

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 19 June 2012
title: Private Hire Driver's Knowledge Test
submitted by: Chief Executive
principal author: Mair Hill

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek Committee's views upon whether an individual should be permitted to sit additional knowledge test(s) having failed the maximum of four which is currently permitted within the six month temporary licence period and if so what arrangements should be put in place to allow additional tests papers to be made available to include setting an appropriate fee.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities
 - Community Objectives - None
 - Corporate Priorities - An efficient licensing service will promote the Council's priority of being a well-managed and efficient Council.
 - Other Considerations – None

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council has for many years required each applicant for a driver's licence to pass a knowledge test. Applicants for a private hire licence are issued with a temporary licence for 6 months and given four opportunities to pass the knowledge test (by the end of that period). Applicants are permitted to take the test on paper or in person in their licensed vehicle. A fee of £7 or £14 is charged respectively.
- 2.2 The knowledge test is used as part of the Council's procedure to determine if an applicant is a fit and proper person to be given a driver's licence. The Council has four test papers and applicants are therefore currently afforded four opportunities to pass the test. Recently an issue has arisen where an individual has failed all four tests but has requested that they be able to sit further tests, despite their temporary licence having expired.

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 As stated above the Council only has four papers and so in practical terms if individuals are to be allowed to take additional tests it would result in them re sitting the same papers or the Council being required to set additional papers. A fee would also need to be set, as this situation has not arisen previously,
- 3.2 Consideration would also need to be given to whether an Applicant should be able to sit the test in person as they are permitted to do during the period of their temporary licence. Officer's safety must be considered, as if the Applicant does not hold a licence they may not have had a recent CRB check, or medical assessment and there may be issues surrounding their insurance. There are therefore practical and resource issues to overcome should Committee wish to allow individuals the opportunity to sit additional tests. This however does need to be weighed against fairness to the Applicant and the Council's equality duties.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources – Resources will need to be expended in either setting additional test or in Officers making arrangements for the applicant to sit the test.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None
- Political - None
- Reputation – None
- Equality & Diversity - None

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Permit Applicants to sit the knowledge test an unlimited number of times during the period of the temporary licence either in person or on paper (provided the appropriate fee is paid on each occasion);

5.2 Permit Applicants to sit the knowledge test an unlimited number of times (on paper only) once the temporary licence has expired; and

5.3 Set a fee of £7 in respect of each knowledge test referred to in 5.2.

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DIANE RICE
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC
SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

REF: MJH/Licensing Committee/19 June 2012

For further information please ask for Mair Hill, extension 3216