

Report title	Taxi Personal Safety Alarms	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	John Roseblade, Director of Resident Services	
Originating service	Licensing	
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Report to be/has been considered by	None.	

Recommendation for noting:

The Regulatory Committee is asked to note:

1. The purchase of personal safety alarms for all vehicles licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle.
2. The 'Safety Tips for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers' guidance, produced to help the trade stay safe.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To request approval from the Committee to purchase a personal safety alarm for every licensed hackney carriage and private hire vehicle.
- 1.2 To present 'Safety Tips for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers', a guidance document produced by the Council and approved by West Midlands Police, to support the safety of the trade.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 As part of the Council's ongoing commitment to the safety of its licensed hackney carriage and private hire drivers, new ways of supporting the trade against violent and abusive customers have been investigated.
- 2.2 In addition to the ongoing consultation on Driver Safety Enclosures, research into other safety products and advice has taken place.

3.0 Personal Safety Alarms

- 3.1 Personal safety alarms have been identified as a cost-effective solution to support drivers against would-be attackers.
- 3.2 Licensing Services undertook a procurement exercise and following market research, obtained quotes for a specification including the following:
 - A. Sold Secure, Secured by Design (SBD), or other recognised accreditation scheme approved
 - B. A pull cord which is separate to any keyring on the device
 - C. Minimum 100dB alarm
 - D. Pocket sized
 - E. Battery included
 - F. Minimum one year warranty
- 3.3 The quote was to provide 20,000 alarms. Three responses were received, with bids ranging from £41,600 to £106,600. The winning bidder with £41,600 was JNE Security Ltd.

4.0 Safety Tips for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers

- 4.1 Licensing Compliance has worked with its training partners, Worcestershire County Council, as well as West Midlands Police to create a guide for the trade on staying safe. This is included as Appendix 1. This will be sent to all licence holders and included as part of the package to new licensees.

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 The £41,060 costs will be met from existing Licencing budgets. To provide value for money for the trade, alarms will be distributed at the vehicle's next inspection, rather than posted. Similarly, the safety guide will be sent digitally, so as not to unnecessarily spend money on printing and postage.

[SB/15022023/Q]

6.0 Legal implications

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications.

[AB/15-02-2023/10]

7.0 Equalities implications

- 7.1 The equalities analysis implications are included as Appendix 1

8.0 All other Implications

- 8.1 By distributing the safety guide digitally, this minimises climate change implications due to not printing and posting documents. In addition, arranging for the alarms to be collected when the vehicle is inspected on site also minimises climate change implications.

9.0 Schedule of background papers

- 9.1 11 January 2023 - Driver Safety Enclosures Consultation – Regulatory Committee

10.0 Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix 1 - Safety Tips for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers
10.2 Appendix 2 – Equality Analysis