

REPORT TO: LICENSING COMMITTEE

DATE: 21 MARCH 2017

TITLE: DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING

LEAD OFFICER: MICHAEL PITT, ENVIRONMENT AND LICENSING MANAGER (01279) 446114

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RECOMMENDED that:

- A** the Licensing Committee note the proposed arrangements made to offer disability awareness training to new and existing drivers.

BACKGROUND

- 1 Harlow Council licenses private hire and Hackney Carriage drivers through a licensing system established by statute. The system allows the licensing authority to attach conditions to driver licences.
- 2 Members of the Licensing Committee will be aware that disability awareness training for taxi and private hire drivers was agreed by the Licensing Committee in March 2016.
- 3 The Licensing Team arranged a tendering exercise for disability awareness training and received 4 completed tenders. The successful tenderer will now be invited to begin the training program to groups of 30 drivers.
- 4 The start of the training will coincide with the commencement of sections 165 and 167 of the Equality Act 2010, for which detailed guidance has been issued by the Department of Transport. The guidance entitled "Access for Wheelchair Users to Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles" is available at Appendix A.

PROPOSALS

5. The Licensing Team shall commence disability awareness training during late spring/early summer 2017.

IMPLICATIONS

Place (includes Sustainability)

As contained within the report.

Author: **Graeme Bloomer, Head of Place**

Finance (Includes ICT)

None specific.

Author: **Simon Freeman, Head of Finance**

Housing

None specific.

Author: **Andrew Murray, Head of Housing**

Community Wellbeing (includes Equalities and Social Inclusion)

Increased awareness of issues around Child Sexual Exploitation in the licensed taxi trade will make a valuable contribution to Community Wellbeing.

Increased awareness of issues and responsibilities around the needs of disabled service users of the licensed taxi and private hire trades will make a valuable contribution to Community Wellbeing. The Disability Awareness Training will be aiming to address some of the difficulties that are encountered by disabled people, to ensure that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to access taxi and private hire services.

Author: **Maureen Pearman, Community, Leisure & Cultural Services Manager, on behalf of Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing**

Governance (includes HR)

By offering disability awareness training to all drivers, the Council will be acting proportionately to exercise compliance with the statutory guidance recently issued. Drivers will need to be aware of the implementation of statutory provisions from April 2017 which intend to assist passengers in wheelchairs within use of designated Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicles licenced by the Council.

Author: **Dimple Roopchand, Assistant Solicitor, on behalf of Brian Keane, Head of Governance**

Background Papers: Department of Transport Taxi and Private Hire Licensing: Best Practice Guide March 2010

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-best-practice-guidance>