

## **PLANNING, LICENSING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE**

Date Written	5 <sup>th</sup> October 2015
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Exempt/Non Exempt	Trading Standards, Licensing and Transport
Committee Date	14 <sup>th</sup> October 2015

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

### **Taxi Licensing – Application Process Guidance**

#### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report proposes that the Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Committee approve the Taxi Licensing Application Process Guidance produced as part of the Safeguarding Review conducted by the Authority following the Casey report into child sexual exploitation in Rotherham

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 The Taxi Licensing Application Process Guidance is approved.

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

3.1 Members will be aware that the Authority has taken a wide ranging Safeguarding Review following the Casey report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham.

3.2 A key finding within the Casey report was the failure by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council to adequately monitor and ensure that only fit and proper persons were holders of taxi driver licences.

3.3 The Safeguarding Review Team at Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council were satisfied that our policy relating to fitness criteria assessment of applicants was

sufficiently robust however improvement could be made by a new documented application process which clearly identified the process that would be followed in determining an applicant's licence request.

- 3.4 The proposed Taxi Licensing Application Process Guidance is attached as appendix 1. The guidance details the process of an application for a driver, vehicle proprietor or an operator's license. The appendices within the guidance document have not been produced as these have been previously approved by committee/council.
- 3.5 A new applicant will only be granted a license to drive following the production of an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and a DVLA check being conducted and assessed. Previously when renewing a licence applicants were advised to apply in advance of the expiry of their license as a DBS check can take up to 6-8 weeks to process. Where a DBS certificate had not yet been returned existing licenses were renewed where the application form did not indicate any convictions and on condition that the DBS certificate would be provided within six weeks of the renewal date. As members are aware driving licenses are now issued for a three year period and following the review of our current process it is proposed that no licence, new or a renewal, will be granted until we have received an Enhanced DBS certificate. Existing Licence holders will be written to two months prior to the expiry of their License advising them to carry out a DBS check in sufficient time for its return prior to the expiry of their current licence.
- 3.6 The process for renewal of vehicle licenses has also been undertaken. Previously we would allow vehicle proprietors to make an application to renew their licence without yet obtaining a pass certificate from the Authority's nominated test house. The licence would only be granted on receipt of the pass certificate. This was permitted following requests from the trade who advised that if a vehicle was off the road awaiting repair and unable to be tested the licence would expire and they would be unable to re-license their vehicles due to the 4 year age rule on new applications. However during monitoring exercises we have found that vehicles are being used without providing a pass certificate. The new process will address this issue in that all applications must produce all relevant paperwork prior to the expiry of an existing licence.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

4.1 None

**ELLIS COOPER  
CORPORATE DIRECTOR (PLACE AND  
TRANSFORMATION)**

**COUNCILLOR CHRIS BARRY,  
PORTFOLIO MEMBER FOR  
REGENERATION, PLANNING AND  
COUNTRYSIDE**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
Taxi Licensing Application Process Guidance.		Attached
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		<b>No</b>