

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Registration and Licensing Committee

11th February 2019

Report of the Head of Legal Services – Craig Griffiths

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All

Welsh Government White Paper - Improving Public Transport

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide information to Members in respect of Welsh Government's White Paper "Improving Public Transport".
2. To approve a consultation response on behalf of Neath Port Talbot CBC in respect of Part 2 of the White Paper "taxis and private hire vehicles"

Executive Summary

3. Following commencement of the relevant provisions of the Wales Act 2017, licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles will be a matter within the legislative competence of the National Assembly for Wales.
4. Welsh Government carried out a consultation exercise with stake holders in September 2017, with the intention of replacing the existing legislative framework with new primary legislation for Wales.
5. Following on from this consultation, Welsh Government have now published a White Paper on proposals to legislate for reforming local bus services (part 1) and licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles (part 2).

6. Members are being asked to approve a response to part 2 of the white paper, on behalf of Neath Port Talbot CBC.

Background

7. Following commencement of the relevant provisions of the Wales Act 2017, licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles will be a matter within the legislative competence of the National Assembly for Wales.
8. It is under this new devolved settlement that in September 2017 Welsh Government published a consultation paper "Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing in Wales" [WG31865] with proposals to introduce new primary legislation for the purpose of bringing new arrangements for taxi and private hire vehicle into effect in relation to Wales.
9. Following on from that consultation, on the 10th December 2018, Welsh Government published a White Paper on proposals to legislate for reforming local bus services (part 1) and licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles (part 2).

Officer Report

10. Information contained in this report and the consultation response attached at appendix 1, are in respect of part 2 of the White paper only. A report and consultation response in respect of part 1 will be brought to Cabinet in due course.
11. The White Paper was issued by Welsh Government on the 10th December 2018 and responses are required by the 29th March 2019. A copy of the White Paper is attached at appendix 2.
12. Part 2 of the White Paper makes the following 4 proposals:

National Standards

13. Welsh Government is proposing to set national standards for taxi and private hire vehicle licensing ensuring that these standards would have to be met in order to obtain a licence

Enforcement

14. Welsh Government is proposing to allow a licensing authority to take enforcement action against any vehicle operating in its area.

Information Sharing

15. Welsh Government is proposing to allow the creation of a mechanism by which relevant information can be shared, for the purposes of safeguarding

Joint Transport Authority

16. Welsh Government is proposing to redirect all of the existing taxi and private hire licensing functions away from the Local Authority and into a national licensing authority, a JTA.

Consultation Response

17. A draft response to Part 2 of the White Paper has been developed by a working group on behalf of the All Wales Licensing Expert Panel. This group consisted of officers from Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Cardiff, Flintshire, Pembrokeshire and Monmouthshire.
18. It is proposed that the response submitted by Neath Port Talbot CBC replicates the response approved by the All Wales Licensing Expert Panel.
19. The draft response is attached at Appendix 1.

Equality Impact Assessment

20. Not applicable

Legal Impacts

21. Not applicable

Risk Management

22. Not applicable

Consultation

23. Not applicable

Recommendation

24. That members approve the draft response to part 2 of the Welsh Government's White Paper "Improving Public Transport" which will be submitted as a response on behalf of Neath Port Talbot CBC.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

25. Not applicable

Implementation of Decision

26. Immediate

Appendices

27. Appendix 1 - Draft consultation response
28. Appendix 2 - Welsh Government White Paper "Improving Public Transport"

List of Background Papers

29. Welsh Government Consultation "Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing in Wales [WG31865] [September 2017]
30. Registration and Licensing Committee report 11th September 2017 - Consultation response

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