



Notices of Motion

Date: 17 April 2024

Notice of Motion – Council’s Taxi Licensing Policy / White Ribbon recognition

Proposer: Councillor Robin Stuchbury

Seconder: Councillor Andrea Baughan

1. This Council notes that:

- (a) Buckinghamshire Council is a local authority which recognises White Ribbon. This status shows our commitment to the White Ribbon campaign to protect and support women and girls from abusive and violent behaviour by men and boys. In gaining this accreditation we, the Council, sought to spread the support to all departments and sections of our Council and beyond, into our community.
- (b) Buckinghamshire council currently licenses approximately 3,300 drivers to provide Private Hire and Hackney Carriage services.
- (c) Buckinghamshire Council operates a proactive stance regarding compliance and safety auditing. While some drivers licensed by other Councils do operate within Buckinghamshire Council’s area, BC officers are only able to take enforcement action if authorised by the corresponding council to do so. MOUs are in place with two of the 12 neighbouring authorities allowing BC Officers to carry out vehicle compliance checks in their areas.
- (d) At present all Buckinghamshire Council drivers are fit and proper persons, (meeting the required local standards as set out within our policy) and undertake safeguarding training to ensure they have a better understanding of the abuse suffered by children and vulnerable adults prior to obtaining their licence. Whilst remaining within the statutory licensing procedures, at present this training which includes undertaking CSE safeguarding and disability awareness training every 3 years together with recognising the signs of abuse and how to report concerns, it does not fully address the issues raised by White Ribbon.
- (e) Nationally, there are a high proportion of complaints from women in regards to inappropriate behaviour or language by drivers towards female passengers.
- (f) Other councils such as Newcastle and Wrexham are already promoting White Ribbon to taxi operators, door security, bar staff and other licenced facilities.

2. This Council therefore resolves to:

- (i) Ensure that all new applicants and taxi license holders understand that verbal, physical and emotional abuse is not tolerated.
- (ii) Encourage all those experiencing abuse to report this to-the Police.
- (iii) Ask Officers to make appropriate arrangements (in consultation with relevant portfolio holder and committee chair) to revise the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy to include education about domestic abuse into existing safeguarding and equality training for drivers, and maintain a register of those who complete the training.
- (iv) Invite all those licenced by Buckinghamshire Council to become White Ribbon ambassadors and display the White Ribbon, and
- (v) encourage Operators to promote White Ribbon with their drivers, regardless of the origin of their licence.

