

**LICENSING REGULATORY  
COMMITTEE**

**10.00 A.M.**

**17TH APRIL 2014**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Jonathan Dixon (Chairman), Mike Greenall (Vice-Chairman), Roger Dennison, Sheila Denwood, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Billy Hill, Tony Johnson, Margaret Pattison and Robert Redfern

Officers in Attendance:

Mark Cullinan	Chief Executive
Wendy Peck	Licensing Manager
Luke Gorst	Assistant Solicitor
Jane Glenton	Democratic Support Officer

**106 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**107 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman advised that there was one item of urgent business regarding Conditions of Application for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Licences (minute no. 109 refers).

**108 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest at this point.

**109 CONDITIONS OF APPLICATION FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCES**

In accordance with Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman agreed to consider the report. The item was considered urgent because changes in funding for the BTEC course had been brought to the attention of officers, following publication of the agenda for the meeting, and the matter needed to be considered immediately.

Members considered the report of the Licensing Manager regarding the removal of the current requirement for all new applicants for hackney carriage and private hire drivers licences to complete a BTEC course - 'Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire' - or hold an equivalent qualification.

It was reported that, since September 2008, it had been a prerequisite that all new applicants for a hackney carriage and private hire driver's licence must pass the BTEC course in Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire. (The report considered by Committee in 2008 was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.)

Members were advised that most applicants chose to take the BTEC course at Lancaster and Morecambe College. The cost of the course had been £198 since 2008, but had recently increased to £675.

Officers therefore recommended that the requirement to pass the BTEC course prior to the grant of a driver's licence be removed and that other options be explored to cover the missing elements. Members noted that, should the requirement to pass the BTEC course be removed, the customer service and disability awareness training elements would be missing from the driver training.

It was reported that a local knowledge test had been re-introduced recently for all new applicants for hackney carriage and private hire drivers' licences, and that the DVSA test, which was a practical driving test, had been introduced, with effect, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014, along with a requirement for any driver of a wheelchair accessible vehicle to pass the taxi wheelchair exercise. It was noted that many insurance companies offered a discount on premiums for vehicles driven by drivers who had passed the assessment.

It was proposed by Councillor Dennison and seconded by Councillor Hill:

- (1) That the requirement for all new applicants for a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence to complete the BTEC course "Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire", or to hold an equivalent qualification prior to the grant of a driver's licence, be removed.
- (2) That officers investigate whether there is a less costly alternative to the BTEC course that could cover the customer service and disability awareness training elements (possibly a requirement for new drivers to complete an NVQ before the first renewal of their licence) and to report back to Committee if such an option exists.
- (3) That whilst an option for alternative training is explored, a proviso (that the applicant may be required to complete any training approved before the first renewal of the licence) be attached to any new grant of a licence in the immediate future."

Upon being put to the vote, Members voted unanimously in favour of the proposition, whereupon the Chairman declared the proposal to be clearly carried.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the requirements for all new applicants for a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence to complete the BTEC course "Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire", or to hold an equivalent qualification, prior to the grant of a driver's licence, be removed.
- (2) That officers investigate whether there is a less costly alternative to the BTEC course that could cover the customer service and disability awareness training elements (possibly a requirement for new drivers to complete an NVQ before the first renewal of their licence) and to report back to Committee if such an option exists.

- (3) That whilst an option for alternative training is explored, a proviso (that the applicant may be required to complete any training approved before the first renewal of the licence) be attached to any new grant of a licence in the immediate future.

**110 EXEMPT ITEM**

In accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraph 1 of Schedule 12 of that Act.

**111 EXISTING HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER'S LICENCE - LAURENCE WILLIAM DENT (PAGES 4 - 11)**

Committee received the report of the Licensing Manager to enable Members to consider whether there was reasonable cause to suspend or revoke Mr. Dent's hackney carriage and private hire dual driver's licence. The item had been deferred from the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014 in order to allow the complainant to attend and give evidence.

Details of the individual case and a summary of the decision are set out in exempt minute no. 111, in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

***Resolved:***

That Mr. Dent's hackney carriage and private hire dual driver's licence be suspended for four months with immediate effect.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 2.08 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Jane Glenton, Democratic Services - telephone (01524) 582068, or email  
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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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