

URGENT DECISION FORM



TO BE UPLOADED ON TO THE INTERNET BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Date: 31 st March 2020	Ref No: 31.3 007		
Type of Decision:			
Cabinet Decision	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Key	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subject matter:			
Request to waive procurement rules to allow for the Licensing Service during the COVID-19 Pandemic to permit Personnel Checks, an external company, to undertake Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for "taxi" driver renewals online.			

Reason for Urgency:

Bury Council's licensing service currently mandates a disclosure and barring service check (Enhanced DBS check) for all licensed driver applications and renewals. These checks are undertaken by the licensing service directly with the Disclosure and Barring Service on behalf of licensed drivers and applicants. The driver has to attend a face to face appointment with licensing staff to enable the advisor to make an application on the driver's behalf and to ensure the driver's identity is verified during the process. The driver pays the Council £59 for this service, £40 is the cost of the check the difference being a charge by Bury Council for this service

Enhanced DBS checks are a mandatory requirement for all driver licensing applications and renewals, the check lasts for a three year period. Checks will only be undertaken if a DBS check is due during the period of restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Personnel Checks Ltd are offering to carry out an enhanced DBS check on behalf of the Council, temporarily, during the COVID-19 pandemic at a reduce cost of £49.60 Incl. VAT. An enhanced criminal record check, also known as an enhanced DBS check, details any cautions, warnings, reprimands or convictions on an individual's criminal history and if relevant, can also check against the children and/or adults barred lists

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic in order to implement social distancing and protect staff and "taxi drivers" alike ,the licensing reception has had to vacate its position in the town hall foyer and relocate behind the cashier's counter with the counter staff. Space is restricted and as a result the service has been requested to find an alternative location to implement safe working practices. Transferring this process would ensure safe working practices are followed for current town hall counter staff and would also provide an online solution for the mandated requirement of dbs checks, should the town hall be required to close.

Bury Council's Licensing Service has received an offer of assistance by Personnel Checks Limited who are a Blackburn company offering to carry out enhanced remote DBS checks. This alternative provision also provides a small saving of £9.40 for "taxi" drivers who are currently facing financial hardship.

Personnel Checks Ltd has been carrying out mandated safeguarding training during the last 12 months on behalf of Bury Council and has been the subject of a procurement process during the last 12 months for this. The provision of this alternative is not considered a financial risk to the council as each individual charge is paid for by the driver directly to them and not the council. Currently the driver pays Bury Licensing Service who in turn pay the disclosure and barring service. This is done in bulk for a number of such checks on a quarterly basis via a call off order.

Urgency is requested as the need to ensure staff are following safe working practices in a confined area behind the town hall counter. There is a need to find an alternative way of providing the service remotely before a decision is made to close the town hall counter. In addition if the service is required to follow the usual procurement rules to find an alternative supplier, this will take too long . It may be in the current uncertain climate the licensing service will be unable to continue to provide the checking service, following our current processes and therefore exposing the council to major risks by not carrying out necessary safeguarding checks which would expose the public to personal risk.

Equality Impact Assessment [Does this decision change policy, procedure or working practice or negatively impact on a group of people? If yes – complete EIA and summarise issues identified and recommendations – forward EIA to Corporate HR]	No	
Decision taken: To waive the council procurement rules during the COVID-19 pandemic allowing temporarily, until further notice Personnel Checks Ltd to undertake DBS checks for driver renewals on behalf of Bury Council Licensing Service where necessary.		
Decision taken by:	Signature:	Date:
Chief/Senior Officer/Cabinet Chair	 	01/04/2020
After consultation with:		
Cabinet Member (if a Key Decision) or Chair or Lead Member (as appropriate)	See above	
If it is a Key Decision, the Chair of Scrutiny Committee to agree that the decision cannot be deferred	Cllr Caserta consulted	2.4.2020
Nominated Opposition or Majority Group Member on Overview and Scrutiny Committee (if a Key Decision) or Opposition Spokesperson	Cllr N Jones consulted	2.4.2020
Leader of second largest Opposition Group	Cllr T Pickstone consulted	2.4.2020