

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 7

meeting date: 15 SEPTEMBER 2015
 title: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR PRIVATE HIRE
 AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVERS
 submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
 principal author: MAIR HILL

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To seek approval from Committee for the implementation of the proposals for new testing requirements for private hire and hackney carriage drivers.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives - }
- Corporate Priorities - } Consideration of these issues will promote the Council's aim to be a well-managed Council.
- Other Considerations - }

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The recommendations of the working group set up to consider the Council's current testing requirements for applicants and in particular the Steering to Success Course were reported in detail to Committee on 23 June 2015. Committee approved the recommendation of the Working Group and authorised the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consult all licence holders upon them.

2.2 Pursuant to this authorisation the Council's solicitor wrote to all licence holders to consult them upon the recommendations on 2 July 2015. A copy of the consultation documents are enclosed as **Appendix 1** to this report.

3 ISSUES

3.1 The Council received 7 responses to the consultation. These are set out in tabular form at **Appendix 2** to this report. Five responses were received in support for the recommendations and two were not in support. One of those not in support of the proposal commented that "*the cost is too expensive to be borne myself, also there seems to be a lot of 'red tape' needed to go through to acquire a new licence*". The cost of completing the DVSA taxi driving test is £64-75 (which must be completed before a licence will be granted) and the cost of the Edexcel level 2 NVQ is £150 (and must be completed with 12 months of the licence being granted). The costs is therefore spread out over a period of time, is not excessive and these are already requirements of the various surrounding licensing authorities so by introducing them the Council would not be exceptional.

- 3.2 For the reasons set out in the report to Committee on 23 June 2015, Committee is asked to approve the removal of the requirement for applicants for a private hire or hackney carriage driver's licence to pass the steering to success course before a licence is granted from 1 April 2016; and to approve the introduction from 1 April 2016 of a requirement that all applicants for a private hire or hackney carriage driver's licence pass the DVSA taxi driving test before a licence is granted and that they must pass the Edexcel, Level 2 NVQ in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) within 12 months of the licence being granted.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources – No implications identified.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – Improved control of licence holders should improve public safety.
- Political – No implications identified.
- Reputation – Improved public safety will enhance the Council's reputation.
- Equality & Diversity – no implication identified

5. RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Approve the removal of the requirement for applicants for a private hire or hackney carriage driver's licence to pass the steering to success course before a licence is granted from 1 April 2016; and
- 5.2 Approve the introduction from 1 April 2016 of a requirement that all applicants for a private hire or hackney carriage driver's licence pass the DVSA taxi driving test before a licence is granted and that they must pass the Edexcel, Level 2 NVQ in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) within 12 months of the licence being granted.



MAIR HILL
SOLICITOR



MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Report of Legal Services Manager dated 10 April 2008
2. Report of Chief Executive dated 17 September 2013
3. Report of Chief Executive dated 21 January 2014.
4. Report of Chief Executive dated 17 March 2015
5. Report of Chief Executive dated 23 June 2015

For further information please ask for Mair Hill, extension 3216

REF: MJH/Licensing Committee/15 September 2015

APPENIDX 1

please ask for: MAIR HILL
direct line: 01200 413216
e-mail: Mair.hill@ribblevalley.gov.uk
my ref: MJH
your ref:
date: 2 July 2015

Dear Sirs

RE: Consultation on changes to requirement for applicants for private hire and hackney driver's licences and to condition 20 of the standard conditions of private hire vehicle.

I write to inform you that the Council's Licensing Committee has recently been considering potential changes to the requirements for applicants for private hire and hackney carriage driver's licences and to condition 20 of the standard conditions of private hire vehicle.

The Council's Licensing Committee considered reports on these issues on 23 June 2015. If you wish to read this report it is available on the Council's website or you can telephone Lindsay Crawford to request a copy.

The proposed changes are outlined in the attached note.

If you wish to respond with your views on the proposed change, please do so in writing using the enclosed form and submitting it to me at the above address on or before **14 August 2015**.

