

REPORT TO	ON
GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE	20 FEBRUARY 2018

September 2017



TITLE	REPORT OF
UPDATE ON RECENT LICENSING ACTIVITY	PETER HAYWOOD

Is this report confidential?	No
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report is to update the Committee on a range of Licensing activity which has taken place since the January meeting of the Committee, including:

- (i) the consultation process which has taken place throughout February 2018 on changes to the Licensing Policy with regard to professional qualifications;
- (ii) the Taxi Trade Forum held on 1 February 2018;
- (iii) arrangements for the Working Group on age differentials for certain types of vehicles; and
- (iv) publication of the “designated list” of wheelchair accessible vehicles.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to:

- 2.1 note the information provided in sections 4-7 below on recent Licensing activity; and
- 2.2 note the proposed date of the next Taxi Trade Forum (3 May 2018).

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The report relates to the following corporate priorities

Clean, green and safe		Strong and healthy communities	
Strong South Ribble in the heart of prosperous Lancashire		Efficient, effective and exceptional council	x

4. CONSULTATION UPDATE

4.1 Members will recall that – at the January meeting of the General Licensing Committee – they agreed to formally consult on a proposal to amend the Licensing Policy so as to allow a “period of grace” within which otherwise suitable applicants for a Hackney Carriage / Private Hire driver’s licence (but who did not hold the necessary professional qualification) may be granted a 12 month fixed-term licence within which the qualification would have to be obtained.

4.2 The following action has subsequently taken place:

- the consultation period was agreed as 1 February 2018 to 5pm on 28 February 2018;

- the consultation pages have been drawn up and appear on the Council's website. They can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.southribble.gov.uk/content/professional-qualifications>

- the consultation exercise has been promoted via the Council's social media outlet; and
- the licensed trade was advised of the consultation exercise at the Taxi Trade Forum on 1 February 2018 (see below).

4.3 All consultation responses will be formally recorded on a log and it is intended that a report outlining the outcomes of the consultation exercise will be presented to members of the General Licensing Committee at their meeting in April 2018.

5. TAXI TRADE FORUM

5.1 On 1 February 2018, a meeting of the Taxi Trade Forum was held under the chairmanship of Cllr Nelson.

5.2 The meeting followed a similar format to that adopted at previous meetings, namely (i) a presentation by the Interim Licensing Manager on matters relating to the licensed trade; and (ii) a response given by the Council to questions submitted in advance of the meeting by the trade.

5.3 A total of 6 trade representatives were present, including one operator.

5.4 The meeting provided lively discussion on a number of topics, with particular emphasis on the commencement of the consultation exercise on professional qualifications (which began that day). As a result, it is anticipated that a significant number of consultation responses may be generated.

5.5 The next scheduled date for a quarterly meeting of the Taxi Trade Forum has been provisionally fixed for 5pm on 3 May 2018.

6. WORKING GROUP

6.1 Members will recall that, at their January meeting, they agreed to establish a working group to consider the following matter:

Differential Age Limits for Licensed Vehicles

6.2 The date for the working group has now been fixed for 22 February 2018. At the meeting of the Taxi Trade Forum on 1 February 2018, trade representatives volunteered to attend the meeting and an invitation will be sent to 2 members of the trade. In addition, a representative from the organisation Disability Equality North West will also be available to attend.

6.3 The relevant paperwork (previously approved by this committee) will be dispatched to members of the working group around 15 February 2018.

6.4 It is still anticipated that a report on the outcome of the working group will be reported to the April meeting of the General Licensing Committee.

7. “DESIGNATED LIST” OF WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

7.1 Members will recall that, at their meeting in October 2017, they agreed to recommend the formal adoption of certain sections of the Equalities Act 2010 (along with formal documentation relating to the enforcement of these provisions). These sections sought to offer greater protection to wheelchair users in the Borough, and were subsequently adopted by full Council at its meeting in November 2017.

7.2 As a result, the Licensing Section wrote to the trade and invited drivers to seek (as appropriate) medical exemption from the requirements relating to the transportation of wheelchairs. Once it was confirmed that no applications for medical exemption had been made, publication of the “designated list” of wheelchair assessable vehicles took place on 24 January 2018.

7.3 From the date of publication, it is a criminal offence for drivers to:

- fail to carry passengers in wheelchairs in vehicle on list;
- fail to provide assistance to those passengers; and
- charge extra for their services when transporting a wheelchair.

8. WIDER IMPLICATIONS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTATION

8.1 Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

The report is for information only and therefore there are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

8.2 Comments of the Monitoring Officer

There are no legal implications to comment upon in respect of this report.

Other implications:	
▶ Risk	None
▶ Equality & Diversity	None
▶ HR & Organisational Development	None
▶ Property & Asset Management	None
▶ ICT / Technology	None

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

SMT Member's Name: Peter Haywood
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