

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Customer, Democratic and Legal Services	Licensing and Safety Committee	25/04/07

## 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 and 28 February 2007. It was recommended that a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee after further enquiries had been made with the proposed training providers and with the Licensing Liaison Panel.

### 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 first committee meeting on 7 June 2006 research has been conducted to find suitable alternative to the BTEC course at Runshaw. There is no other suitable training currently available, and there is no funding available for this course.
12. 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

13. Preston City Council has agreed to make the BTEC training, with Runshaw College as provider, mandatory for all new drivers from 1 April 2007. All new drivers must first successfully complete the BTEC course before a licence is issued.
14. South Ribble Borough Council has also agreed to make the BTEC training mandatory for all new drivers from 1 April 2007. All new drivers will be required to successfully complete the o BTEC course within 6 months of being granted a licence.
15. As outlined in the previous reports 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.
16. Representatives from Preston City Council and Runshaw College have attended a previous meeting of this Committee to answer questions regarding the training.
17. This Council requires applicants for driver licences to complete a knowledge test before a licence is issued. This test would need to be maintained in order to screen applicants as to their ability to undergo a BTEC training course.

18. Following the meeting of this Committee on 28 February 2007, letters were sent to all private hire operators and the chairman of the hackney association inviting them to attend the meeting of the licensing liaison panel on 2 April 2007 in order to allow a further opportunity to discuss the subject of driver training.
19. Representatives of the hackney carriage proprietors attended the licensing liaison panel on 2 April 2007 but in spite of the letters sent to all private hire operators, only representatives from Yellow Cabs attended and expressed their views. No written or other communication was received from the other private hire operators.
20. The view of those who attended the licensing liaison panel was that although training was seen as a positive step there was a risk that the extra costs incurred by new drivers may discourage them from taking up "taxi" work leading to a shortage of drivers. A suggestion was made that the decision be deferred for six months in order to monitor the effect in Preston and South Ribble Councils who have already made this training compulsory for new drivers.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

21. N/A

#### **COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

22. N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

23. That the Committee considers:-
  - (a) introducing driver training to BTEC standard as provided by Runshaw College for all new applicants, who must either (i) complete their training before being granted a licence or (ii) within a specified time of being granted a licence. OR
  - (b) deferring the decision for six months in order to assess the impact of compulsory driver training upon Preston and South Ribble Councils.

ANDREW DOCHERTY  
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER, DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES

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

  

<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Ext</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Doc ID</b>
Keith Ogden	5726	11 April 2007	LEGREP/1104LM2

# 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, discretion 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