

REPORT FROM: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PLANNING, BUILDING CONTROL & REGULATORY SERVICES

TO: TAXI LICENSING COMMITTEE

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TAXI & PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the updated Best Practice Guidance issued by the Department for Transport and to consider how to incorporate the updates not Pendle's licensing policies.

RECOMMENDATION

That the proposed actions as set out in appendix 1 be agreed and a further report be submitted to this committee with any proposed updates to the Taxi Licensing Policy.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To consider the guidance issued by the Department for Transport to enable the provision of safe, accessible, available and affordable services that meet the wide range of passenger needs by a thriving trade.

ISSUES

1. The Department for Transport has issued guidance on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing since 2006, to assist local authorities that have responsibility for the regulation of the taxi and private hire vehicles trades. This is updated periodically, considering stakeholder views and changes in the way the sector operates. The objective of the government is to work with licensing authorities to promote the regulation of the sector in a way that enables the provision of safe, accessible, available, and affordable services that meet the wide range of passenger needs by a thriving trade.
2. This non-statutory best practice guidance complements the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards issued in 2020. It is intended to assist Licensing Authorities to adopt licensing polices that best suit their circumstances.

3. The guidance does not seek to cover the whole range of possible licensing requirements. Instead, it seeks to concentrate on those issues that have caused difficulty in the past or that seem of particular significance to the modern day licensing regime.
4. Taxis and private hire vehicles play a vital part in local transport, connecting residents to the local economy and in enabling businesses and residents to reach wider transport networks. All social groups use taxis and private hire vehicles. Groups that use them the most are low-income young women, amongst whom car ownership is low, and those with mobility difficulties.
5. The taxi and private hire sector is entirely demand-led. Though these services are most often associated with journeys for leisure, social and business purposes, they are an important part of the transport network and should be considered as part of local transport planning.
6. All the issues in the guidance have been considered and attached as appendix 1, is a list of our proposed action or updates to policy for consideration. Attached as appendix 2 is a copy of the Best Practice Guidance.

CONCLUSION

7. The personal safety of passengers is critical. The government has clearly set out measures that licensing authorities should take to safeguard passengers in the statutory vehicle standards. The guidance seeks to reinforce that message by highlighting other measures that should be considered to assist the sector to deliver the range of services the public demand.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy:

The taxi licensing policy adopted on 1 April 2022 will require updating to reflect any agreed changes.

Financial:

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Legal:

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Risk Management:

There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report

Health and Safety:

The guidance advises to remind operators of responsibilities regarding health and safety compliance.

Sustainability:

There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report

Community Safety:

There are no community safety implications arising directly from this report

Equality and Diversity:

The Equality Act 2010 must be given due regard in any decisions.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Proposed Action Plan

Appendix 2 – Best Practice Guidance 2023

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Best Practice Guidance 2023