

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information and Resolution**

Report To: Licensing & Appeals Committee – 23 March 2015

Subject: Proposals for the introduction of Interim Measures in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire knowledge tests

Report of: Head of Planning, Building Control and Licensing

Summary

The Committee will recall its decision on 15 December 2015 that as an interim measure, pending a full review, an additional section (Paper 3), covering customer care, disability awareness and ‘safeguarding of children/young persons and vulnerable adults’, should be included within the current hackney carriage/ private hire knowledge tests.

This report informs Members of the proposals for the introduction of the additional paper for both hackney carriage and private hire driver knowledge tests. Officers have taken the current questions which relate to customer care, conditions and byelaws and combined these with questions specifically relating to ‘safeguarding issues’ to make the new bank of questions for the new paper..

Recommendations

That the Committee agree;

- (i) The introduction of ‘Paper 3’ on both hackney carriage and private hire driver knowledge tests using a bank of questions which relate to customer care, conditions and byelaws and combined with questions specifically relating to ‘safeguarding issues’
 - (ii) That any revision/amendment/addition of the questions be undertaken as and when required by a Principal or more Senior Licensing Officer.
 - (ii) A commencement date of 1 April 2015 for the introduction of ‘Paper 3’ within the private hire and hackney carriage driver knowledge tests and confirm that
 - The pass mark will be 8 out of 10 questions.
 - It will be mandatory for applicants to pass this section of the knowledge test.
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Wards Affected:

All

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	Licensed private hire and hackney carriage drivers are often the first point of contact for business and leisure visitors. It is therefore important that they provide excellent customer service so that visitors get a good first impression of the city.
Reaching full potential in education and employment	Training, particularly that which leads to recognised qualifications, may improve the job prospects for hackney carriage and private hire drivers and those wishing to enter the trade.
Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	Drivers who undertake NVQ's and other training may gain improved confidence in their interaction with their passengers. Investing in driver training is likely to encourage the promotion of driving a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle as a career of choice leading to improved self esteem.
Neighbourhoods of Choice	<p>The taxi trade provides public transport to residents, visitors and businesses across all our neighbourhoods.</p> <p>In transporting persons with mobility/disability issues it is important that drivers are fully conversant with the use of any facilities within their vehicles ie ramps and the carriage of assistance dogs. It is equally as important that drivers are aware of issues relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.</p>

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

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Background documents

Licensing and Appeals Committee report of 15 December 2014

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 15 December 2014 the Licensing and Appeals Committee considered a report relating to the introduction of interim measures (pending a full review of driver training) in relation to hackney carriage and private hire driver knowledge tests for new applicants.
 - 1.1.1 The Committee resolved to include in both hackney carriage and private hire driver knowledge tests a section 3 paper.
- 1.2 This paper would consist of 10 randomly selected questions and would relate to customer care, disability awareness and safeguarding of children/ young persons and vulnerable adults.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 15 December 2014 (min LAP/4/31 refers) members also asked Officers to provide them with the additional questions that will be used to formulate 'paper 3'.

2.0 Proposed format and wording of the questions for Paper 3.

- 2.1 In order that 'paper 3' provides a sufficient bank of questions to enable random selection, officers have combined questions from the original bank of questions relating to customer care, conditions/byelaws etc (25 questions), with a further 13 questions that have been compiled, with safeguarding in mind, by GMP.
 - 2.1.2 These questions (some examples of which are provided in 2.2 of the report) will now form section 3 on both the hackney carriage and private hire papers. The proposed revised knowledge tests and categories are provided as follows;

Private Hire- Paper 1

A-Z	pass mark 8 out of 10 questions
Locations - Pubs and Clubs	pass mark 8 out of 10 questions

Private Hire paper 2

Routes	pass mark 8 out of 10 questions
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Paper 3

Customer care/Conditions /Safeguarding	pass mark 8 out of 10 questions
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Hackney Carriage- Paper 1

A-Z	pass mark 8 out of 10 questions
Locations - Pubs and Clubs	pass mark 8 out of 10 questions

Hackney Carriage- Paper 2

Routes	pass mark 8 out of 10 questions
Districts	pass mark 4 out of 5 questions
Compellable area	pass mark 8 out of 10 questions
Motorways	pass mark 4 out of 5 questions.

