

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee

Date **05 October 2023**

Report of: **Head of Environmental Health**

Subject: **UPDATE ON THE IMPLMENTATION OF RANDOM DRUG
TESTING FOR TAXI/PRIVATE HIRE LICENCE HOLDERS**

SUMMARY

The Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee agreed at the meeting of Monday 25 July 2022 to introduce drug testing for new applicants and randomly for licensed drivers.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of the report and the progress made with the introduction of drug testing.

INTRODUCTION

1. Initially we spoke to several companies that specialise in providing drug testing services for organisations. We then selected the company that best met our requirements. This company came in and provided comprehensive training to the Support and Licensing staff to enable them to become competent in supervising the self-administered drug tests.
2. The oral fluid swab is administered by the applicant who must hold it in their mouth for 10 minutes. Following this, it is placed into a pot whereby the following are then looked for:
 - Alcohol
 - Amphetamine (speed)
 - Barbiturates (sedative)
 - Benzodiazepines (Diazepam, Temazepam)
 - Cannabis (THC)
 - Cocaine and Crack Cocaine
 - Ketamine (veterinary tranquiliser)
 - Khat (plant)
 - MDMA (including ecstasy)
 - Methadone (heroin substitute drug)
 - Opiates (including morphine and heroin)
 - Phencyclidine (PCP, angel dust)
 - Propoxyphene (painkillers)

Within the pot is a strip for each of the above. On each drug strip a procedural control line should appear to show that the strip has worked correctly, and sufficient oral fluid has been collected. For the alcohol strip there should be a slight colouration at the bottom of the strip.

For a successful test, another line will appear on each strip. A non-negative result is where a pink line is missing. A negative alcohol strip is shown by no colour change to the strip. A non-negative for alcohol is shown by the strip changing to green/blue.

If a non-negative result is displayed for alcohol, the applicant is advised not to drive home and return at a later date for a further test.

If a non-negative result is displayed for drugs, a further swab test is undertaken in a similar way as the first, however this test is then sent to the Hampton Knight laboratory.

Details results are received back from the lab within 3 working days. By the Licensing Officers.

3. We wrote to all existing drivers and application packs issued on or after 1 July 2023, now contain the guidance document for drug testing. This means that these applicants are now subject to drug testing as part of the application process. The guidance document states which drugs the test is screening for, the procedure and the current cost (£30, to cover the testing cost).
4. Existing licence holders were contacted on 28 June 2023 to confirm that policies had been updated, including the introduction of random drug testing for licence holders. As well as the policy, licence holders were sent a link to the drug testing procedure which includes information on the drugs that will be tested for, the process.

TRAINING

5. On Friday 2 June members of the Admin and Licensing Team, as well as the Head of Environmental Health successfully attended and passed the drug testing training provided by the drug testing kit provider, Hampton Knight.
6. The training consisted of theory and practical and ensured that all members of the team are competent to administer the testing.

TEST DATA

7. To date, there have been 5 number of tests carried out on applicant licence holders.
8. All tests have been successfully passed.
9. There have been no reasons to offer tests to current licence holders at present, although this facility has been made aware to the Police as part of joint working.

RISK ASSESSMENT

10. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report.

CONCLUSION

11. The successful implementation of this committee's resolution to introduce drug testing has helped further protect public safety.

Background Papers:

None.

Reference Papers:

None.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Ian Rickman 01329 824773.