

## **A.6 TENDRING QUALITY TAXI PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT.**

(Report prepared by Alan Tolmie)

### **PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To seek Members' approval to consult with the Trade about the feasibility of entering into a Quality Taxi Partnership (QTP) agreement.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Essex County Council has been working for some time to establish a QTP across the county. Whilst voluntary, the aim of the proposed agreement is to enhance the experience of the travelling public and reduce the fear of crime when using this form of transport. This report provides information in respect of the proposed QTP, should Members be minded to recommend it.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That permission is granted to your officers to commence discussions with the Trade about the feasibility of entering into a Quality Taxi Partnership agreement and that the outcome of those discussions be reported to the next meeting of the Licensing Committee.**

### **PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

#### **DELIVERING PRIORITIES**

The use of this agreement supports the Council's Corporate Strategy in providing a low crime area and reducing the fear of crime.

#### **FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK**

##### **Finance and other resources**

There are no financial implications for the Authority other than the cost of consulting with the trade, which can be met within existing budgets.

##### **Risk**

If the agreement were not to be adopted, the image presented by the taxi trade to residents and visitors to the District could deteriorate. There have been indications that, at a future stage, Essex County Council transport contracts would only be awarded to drivers/operators who had signed up to a QTP agreement.

#### **LEGAL**

The proposed action is within the Council's discretionary powers. The proposed QTP agreement is voluntary.

#### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder / Equality and Diversity / Consultation/Public Engagement.

##### **CRIME AND DISORDER**

The inception of this agreement should lead to a reduction in the fear of crime.

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken if the Trade support the proposal.

## **AREA/WARDS AFFECTED**

All wards

## **PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **BACKGROUND**

Most other Essex Authorities have already signed up to a QTP agreement and feel that the agreement, whilst voluntary, can only enhance the experience of the travelling public. Any driver/operator who fails to maintain the standards set out in the agreement will have the privilege of displaying QTP material in their vehicles and offices revoked. As stated earlier, failure to maintain standards could in the future lead to the loss of transportation contracts awarded by Essex County Council.

A Quality Taxi Partnership (QTP) is a framework to facilitate joint working between Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle owners/operators and other stakeholders as deemed appropriate.

Other stakeholders can include:-

- Licensing Authority
- Police
- Local Transport Authority (Essex County Council)
- Trade Associations (Tendring District Taxi Association) [TDTA]
- Pubwatch

The above list is not exclusive and can include other bodies as deemed appropriate.

The aims of the QTP include:-

- Promote accessibility to everyday facilities for all.
- Meet the needs of people without access to a vehicle.
- Reduce crime and fear of crime on the transport system.
- Improve quality of transport services.
- Support services for people who cannot use conventional transport.
- Promote driver awareness and reduce Road Traffic Collisions that cause death and/or serious injury.

The objectives of the QTP include:-

- To improve the customer care skills of drivers.
- To provide priority access where possible through the District.
- To improve working relationships and understanding between partners.
- To make taxi journeys as safe as can be.

Once established, membership of the QTP will be open to Hackney Carriage Drivers and Private Hire Drivers and Operators.

The criteria for membership will be:-

- Sign up to the Tendring QTP voluntary agreement – this will be prepared following discussion with Members, Officers and the Trade.
- Abide by the QTP passenger charter – to be compiled if Members agree to go forward with the proposal.
- Any other requirement the Authority consider appropriate.

Members of the Quality Taxi Partnership will be permitted to display the QTP logo on their vehicles and Operators will also be permitted to use the QTP logo on letterheads and other publicity material.

#### **CURRENT POSITION**

If Members agree to progress this matter, your officers will consult with all Hackney Carriage/Private Hire drivers to establish the feasibility of entering into a QTP agreement. If favourable, your officers will meet with representatives of the Trade in order to formulate a draft Tending Quality Taxi Partnership agreement which, subject to Member approval, drivers and operators will need to sign up to if they wish to become a member of the QTP.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION**

None

#### **APPENDIX**

None

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