Paper 3

**Customer care/Byelaws
/Safeguarding**

pass mark 8 out of 10 questions

- 2.1.3 Moving forward Officers will liaise with the safeguarding board and other agencies and continue to expand and reinforce the section 3 bank of questions.

- 2.2 As this report is in the public domain officers have not provided a full list of questions, as these would also be accessible to applicants. The following questions are provided as examples of those that will form Section 3 of the driver knowledge test.

Q. You are working a night shift and a young person who looks to be drunk gets into your taxi with a visibly older person. The older person asks for them to be taken to a hotel however on route the conversation and the action of the older person makes you uncomfortable as they talking about sexual activity. You suspect that the young person is under the age of 18. Do You?

Q. You pick up off the street and a male asks to be taken to an address, on route the customer states he can't afford the fare but has an expensive phone that they offer as payment. Do you?

Q. How often should you check your hackney carriage vehicle for lost property?

Q. You are sent to an address to collect a customer they ask to be taken to another address a couple of miles away. When you arrive they ask if you would wait whilst they go and speak with the occupant at the address at the door. You recognise the address as you have attended there on a few occasions in the past couple of weeks with different customers. The customer comes back to your vehicle concealing what you suspect to be drugs in their coat. Do you?

Q. The insurance for your hackney carriage vehicle is in your name and one more named driver - who else can drive the vehicle?

- 2.2.1 Any Member wishing to see the full bank of question may do so by contacting the Principal Licensing Officer Ann Marku.

- 2.3 It is proposed that the new section 3 paper will be included in both hackney carriage and private hire knowledge tests from 1 April 2015.

3.0 Contributing to the Community

(a) Performance of the economy of the region and sub region

Licensed private hire and hackney carriage drivers are often the first point of contact for business and leisure visitors. It is therefore important that they provide excellent customer service so that visitors get a good first impression of the city.

(b) Reaching full potential in education and employment

Training, particularly that which leads to recognised qualifications improves the job prospects for hackney carriage and private hire drivers and those wishing to enter the trade.

(c) Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect

Drivers who undertake NVQ's and other training gain improved confidence in their interaction with their passengers. Investing in driver training is likely to encourage the promotion of driving a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle as a career of choice leading to improved self esteem.

(d) Neighbourhoods of Choice

The taxi trade provides public transport to residents, visitors and businesses across all our neighbourhoods.

In transporting persons with mobility/disability issues it is important that drivers are fully conversant with the use of any facilities within their vehicles ie ramps and the carriage of assistance dogs. It is equally as important that drivers are aware of issues relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

4. Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

The content of this report does not have any effect on equal opportunities.

(b) Risk Management

The content of this report does not pose a risk to the Council.

(c) Legal Considerations

There are no further legal considerations within the report

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The report follows the Committee's decision of 15 December 2015 that as an interim measure, an additional section (Paper 3), covering customer care, disability awareness and 'safeguarding of children/young persons and vulnerable adults', should be included within the current hackney carriage/private hire knowledge tests.
- 5.2 The report further informs Members of the proposals for the introduction of this additional paper for both hackney carriage and private hire driver knowledge tests. Officers have combined current questions which relate to customer care, conditions and byelaws with questions specifically relating to 'safeguarding issues' to make the new 'Paper 3' bank of questions. Examples of the questions used to form paper 3 are provided in section 2.2 of the report.
- 5.3 The report asks the Committee to agree:
- (i) the introduction of 'Paper 3' on both hackney carriage and private hire driver knowledge tests using the proposed bank of combined questions from the original bank of questions relating to customer care, conditions/byelaws etc, (25 questions) with an additional 13 questions compiled, with safeguarding in mind, by GMP
 - (ii) the revision/amendment/addition of the questions be undertaken as and when required by a Principal or more Senior Licensing Officer.
 - (ii) A commencement date of 1 April 2015 for the introduction of 'Section 3' within the private hire and hackney carriage driver knowledge tests and confirms that;
- The pass mark will be 8 out of 10 questions
 - It will be mandatory to pass this section of the knowledge test