

**LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
23 APRIL 2009**

**FIRST AID TRAINING FOR LICENSED DRIVERS
(Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection)**

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 This report is brought to the Committee following a decision made by the Committee at its meeting on 2 October 2008.
- 1.2 On 2 October the Committee deferred the item until its next meeting in February in order to allow officers to discuss concerns raised by the taxi trade on the original report.
- 1.3 Officers have met with the Bracknell Licensed Taxi Forum and their union representatives in the intervening period in an attempt to discuss the concerns raised and seek consensus on the way forward.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That drivers first licensed with the Council prior to August 2001, who have not attended an approved emergency first aid course, be required to do so by 1 April 2011;
- 2.2 That licensed drivers who have attended an emergency first aid course more than 5 years ago must attend the Council's emergency first aid course by 1 April 2011;
- 2.3 That all licensed drivers must undertake refresher emergency first aid training every 5 years from the date of the original training;
- 2.4 That the cost of the training be met by licensed drivers through a fee payable at the time of booking; and,
- 2.5 That, if a driver fails, without reasonable excuse, to attend a booked course, a further fee will be payable.

3 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 3.1 The legal implications are identified within the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 3.2 There are no significant financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 3.3 There are no implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 3.4 There are no strategic risk management implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

4 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Under section 51(2) of the Local Government, Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, a council may attach to the grant of a driver's licence such conditions as the Council may consider reasonably necessary.
- 4.2 All new dual and private hire drivers are required, as a condition of their licence, to attend a first aid course run by the Council, unless they can provide documentation stating that they have passed a recognised first aid course within the last five years. Where a new driver fails to attend a first aid course within twelve months of the issue of their licence, their licence will be suspended until the course has been undertaken. Drivers must also attend refresher first aid courses, five years after the date of their initial course or when their current certificate expires.
- 4.3 The Council did set aside free places for drivers licensed prior to August 2001 to attend first aid courses, with the aim of having all drivers first aid trained by 2010, but to date the Licensing Section are aware that a very limited number of drivers have taken up this opportunity.
- 4.4 The Council runs one first aid course each month using an external training provider. The course lasts approximately half a day and covers emergency first aid and life support.
- 4.5 Following the report considered by the Committee on 2 October, officers have met with representatives of the Bracknell Licensed Taxi Forum on five occasions. It was agreed at the meeting on 14 October that the GMB union, who represent a number of licensed drivers within Bracknell Forest, would make arrangements for health and safety representatives from the union to meet with officers to discuss health and safety concerns expressed by licensed drivers. Despite raising the issue at every meeting with the Bracknell Licensed Taxi Forum, no arrangements for a meeting have been made. It should be noted that since we started requiring drivers to undertake Emergency First Aid training in 2001 we have not received any reports from local drivers that have experienced health and safety issues related to the use of that training.
- 4.6 The recommendation is therefore that the process should be started from 1 May 2009 for all licensed drivers to undertaken an emergency first aid course. Additionally all drivers should be required to undertake a refresher course every 5 years.

- 4.7 At present the Council runs a course every month which is suitable for up to 12 delegates. Spaces on these courses will be exceeded in the short term due to demand from new applicants, refresher applicants and original drivers. It is therefore recommended that a period until April 2011 be given to train existing drivers and deliver refresher training. It is recommended that provisions for new applicants will remain the same.
- 4.8 Drivers who have not participated in emergency first aid training will therefore be required to attend the training by 1 April 2011. Failure to do so will constitute a breach of their driver licence conditions and could result in the suspension of the licence until the condition is complied with. Officers will discuss with the trade the best way to affect the training such that spaces on courses are fully utilised over the next 2 years and deliver opportunities for drivers to attend within the timeframe proposed.

Background Papers

First Aid Training for Licensed Drivers - 2 October 2008 – Licensing and Safety Committee
Emergency First Aid Training - 6 March 2001 - Hackney Carriage Sub-Committee

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