

# Licensing Committee



Forest Heath  
District Council

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Child Sexual Exploitation: Awareness Raising and Training for Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licence Holders</b>	
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>LIC/FH/15/005</b>	
<b>Report to and date/s:</b>	Licensing Committee	28 September 2015
<b>Portfolio holder:</b>	Councillor James Waters Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth <b>Tel:</b> 07771 621038 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:james.waters@forest-heath.gov.uk">james.waters@forest-heath.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Lead officer:</b>	Tom Wright Business Regulation and Licensing Manager <b>Tel:</b> 01638 719223 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:tom.wright@westsuffolk.gov.uk">tom.wright@westsuffolk.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	Members are being requested to approve mandatory Child Sexual Exploitation training for all drivers.	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<p><b>It is recommended that Members:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Note the contents of the report and approve mandatory Child Sexual Exploitation training for all drivers (subject to its ongoing viability); and</b></li> <li><b>2. Give the Business Regulation and Licensing Manager Delegated Authority to specify the start date after consultation with the Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman.</b></li> </ol>	
<p><b>Key Decision:</b></p> <p><i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that <b>do not</b> apply.)</i></p>	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	

<p><i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within <b>48 hours</b> and cannot be actioned until <b>five clear working days of the publication of the decision</b> have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>			
<b>Consultation:</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be carried out</li> </ul>	
<b>Alternative option(s):</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None applicable</li> </ul>	
<b>Implications:</b>			
<p>Are there any <b>financial</b> implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within budget</li> </ul>	
<p>Are there any <b>staffing</b> implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planned work with current resources</li> </ul>	
<p>Are there any <b>ICT</b> implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Are there any <b>legal and/or policy</b> implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See body of report</li> </ul>	
<p>Are there any <b>equality</b> implications? If yes, please give details</p>		<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No impact identified</li> </ul>	
<b>Risk/opportunity assessment:</b>		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
<b>Risk area</b>	<b>Inherent level of risk</b> (before controls)	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Residual risk</b> (after controls)
	Low/Medium/ High*		Low/Medium/ High*
Implementing any policy or code which fails to meet current legislative or good practice requirements could leave this Licensing Authority open to a challenge.	High	Ensuring relevant licence holders are informed of the changes.	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>		All	
<b>Background papers:</b> <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		<p>Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children Board  <a href="http://suffolkscb.org.uk/">http://suffolkscb.org.uk/</a>          Local Government Association: Taxi and PHV Licensing – Councillors’ Handbook  <a href="http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/6869714/L15-87+Councillor+Handbook+-+Taxi+and+PHV+Licensing_06.pdf/c73bec4b-cd31-4bcd-be2c-f5fe3e87b4f4">http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/6869714/L15-87+Councillor+Handbook+-+Taxi+and+PHV+Licensing_06.pdf/c73bec4b-cd31-4bcd-be2c-f5fe3e87b4f4</a>          Town Police Clauses Act 1847  <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/10-11/89">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/10-11/89</a>          Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976  <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/57">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/57</a></p>	
<b>Documents attached:</b>		None	

## **1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)**

- 1.1 Taxis (Hackney Carriages) and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) are vital to our communities, providing essential transport links for many. The Local Government Association Taxi and PHV Licensing – Councillors’ Handbook, states that elected members, are responsible for ensuring the public travel safely and receive a good level of service, and that the council systems attract good, reputable drivers.
- 1.2 There have been recent examples nationally, that Members will be aware of concerning licensed drivers, vehicles and operators being involved in the sexual exploitation of children. Taxis and PHVs are regularly used to transport children during the school run. Elderly and disabled users also rely heavily on the door-to-door service taxis and PHVs provide, as it is often the only way for many residents to access local services. Clearly, drivers must therefore command the highest level of confidence before they can be entrusted with this responsibility. It is essential that this responsibility is taken seriously to determine whether someone is a ‘fit and proper’ person to hold a licence.
- 1.3 The Business Regulation and Licensing Manager for the West Suffolk Councils, acts as the licensing lead for Suffolk on the Exploited Children Strategic Group which brings together a number of related work streams.
- 1.4 The purpose of the group is to support the Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB), in fulfilling its statutory duty to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the Local Authority and Board partners, individually and collectively, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise them on ways to improve. It also ensures there is a multi-agency response to the identification and safeguarding of vulnerable children and young people and the risks they may encounter.
- 1.5 A key strategic priority of the group and the LSCB is to raise awareness of what child exploitation is and what risk factors may indicate that a child or young person is being abused or at risk of abuse in a number of areas including taxi and private hire trade.
- 1.6 The Business Regulation and Licensing Manager, along with the Suffolk LSCB Manager and associated officers are working on a number of individual actions in order to raise awareness amongst the licensed private hire and hackney carriage trade of child exploitation. These actions include:
  - Mailings
  - Information Packs for drivers, taxi and private hire operators and employers.
  - Factsheets for inclusion in application packs.
  - Briefings and training for drivers.
- 1.7 The specific details of the driver briefings and training will take some time to come to fruition, but is anticipated the first can be delivered to in January 2016.
- 1.8 Some of the countries larger authorities e.g. Gateshead, have already made changes to their own licensing policy on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire to make it mandatory for all new applicants and existing drivers on renewal that they have attended Child Sexual Exploitation awareness training.

- 1.9 Should it be viable to deliver the training to all drivers (currently 191 at Forest Heath DC and 407 at St. Edmundsbury BC) and to continue to do so to all new applicants on an ongoing basis, Members are being requested to approve the training as a mandatory requirement. Furthermore to give the Business Regulation and Licensing Manager delegated authority to specify the start date after consultation with the Committee Chair and Vice Chair.