

At a meeting of the Licensing Committee held in Council Chamber - Allerdale House, Workington on Wednesday 4 July 2018 at 2.30 pm

Members

Councillor Angela Kendall (Chair)
Councillor Mary Bainbridge
Councillor Peter Kendall
Councillor Jacqueline Mounsey
Councillor Stephen Stoddart
Councillor Martin Wood

Councillor Hilary Harrington
Councillor Billy Miskelly
Councillor Ron Munby
Councillor Janice Wood

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Christine Smith, Councillor Tony Annison, Councillor Len Davies, Councillor Malcolm Grainger and Councillor Bill Pegram

Staff Present

D Devine, D Fletcher, A Gilbert and J Morgan

83. Minutes

The minutes of the Licensing Panel meeting held on 19 January 2018, the Licensing Committee meeting held on 5 February 2018, the Licensing Panel meeting held on 9 March 2018, the Licensing Regulatory Panel meeting held on 19 March 2018, the Licensing Panel meeting held on 21 May 2018 and the Licensing Regulatory Panel meeting held on 18 June 2018 were signed as a correct record.

84. Declaration of Interests

None declared.

85. Questions

None received.

86. Result of Knowledge Test Consultation

The Senior Licensing and Compliance Officer submitted a report which sought the Licensing Committee to consider the results from the consultation with the hackney carriage and private hire trade regarding the implementation of a knowledge test for all existing drivers and future applicants and decide whether a knowledge test should be introduced.

The Licensing and Compliance Officer highlighted the main themes of the responses and Members addressed each of them as follows:

Cost – the cost would be minimal.

Exemptions for existing drivers – there would not be any.

Satellite navigation – satnav systems were a tool and were not to be used instead of having knowledge of areas.

Booking systems – these systems were a tool and were not to be used instead of having knowledge of areas.

Geographical area – the test would not include questions relating to specific locations.

Contract work – being satisfied that a person is fit and proper to hold a licence applied to all drivers licensed whatever the nature or duration of their work, therefore contract workers would be treated the same as all other drivers.

Local work – the test would not include questions relating to specific locations.

Part time drivers - being satisfied that a person is fit and proper to hold a licence applied to all drivers licensed whatever the nature or duration of their work, therefore part time drivers would be treated the same as all other drivers.

Medical conditions – individuals with medical conditions would be supported and would not be disadvantaged.

Alternative training suggestion – this was not an appropriate replacement of the test.

Cap on drivers – this was not legally allowed.

Recruitment of drivers – drivers were required to be qualified.

Councillor R Munby moved that a knowledge test be implemented for new applicants to pass prior to a licence being issued and for existing drivers to pass within 12 months of implementation with no restrictions on the number of attempts and that the council commence the procurement of an electronic knowledge test by an external company and, following procurement delegate the awarding of the contract to the Head of Governance in conjunction with the Chair of the Licensing Committee.

The motion was seconded by Councillor M Wood.

A vote was taken on the motion. The vote in favour was unanimous. The motion was carried.

In making its decision, the Committee had regard to the officer's report, the consultation responses and advice from officers. The Committee also considered the relevant legislation, particularly in respect of the 'fit and proper test'.

Resolved

That:

1. a knowledge test be implemented for new applicants to pass prior to a licence being issued and for existing drivers to pass within 12 months of implementation with no restrictions on the number of attempts; and
2. the council commence the procurement of an electronic knowledge test by an external company and, following procurement delegate the awarding of the contract to the Head of Governance in conjunction with the Chair of the Licensing Committee.

The meeting closed at 3.12 pm