

CCTV in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles

To:

Licensing Committee 20/03/2023

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 In support of the above objectives, the mandatory installation of CCTV within Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles was agreed by members in October 2017.

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 Since approval in 2017, an implementation date has been sought however due to procurement issues and the Covid 19 pandemic, the implementation date for CCTV in licenced vehicles was delayed.

- 1.6 In October 2022, Licensing Committee Members approved the following recommendations:
- 1.6.1 Implementation of CCTV in licensed vehicles in a phased and manageable approach. Any grant of a new vehicle licence or renewal of an existing licensed vehicle from 1st April 2023, vehicle must be fitted with CCTV. This would see all licenced vehicles installed with CCTV by 31st March 2024.
- 1.6.2 A review of CCTV in licenced vehicles every 5 years. Next review would be 2029, 5 years from date all licenced vehicles will have CCTV installed.
- 1.7 Following the October 2022 approval, attempts were made to publish the CCTV specification and details of companies who have confirmed they meet Cambridge City Council CCTV specification in January 2023. Unfortunately, due to delays in completing Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA), there was a delay in releasing this information to Licence holders.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are recommended to approve the implementation of CCTV in licensed vehicles in a phased and manageable approach be postponed to the 1st September 2023.
- 2.2 Any grant of a new vehicle licence or renewal of an existing licensed vehicle from 1st September 2023, vehicle must be fitted with CCTV.

This would see all licenced vehicles installed with CCTV by 31st August 2024.

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 working as a deterrent to those with intentions of committing an offence, 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. But also where an offence has been committed images/audio recordings can capture evidence used in both a criminal and enforcement investigations.

CCTV specification

- 3.3 Appendix A presents the CCTV specification which has been developed working with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). Specification was developed using specifications from several other local authorities who have successfully implemented the

mandatory installation of CCTV in their licenced vehicles.

- 3.4 The specification will be supplied to all licence holders, who will be able to identify their own supplier/installer who can meet/ exceed that CCTV specification. To support with the identification of such suppliers, following being approached by several suppliers, Cambridge City Council have been able to provide the trade with details of the companies who confirmed they can meet Cambridge City Council CCTV specification. This is an approach utilised by several other councils.
- 3.5 These companies offer various systems at different costs, which allows licence holders to approach different companies to make an informed decision regarding what system they purchase.

Postpone

- 3.6 Following the 1st April 2023 implementation date approval in October 2022, additional internal work was required before specification and supplier details could be shared with members of the trade. The aim was to publish specification and supplier details in January 2023. There was a delay in publishing the final CCTV specification and details of suppliers who confirmed they can meet or exceed CCTV specification.
- 3.7 Furthermore, during correspondence with some suppliers, concerns were raised regarding the availability of local installers.
- 3.8 Due to the delay in publishing specification, and concerns regarding available installation options, consideration of delaying implementation

date, will provide licence holders additional time to find an approved system and installers.

- 3.9 Furthermore it will enable suppliers the ability to increase their availability of local installers.

4. Implications

a) Financial Implications

Of companies who have approached Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, installation costs can be estimated at between £80 to £500 depending on type of system e.g a single camera system or a two-camera system. With CCTV system unit, costing has been estimated between £300 and £500.

The number of cameras installed, and audio buttons will be dependent on size of vehicle, and whether 90 or 180 degree cameras are used. For example, if using a 180 degree angle camera, standard 5 seater saloon vehicles may only require 1 camera and 1 audio button, where as a larger 8 seater vehicle may require up to 4 cameras and 2/3 audio buttons to meet the needs of both driver and passenger and capture the whole vehicle.

b) Staffing Implications

1. Licensing officers will be required to undertake training on how to securely retrieve data from camera systems.

2. Garage Staff who complete Certificate of Compliance checks will also be required to be trained to test CCTV systems are in good order.

c) Equality and Poverty Implications

Nil.

d) Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental Implications

Nil.

e) Procurement Implications

Nil.

f) Community Safety Implications

The mandatory installation of CCTV within Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles will support licensing objectives i), iii) and v), detailed on section 1.7.

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.

5. Consultation and communication considerations

Nil.

6. Background papers

Nil.

7. Appendices

Appendix A - CCTV Specification

8. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Wangari Njiiri, Environmental Health and Licensing Support Team Leader, 01223 458533, Wangari.njiiri@cambridge.gov.uk