

Item

CCTV in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles

To:

Licensing Committee 21/03/2022

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All

1. Introduction / Executive Summary

- 1.1 Under the powers conferred to Cambridge City Council under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, (as amended), Cambridge City Council has responsibility for licensing Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Dual Licence Drivers as well as vehicle proprietors and Private Hire Operators within the City.
- 1.2 As a responsible licensing authority Cambridge City Council seeks to carry out its licensing functions with the view of promoting the following objectives;
 - i) The safety and protection of the public;
 - ii) Vehicle safety, comfort and access;

- iii) The prevention of crime and disorder;
- iv) The promotion of environmental sustainability;
- v) Protection of children and adults at risk from harm

1.3 The mandatory installation of CCTV within Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles was agreed by members in October 2017. Supporting objectives i), iii) and v).

1.4 In implementing CCTV in licensed vehicles, further objectives can be met;

- The protection of licensed drivers.
- The protection of the travelling public.
- To ensure that licensed drivers continue to be 'fit and proper' in line with licence conditions.
- To enable investigations to be fully supported with evidence in a secure and retrievable form.

1.5 Members of the Licensing Committee in September 2020 agreed an implementation date of 1st April 2022 where by all taxi and private hire vehicles will have had CCTV installed.

1.6 Due to delays in the identification of an approved supplier and the Covid 19 pandemic, the 1st April 2022 implementation will not be met, and further consideration is required following the statutory guidance for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Services.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are recommended to approve that Cambridge City Council conduct a review of the requirement of CCTV in licenced vehicles to demonatrate:
- necessary to meet a pressing need;
 - and proportionate need.
- 2.2 Members are recommended to approve that Cambridge City Council conitnue to work with South Cambridgeshire District Council to identify appropriate supplier.
- 2.3 Members are recommended to approve that Licensing officers return to Licensing Committee in June 2022 to present outcome of review and proposed implementation dates, if pressing need and proporionate need is met.

3. Background

- 3.1 There is no doubt a vulnerability relating to Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHV). Members of the public enter into a Taxi/ PHV putting themselves under the control of a stranger in a confined space with no physical control over where they are taken. Furthermore, drivers also entrust members of the public into their vehicles, transporting them during unsocial hours, and sometimes visiting poorly lit routes.
- 3.2 CCTV systems can act as an additional safeguard, providing protection, confidence and reassurance to the public when they are travelling in a taxi or PHV, as well as to drivers who can also be victims of violence, and abuse.
- 3.3 CCTV systems can act as a deterrent to those with intentions of committing an offence to both drivers and passengers, but also where an offence has been committed images/audio recordings can capture evidence used in both a criminal and enforcement investigations.

- 3.4 Local authorities in recent years have considered the benefits of CCTV systems. Some authorities have made it a mandatory condition, whereas others have offered it as a voluntary requirement.
- 3.5 In October 2017, Cambridge City Council members agreed to make the installation of CCTV a mandatory condition, due to the seen benefits in safeguarding members of the public but also in the protection of drivers.
- 3.6 Although attempts have been made in the past in respect to the implementation of the mandatory requirement, due to securing a suitable supplier and Covid-19 pandemic, implementation has been delayed.
- 3.7 In September 2020, members agreed for an implementation date of 1st April 2022, in which all licensed vehicles would be required to have installed a CCTV system, following successful procurement.
- 3.8 Due to procurement issues identified the approved implementation date is unable to be met at this time.
- 3.9 In addition to procurement delays, following the release of the Statutory and Best Practice Guidance there is guidance to local authorities who mandate CCTV as a condition of a license, will require an appropriately strong justification and which must be kept under regular review.
- 3.10 Furthermore, The Home Office 'Surveillance Camera Code of Practice' advises that government is fully supportive of the use of overt surveillance cameras in a public place whenever that use is:
- in pursuit of a legitimate aim;
 - necessary to meet a pressing need;
 - proportionate;
 - effective, and;

- compliant with any relevant legal obligation

3.11 As the mandatory requirement of CCTV for Cambridge City Council in its licensed vehicles was agreed in October 2017, and although the Statutory guidance does not specify what they consider a regular review, it is felt it is appropriate to take this time to conduct a review.

3.12 The review exercise will look at points referenced by the Home office, to ensure that introduction of installing CCTV meets all the above tests. Specifically focusing on;

1. Necessary to meet pressing need,
2. and Proportionality

3.13 As part of the review exercise information will be obtained from Cambridge City Council records, South Cambridgeshire District Council records and Police information to indicate if there is evidence to support the local need to install CCTV in licensed vehicles.

3.14 Cambridge City Council will continue working together with South Cambridgeshire District Council in finalising the CCTV Technical Specification, conducting the review and identifying appropriate supplier/s if pressing need is established.

3. Implications

a) Financial Implications

Nil.

b) Staffing Implications

Officers will spend time to formulate and complete review. Time will be absorbed with daily job requirements.

c) Equality and Poverty Implications

Nil.

d) Environmental Implications

Nil.

e) Procurement Implications

Nil.

f) Community Safety Implications

Review will reconsider the use of CCTV within licensed vehicles

4. Consultation and communication considerations

A full consultation took place from Monday 31st July 2017 to Sunday 3rd September 2017. Consultation was regarding the installation of CCTV systems in licensed vehicles, that were locked and only accessible to the licensing authority and police.

Report and consultation responses were presented to Members, who considered information during Licensing Committee meeting.

Members resolved (unanimously) to require the installation of CCTV, that is locked and only accessed by the licensing authority and police.

5. Background papers

- a) Developing an approach to mandatory CCTV in taxis and PHVs – Local Government Association Guidance.
- b) Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards

6. Appendices

Nil.

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Wangari Njiiri, Environmental Health and

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