

Public Document Pack

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A meeting of **General Licensing Committee** will be held in Committee Room 2, East Pallant House on **Wednesday 22 March 2017 at 9.30 am**

MEMBERS: Mr J Ridd (Chairman), Mr H Potter (Vice-Chairman), Mr G Barrett, Mr P Budge, Mr J Connor, Mr J W Elliott, Mr N Galloway, Mrs D Knightley, Mr L Macey, Mr G McAra, Mrs C Purnell, Mr N Thomas, Mr D Wakeham and Mrs S Westacott

SUPPLEMENT TO AGENDA

Part 1

7 Update regarding policy review - Implementation of Private Hire Knowledge Test (Pages 1 - 2)

Supplement circulated at the General Licensing Committee (22.03.17) - responses regarding Private Hire Knowledge Test.

Response Received from the Trade in relation to implementation of the PH Knowledge Test

Date	Driver/Operator	Comments	Licensing Team Response
14 th March	Luke Shephard – PH Driver	<p>So does the knowledge test affect renewals or is it just for new applications?</p> <p>Also will Chichester district council be thinking about looking at the process that other councils have in place such as Arun and having an mandatory English text for non UK applicants, I understand that this could be looked upon as discrimination but in Chichester we do have a lot of elderly customers and feedback from some that at times they find it difficult as there is a language barrier between themselves and the driver.</p>	<p>The Knowledge Test is solely in relation to new applicants, there is no intention to require existing licensed PH drivers to sit the test upon renewal.</p> <p>It is not proposed to introduce an English speaking language test at this time. However, the knowledge test will as a by-product require the applicant to have a good grasp of the English language to be able to pass the test.</p>
14 th March 2017	Kim Mullen – PH Driver	<p>For a previous council where I held a private licence, on first applying for a private hire licence the applicant was issued with a provisional licence which lasted for 3 months. 3 months in which to allow the applicant to actually start working the area, earning some money and learning the area.</p> <p>The test itself consisted only of naming the road where public house's, restaurant's, bar's, public building's etc. you were asked 10 random question's from a master list compiled by C.D.C. all 10 had to be answered correctly. actual routes weren't necessary as the driver had radio contact if necessary.</p>	<p>Provisional licences could be considered, but the practicalities of administering this process effectively is complex.</p> <p>It is felt a variety types of questions regarding local knowledge of the area, such as location of landmarks would be relevant. However, this element dos not necessarily need to be as detailed as the HC Test.</p>
15 th March 2017	David Harwood – PH Driver	<p>I am happy to see a move to make the Private Hire Driver job something that you can be proud of. I have been a driver for nearly 11 years and did an NVQ a few years ago. The councils move is to be welcomed, but I think that a consultation with drivers should be looked into. I feel that if on a driving test you can fail on maybe 9 items that is too much, a maximum of 5 should be applied.</p>	<p>Noted Mr Harwood's comment re DVSA Driving Assessment, although this is a separate matter to the knowledge test.</p>

15 th March AB by phone	Gary Davidoff (PH Operator) – Owner of Starline, Chichester	<p>Broadly in support although concerns raised regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost • Timescale – Whether the knowledge test adds to the length of the application process <p>Already difficult for Operators to recruit good quality individuals. The longer the application process the harder this becomes.</p>	Note comments. The structure of the knowledge test needs to be very carefully considered to ensure that the length of the application process is not unnecessarily prolonged. Also cost will need to be carefully considered.
20 th March 2017	Steve Jull – Dual Licence Holder and owner of Alfa Taxis.	<p>I would like to comment regarding the knowledge test being considered for Private Hire Drivers.</p> <p>There is a major shortage in Hackney and Private Hire Drivers. Part reason is the Driving Assessment they have to take. It would be easier to have them assessed as they do in Havant by a retired Police Officer.</p> <p>Now ask a new PH driver to do a knowledge test that will stop more people wanting to become Drivers.</p> <p>We can't use Hackney s if there are more than 3 Pupils on board as WSCC don't let any Pupil travel backwards so the use of rear facing seats is a no no in Their eyes.</p> <p>It is a shame that CDC can't let us use drivers on restricted Licences as only School run Drivers if a Man/Woman aged about 50/60 wanted a part time job it would be ideal.</p> <p>The other problem is Arun have allowed PH CDC Drivers to work out of Bognor for Bognor Taxi Firms.</p> <p>So with all this it has made Alfa struggle to get more Drivers to cover School runs and I fear this will get a lot worse as the average age of some Hackney Drivers and Private Hire Drivers is 55/60, and it has made Alfa think of another way of getting Drivers</p>	Note comments. In terms of Restricted Licences this is something that some Councils in the area offer. Essentially, applicants for a PH Driver Licence who are applying for the sole purpose of undertaking school runs on the WSCC school contract do not have to undertake the knowledge test. This is something to be considered as part of the overall policy review. Once again practical implications in setting up and administering an alternative licensing scheme.