Agree for formal consultation to be undertaken on the proposed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy for no less than 12 weeks to commence from June 2014.
- iv. Consider and decide if it would be acceptable for the Law Commission Consultation Report (if made available during the period of this consultation) to be added to the Website as part of the consultation proposed in this report.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Human Rights Act Appraisal

- 3.1 This report is to request Members for permission to formally consult on the revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and therefore a risk assessment has not been carried out.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There will be an initial cost of around £1,000.00 for notifying the Trade in writing of the formal consultation period. This cost could be reduced by using electronic means of communication but currently there is only around 50% of the Trade who have provided an email address.
- 4.2 It will cost around £500.00 to place a full circulation advert in the Shropshire Star.

5. Background

- 5.1 The existing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy came into effect from the 1st October 2011 as a result of lengthy consultation with Trade Representatives. (Appendix A)

- 5.2 Following the Strategic Licensing Committee meeting held on the 19th of March 2014 a series of Taxi Forums were undertake between the 15th and 24th of April 2014 across the County. This gave an initial opportunity for members of the Trade to put forward any suggestions for improvements to the existing policy. (Notes from those meetings can be found at Appendix B).
- 5.3 A summary of specific points in regard to the suggested improvements the Trade has requested to be made to the existing policy has been put together. (Appendix C)
- 5.4 A revision of the existing policy has been put together for formal consultation. (Appendix D)
- 5.5 At the time of writing this report the Law Commission Consultation on Taxi Legislation had not been published and there has been no formal date released as to when the report will be available or when any changes will come into force. However if this information is released during the period of consultation proposed in this report the information will be included on the Website information for consideration.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

16th March 2011 – Strategic Licensing Committee Report, Common Licence Conditions for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles and Drivers.

Minutes from the Strategic Licensing Committee Meeting held on the 16th March 2011.

Minutes from the Strategic Licensing Committee Meeting held on the 8th June 2011.

Minutes from the Strategic Licensing Committee Meeting held on the 13th June 2012.

Minutes from the Strategic Licensing Committee Meeting held on the 5th September 2012.

19th March 2014 – Strategic Licensing Committee Report, Request for the Review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policies and Associated Documents.

Cabinet Member: Cllr Steve Charmley

Local Member:

Cover all areas of Shropshire

Appendices:

Appendix A – Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policies and Associated Documents. (Dated: 01 October 2011)

Appendix B – Notes taken at the Taxi Forums undertaken between the 15th and 24th

of April 2014.

Appendix C – Summary of specific suggestions for improvement points made by the Trade in regard to the current policy drawn from the Taxi Forums undertaken between the 15th and 24th of April 2014.

Appendix D – A copy of the revised policy to be put forward for formal consultation.

Appendix E – Taxi Forum Dates and Venues