Please contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

MAIR HILL
SOLICITOR
RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

To all private hire operators and all private hire and hackney carriage drivers and vehicle licence holders



Ribble Valley
Borough Council
www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

Ribble Valley Borough Council

Potential changes to the requirements for an applicant for a private hire/hackney carriage driver's licence and to Condition 20 of the standard condition of licence for a private hire vehicle

The Council's Licensing Committee discussed these matters on 23 June 2015. Committee was informed that:

Changes to testing arrangements - applicants for hackney carriage and private hire driver's licences

The working group established following Licensing Committee on 17 March 2015 considered that the requirements for applicants for either hackney carriage or private hire drivers should be changed as follows:

- Applicants will no longer be required to pass the steering to success course prior to applying for a licence
- Applicants will instead be required to pass the DVSA taxi driving test prior to applying for a licence (with the costs of approximately £64-75 being borne by the Applicant)
- Applicants will also be required to complete and pass the Edexcel, Level 2 NVQ in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) within 12 months of a licence being granted (with the cost of £150 being borne by the Applicant).

Changes to private hire vehicle signage to specify the minimum size and type of font

The standard conditions of licence for a private hire vehicle licence should be amended to incorporate revised conditions relating to signage so that condition 20 would read as follows:

"20. A private hire vehicle must:

- (a) not have any lights, plates, signs, advertisements or other fittings, save for those required under conditions or as approved by the Council;*
- (b) not be equipped with any roof fitting or sign other than a wireless aerial, approved by the Council;*
- (c) not display the words "Taxi", "Taxi Cab" or "Cab";*
- (d) display door signs upon its rear doors stating "Private Hire Vehicle", "Advanced bookings only" and "Not insured unless prebooked" only and the lettering within those signs must be in bold black type and not less than 15mm in height. These signs must be displayed on private hire vehicles AT ALL TIMES (including when the vehicle is not in use);**
- (e) display door signs upon its front doors which shall only include the name of the private hire operator and its telephone number. If the words "Taxi", "Taxi Cab" or "Cab" or "for hire" form part of the Operator's name these must be omitted from the sign; and**
- (f) display a sign stating "no smoking" with a minimum diameter of 70mm inside the vehicle in a position which is clearly visible to the hirer/passengers." [Emphasis added]*

The Council's Licensing Committee resolved to consult upon these issues.

Timetable

The next meeting of the Council's Licensing Committee will be held on 15 September 2015. It is proposed that the results of this consultation will be reported to that Committee. The Consultation will therefore run from 3 July 2015 to 14 August 2015.

More details on the above proposals can be found in the Committee report available on request or via the Council's website.

If you wish to respond with your views on the proposed change to the licensing requirements and conditions please do this by completing the enclosed form and submitting it to Mair Hill at the Council Offices on or before **14 August 2015**.



Ribble Valley
Borough Council
www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Name:

Address:

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Licence No:

Contact details:

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I support/do not support the removal of the requirement to pass the steering to success course prior to the issue of a private hire/hackney carriage driver's licence, to be replaced by a requirement to pass the DVSA taxi driver's test in advance of the issue of a licence and to complete and pass Edexcel, Level 2 NVQ in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) within 12 months of the licence being granted.

Comments:

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I support/do not support the amendment of condition 20 of the private hire vehicle licence conditions.

Comments:

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APPENDIX 2

Response to Consultation on the testing requirements for applicants

	Comments
<p>I support/do not support the removal of the requirement to pass the steering to success course prior to the issue of a private hire/hackney carriage driver's licence, to be replaced by a requirement to pass the DVSA taxi driver's test in advance of the issue of a licence and to complete and pass Edexcel, Level 2 NVQ in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire) within 12 months of the licence being granted</p>	
Do not support	The cost is too excessive to be borne myself, also there seems to be a lot of 'red tape' needed to go through to acquire a new licence.
Do not support	
Support	
Support	
Support	Totally support the above
Support	
Support	