

**Name of meeting and date: Licensing & Safety Committee  
21<sup>st</sup> February 2011**

**Title of report: Driver Badge renewal 1 or 3 years**

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| <b>Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?</b> | <b>Not Applicable</b>                                 |
| <b>Is it in the Council's Forward Plan?</b>  | <b>No</b>   |
| <b>Is it eligible for "call in" by Scrutiny?</b>   | <b>Not Applicable</b>                                 |
| <b>Cabinet member portfolio</b>  | <b>Regeneration, Environment &amp; Transportation</b> |

**Electoral wards affected and ward councillors consulted: ALL**

**Public or private: Public**

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 At the request of a Trade representative we have brought this report for members to determine whether the Licensing Authority should offer options of one, two and three year renewals for taxi driver licences.

## **2 KEY POINTS**

2.1 Currently in Kirklees taxi driver licences are renewed on an annual basis only.

2.2 A taxi driver licence is itself granted under the Local Government (miscellaneous provisions) Act 1976, s.51

2.3 Three years is the legal maximum a licence can be issued for.

2.4 Department for Transport Best Practice Guide, states that renewing licences on an annual basis can impose an undue burden on drivers and licensing authorities alike, but advises against only renewing for three year periods, as this is deemed too financially restrictive to drivers. Best practice would be to offer one, two or three year renewals with a combined fee.

2.5 It is a requirement that no licence should be granted to someone unless they are a 'fit & proper' person. One of the methods available to assess the fitness and propriety of the applicant include Criminal Record Bureau checks (CRB). It is best practice for CRB checks to be sought when a licence is first applied for and then every three years, even if a licence is renewed annually, provided drivers are obliged to report all new convictions and cautions to the licensing authority.

2.6 Most authorities grant licences for one year, thereby requiring annual renewals. This is felt to give a greater element of control over drivers. Although there is often imposed on drivers licences a condition which requires the driver to notify the local authority of any convictions recorded against the driver during the currency of the licence, annual renewals are felt to provide an opportunity to ensure that drivers do comply with that requirement.

### **3 CONSULTEES AND THEIR OPINIONS**

3.1 An officer has been consulted from Wakefield Council who already offers the option to drivers renewing their licence for periods of either one, two or three years.

3.2 As in Kirklees, Wakefield Council also carries out a (CRB) Criminal Record Bureau check every three years.

3.3 Wakefield council Licensing department have reported that this causes confusion and frustration for both the licensing staff and drivers alike, for example:

a) if a driver renews his licence for a one year period. At his next renewal he is then unable to renew his licence for three years as his CRB check is due after two years. So he only has the option of either a one or two year renewal to the date his next CRB check is due.

b) if a driver renews his licence for a two year period. At his next renewal he is then only able to renew his licence for one year to the date his next CRB check is due.

### **4 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL**

4.1 If the Licensing and Safety Committee decide to alter the renewal periods to make the options of one, two or three years available to drivers, the licensing authority will be required to implement a system to ensure licenses are tracked satisfactorily to prevent problems occurring as experienced by Wakefield Council.(as above.)

4.2 The licensing authority would be required to review fees to offer combined fees dependant on period of renewal

## **5 OFFICERS RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members of the committee are requested to consider this report and determine what course of action they should take. It is recommended that current system should be upheld.