	ITEM NO:	10
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SUBJECT:	Driving Assessment for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers
DECISION-MAKER:	LICENSING (GENERAL) SUB-COMMITTEE
DATE OF DECISION:	23 rd August 2006
REPORT VERSION No:	1

FORWARD PLAN No: N/A KEY DECISION? N/A

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

NOT APPLICABLE

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:

NOT APPLICABLE

SUMMARY Southampton City Council currently licenses hackney carriage and private hire drivers and in doing so carries out CRB enhanced checks, Medical checks in line with DVLA standards, DVLA driving licence history check and Topography test. Having carried out these checks we then issue applicants with a licence. At no time is their driving ability tested. The licensing team rarely goes through a week without receiving complaints about dangerous or inconsiderate driving.

To that end the licensing team seek to introduce a driving assessment as a condition of licence, initially for new drivers but with sufficient flexibility to extend the system to frequent offenders and those who are disqualified from driving under the totting up procedure.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) Members to include a condition that all new applicants for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers Licences and those who are disqualified from driving under the totting up procedure must pass a driving assessment test with an Approved Driving Instructor and produce the necessary documentation to licensing prior to the issue or reinstatement of the relevant licence.
- (ii) That approval in principle is given to officers to identify suitable examiners and report back to the Licensing Committee the details of the scheme and proposed date of implementation.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increased licensing of specialised vehicles for example stretched limousines. This type of vehicle is unusual in that they are exceptionally long and have distinctive handling deficiencies (extremely large turning circle for example). For public safety reasons the Authority should be satisfied that any licensed driver is

- capable of handling the vehicle they are driving.
- 2. Increasing notifications, to the licensing team, of poor driving by hackney carriage and private hire drivers

BACKGROUND

CONSULTATION

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

None

DETAIL The licensing team is receiving an increasing number of complaints from the public of poor driving by both hackney and private hire drivers. At both renewal and application it is clear that the incidence of conviction as a result of traffic cameras is on the increase, this is itself an indication of poor driving and therefore a risk to public safety. Additionally with the expected increase in the licensing of specialised vehicles there is a genuine concern that many drivers are not capable of driving the type of vehicle they wish to be licensed to drive, driving assessment will assist in identifying training requirements for drivers.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS None. The cost of any assessment will be borne by the applicant

Capital

Not applicable.

Revenue

Not applicable.

Property

Not applicable.

Other

Not applicable.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

Section 51 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

Other Legal Implications:

Human Rights Act 1998

The proposals in this report are consistent with and have regard to Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Equalities legislation.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

The decision to determine the application in the manner set out in this report is not contrary to the Council's policy framework.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1. 2.

1.			
2.			
Documents In Members' Rooms			
1.			
2.			
Background Documents			
Title	of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)	

Background documents available for inspection at:

REPORT OF: SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL

AUTHOR: Name: Richard Black Tel: 023 8083 3523

E-mail: richard.black@southampton.gov.uk

File Name: Driving assessment report