

## **LICENSING COMMITTEE**

# **Licensing – Private Hire Door Signs**

## **Report of Executive Member for Housing & Licensing**

Officer contact: Nicola Lord – Principal Licensing Officer

**6<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

### **Executive Summary**

This report requests that Members consider a proposal for the redesign and implementation of private hire door signs.

### **Recommendations**

That Members:

- 1) Note the report; and
  - 2) Approve the proposal
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## 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request that Members approve a revised private hire door sign design.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 The strategic objective for Oldham Council regarding taxi licensing is to ensure safe passenger journeys in safe licensed vehicles with safe licensed drivers.
- 2.2 The Licensing Service has received feedback as part of a recent consultation on the use and practicalities of the existing requirements around private hire door signs.
- 2.3 Several suggestions were put forward as part of the responses to the consultation, and the Licensing Service have reviewed each response and given them due consideration before putting this proposal before members today.

## 3. Existing Requirements

- 3.1 All private hire vehicles must display mandatory door signs. The signs must contain the words "Advance Bookings Only", the letters must be block capitals, in the colour black, on a yellow background. Each letter must be at least 60mm high and 6mm wide.
- 3.2 The door sign must include the name and contact information of the private hire operator company, and the words "Private Hire". Any other lettering on the sign must be under 50mm high and 5mm wide, can be any colour but must not have a yellow background.
- 3.3 The overall size of the door sign must be a minimum of 200mm wide and 600mm high.
- 3.4 The mandatory door signs must be permanently displayed on the top half of the front driver and passenger door panels by way of adhesive, rather than magnetic means. These signs must always be in place whilst the vehicle is licensed.

## 4 Proposed Requirements

- 4.1 All private hire vehicles must display mandatory door signs. The signs must be permanently displayed on the top half of the rear passenger doors of the vehicle. These signs must always be in place whilst the vehicle is licensed.
- 4.2 The door signs will be issued by the Council and will display the following wording: **Private Hire Vehicle – Not Insured Unless Pre-Booked with the Operator**. A proposed design for this is attached at Appendix 14.1 to this report.

## 5 Rationale

- 5.1 The introduction of App based operators has significantly shifted the way in which private hire drivers work. It has seen the decrease in local operators and the introduction of larger companies who operate and are well known around the world.

- 5.2 This has resulted in many private hire drivers working for multiple operators in order to maximise their earning potential.
- 5.3 For private hire drivers to work in this way, the Licensing Service recognises that the existing door sign requirements do not support this and restricts that earning potential.
- 5.4 The Licensing Service does not support the complete removal of private hire door signage, and believes they are a vital and useful tool to distinguish private hire vehicles and remind customers of the implications of not pre-booking journeys with operators.

## **6 Legal Services Comments**

- 6.1 Under section 48(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council may attach such conditions to the grant of a private hire vehicle licence as they may consider reasonably necessary. Any person aggrieved by any conditions attached to a private hire vehicle licence may appeal to the magistrates' court. (A. Evans)

## **7 Co-operative Agenda**

- 7.1 Not applicable

## **8 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

- 8.1 None

## **9 Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

- 9.1 None

## **10 Equality Impact Assessment Completed**

- 10.1 Not considered to be required for the purposes of this proposal

## **11 Key Decision**

- 11.1 No

## **12 Key Decision Reference - N/A**

## **13 Background Papers**

- 13.1 None

## **14 Appendices**

- 14.1 Appendix 1 – proposed mandatory door sign design