

LICENSING COMMITTEE

4 NOVEMBER 2019

PRESENT: Councillor S Renshell (Chairman); Councillors T Mills (Vice-Chairman), M Collins, P Cooper, M Hawke, S Lambert, S Morgan, G Powell, B Russel and Sir Beville Stanier Bt (ex-Officio)

APOLOGY: Councillor L Monger

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September, 2019, be approved as a correct record.

2. MANDATORY CSE SAFEGUARDING TRAINING FOR TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE DRIVERS

The Committee received a report for Members to consider on an amendment to the taxi and private hire licensing arrangements to ensure that licensed drivers had undergone Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) safeguarding training.

The Committee was informed that it was proposed that the training be a mandatory requirement to be imposed on all new existing and renewing drivers. Since training had begun the council had hosted 72 training sessions with a continuing 3 sessions available each month. On completion of the training each driver was given a card highlighting training details and an attendance certificate.

The Committee also heard that awareness of the training had been raised through the AVDC website with regular email reminders to drivers and operators informing them of the consequences of their drivers not undertaking the training. The feedback from operators was that the training was a good thing to do and there had been positive feedback from those that have taken part. AVDC had one of the highest number of drivers in the country being 7th or 8th. There was a sizeable minority of about 15% that had still not attended the training. There was some conjecture and discussion as to the reasons for non attendance.

Members were informed that there were concerns around passenger safety in regards to those drivers that had not or were not willing to attend the training.

The Committee raised some concern in cases where drivers had stated that they had been trained by another authority. It was explained that training provided in local councils and where it could be shown the training was the same were being accepted. However, where this could not be shown, and due to the fact that such training had been recently updated (to include for e.g. County lines) then the requirement to attend a training session locally remained.

The Committee heard that refresher training would be provided and noted that there would be not be too much lapse in the time between the refresher training. The Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Board had been invited and would be attending the training given with the inference that they could provide input if they considered it appropriate.

The Committee also heard that training was continuous for new drivers and renewal drivers and continued to be provided on a monthly basis.

Members were keen to ensure that the drivers were made aware of the imposed training/timetable and the consequences of not complying . The Committee heard that in addition to all those efforts made to date it was also intended that each driver would be contacted by telephone.

The Committee was informed of the requirement for any change to the licensing arrangements to be reasonable and proportionate.

RESOLVED –

To agree an amendment to the current licensing arrangements to ensure all licensed taxi and private hire vehicle drivers had undergone Child Sexual Exploitation safeguard training. Specifically, any licensed driver who had not attended the council's training by 31 January 2020 would have their licence suspended with immediate effect, until such time as they had satisfactorily attended the council's approved training session.