

Cheltenham Borough Council

Licensing Committee – 6 December 2017

Review of Cheltenham Borough Council's Private Hire and Taxi Licensing Policy

Report of the Licensing Officer

1. Background, summary and recommendation

- 1.1 Cheltenham Borough Council's current licensing policy for private hire and taxis ("taxi policy") was approved by Cabinet on 15 July 2014. Whilst there is no statutory requirement to undertake a review of the taxi policy, there is a commitment set out in the policy to do so every three years to ensure the policy remains up to date and relevant.
- 1.2 To facilitate the review and better engage with key stakeholders, a working group was set up by the Licensing Committee in 2017. The working group was made up of Licensing Committee members, representatives of the hackney carriage and private hire trade, and council licensing officers.
- 1.3 Following the meetings of the working group a number of policy changes were proposed and approved by Cabinet for consultation on 12 September 2017.
- 1.4 A statutory 12-week consultation process has been undertaken which is due to end on 21 December 2017.
- 1.5 The Miscellaneous Licensing Sub-Committee, being the sub-committee with responsibility for decision making in taxi and private hire licensing matters, met on Wednesday 22 November 2017 to consider their formal response to the consultation. The sub-committee's response is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.6 The licensing committee is recommended to:**
- 1.6.1 Note the responses of the miscellaneous licensing sub-committee; and**
- 1.6.2 Ratify and approve the sub-committee's response for submission to Cabinet for consideration.**
- 1.7 Implications**

Legal Legal advice may be sought on any proposals arising out of the review of the licensing policy.

Contact officer: One Legal
E-mail: legalservices@tewkesbury.gov.uk
Tel no: 01684 272015

2. Background

- 2.1 The council is responsible for the licensing and regulation of all hackney carriage and private hire drivers, vehicles and operators.
- 2.2 While there is no statutory requirement on the council to have a taxi policy, it is common practice to do so. The taxi policy sets out how the council intends to discharge its functions under the relevant legislation but also acts as a guide to Members, prospective applicants, licence holders and the wider public.

3. Policy review

- 3.1 Whilst there is no requirement in law to review the policy, the council has set out a commitment to do so every three years. This is to ensure that the policy remains relevant, up-to-date, fit for purpose and achieves its objectives.
- 3.2 To facilitate the review and better engage with key stakeholders, a taxi policy review working group was set up by the Licensing Committee. Representatives from the trade, council officers and Councillors sat on the working group, which met on 5 occasions.
- 3.3 Several amendments to the policy were proposed by the members of the working group and others, and these were approved by Cabinet for consultation in September 2017. A statutory 12 week consultation is currently underway which is due to end on 21 December 2017.
- 3.4 The miscellaneous licensing sub-committee, as the group with delegated responsibility for decision-making in applications and reviews for private hire and taxis, met on 22 November 2017 to consider their formal response to the consultation.
- 3.5 The sub-committee's formal response is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Background Papers

Service Records

Adopted Private Hire and Taxi Policy

Case Officer

Contact officer: Mr Philip Cooper
E-mail: licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk
Tel no: 01242 775200