



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

LICENSING & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

15 November 2021

TAXI STRATEGY

Report of the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the committee of progress in relation to the Taxi Strategy.

2. Background

2.1 The aim of the strategy document is to set the overall tone for taxi licensing and steer policy development.

2.2 On 12 February 2019 the committee received a report about the taxi strategy, which said "The Licensing and Public Safety Committee will be involved in changes to policies on licensing drivers, operators and vehicles. Reports will be brought to the Committee at the appropriate time."

2.1 There has been separate consultation on various proposals for taxi drivers, vehicles and private hire operators flowing from the overarching strategy. These proposals contribute to the overall taxi strategy for the city for the coming years. Reports were brought to the committee about the three areas of licensing on 9 July, 22 October and 10 December 2019.

2.2 The statutory taxi and private hire standards have been introduced since work began on the taxi strategy, and the opportunity has been taken to combine these two pieces of work. These standards were reported to the committee on 15 September 2020.

3. Taxi strategy

3.1 The Communications and Marketing team has provided input to ensure that the strategy is consistent with the 'house style' for Leicester City Council. They have suggested that this document be produced as an online strategy only, to allow improved accessibility, better promotion, and lower costs. This has the added advantage of ensuring that content can be easily amended/added and data can more visual and interactive.

- 3.2 Work has been delayed by the coronavirus pandemic but the taxi strategy has now been finalised in consultation with Cllr Clair, Deputy City Mayor for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Regulatory Services. Final approval will be sought from the City Mayor once the document has been properly laid out and formatted as an online resource. This will be shared with members of the Committee at that time.
- 3.3 Once the overall strategy is implemented work can begin on implementing the straightforward changes resulting from consultation (eg, updates to conditions of fitness and various procedures) as well as the commencement of work on more detailed changes (eg, new ways of undertaking medicals and the taxi knowledge test).

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 The committee is asked to note the report.

5 Financial, Legal, Equalities and Climate Emergency Implications

Financial Implications

- 5.1 As an update report to the committee, there are no financial implications arising. There may be financial implications of the strategy itself, and these will be considered as part of the report proposing its adoption.

Stuart McAvoy, Principal Accountant, Ext 37 4004

Legal Implications

- 5.2 In addition to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, in providing the taxi strategy documentation as an 'online strategy only' the Council must meet its obligations under the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. The Regulations aim to make websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies more accessible to users, particularly persons with disabilities by requiring compliance with the "accessibility requirement" which is the requirement to make a website or mobile application accessible by making it "perceivable, operable, understandable and robust".

John Moss, Solicitor, Legal Services, Ext 37 3010

Equalities Implications

- 5.3 Following consultation with trade, regulators and safety campaign groups, the government issued statutory taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) standards to licensing authorities, outlining how they should carry out their licensing function. Whilst the focus of these standards is on protecting children and vulnerable adults, all passengers will benefit from the recommendations, which aim to better regulate the taxi and PHV sector. There are no direct equalities implications arising from this update report. An equality impact assessment has been carried out as part of the development of the strategy.

It is important to note that consideration should be given to providing information in a different format if requested.

Surinder Singh, Equalities Officer, Ext 37 4148

Climate Emergency Implications

- 5.4 Whilst there are no significant climate emergency implications directly associated with this progress report, there are wider implications of the Taxi Strategy itself, as noted below.

Transport is responsible for around 25% of carbon emissions in Leicester. Following the city council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, and its aim to achieve carbon neutrality, addressing transport-related emissions is a vital part of the council's work. This is particularly important in those areas where the council has influence, including through its licensing activities. This is reflected within the Taxi Strategy, which notes low emission services as one of the five strategic objectives. This includes two of the actions, around enabling a choice of an ultra-low emissions vehicle and updating vehicle conditions of fitness to be environmentally sustainable. Further opportunities to support these aims should be considered, for example through engagement with future opportunities to provide or refer drivers to grants and guidance on the purchase of low emission vehicles, as appropriate.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

6 Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Licensing and Public Safety Committee reports:

- 12 February 2019
- 9 July 2019
- 22 October 2019
- 10 December 2019
- 15 September 2020

7 Consultations

Legal Services
Finance
Equalities
Sustainability

8 Report Author

Rachel Hall – Chief Licensing Officer
454 3047
Rachel.hall@leicester.gov.uk