

Safeguarding and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Training for Taxi Drivers

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Portfolio: Finance, IT and Customer
& Communities and Social Cohesion

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To update on the co-ordination of Safeguarding and CSE training to taxi drivers.

To reaffirm to Members the role of the Borough Council in safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

Recommendations

That Members note the contents of this report.

That the Partnerships Team liaise with the Democratic Services Team to co-ordinate an additional training date for members of the Public Protection Committees by the end of December 2016.

Reasons

The Children Acts (1989) and (2004), the Care Act (2014) and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) place statutory duties on District Councils to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

The statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2015)' provides core legislative requirements regarding the expectations of the role of District Councils working alone or in partnership with other organisations.

1. Background

- 1.1 On 22nd September 2015 a report to the Public Protection Committee was presented by the Democratic Services Manager, recommending that the Council consult with all licenced hackney carriage and private hire drivers regarding the introduction of compulsory awareness training in relation to Safeguarding and Child Sexual Exploitation. This recommendation was supported and approved by the Committee and the consultation was undertaken by the Democratic Services team.
- 1.2 On 3rd November 2015 a further report was presented by the Democratic Services Manager to advise of the outcome from the consultation with drivers. Although no written replies had been received, a large number of telephone calls had been received with the majority of drivers indicating that they would appreciate the training and would have no concerns over attending. Only one verbal objection was received.

- 1.3 The report stated that a further report would be presented to Public Protection Committee outlining the training content and timescales for completion. The report also recommended the following for inclusion in the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy:
- i. That all new applicants for a private hire or hackney carriage drivers' licence be required to complete a safeguarding/child sexual exploitation course prior to their licence being granted.
 - ii. That all existing drivers be required to have completed the training by the end of December 2016 or upon renewal of their licence whichever is sooner.
 - iii. That should an applicant fail to attend a training session, without providing 24 hours' notice then a fee of £35 will be incurred.
 - iv. That any driver not attending a training session prior to 31st December 2016, without a good reason, may have their licence revoked.
 - v. That a refresher training session be attended prior to any subsequent licence renewal.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 The training content for the taxi drivers training has now been finalised and approved by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) and is available for delivery by trainers approved by SSCB.
- 2.2 There are approximately 1000 hackney carriage and private hire drivers in the Borough, all of whom will need to attend the training by the end of December 2016 as per the decision from the 3rd November 2015 Public Protection Committee Report.
- 2.3 There are a number of additional new applications and licenses granted throughout the year who will also need to be accommodated for the training prior to a licence being granted.
- 2.4 It was anticipated that the Partnerships Vulnerability Officer would be able to deliver some of the required training sessions to the drivers. However, based on the existing workload and pending maternity leave of the postholder, it would be difficult to deliver the training to such a large number of recipients in the required timescale.
- 2.5 Therefore the Council have procured an independent specialist training provider to deliver the training on behalf of the Borough Council in the required timescale.

3. **Proposal**

- 3.1 The provider is proposing to train 20 drivers per session and a total of up to 4, 1hr sessions will be delivered in a day. These will alternate between 2 morning sessions and 2 afternoons or 3 afternoons and 1 evening. This will cover approximately 80 drivers a day.
- 3.2 The provider has been contracted for 14 days in total, which will comfortably cover 1000, with availability for mop up sessions for those who do not attend or any additional drivers and operatives identified after the initial co-ordination of the training e.g. new applicants.
- 3.3 The sessions have been scheduled during September and October and each driver/operative has been invited to attend and allocated session (please see attached template letter). The training is therefore anticipated to be delivered by the target timescale of December 2016.

- 3.4 The training to be delivered will cover the following;
- What is abuse
 - Adults at risk
 - Child sexual exploitation
 - How are young people targeted
 - Indicators of risk
 - Human trafficking
 - How should a driver deal with a disclosure
 - Allegations against taxi drivers
 - How can a driver keep themselves safe
 - How to pass information on.

4. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 4.1 The trainer has been selected after inviting two suitable qualified specialist training providers to give quotations.
- 4.2 On receipt of the two quotations, the provider offering the best price was selected for delivery. The successful provider has also delivered similar training in a neighbouring district and is endorsed by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB).
- 4.3 It is also proposed that the Partnerships Team liaise with the Democratic Services Team to co-ordinate a training date for members of the Public Protection Committee by the end of December 2016, so that they are suitably knowledgeable of the content being disseminated to drivers and operatives.

5. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1 The training proposal contributes to delivery of the Council's Sustainable Communities Strategy 2014-2020 by delivering assisting in preventing the exploitation of vulnerable residents. It also meets the Council's Corporate Priorities for Creating Healthy and Active Communities and Creating a Cleaner, Safer and Sustainable Borough.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 The Council has statutory duties under the Children Act (1989) and (2004), the Care Act (2014) and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging functions we have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.
- 6.2 The statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2015)' provides core legislative requirements regarding the expectations of the role of District Councils working alone or in partnership with other organisations.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is being developed for this area of work.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 The additional financial implications or commitments required for provision of the training have already been agreed through the Executive Management Team using existing budgets.

8.2 There are resource implications for Council Officers who are involved in and will co-ordinate delivery of the training and safeguarding activity thereafter but these are met through existing arrangements.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 Failure to take appropriate action regarding safeguarding may result in the Council being unable to perform its statutory duties, leaving the Council open to legal challenge.

9.2 Failure to take appropriate action regarding safeguarding may lead to a child or adult at risk suffering unnecessary harm.

9.3 There is also a risk of reputational damage to the Council if it does not deliver its statutory duties lawfully and effectively.

10. **Key Decision Information**

10.1 The Council has statutory duties to safeguard, promote wellbeing and protect children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

10.2 This report can be considered key in the following ways: -

- It results in the Borough Council committing existing resources for the function to which the decision relates and;
- To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral wards in the Borough.

11. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

11.1 Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy – October 2015.

12. **List of Appendices**

12.1 None.