

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

ORIGINATING SECTION: PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE

REPORT TO : LICENSING COMMITTEE 29 October 2019

TITLE : UPDATE ON THE WORK OF PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work of the Council's Public Protection and Environmental Health Service (PPS) where there is a connection with businesses and persons who require a licence from the Council. It also provides an update for members on national policy changes and proposals affecting licencing work.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That members note the report.

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 Taxi safety operation

In August a joint taxi safety operation was undertaken in Hyndburn with officers from Hyndburn District Council, the police and VOSA.

6 vehicles licensed by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council were stopped and checked. Only minor issues were found.

3.2 Routine work carried out

The following table provides some of the key figures on work carried out by members of staff working in the Licensing Team from 1 January to 30 September 2019

Vehicle licences processed	962
Driver licences processed	454
Licensing Act licences processed	163
Inspections of premises/vehicles carried out	176

3.3 National Issues

Clean Air

The Air Quality (Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles Database) (England and Wales) Regulations 2019 came into force on 1 May 2019. They will require all licensing authorities in England and Wales to send to a central portal on a minimum weekly basis certain information about the taxis and PHVs that they have licensed. This will include the Vehicle Registration Mark, the start and expiry date of the vehicle licence, whether the vehicle is a taxi or PHV, the name of the licensing authority, the licence plate number and an indication of whether it is a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

There is to be a phased introduction in readiness for the start dates for the first charging “Clean Air Zones” in Leeds and Birmingham expected in 2020.

Fixed Odds Betting Terminal Stakes

On 1 April 2019 the reduction of the maximum stakes on fixed odd betting terminals (FOBT) came into effect.

The reduction in maximum stakes saw stakes reduced from £100 to £2.

Taxi statistics for 2018/19 released

The statistical release presents information on taxis and private hire vehicles in England as at 31 March 2019, including PHV operators and enlisted drivers who use app-based technology.

Figures are updated every year through surveying each licensing authority in England and Wales.

Statistics on taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) in England show at end March 2019:

There were:

- *291,800 licensed taxis and PHVs
- * 76% of all licensed vehicles were PHVs
- * 58% of licensed taxis were wheelchair accessible
- * 362,600 taxi or private hire driver licences
- * 63% of licences were PHV only licences
- * 15% were taxi only licences
- * 23% were dual licences

For more information see:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/833569/taxi-and-phv-england-2019.pdf

Licensing Act 2003 – Councillor’s Handbook

The Local Government Association has updated its Councillors Handbook about the Licensing Act 2003.

https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/10%2036_Licensing_Act_2003_V04%203_1.pdf

4. RATIONALE

To inform members of the Licensing committee about the key work carried out by staff working within the Council’s Public Protection and Environmental Health Service where there is a connection with businesses and people needing a licence from the Council. It also provides an update on some national licensing issues.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None

9. CONSULTATIONS

None

10 . CONTACT OFFICER

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