

REPORT ON MANDATORY CSE SAFEGUARD TRAINING FOR TAXI AND PHV DRIVERS

Tracey Aldworth

1 Purpose

- 1.1 For Members to consider the recommended arrangements to ensure all licensed taxi and PHV drivers have undergone Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) safeguard training.

2 Recommendations

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| 2.1 For Members to agree to the recommended arrangements to ensure all licensed taxi and PHV drivers have undergone Child Sexual Exploitation safeguard training. |
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3 Supporting information

- 3.1 The need for licensed taxi and PHV drivers to undergo training in recognising and knowing how to report instances, or potential instances, of CSE is widely accepted. In July 2016 the Licensing Committee, in response to the Casey Report criticising failures at Rotherham Borough Council to safeguard young and other vulnerable, acknowledged the desirability that drivers in the AVDC area undergo some form of safeguard awareness training. Likewise the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) recognised this training need, which is reflected in recommendations from the Serious Case Review into Child Sexual Exploitation in Buckinghamshire 1998-2016, published in April 2017. More recently, the Task and Finishing Group on Taxi and PHV Licensing report to the Government has recommended that Licensing Authorities use their existing powers to require all drivers to undertake safeguarding/child sexual abuse and exploitation awareness training (Recommendation 25). Unfortunately there has been a delay in implementing this training due within AVDC due to a number of factors, which include practical issues identifying a suitable training provider and delays arising from restructuring and staff changes within the Licensing Service. We are pleased to report that we are now in a position to take this matter forward.

Option 1

- 3.2 In April 2018 the Principal Licensing officer attended a Safeguard training session with a private company called Personnel Checks (PC). PC have been successfully providing safeguard training for drivers in a number of other LA areas, including Chiltern and South Bucks. The course content requires a basic level of English understanding and is based on the three Es: educating, engaging and empowering drivers. The training is divided into 4 clear sections:
 - 1 – Statistics re CSE and grooming.
 - 2 – Indicators and types of abuse/exploitation
 - 3 – Reporting
 - 4 – Passenger/driver safety (dos and don'ts)
- 3.3 The trainer uses a variety of media and materials to engage drivers, including videos and open discussions. Real life examples are used and the taxi/PHV trade is promoted in a positive light. Attendees are assessed at the end of the session and given a certificate. Drivers are given a handbook and windows sticker to take away with them. A summary of the training content is

provided in the email shown as Appendix 1. While the Principal Licensing Officer felt there were many positives with this option, cost is a significant issue, equating to £750 per session (£15 to £30 per driver).

- 3.4 Further contact was made with PC in October 2018, and their representative met with the Chairman of the Licensing Committee and the Principal Licensing Officer, which provided an opportunity to review their training material again. This meeting re-enforced the Licensing Service view that this was a viable option on the basis that the training provides a positive interaction with drivers, there is good use of training materials to facilitate learning and the content is both comprehensive and coherent. The representative gave assurances that they would be able to comfortably deliver the training to an estimated 3000 drivers within the next 12 months, however cost remained an issue and the £750 per session fee proved non-negotiable. Furthermore there were concerns that potential procurement issues due to the overall amounts involved could cause further delays.

Option 2

- 3.5 A significant number of AVDC licensed drivers are employed on contract type work via Bucks County Council (BCC) Client Transport Services (CTS). This work typically involves transporting children and other vulnerable persons throughout the County. These drivers require additional licensing with BCC, which requires attendance at a mandatory training and assessment session prior to approval. It was hoped that the BCC training would satisfy AVDC's CSE training requirements, with the effect that BCC licensed drivers could be exempted from additional training and the training could be adapted to non-BCC licensed drivers. Unfortunately when officers attended a training session they found that the material was not suitable. Due to the complex and varied needs of many of the clients using the contract service, drivers are required to be literate to a relatively high standard and training needs to be extensive and technical in nature to reflect the specialist nature of this work. Delegates undergo a comprehensive English Language test followed by a 4 to 5 hour training session. Officers felt that the assessment measures and training material were likely to be excessively challenging and overly burdensome for many routine, non-contract drivers. Furthermore the content was very specific to contract work and only around 5 minutes was dedicated to CSE. In response to officer feedback, the BCC CTS team proposed putting together a bespoke CSE/exploitation training package for the local Districts.
- 3.6 BCC presented the new training material in August 2018. Officers from the local Districts attended together with the Chairman of AVDC Licensing Committee. Unfortunately feedback to the Licensing Service following this session was not favourable with officers reporting that they were disappointed by the new course materials and its delivery. The slides were reported as too wordy and incoherent; the course was too long and not engaging enough. It was also reported that content/delivery lacked empathy for the driver's position and there were insufficient attempts to engage with drivers to put their trade in a positive light. For example there was no protection advice for drivers or positive examples where drivers had acted correctly. The Principal Licensing Officer, in liaison with the other Districts, decided at this stage to consider other options.

Option 3

- 3.7 Cyp First is an organisation that has around 20 years experiencing working directly with victims of CSE and other forms of exploitation. They have

developed a training package in partnership with drivers. The training has 6 interactive films built in which are taken from real life scenarios that drivers have disclosed from their experience. The films are analysed and the appropriate course of action is identified and discussed for each scenario. An outline of the session is provided below:

- Understand what Child Exploitation is, including Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation (County Lines)
- Understand the vulnerability factors of some passengers.
- Know the risk indicators and how to spot them.
- Be aware of what Human Trafficking is and the legal implications
- How to report concerns.
- Understand how all of the above relates to your role
- How to protect yourselves as drivers.
- How to report concerns & contact details handout (detailed local response)

At the end of the session delegates are given a CSE advice card which provides a summary of the warning signs to look out for and contact details for reporting concerns. Further details of the course content are shown in Appendix 2.

- 3.8 Licensing officers and the Chairman of the Licensing Committee attended a Cyp First training session on 7 November 2018. The feedback was very positive. The use of training materials was very effective, which ensured the delegates were engaged and the delivery was excellent. The trainer was compelling, drawing on real life experiences to impress the seriousness of the subject, while remaining empathetic and supportive of the drivers' role in this troubling area. Delegates are asked to record their knowledge of the subject area before and after the session.
- 3.9 The training sessions have been delivered to over 3500 drivers, including Luton, Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire. Sessions can host up to 50 delegates and the cost is £600 per day, for 3 sessions (£4 per driver).
- 3.10 Having explored this area extensively and considered three credible options, the Licensing Service recommends that the Council proceed with Option 3 forthwith and engage Cyp First to provide the required training. It is proposed that training be a mandatory requirement imposed on all drivers, with new and renewal applicants being required to demonstrate attendance on the Cyp First CSE training session.
- 3.11 Cyp First have reported that they will be able to manage bookings directly and they will manage the attendance at the sessions. AVDC will provide the training room. It is further proposed that the Licensing Service aim to ensure all drivers (approximately 3000) have attended the training within 12 months of implementation.

4 Options considered

4.1 No other options considered.

5 Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 Taxi and PHV drivers can play a key role in identifying and reporting instances of child abuse. The Cyp First child exploitation training programme presents this message in a clear, memorable and empathic way. The trainers have first hand experience of working with both the victims of abuse and the taxi/phv driving trade. The cost of the training provides excellent value for money.

6 Resource implications

6.1 The Licensing Service intends to use licensing reserves to subsidise training in the first instance to encourage early participation. Some basic administration services using existing resources may be necessary to help facilitate initial implementation.

Contact Officer

Background Documents

Simon Gallacher Ext 5083

Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing

Steps towards a safer and more robust system