



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

TAXI LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE 19 OCTOBER 2005

Report of the Director of Corporate Services

INTRODUCTION OF REGULAR MEDICAL CHECKS FOR LICENSED DRIVERS

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To approve a requirement for licensed hackney carriage and private hire drivers to undergo regular medical checks performed by their own general practitioner.
- 1.2 To amend the relevant licence conditions as detailed in Appendix 2.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 At its last meeting in July 2005 this Committee considered a report recommending that licensed drivers have regular medical checks. At present, applicants for hackney carriage and private hire vehicle drivers licences have a medical test when they first apply for a licence and then again from the age of 50 at increasingly regular intervals (as set out in Appendix 2).
- 2.2 The current licensing process relies upon drivers making a health declaration each time they review their licence (annually). However, it would significantly improve public and driver safety if drivers underwent regular medical examinations by their general practitioner.
- 2.3 Many other local authorities already require such regular medical checks within their licence conditions. Such examinations are usually required at either three or five year intervals.
- 2.4 It was proposed that a requirement for such medical examinations is incorporated into this authority's licence conditions. Both the hackney carriage and private hire trade representatives have been consulted and are in agreement with this proposal.
- 2.5 Whilst committee members approved the proposal in principle they raised queries about two key issues:
 - a) the cost of the medical examination and whether a standard fee could be agreed, and
 - b) whether the current medical form used by the Council was adequate for the purpose.

The Taxi Licensing Section agreed to consult both the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the Council's Occupational Health Service on these matters.

- 2.6 A representative from the PCT confirmed that GPs are allowed to make charges for their services (including 'occupational' medicals/reports) and that they could charge what they considered appropriate. This clearly leads to different charges at different practises and therefore encourages drivers to 'shop around' for their medical examination. Licensing Officers and the Occupational Health Service believe this practice is undesirable, since only the applicant's own practice will have access to their medical records and be aware of previous medical conditions. At present, some medical reports completed by other practitioners are based solely on the word of the applicant and often no actual medical examination takes place. For this reason, it is recommended that medical examinations should be conducted by the applicant's own GP practice.
- 2.7 The current medical form used is based upon the 'Group 2 Medical Standard' for professional drivers. The Occupational Health Service has confirmed that the form is appropriate for the purpose. This is confirmed by the Government's draft good practice guidance on this matter.

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Background papers:	None
List of Appendices:	Appendix 1 Implications Appendix 2 Extract from Conditions of Application

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None

Legal

2. ?

Personnel

3. None.

Equalities impact

4. None

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. This initiative contributes towards the object **of healthy, safe and independent communities.**