

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LICENSING & APPEALS COMMITTEE

15 June 2009

Report of the Central Services Director

Part 1- Public

Delegated

1 TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING – CONSULTATION ON REVISED PRACTICE GUIDANCE

1.1 General

- 1.1.1 Members will be aware that at the last meeting concern was expressed about the frequency of vehicle testing, the age of vehicles and the lack of clarity about requirements regarding the provision of fully wheelchair accessible vehicles at a national level.
- 1.1.2 It was acknowledged that a fundamental review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing was required and the consideration of licence fees was deferred.
- 1.1.3 Research into this review, in line with best practice, is on going.
- 1.1.4 The Department for Transport has just announced a consultation process in respect of new revised Best Practice Guidance. The consultation process will run until 28 July 2009. More details can be found on the following link www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/open/hirevehiclelicensing/ .
- 1.1.5 A list of consultees is attached (Annex A) together with a list of issues on which the Department for Transport are seeking feedback (Annex B).
- 1.1.6 The proposed new guidance deliberately does not seek to cover the whole range of possible licensing requirements. Instead, it seeks to concentrate only on those issues that have caused difficulty in the past or that seem of particular significance. Aspects covered in the guidance include local level consultation, accessibility, vehicle specification and testing, quantity restrictions and fares.
- 1.1.7 A suggested recommended response to the consultation questionnaire has been prepared (Annex C).
- 1.1.8 I would recommend that once the revised Best Practice Guidance is issued the review of hackney carriage and private hire licensing be concluded and a further report submitted.

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 N/A

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 N/A

1.4 Risk Assessment

1.4.1 N/A

1.5 Recommendations

1.5.1 Members are requested to endorse the suggested response to the consultation questionnaire and to authorise the Central Services Director to complete the full review of the taxi and private hire policy in line with the revised best practice guidance once it is issued and report back to the Committee.

Background papers:

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Draft Consultation Documents

Julie Beilby
Central Services Director