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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>General Purposes Board</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>8 April 2015</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Legal and Property Services</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>LP/062/15</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>James Douglas Legal Services</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712107</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Mandatory Training of Taxi Drivers</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to consider a proposal by Councillor Rebecchi that taxi drivers undertake mandatory training as a condition of being granted a new licence or being granted a renewal of an existing licence.
- 1.2 Councillor Rebecchi's proposal was considered by the General Purposes Board on 8 October 2014 and it was remitted to the Head of Legal & Property Services to undertake research into the training available and the implications of introducing mandatory training.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Councillor Rebecchi raised a Motion at a meeting of the General Purposes Board on 8 October 2014 that the Board considers implementing mandatory training for all taxi drivers in how to safely transport, secure and interact with members of the disabled community. This was as a result of concerns that had been raised with him by those within the disabled community. The Board unanimously agreed that the matter should be investigated and a report brought back for consideration.
- 2.2 Licensing staff e-mailed all other local authorities in Scotland seeking information on any mandatory schemes that had been introduced within other local authority areas. A variety of responses were received from the 22 local authorities that responded. Some authorities have no requirement for mandatory driver training, some authorities have training as a mandatory licensing requirement and some authorities are currently reviewing the matter.
- 2.3 Of the Councils that indicated a requirement for mandatory training of taxi drivers, some provide in-house training and others expect drivers to ensure they attend relevant training courses available throughout Scotland. Where drivers attend training courses provided by independent training providers, proof of attendance and completion of the course is submitted with the licence application at the appropriate time. Some authorities require mandatory training for all taxi drivers whilst others require training for new applicants only.
- 2.4 Research undertaken by officers suggests that there are training courses available from a number of independent training providers. The courses range in price for each delegate from £46 to over £100. The duration of courses range from a full-day course to courses provided over a period of four evenings. A number of training providers have also indicated that they would be interested in creating a training course in the event that all current and future taxi drivers would be required to undertake mandatory training.
- 2.5 Ayrshire College currently offers a course for taxi drivers, the cost of which may be covered by an Individual Learning Account (ILA). There are certain qualifying criteria for these grants such as the applicant must not be in higher education or earning in excess of £22,000 per annum. Skills Development Scotland, the body responsible for administering ILAs, has advised that at this time the course provided by Ayrshire College is the only course of this description

registered with them as being eligible for the ILA grant payment. Each taxi driver would be personally responsible for applying for said grant in the event they wished to undertake any training with this establishment and wished the payment of the course to be covered by an Individual Learning Account.

- 2.6 There are other organisations such as GTC Training (Glasgow) and MiDAS that offer training courses. CTG courses are the providers of courses preferred by Glasgow City Council and West Dunbartonshire Council. The cost of the course is £46 per delegate. MiDas (Mini-Bus Driver Awareness Scheme) is organised by the Community Transport Association and promotes a nationally recognised standard for assessment and training. Preliminary enquiries indicate that they have a suitable course for drivers called “Driver Awareness Training” which would cost £500 regardless of the number of delegates undertaking the course, with the maximum number of delegates being 12. Accordingly the lowest cost per delegate would be £41 per person assuming all 12 training places were taken up. The cost to delegates would increase if uptake was not at full capacity or proposed delegates failed to attend the course.
- 2.7 All courses offered deal specifically with customer care, including the particular needs of the disabled community. Taxi conditions are also discussed, and particular emphasis can be provided by the training providers on Inverclyde Council’s conditions of licence.
- 2.8 The introduction of a training programme would comply with the Scottish Governments recommendation for best practice as detailed in the publication Taxi and Private Hire Car Licensing Best Practice For Licensing Authorities.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That the Board consider the request from Councillor Rebecchi that Inverclyde Council introduce in principle mandatory training for all taxi drivers licensed by Inverclyde Council. That such training should be undertaken by a recognised training body, and the mandatory training be a matter of personal responsibility for those wishing to be licensed as a taxi driver by Inverclyde Council.
- 3.2 That should the Board approve in principle the idea of mandatory training for all taxi drivers licensed by Inverclyde Council, that it be remitted to the Head of Legal & Property Services to undertake consultation with the taxi trade and Inverclyde Council on Disability, and thereafter report back to the Board.

### **4.0 IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Finance**

- 4.1 There are financial implications for those requiring to undertake any training required in the event that they do not wish to apply for an Independent Learning Allowance or do not qualify for same.

#### **Legal**

- 4.2 There are legal implications in that any decision by the Board is subject to Appeal to the Sheriff Court by those with locus to do so.

#### **Human Resources**

- 4.3 There are Human Resources implications in as much as Licensing staff will require to monitor and enforce any mandatory condition of licence.

## **Equalities**

4.4 There are no equalities implications.

## **Repopulation**

4.5 There are no repopulation implications.