

Report from the Assistant Director – Planning and Public Protection

Update on Disclosure and Barring Service checks for York taxi drivers

Summary

1. This report is to update Members on the progress made on ongoing Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) ‘refresher’ checks for York taxi drivers.

Recommendations

2. The Committee is asked to note the information in the report.

Reason: In order to be updated on the progress made on ongoing Disclosure and Barring Service ‘refresher’ checks for York taxi drivers.

Background

3. As described in previous reports on DBS checks, the Taxi Licensing Policy states that all licensed drivers will undergo an enhanced DBS check prior to being licensed, and once every three years thereafter.
4. It is important to stress that the three yearly refresher checks are a ‘backstop’ to a number of other activities which take place to determine whether drivers continue to be ‘fit and proper persons’ throughout the term of their licence. For example, taxi drivers are required by law to notify licensing officers if they are arrested and/or charged with any offences and they make a ‘self declaration’ of any offences upon the renewal of their drivers licence.
5. There are however obvious potential weaknesses in relying on the system of self notification. The Licensing Officers therefore have excellent lines of communication with the police, who inform us upon arrest of a licensed person for any serious crime they are investigating under the common law power of police disclosure. This can and does

result in suspension/revocation of drivers licences. Other partners and Council Services also report concerns through a network of contacts.

6. Operators themselves report complaints about their drivers to Licensing Officers (as required by their own licence conditions), and we investigate concerns from other drivers and members of the public. Again this does lead to a range of sanctions from warnings to drivers having licences suspended/ revoked.
7. Since 1 January 2019, the licensing team have revoked the licences of 30 drivers for not completing a DBS check, a further two have been revoked following notification of arrest from the police.
8. As of 31 August 2019 there were 977 licensed drivers.
 - Only five have a DBS check outstanding (0.5%). These are between three and six weeks overdue. Of these drivers, three drivers begun the process and are awaiting the results. Two state that they are no longer working as licensed drivers and have undertaken to return their licences to officers in the coming days (rather than going through the revocation process).

Consultation

9. There is no consultation associated with this report as it is for information only

Options

10. There are no options and analysis associated with this report as it is for information only

Analysis

11. There are no options and analysis associated with this report as it is for information only

Council Plan

12. This action supports the council's priority to meet its statutory duties.

Implications

13. There are no other implications

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Approved

Specialist Implications Officer(s) List information for all

N/A

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all **All**

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

None

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service