



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

## TAXI LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE 22 JULY 2009

Report of the Corporate Director of Environmental Services

### DRIVER TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS

#### RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To note the findings of the Cross Party Working Group.
- 1.2 To approve the Cross Party Working Group's recommendations set out in paragraph 2.4 and report this to the next full Council meeting.

#### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 At its meeting on 17 December 2008, Committee considered a report that set out proposals to require training and qualifications to be mandatory for all hackney carriage and private hire driver's licences.
- 2.2 Committee resolved to approve the proposal to consult with the trade about making driver training and qualifications mandatory and appoint a Cross Party Working Group to consider any comments received from the consultation process and make recommendations to Committee.
- 2.3 The consultation process has been carried out and the Cross Party Working Group met on the 7 July 2009 to consider the comments received and the wider issues involved. A copy of the minutes of the Working Group's meeting is set out at Appendix 2 for information.
- 2.4 The Cross Party Working Group's recommendations to Committee are to:
  - Introduce a mandatory requirement that all holders of hackney carriage and private hire drivers licenses are required to have passed the NVQ (Edexcel) in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving Level 2. For existing drivers, this will be within five years of this being adopted by the Council. For new drivers, this will be within five years of their licence being issued (subject to this provision being adopted by the Council)
  - Review the current guidance issued to members of the Taxi Licensing Sub Committee. Amend the decision options available to them to incorporate the need to undertake refresher training. This will be the BTEC Level 2 (Edexcel) in Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire. The new decision options will be:

- Take no action
  - Issue a warning
  - Undertake BTEC Refresher training (within a specified period)
  - Suspension
  - Suspension, and undertake BTEC Refresher training (within a specified period)
  - Revocation
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- Where any driver becomes subject to referral for the BTEC Level 2 (Edexcel) in Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire on more than two occasions in any rolling period of [5 or 7] years, they should be referred back to a sub-committee of the committee to consider whether or not the licence holder remains fit and proper to continue to hold a licence
  
  - Review the changes made after 12 months to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the measures introduced

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Michael Kay, Tel. 01332 641940, email michael.kay@derby.gov.uk
<b>Background papers:</b>	Driver Training and Qualifications – Taxi Licensing and Appeals Committee, 17 December 2008
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Cross Party Working Group Minutes, 7 July 2009

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. None directly arising from this report.

**Legal**

- 2.1 The Council can make provisions to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicably, licensed drivers are fit and proper to hold such a licence. Any provisions made will need to promote the principle of protecting public safety.
- 2.2 If members decide to introduce a mandatory requirement for driver training and qualifications, the decision will need to be confirmed at the next Council meeting.

**Personnel**

3. None directly arising from this report.

**Equalities Impact**

4. If members decide to introduce a mandatory requirement for driver training and qualifications, an Equality Impact Assessment will need to be carried out.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

5. The introduction of training and qualifications for licensed drivers could contribute to the corporate priorities of **creating a 21<sup>st</sup> Century city centre, supporting everyone in learning and achieving and giving excellent services and value for money.**

7 July 2009

**Taxi Licensing and Appeals Committee**  
**Cross Party Working Group – Driver Training and Qualifications**

Present

Councillor Redfern (Chair)  
Councillor Williams  
Olu Idowu (Legal)  
Michael Kay (EH&TS)

Apologies

Councillor Winter

1. Purpose of Meeting

To consider proposals to introduce requirements for qualifications and training for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle drivers, whether mandatorily or otherwise, and make recommendations to the Taxi Licensing and Appeals Committee.

2. Information considered by the group

- a) Taxi Licensing and Appeals Committee, 17 December 2008, Item 6 – Driver training and Qualifications
- b) Conviction information randomly sampled from 50 anonymous drivers currently licensed by the Council.
- c) Responses from a number of other LA licensing teams following a request for information.
- d) Information on the BTEC/NVQ qualifications available and relevant to drivers.
- e) A summary of the results from the drivers questionnaires returned.

3. Summary of comments made

- a) Benefits of introducing a training / qualification requirement were discussed:
  - Public safety paramount
  - Vehicle maintenance statistics reported on a quarterly basis not improving
  - Random sample of drivers revealed 26% have relevant convictions
  - Number of complaints, and their variety, about licence holders dealt with at sub-committee not improving
  - Need to see improvements in conduct and competency, to the benefit of passenger safety (and public confidence)
  - Gives drivers more professional image, raising their profile and encouraging personal development
  - Improves overall standards

- b) Potential problems / issues identified with introducing a training / qualification requirement were discussed:
- Current concerns relate to existing drivers only
  - Need to ensure fairness and consistency for both existing and new drivers
  - Realistic timescales for the introduction of a scheme
  - Need to ensure any proposal for introduction is not over burdensome but yet realistic
  - Clear requirements and procedures
  - Good communication with drivers and training providers
  - Number of possible options available
- c) General issues considered:
- Planned revisions to the knowledge test that incorporate questions on vehicle maintenance and customer service may overlap with BTEC qualification
  - Incorporating the requirement to undergo refresher training into the decision options that are available to committee
  - Referral of individuals with particular learning needs for refresher training would need to be accommodated by training providers
  - A wider review of the guidance issued to members may be required to incorporate changes to decision making options
  - Any changes made would need a review period built into it
  - Need to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment of any changes introduced
  - If refresher training requirement introduced, consider timescales for completion and frequency of scheduled training

#### 4. Cross Party Working Group recommendations to Taxi Licensing and Appeals Committee

- a) Introduce a mandatory requirement that all holders of hackney carriage and private hire drivers licenses are required to have passed the NVQ (Edexcel) in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving Level 2.

For existing drivers, this will be within five years of this policy being adopted by the Council.

For new drivers, this will be within five years of their licence being issued (subject to this policy being adopted by the Council).

- b) Review the current guidance issued to members of the Taxi Licensing Sub Committee and amend the decision options available to incorporate the need to undertake refresher training. This will be the BTEC Level 2 (Edexcel) in Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire.

The new decision options will now be:

- Take no action
- Issue a warning
- Undertake BTEC Refresher training (within a specified period)
- Suspension

- Suspension and undertake BTEC Refresher training (within a specified period)
  - Revocation
- c) Where any driver becomes subject to referral for the BTEC Level 2 (Edexcel) in Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire on more than two occasions in any rolling period of [5 or 7] years, they should be referred back to a sub-committee of the committee to consider whether or not the licence holder remains fit and proper to continue to hold a licence.
- d) Review the changes made after 12 months to ensure they remain effective.