

## Notice of Motion – “Access All Areas”

19 October 2017

### **This Council notes:**

- That a Guide Dogs’ survey found that 42% of assistance dog owners were refused by a taxi or Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) driver over a one-year period despite this being a criminal offence under the Equality Act 2010;
- The significant impact such refusals can have on assistance dog owners’ lives, leading to feelings of embarrassment and anger as well as to a loss of independence, mobility and an associated detrimental impact on mental health;
- That disability equality training for taxi and PHV drivers has helped to reduce the number of access refusals; and

### **This Council believes:**

- That as a local authority, we are responsible for ensuring that taxis and PHVs are safe to travel on and that drivers provide good service and do not discriminate against disabled people, including those with assistance dogs; and
- that disability equality training should be a priority amongst plans to improve local taxi and PHV services.

### **This Council resolves:**

- to review its Hackney Carriage (Taxi) and Private Hire Policy and introduce a provision for all drivers to undertake disability equality training when obtaining their Torbay Council drivers licence and at regular intervals.
- To only issue a medical exemption certificate when it is evidenced by a medical practitioner and accompanied by medical evidence, for example a blood test, a skin prick test or clinical history.
- To investigate all reported access refusals with a view to pursuing a conviction under the Equality Act 2010, and ensuring appropriate penalties are imposed in line with the distressing impact a refusal can have on an assistance dog owner.
- To undertake periodic test purchasing on licenced vehicles to ensure that licensing requirements are being complied with.

**Proposer:** Councillor Darling (M)

**Secunder:** Councillor Doggett