



AGENDA ITEM: 8

SUMMARY

Report for:	Licensing Health & Safety Enforcement Committee
Date of meeting:	03 February 2015
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Letter from Baroness Kramer, Department for Transport
Contact:	Ross Hill – Licensing Team Leader, Legal Governance
Purpose of report:	To present a letter recently received from the Department for Transport in respect of the taxi licensing functions.
Recommendations	That the Committee note the letter from Baroness Kramer.
Corporate objectives:	Safe and Clean Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a clean and safe environment
Implications:	None
Consultees:	None
Background papers:	Letter from Baroness Kramer (attached)
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	

1. The letter attached at Annex A has recently been sent from the Department for Transport to all taxi licensing authorities, reminding authorities that they should not be afraid to use their powers to refuse, suspend or revoke licences where the situation warrants doing so, and to ensure a robust and comprehensive system of pre-licensing checks is in place. This has been prompted in part following revelations around the use of taxis and private hire vehicles by the perpetrators of child sexual exploitation offences in a number of areas.

Annex A
Letter from Baroness Kramer, Department for Transport



Department
for Transport

Chief Executive
Local licensing authorities

From the Minister of State
Baroness Kramer

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Our Ref:

Dear Colleagues

18 NOV 2014

Taxi and private hire vehicle drivers

I am writing to you about the important issue of ensuring that licensed taxi and private hire vehicle drivers are safe to drive the travelling public.

National and local government have a joint interest in ensuring personal safety of passengers. We recognise the good work that many local authorities have already done through stringent licensing procedures to protect passengers and maintain confidence in taxi and private hire vehicle services.

Licensing authorities have power to undertake enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks on all applicants for taxi and private hire vehicle driver licences. These checks will highlight convictions for sex offences and other relevant information that can be taken into consideration when deciding who to license. Furthermore, once a licence has been issued, licensing authorities should have systems in place, including maintaining links with the police, to ensure that drivers continue to be 'fit and proper'. While the decision to revoke or suspend a licence should never be considered lightly, the licensing system is designed to protect the public and it would be wrong to avoid this course of action where it is clearly appropriate.

In the interests of public safety and the reputation of the licensed trade, I encourage you to use all the tools available to ensure that all licensed drivers have undergone a thorough vetting process, their conduct is monitored once licensed, and all available information is fully considered when making licensing decisions.

Baroness Kramer

BARONESS KRAMER