
TITLE: LICENSING OFFICERS YEAR END UPDATE

COMMITTEE: LICENSING COMMITTEE

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[T288]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To update Members of the Licensing Committee on the work of Officers in the 2018/ 2019 period.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 For information purposes only.

3.0 HIGHLIGHTS

Animal Licensing

3.1 2018 saw the implementation by Defra of new animal welfare regulations. In order to administer these new regulations, officers had to ensure that the scheme of delegation was correct, the fee structure was suitable, the web-pages were updated, the database was re-configured to record and store the information correctly, the trade were made aware and were assisted as much as was possible with available resources, and finally, the inspections were conducted and the licences issued in a timely fashion.

3.2 I am pleased to state that thanks to the support of Members, it was possible to get all of the above completed, and all 43 licences issued within the required time frame. A feat not replicated by all Councils in England.

Inspections

3.3 This past year has seen a program of house-keeping and compliance visits undertaken. Over 150 general inspections have been conducted in addition to the 43 animal inspections, 22 private hire operator inspections and 6 betting premises inspections. The team has also conducted 4 evening compliance initiatives and 4 school compliance initiatives to ensure taxis collecting children are safe.

Safe-guarding Training

3.4 Officers arranged and observed safeguarding and customer service training sessions for the licensed taxi trade. Approximately 95% of the Council's taxi drivers have now sat the session with great feedback being provided by those who have attended. Further sessions are being run by officers to ensure that all existing and new drivers attend this course, as required by our local policy.

Paper-free licensing

- 3.5 The licensing department continues to strive towards being as paper-free as possible. Online forms are now available for almost all application types, and the number of electronic applications received now represents 65% of the total number of applications, up from 47% the previous period.
- 3.6 The team is also on track to have all files back-scanned, and a clear desk policy in place by the end of 2019.

Audit

- 3.7 The department's taxi procedures were audited in 2018, and the following was noted:

"The assurance opinions are "Good" for the design of the control environment and "Substantial" for compliance. There is an opportunity to improve the design of the controls to a substantial level once the safeguarding training is in place."

As mentioned above, safeguarding has now been implemented, and so we have achieved a rating of substantial.

4.0 DEPARTMENTAL WORK

Applications

Licence type	Number 17/18	Number 18/19
Taxi driver	165	156
Taxi vehicle	197	213
Taxi operator	18	23
TEN's	321	356
New and varied premise licences	43	32
Animal welfare licences	50	60
Personal licences	55	47
Small lottery licences	10	14
Other	146	146
DPS and transfers of premise licences	76	65
TOTAL	1081	1112

Inspections

Inspection type	Number 17/18	Number 18/19
Complaint	6	14
Enforcement	9	32
Routine	51	218
Re-visit	1	14
TOTAL	67	278