

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**  
**8 DECEMBER 2015**  
**REPORT OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE**

**Draft Taxi Licensing Policy for adoption**

**Issue for Decision**

Maidstone Borough Council has responsibility for licensing Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles, drivers and operators within the Borough of Maidstone. To date this responsibility has been exercised in accordance with a number of policies and procedures developed over the years. A comprehensive review of these policies and procedures has been undertaken, taking into account guidance issued by central Government for licensing authorities. This guidance sets out what is considered to be best practice in terms of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing.

**Recommendation Made**

That Communities, Housing and Environment Committee adopt the attached draft Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

**Reason for Recommendation**

A comprehensive Taxi policy will improve the consistency in delivering the service and will better inform applicants and operators of the licensing process in an open and transparent way. This will contribute towards providing a better customer service. A clear and up to date Taxi policy will help to minimise the risk of challenges to the council from drivers and operators.

**Alternatives Considered**

The Committee could choose to retain its current policies but to do so would be to keep aging and incomplete policies that would quickly become open to challenge. Best practice suggests that having an up to date policy provides the most appropriate framework for ensuring a safe and effective service. Therefore keeping the existing system is not a course of action that is recommended.

The Committee could do nothing with the inherent risk that our policies may not be compliant with current regulation and case law, and it is noted that not policy decisions are presently contained across a range of reports and are not collated into one document.

## **Background Papers**

None.