



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Licensing Committee
<b>DATE:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2016
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	Head of Planning and Public Protection Services
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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Consideration of training for licensed drivers

## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 For members to consider instructing officers to draft a proposal for the introduction of mandatory safeguarding awareness training for all Denbighshire licensed hackney carriage, private hire drivers and operators.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The primary role of the licensing authority and Committee members is the protection, safety and wellbeing of the public.
- 2.2 A number of recent high profile safeguarding issues around the country have been publicised and in particular relating to child sexual exploitation (CSE) a number of which have had links with local authority licensed vehicles. Introduction of mandatory awareness training supports Denbighshire's commitment to protecting vulnerable people.

## **3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Officers have carefully considered the findings of the inspection report of Rotherham Borough Council submitted to The House of Lords in February 2015 by Louise Casey CB and the independent enquiry into child sexual exploitation in Rotherham 1997-2013 undertaken by Alex Jay OBE, in particular and in the context of licensed vehicles. Members should note that the report by Alex Jay OBE. States: one of the common threads running through child sexual exploitation across England has been the prominent role of taxi drivers in being directly linked to children who were abused.

In September 2015, the Conwy Licensing Committee resolved to

- 3.2 introduce such a mandatory awareness training scheme for all licensed drivers and extended this further to a BTEC Level 2 training. Whilst both Conwy and Denbighshire licensing conditions are separate there is a similarity in most aspects of the industry. Community Safety partners have welcomed this approach in Conwy and have encouraged Denbighshire to implement such a requirement and have included such an action in the Safer Conwy & Denbighshire “Conwy & Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership Action Plan for 2015 / 16”.

- 3.3 At this stage there is no preconception of the scope of the scheme other than it should apply to all drivers. Should Members be minded to instruct officers to consider a scheme they may wish to direct officers to consider particular considerations, such as the action against any driver not trained; the time period to gain training and how long before any refresher training is required and whether this should form part of a wider mandatory training scheme, such as BTEC or NVQ or equivalent.

#### **CONSULTATION**

4. None to date although the potential for safeguarding awareness training has been discussed at internal safeguarding meetings including the Corporate Safeguarding Panel who are supportive of the proposal.
- 4.1
- 4.2 It is anticipated that all those who may be affected, such as driver and operators, will be consulted along with partner agencies involved in safeguarding of vulnerable people locally.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

5. That the Committee instruct officers to introduce mandatory safeguarding awareness training for all licensed taxi drivers during 2016.
- 5.1
- 5.2 That the Committee instruct officers to prepare a proposal for formal training for licensed taxi drivers.