

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Executive Member for Education, Children & Young People
Date	19 March 2018
Present	Councillors Douglas (Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods) and K Myers (Executive Member for Education, Children & Young People)

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#### **41. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting the Executive Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they had on the business on the agenda. No additional interests were declared.

#### **42. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2018 be approved and then signed by the Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods as a correct record.

#### **43. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

#### **44. Petitions - Driver Safeguarding Training and Safeguarding Passengers**

The Executive Member of Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods and the Executive Member of Education, Children and Young People considered a report that:

- informed them of a petition from York Hackney Carriage Association, entitled 'Petition to Remove the £40 Fee for the Safeguarding Training' and a petition from York Taxi Trade entitled 'Petition for Safeguarding Passengers'.
- provided details about the introduction of training, which was designed to enable licensed hackney carriage and private hire drivers to demonstrate an awareness of sexual exploitation issues, this being required to meet the criteria of being 'fit and proper' to hold a drivers licence in York.
- provided details related to the recent application determined by Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee regarding Uber Britannia Ltd private hire operator licence and
- provided details of the legal reason why the authority could not prevent out of area licensed vehicles/drivers operating in York.

The Acting Head of Public Protection presented the report and explained the background to introducing a requirement that any new driver applicants must, as part of the application process, complete sexual exploitation awareness training to demonstrate an understanding in this area and that existing licensed drivers should also complete this type of specialist training to ensure York had 'fit and proper' licensed drivers.

Officers confirmed that the training was first offered for free in 2016 but that it soon became apparent to all that this was not an appropriate format and that a new method of delivering the training, in smaller groups, by a specialist trainer, should be developed. The Executive Members noted that the new training packages would be tailored and delivered at different sessions to new and existing drivers at a cost of £40. The new training covered sexual exploitation training and other matters such as disability awareness and customer service.

The Executive Members also noted the content and cost of similar sessions operated by Local Authorities in West Yorkshire and that an existing driver may not have to undergo this training if they could provide evidence that they had undertaken recent

equivalent training that could demonstrate a sufficient level of understanding.

Officers answered the Executive Members questions and it was noted that:

- The Workforce Development Unit arranged the training days, where the week day offered would change each month.
- The courses were receiving bookings and drivers would be encouraged to sign up before their renewals to help improve standards sooner.
- The taxi associations also agreed the free training held in 2016 did not work for drivers.
- The Workforce Development Unit had completed a procurement exercise to ensure they found a trainer who had the specialist skills to deliver high quality training.

The Executive Members considered the fee and agreed this was good value to ensure drivers received the correct training package that would ensure York continued to provide good quality taxi drivers.

The Executive Members also considered the petition from the York Taxi Trade and agreed it warranted a further letter to the Department for Transport to highlight continued concerns with the legislation.

Resolved: That Option 3 be agreed:

- (i) That no further action be required in relation to Petition 1.

Reason: An ongoing review of the training is already timetabled. On the 13 November 2017, the Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee considered a report relating to the review of driver training. The Committee approved the training and the fee and resolved that driver training would be reviewed by the Committee in six months time (scheduled for 21 May 2018).

- (ii) That no further action be required in relation to Petition 2
- (iii) That Officer's write again to the Department for Transport (DfT) asking for reform of the legislation concerning the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles in England.

Reasons: On the 12 December 2017, the Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee considered a report relating to the renewal of Uber Britannia Ltd private hire operators licence. The Committee resolved to refuse this application and

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee, and the Executive Member for Planning and Transport have already written to the two local MPs requesting that they ask the Department for Transport (DfT) to put hackney carriage and private hire reform back on the agenda.

Cllr H Douglas, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 4.20 pm].