

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION ON REMOVING THE REQUIREMENT FOR LICENSED DRIVERS TO UNDERTAKE A DRIVING ASSESSMENT EVERY THREE YEARS

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Grubb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Simon Wilkes – Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

Members are asked to consider the responses received during a consultation on removing the requirement for individuals licensed to drive hackney carriage and / or private hire vehicles to undertake a practical driving assessment every three years.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members consider the responses received to the consultation and RESOLVE whether or not to amend the Council's current policy on the licensing of drivers of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles (shown at Appendix 1) to remove the requirement for individuals licensed to drive hackney carriage and / or private hire vehicles to undertake a practical driving assessment every three years.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The costs associated with carrying out the consultation were met from existing budgets held by Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 Proper consultation on any proposals to amend the Council's policies minimises the risk of legal challenge if the proposals are subsequently implemented.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.4 The Council's current policy on the licensing of drivers of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles includes the following requirement:

With effect from 1st December 2017, holders of driver licences must undertake refresher training in disability awareness and must pass a Driving Assessment test with Worcestershire County Council at least every three years.

A copy of this policy can be seen at **Appendix 1**.

- 3.5 The Licensing Committee resolved to introduce this requirement at their meeting on 6th November 2017.
- 3.6 The requirement to undertake a driving assessment test every three years has been consistently opposed and challenged by licensed drivers as being disproportionate and unreasonable.
- 3.7 The issue was raised again by licence holders at the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Liaison Forum held in September 2019. At the Licensing Committee held on 4th November 2019, Members resolved to add an item to the Committee's work programme to review the current rules whereby drivers are required to undertake three yearly driver assessments.
- 3.8 Members considered the matter at their meeting on 27th January 2020 and resolved to direct officers to undertake consultation on removing the requirement for individuals licensed to drive hackney carriage and/or private hire vehicles to undertake a practical driving assessment every three years.
- 3.10 The consultation took place between 12th February 2020 and 20th March 2020. A consultation survey was sent out to relevant stakeholders including individuals licensed by the Council to drive hackney carriage and / or private hire vehicles. A copy of the consultation survey can be seen at **Appendix 2**.
- 3.11 The consultation survey was also made available to download via the Council's website and was further publicised via the Council's social media channels.
- 3.12 A summary of the responses received during the consultation can be seen at **Appendix 3**.

- 3.13 In total 43 responses were received to the consultation. 35 respondents (81.4%) supported the proposal to remove the requirement for individuals licensed to drive hackney carriage and/or private hire vehicles to undertake a practical driving assessment every three years. 8 respondents (18.6%) did not support the proposal.
- 3.14 The additional comments made by those who responded to the consultation can be seen within **Appendix 3**. Members will note that some of the comments made by those who indicated they did not support the proposal seem to be at odds with that stated position. This may indicate they did not properly understand the question they were being asked to respond to.
- 3.15 Of the 43 responses received, 33 were from licensed hackney carriage / private hire drivers, 2 were from licensed private hire operators and 8 respondents did not indicate the capacity in which they were responding to the consultation.
- 3.15 Members are now asked to consider the responses received during the consultation and resolve whether or not to amend the Council's current policy on the licensing of drivers of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles (**Appendix 1**) to remove the requirement for individuals licensed to drive hackney carriage and / or private hire vehicles to undertake a practical driving assessment every three years.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 None

5. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Current Driver Licensing Policy
- Appendix 2 – Consultation Survey
- Appendix 3 – Summary of Consultation Responses

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