

REPORT: Regulatory Committee

DATE: 9 October 2024

REPORTING OFFICER: Director – Legal and Democratic Services

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Taxi Enforcement Policy

WARDS: Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To accept the powers delegated from the City of Wolverhampton Council to Halton Borough Council under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 1.2. **RECOMMENDATION: that the Committee approve the proposed formal arrangement between the City of Wolverhampton Council and Halton Borough Council in relation to officer authorisation concerning Taxi and Private Hire licensing functions and accept the powers delegated by the City of Wolverhampton Council under section 101 Local Government Act 1972.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Since the introduction of the Deregulation Act 2015, Private Hire Operators have been allowed to subcontract bookings to any other Private Hire Operator. This has resulted in an increase of vehicles completing bookings in one local authority area although the driver and vehicle are licensed in a different local authority area.
- 2.2. The City of Wolverhampton have recently piloted a scheme with Milton Keynes for a period of 6 months. This scheme has been successful and has now been offered to other Local Authorities one of them being Halton Borough Council.
- 2.3. Section 5.3 of the Department for Transport's 'Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance for licensing authorities in England' states, "Licensing authorities should, where the need arises, jointly authorise officers from other authorities so that compliance and enforcement action can be taken against licensees from outside their area. An agreement between licensing authorities to jointly authorise officers enables the use of compliance and enforcement powers regardless of which authority within the agreement employs the officer and which issued the licence. This will mitigate the opportunities for licensees to evade regulation. Such an agreement will enable those authorities to take action against vehicles and drivers that are licensed

by the other authority when they cross over boundaries. A model for agreeing joint authorisation is contained in the LGA Councillors' handbook."

- 2.4. A copy of the report which will be presented to the City of Wolverhampton Council Regulatory Committee on the 25 September 2024 is attached at **Appendix A** of this report.
- 2.5. In the event this report is approved, a letter of acceptance will be given to the City of Wolverhampton Council's Compliance Service Lead accepting the powers that are proposed to be delegated, enabling officers at Halton BC to enforce licensing requirements for vehicles carrying a plate licensed with Wolverhampton City Council. Wolverhampton CC would provide a letter of authority to the Taxi Enforcement Officer at Halton BC and all licence holders shall be made aware.
- 2.6. All licence holders in Halton will be made aware of the joint authorisation.

3. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no other implications arising out of this report.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCILS PRIORITIES

5.1. Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

None

5.2. Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

None

5.3. Supporting Children, Young People and Families

None

5.4. Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

None

5.5. Working Towards a Greener Future

None

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

None

6. RISK ANALYSIS

6.1. None identified.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1. There are no equality and diversity issues to highlight.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1. There are no climate change implications since the decision will have no effect on the environment.

9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None.