

Derbyshire County Council

Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - People

4 September 2019

Safeguarding Children in Derbyshire – Home to School Transport

Scoping Report

1. Purpose of the Report

To inform the Committee about the intention to resume work on the review of policies in place to safeguard children in Home to School Transport and to seek approval for the revised scope of this review.

2. Information and Analysis

Background information

In November 2018 the Committee began work on a review of the policies in place (in Derbyshire) to safeguard children in Home to School Transport. Shortly afterwards, in February 2019, the Government launched a consultation on statutory guidance for taxi and Public Hire Vehicles (PHV) which focused on measures to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm when using these services. Consequently, work on the scrutiny review was paused. The national public consultation exercise has now been completed and the Department for Transport is considering the responses. Furthermore the Government has stated that it will bring forward legislation to introduce national minimum standards for taxi and PHV licensing when time allows.

An unintended consequence of the ongoing Brexit debate in Parliament is that the introduction of some legislation has been delayed. Therefore it is proposed that rather than wait for new legislation on taxi and PHV licensing to be enacted and for the guidance to be formally adopted, the Committee should resume its work on scrutinising the measures in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults using taxis and PHV services.

Review objectives

The aim of the review is to ascertain whether there are additional measures that the Council could take to safeguard children and vulnerable adults using taxis and PHV services.

It is proposed that during the review the draft statutory guidance “Taxi and Private Vehicle Licensing: Protecting Users” is used as a benchmark standard

PUBLIC

and the criteria that the Council sets for Taxi and Private Hire Contractors and the commissioning process will be considered against it.

With a view to ensuring the readiness of the County Council's commissioning services, for the introduction of the proposed new legislation and guidance, attention will also be given to the borough and district council's licensing requirements to see how arrangements across Derbyshire compare to the draft statutory guidance.

Potential Information Sources

The review may seek evidence from the following:

- Executive Director for Childrens Services
- Executive Director for Commissioning, Communities and Policy
- Cabinet Member for Young People
- Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
- Officers from the Council's Commissioning Service
- Appropriate officers and councillors from district and borough councils

Timeframe and working arrangements

The review will be completed by April 2020.

It is proposed that a working group will be appointed by this Committee to undertake the review, prepare progress reports and submit a final report to the full Committee at the conclusion of the review.

3. Officer's Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

- (1) Agree to the resumption of the review of policies in place to safeguard children in Home to School Transport and the revised scoping report.
- (2) Appoint Members of the Committee to the review working group.

Cllr Gary Musson
Chairman of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - People