

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Licensing Committee **DATE:** 22nd July 2015

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR DECISION**

PROPOSALS FOR MANDATORY SAFEGUARDING TRAINING FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS AND OPERATORS

1. **Purpose of Report**

For Members to consider a proposal for the introduction of mandatory 'Safeguarding Training' for all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers and Operators.

2. **Recommendation(s)**

That the Committee recommend the introduction of mandatory safeguarding training for all Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers and Operators and the Trade to be consulted on the arrangements for such introduction.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

The primary role of the licensing authority is the protection, safety and wellbeing of the public.

A number of high profile recent safeguarding issues around the country have been publicised in particular relating to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), some involving Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers.

The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade including both the drivers and Operators carry out and deal with hundreds of fares on a daily basis some of whom are potential vulnerable people. The proposal will increase and raise awareness of all aspects of safeguarding vulnerable persons.

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities –**

Safeguarding issues, particularly that of CSE are high on the agenda and priorities of both the JSNA and SJWS. The proposal will also be included in the LSCB Strategy.

The eventual approval of the proposal of mandatory 'Safeguarding Training' will contribute considerably to the wellbeing priority of:

- Safer Communities

Cross-Cutting themes:

The eventual proposal of the introduction of mandatory ‘Safeguarding Training’ will promote the benefits of living and working in Slough and will contribute to the cross cutting theme of **Improving the image of the town.**

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The report outlines the work undertaken by the LSCB Licensing Splinter Group and that of similar Safeguarding Training already introduced in Scarborough.

Approval of the proposal will therefore contribute to the Five Year Plan.

The specific Five year Plan targets are:

- Slough will be one of the safest places in the Thames Valley
- Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive chances

4. **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

There will be a cost to the Council on setting up the training package, but at this time the full cost is not known.

Risk Management

Recommendation	Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)
As detailed in Point 2.	Introduction of mandatory safeguarding training will support the council priorities with regards to not only children subject of CSE but of all other vulnerable people many of whom use local private hire and hackney carriages on a daily basis.	It is important that a full public and wide ranging consultation is conducted with all relevant agencies as well as with all current licensed hackney carriage and private hire drivers and Operators, to assess views on the proposal.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

Section 1 and Schedule 1 Parts I & II of The Human Rights Act 1998 apply:

Article 1 – Every person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his or her possessions including the possession of licence and shall not be deprived of the possession except in the public interest

Article 6 – That in the determination of civil rights and obligations everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law.

(b) Equalities Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed on conclusion of the consultation which will highlight the positive and negative impacts on the proposed introduction of the policy.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 Members will be aware of the Council's commitment through Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) together with Thames Valley Police in combating and raising awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation.

Background

- 5.2 In late 2013, Slough LSCB and Thames Valley Police agreed to work together on a CSE awareness raising campaign for licensed premises. A 'licensing splinter' group was established, linked to the LSCB CSE sub-group with the partners being Thames Valley Police, SBC Engage team and SBC Licensing Team.
- 5.3 The Purpose of the Licensing Splinter Group is to *"Raise awareness of CSE with premises and taxi drivers of Slough through a range of methods including media and campaigns. Work together to ensure a robust response to CSE is implemented by businesses. Coordinate resources and work together to achieve the above"*.
- 5.4 In 2012 the Licensing Team developed a Taxi and Private Hire Newsletter to provide advice and guidance on all areas of taxi and private hire licensing issues. The newsletter is sent out to all current taxi and private hire licence holders on a regular basis and has also been used as a platform to raise awareness of a number of issues including, Loan Sharks, Hate Crime (*stickers provided to all drivers*), Dementia and Diabetes. Since the introduction of the Licensing Splinter Group the newsletter has also carried articles on raising awareness of CSE and human trafficking where all drivers were provided with stickers which are now displayed in their vehicles. A copy of the most recent Newsletter is attached at **Appendix C**, which again includes CSE and also the National Working Group (NWG) Code of Conduct for drivers and staff.
- 5.5 The work through the CSE Splinter Group to raise awareness of CSE with businesses drivers and Operators has received national recognition by the Local Government Association (LGA) and Slough is used as one of 9 case studies in the LGA Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation resource pack for Councillors. A copy of the case study is attached at **Appendix A**.
- 5.5 Following the case study being published, Slough Borough Council represented by Ginny de Hann - Head of Consumer Protection and Business compliance Services was asked by the LGA to take part in a workshop at the LGA Taxi and PHV Licensing Conference. The workshop was run jointly with representatives from Scarborough Council and North Yorkshire Police who covered working with taxi drivers and of the 'mandatory safeguarding training for taxi and private hire drivers'.

- 5.6 Scarborough Council introduced the mandatory condition that all licence holders must undergo safeguarding and safer recruitment training following consultation with all taxi and private hire trade members. The training covers, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, making referrals, signposting to relevant agencies, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation and ‘hate and mate’ crime”.
The wording of the mandatory condition is:

“Following the grant of a licence (and where a driver has not already completed an approved certified safeguarding training session) the driver shall within 6 months produce a certificate to the LA confirming that they have undertaken and completed a training session on safeguarding and safer recruitment. Certificates will only be accepted by training providers approved by the LA and training should be delivered in person, where such a session is not available, an online training session may be substituted, but only in these circumstances”.

A copy of the article covering the training provided by Scarborough Council and North Yorkshire Police as detailed in the LGA Taxi and PHV Licensing Councillors handbook is attached at **Appendix B**.

Proposals

- 5.7 In light of the work done by Scarborough Council the SBC Licensing Team are now working on developing a similar training package together with a recommendation that all licence holders must complete the safeguarding training package within a specified period of time. The training package and training method will be identified and formally consulted upon with all current licence holders. The proposal for mandatory safeguarding training has been included in the latest Taxi and Private Hire Newsletter to inform licence holders of the proposal.
- 5.7 In addition to the implementation of the safeguarding training the Licensing team will also be looking at introducing a ‘Licensing Hotline’ where information can be passed confidentially to officers by all licence holders as well as taxi and private hire drover and operators.

6. Comments of Other Committees

None

7. Conclusion

The Committee is therefore requested to note and make comment on the Proposals. A further report will be put before the Licensing Committee in due course following the consultation detailing the responses to the consultation, full recommendations for the proposed condition and how and by whom the training package will be delivered.

8. Appendices Attached

‘A’ Extract of the Slough case study (*LGA resource pack*)

‘B’ Extract of the Scarborough Council and North Yorkshire training (*LGA Taxi and PHV Councillors handbook*).

'C' Copy of June 2015 issue of the SBC Taxi and Private Hire Newsletter.

9. Background Papers

LGA Tackling child sexual exploitation – A resource pack for Councils

LGA Taxi and PHV Licensing – Councillors' Handbook