

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Customer, Democratic and Legal Services	Licensing and Safety Committee	28/02/07

TRAINING FOR HACKNEY/PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS – FURTHER REPORT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. For Members to consider the introduction of vocational training for all new applicants for hackney carriage and private hire driver licences.
2. A report to consider driver training was submitted to this Committee on 7 June 2006. It was recommended that a report be submitted to a future meeting of this committee giving details of other providers of driver training, showing comparisons with other local authorities and costs to the taxi trade.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3. This report is relevant to further the key corporate priorities of the Council, ie making a safer Chorley by ensuring as far as practicable that all licensed drivers are fit and proper persons and that they are adequately trained to carry out their duties in particular their duties in conveying disabled people.

RISK ISSUES

4. The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

Strategy	4	Information	
Reputation	4	Regulatory/Legal	4
Financial	4	Operational	4
People	4	Other	

5. There will be cost involved, members of the trade could ask for a judicial review of any decision made, there are operational considerations with the extra work involved in setting up and running a training scheme and it is important that the overall cost of obtaining a hackney or private hire driver's licence does not have an adverse effect upon the recruitment of new drivers.

BACKGROUND

6. The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee, in its good practice guide 2003, emphasised the need for driver training for taxi drivers in dealing with disabled people.

7. In a speech by the Transport Minister Karen Buck to the National Taxi Association on 25 October, concerning best practice, she stated that driver training is something that is mentioned in a draft best practice note and that in future licensing authorities might stipulate that those applying for their first licences undergo a certain amount of training.
8. The chairman of the national private hire association has given his support for the need for driver training to a BTEC level and there is clearly a growing impetus for Councils to introduce driver training.
9. At a regional meeting of the national association of licensing enforcement officers (NALEO) held on 23 June 2005 a presentation was made on a national qualification (the BTEC) which had been introduced and piloted with a great deal of success by Bournemouth District Council. An article also appeared in the Private Hire and Taxi monthly Magazine.
10. In its best practice guidance (October 2006) the Department for Transport states that there is advantage in encouraging drivers to obtain a nationally recognised vocational qualification for the taxi and private hire trades.
11. Since the previous committee meeting on 7 June 2006 research has been conducted to find a suitable alternative to the BTEC course at Runshaw. No other suitable training courses are currently available and there are no other authorities in this area requiring applicants to undergo training.
12. Information has been received from an organisation called Hearfirst who are able to provide training in disabled issues to groups of up to 15 people at a total cost of £780 for one day.
13. This would involve the Council providing accommodation for the course and also officer's time in arranging course dates for individual applicants.
14. This option would have the benefit of providing disability training but would fall short of the complete package offered by Runshaw College. The syllabus for the BTEC course offered by Runshaw College is as follows:
 - Customer service for passenger transport
 - Passenger Transport and equal opportunities
 - Passenger Transport and Disability Awareness
 - Taxi and Private Hire Safety
 - Carriage of luggage and parcels
 - Route planning
 - Taxi and Private Hire regulation (London)
 - Taxi and Private Hire regulation (UK)

The full breakdown of the course is attached to the report

15. Preston City Council has agreed to make the BTEC training, with Runshaw College as the provider, mandatory for all new drivers from 1 April 2007. South Ribble Borough Council is also considering adopting this option.
16. As outlined in the previous report on this subject the three Councils would prefer adopting a uniform approach to driver licensing in order to prevent applicants choosing any of the three authorities that they believe operates a lower standard.

17. Representatives from Preston City Council and Runshaw College will be attending a meeting of South Ribble Borough Council who will be making a decision on training prior to this meeting and these representatives have also been asked to attend this meeting to answer any questions that may arise.
18. This Council has required applicants to undergo a knowledge test. This could be incorporated into the BTEC course giving a saving in cost of £20 to the applicant and a saving in officer time.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

19. N/A

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

20. N/A

RECOMMENDATION (S)

20. That the Committee considers:
- (i) introducing driver training to BTEC standard as provided by Runshaw College for all new applicants, who must either complete their training before being granted a licence or within a specified time of being granted a licence; and
 - (ii) incorporating this Council's existing knowledge test for new drivers into the BTEC Course in order to reduce the licence fee for new drivers by the knowledge test element which currently stands at £20.

ANDREW DOCHERTY
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER, DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Report re driver training	7 June 2006	-	The loop (Committee Files)

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Keith Ogden/Howard Bee	5163	1 February 2007	ADMINREP/REPORT

TRANSPORTING PASSENGERS BY TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE EDEXCEL LEVEL 2 BTEC AWARD

Level 2 Vocationally Related Qualification on the National Qualifications Framework QAN-100/3594/1

Unit 1 – Customer Service for Passenger Transport

- Good communication and positive working relationships
 - Good customer service
 - Difficult customers and situations
- Communication
 - Working relationships
 - The customer
 - The employee
 - Good customer service
 - Benefits of good customer service
 - Difficult situations and customers
 - Resolving situations
 - Resolving complaints

Unit 2 – Passenger Transport and Equal Opportunities

- Legislation
 - Discrimination
 - Duties and responsibilities
- Aims of legislation
 - Implications
 - Scope of legislative Acts and Codes of Practice
 - Sector specific legislation
 - Definition and occurrence
 - Situations where discrimination occurs
 - Providing a non-discriminatory passenger service
 - Amendments to service

Unit 3 – Passenger Transport and Disability Awareness

- Disabilities and the barriers they present
 - Sensitive assistance
 - Technology and equipment
- Disabilities
 - Recognising disabilities and impairments
 - Barriers
 - Assistance
 - Empathy, discreetness and dignity
 - Technology and equipment
 - Types of equipment

Unit 4 - Taxi and Private Hire Safety

- Hazards and risks
 - Consequences of road accidents or emergencies
 - Vehicles
- Hazards and risks
 - Addressing hazards and risks
 - Common causes
 - Passenger emergencies
 - Reducing risks
 - Procedures
 - Vehicle maintenance
 - Operation

Unit 5 – Carriage of Luggage and Parcels

Obligations

Health and Safety

Dangerous goods

- Main obligations
- Lost property
- Safe lifting and carrying
- Operator responsibilities
- Legislation and regulations
- Responsibilities
- Risk assessment

Unit 6 – Route Planning

Maps

Interpret maps

Routes and timings

- Types and sources of maps
- Contribution to route planning
- Map symbols
- Topographical detail
- Routes
- Timings
- Communications

Unit 7 - Taxi and Private Hire Regulation (UK)

Licensing legislation

Obligations

Regulatory authority requirements

- Types of licence
- Legislation
- Requirements
- Insurance requirements
- Providing a suitable vehicle
- Obligations
- Plying for hire and fares
- Fares meter
- Other operating requirements
- Private Hire operators

Unit 8 – Taxi and Private Hire Regulation (London)

Licensing Legislation

Obligations

Regulatory authority requirements

- Types of licence
- Legislation
- Requirements
- Insurance requirements
- Providing a suitable vehicle
- Obligations
- Plying for hire and fares
- Fares meter
- Other operating requirements
- Private Hire operators