

**Report of the Service Director Culture,
Housing and Regulation to the
General Licensing Regulatory Board
to be held on the 21 February 2018**

ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report, is to provide Members with an overview of the work Licensing Enforcement Officers have undertaken to date.

2. Background

Members are minded to note, that since the last enforcement update, Licensing Enforcement Officers have continued to proactively embark on a number of taxi licensing enforcement operations. A summary of enforcement operations undertaken are detailed below.

3. Current Position

On 20 December 2018, a joint multi agency day time operation took place in Barnsley town centre involving Licensing Enforcement Officers, colleagues from Smithies Lane Depot and South Yorkshire Police. This road side operation focused attention on all licensed vehicles that were in the vicinity of the Summer Lane roundabout during the course of the day. Working collaboratively, Officers inspected a high volume of licensed vehicles (both hackney carriage and private hire) as well as two vehicles licensed with other local authorities. In total 22 vehicles were inspected the results of which are detailed as follows:

- 18 vehicles were found to be compliant
- 4 vehicles were issued with immediate suspension notices for defects including:
 - Vehicle suspended as warning light showing on dashboard

- Vehicle suspended for tyres below the legal limit
- Vehicle suspended as headlights in wrong position
- Vehicle suspended as number plate light inoperative

In addition to the above, 3 drivers were also issued with written warnings for failing to complete or falsifying their daily vehicle inspection books.

Taking the above into account, Members will note that under 25% of vehicles inspected during this operation were found to be non-compliant and as a result, suspended with immediate effect.

On the 18 January 2018 Licensing Enforcement Officers alongside Vehicle Examiners from the Smithies Lane Depot, took part in a day time operation focusing their attention at Springwell School and the drivers and vehicles that are contracted to transport children to the school on a daily basis.

The Chair of the Licensing Regulatory Board, Councillor C Wraith MBE, was also in attendance.

In total 29 licensed vehicles were inspected on the day, the results of which are detailed as follows:

- 22 vehicles found to be compliant
- 7 vehicles were issued with immediate suspension notices for defects including:
 - 2 Vehicles suspended - rear number plate lights inoperative
 - 2 Vehicles suspended - near side front side lights and rear side light inoperative
 - Vehicle suspended - near side rear brake light inoperative
 - Vehicle suspended – rear fog light inoperative
 - Vehicle suspended – nearside indicator inoperative

Vehicle non-compliance is not just an issue Officers are concerned with during the undertaking of each and every enforcement operation; it is one that continues to be at the forefront of every Vehicle Examiners mind whilst undertaking an MOT test. Defective vehicles are not acceptable and cannot

be excused, coupled with failing to complete basic vehicle inspection sheets, an inspection sheet that not only the Trade requested to complete but a tool that ensures the very safety of a licensed vehicle, is not acceptable.

4. Prosecution

A Sheffield taxi driver who picked up a fare in Barnsley town centre when he wasn't allowed to do so, has been given a £150 fine at Barnsley Magistrates and ordered to pay £500 and £30 victim surcharge, following an investigation by Barnsley Council's Licensing Officers.

A more detailed verbal update in relation to the above will be given at the meeting.

5. Proposal

Proactive enforcement operations will continue to take place on a quarterly basis. Whilst vehicle failure rates remain at an unacceptable level this continues to harbour great concerns amongst those driven to combat such ill failings and convey the message that operators, vehicle proprietors and drivers must begin to accept responsibility for their failures and make a change.

Failure to do so, will only continue to put the safety of the public at risk when using a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle in Barnsley.

After all, the principal consideration here must be one of public safety.

6. Background Papers

Enforcement Officer Reports which contain exempt information are not available for public inspection

7. Officer Contact

Debbie Bailey

X 5696