

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Registration and Licensing Committee

26th September 2016

Report of the Head of Legal Services – David Michael

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Licensing - Knowledge and suitability Test

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider amendments to the hackney carriage and private hire driver's knowledge test.

Executive Summary

2. This report is to consider amendments to the hackney carriage and private hire driver's knowledge test.
3. The knowledge test has been amended to include questions on safeguarding which will include child sexual exploitation. In addition the standard of testing will be raised to ensure applicants have the necessary local knowledge, basic English and numeracy skills.
4. It is proposed that the "knowledge test" will be renamed as a "knowledge & suitability test"

Background

5. On the 1st August 2008, the Council introduced a knowledge test for new applicants for driver licences, and for existing drivers where the authority is satisfied that he/she is lacking in one or more of the test areas.
6. The test includes sections on basic English, local knowledge, licensing legislation and a section about using an A-Z map.
7. Applicants have to achieve 80% on each section in order to pass the test

Officer Report

8. Concerns have been raised by the public and the trade that some drivers, despite having passed the knowledge test, are still lacking the necessary communication skills and knowledge of the local area.
9. It is also evident that the number of applicants originating from outside of the local area is increasing, particularly from foreign nationals. It is essential that in the interests of public safety, licensed drivers have the appropriate skill sets to enable him/her to work as a hackney carriage or private hire driver.
10. It is proposed that the revised test will include the following sections.
 - Section 1 - Shortest and most direct routes (oral)
 - Section 2 - Identifying Roads
 - Section 3 - Identifying landmarks / places of interest
 - Section 4 - Policy and Legislation
 - Section 5 - Safeguarding (including CSE)
 - Section 6 - Basic Numeracy
 - Section 7 - Basic English
11. The pass mark is proposed to be set at 80% for each section.
12. As the test involves more than just local knowledge, it is proposed that the revised test be renamed the "knowledge and suitability test"

13. It is proposed that the revised test be implemented for all new applications received after the 1st October 2016.

Equality Impact Assessment

14. A Screening Assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. After completing the assessment it has been determined that this procedure does not require an Equality Impact Assessment.

Legal Impacts

15. Not applicable

Risk Management

16. Not applicable

Consultation

17. Not applicable

Recommendation

18. That the revised knowledge test shall include the following sections
- Section 1 - Shortest and most direct routes (oral)
 - Section 2 - Identifying Roads
 - Section 3 - Identifying landmarks / places of interest
 - Section 4 - Policy and Legislation
 - Section 5 - Safeguarding (including CSE)
 - Section 6 - Basic Numeracy
 - Section 7 - Basic English
19. That the revised test shall be renamed the "knowledge and suitability test"
20. That the pass mark for each section shall be 80%

21. That the revised test be implemented for all new applications received after the 1st October 2016.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

22. Not applicable

Implementation of Decision

23. Not applicable

Appendices

24. Not applicable

List of Background Papers

25. Existing Knowledge Test

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