

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

DECISION

meeting date: TUESDAY, 15 JUNE 2021
title: OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION ON REVISION OF TAXI LICENSING POLICY
submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT – CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: STEPHEN BARKER – SOLICITOR

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Committee of the outcome of the consultation on amendment of the Council's Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy, and to seek Committee's views on the proposed amendments.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – }
- Corporate Priorities – } Consideration of these issues will promote the Council's aim to be a well-managed Council.
- Other Considerations – }

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Committee will recall consideration of the Department for Transport Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards ("Taxi Standards") at the meeting on 20 October 2020. At that meeting, Committee considered the current policies and conditions for drivers, vehicles and operators, which for the most part conformed with the Taxi Standards. Where some amendment might be needed to comply with the Taxi Standards, Committee authorised the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consult on the possible amendments.

2.2 Pursuant to this authorisation, the Council's Solicitor wrote to all relevant licence holders and interested parties to consult them. A copy of the consultation documents is enclosed with this report as Appendix 1.

3 ISSUES

3.1 The Council received one response to the consultation. The respondent's only comment was "I won't pay £1,000". Whilst this figure is not mentioned in the consultation documents, it is perceived that this is a reference to the possible cost of installation of CCTV as a condition of licence. The Council is required to consult to establish if there are local circumstances indicating whether the installation of CCTV would have a positive or adverse net effect on the safety of taxi and private hire vehicle users, including children and vulnerable adults, and taking into account potential privacy issues.

3.2 Members approved the proposed actions as recommendations to comply with the Standards, and, following the consultation, the Council will take steps to implement those actions. In the light of the consultation, with the one apparently negative response, Committee's views are sought on a requirement for installation of CCTV in all licensed vehicles.

3.3 Were there to be consideration of the introduction of a requirement for CCTV, it is considered that specific and focussed consultation with the trade be required. At this time, save for the response on cost, no positive or negative approach has been

determined. LGA Guidance emphasises the need to obtain the views of the trade on CCTV introduction (including evidence from a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)), and consideration of issues of privacy and proportionality. Any decision of introduction of such a requirement would need to be evidence based.

- 3.4 A further consideration is that, in most circumstances, a licensing authority which mandates the installation of CCTV systems in taxis and private hire vehicles will be responsible for the data as data controller. The Council currently does not have the resources to carry out this role if the requirement were to be introduced for all such vehicles. Members may wish to consider whether, in the absence of evidence and any specific request, such a requirement is justified and proportionate.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Resources may be expended in officer time in amendment of the policy and conditions.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – No implications identified.
- Political – No implications identified.
- Reputation – The Council's reputation will be enhanced by ensuring that aspects of public safety are addressed.
- Equality & Diversity – No implications identified.

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 Authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to amend the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy as set out in Appendix 2 of the report to Committee of 20 October 2020, with the exception of provisions regarding CCTV consultation.
- 5.2 Determine whether further steps should be taken to consider a requirement for the introduction of CCTV, including preparation of a DPIA and specific consultation.

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For further information please ask for Stephen Barker, extension 3216.