

APPEALS AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 7th February, 2018

Present:-

Councillor Bellamy (Chair)

Councillors	A Murphy Bingham Derbyshire P Innes	Councillors	Miles T Murphy Perkins Rayner
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*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

**166 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations of interest were received.

167 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Niblock.

**168 HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY -
AMENDMENTS (A000)**

The Licensing Manager submitted a report for Members to consider proposed amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy, including a proposed exemption to the signage requirements to allow 'Dementia Friendly' notices to be displayed in certain circumstances.

The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy had been revised following a request from trade representatives on the Taxi Consultative Committee to make it more easily understood whilst maintaining the necessary rigour that was required.

Repetition within the document had been removed wherever possible and the schedules changed into specific sections covering:

- 1) General policy
- 2) Vehicles
- 3) Drivers
- 4) Breaches of conditions
- 5) Application guidance
- 6) Taxi consultative committee
- 7) Private hire operators

A comprehensive list of the amendments was attached to the report at Appendix A, including:

- Notification of convictions (paragraph 3.11) - changed so that all such notifications are in writing, for consistency.
- Penalty points (section 4) - 'Penalty Points Scheme' was a more meaningful title than previously ('Breaches of licensing conditions/policy/legal requirements/code of conduct not subject to prosecution').
- English language (paragraph 5.5) - clarified that applicants must be able to read and write to an acceptable standard in English.
- Disclosure and Barring Service (paragraph 5.8) - an acceptable certificate must be no more than 30 days old (not 3 months as previous).
- Personal references (paragraphs 5.11 and 7.30) – requirement removed as these had become less relevant with the advent of online monitoring of both convictions and driving behaviour.

Following a recent presentation to the Taxi Consultative Committee by a representative of the Alzheimer's Society on developing dementia friendly communities, it was recognised that many licensed drivers were experienced in providing assistance to people with disabilities, including dementia, and it was noted that awareness training was available from the Alzheimer's Society.

In response to Members' questions it was confirmed that many licensing authorities did not now request personal references as it was possible to continuously monitor criminal records and driving convictions and endorsements through online systems. If complaints arose about the behaviour of drivers, these were investigated and appropriate action taken, in order to maintain public safety. In order to pass the written knowledge test applicants would need to have a reasonable understanding of English.

It was noted that details of the proposed changes would be notified to all Hackney Carriage / Private Hire licence holders and operators for a one month period of consultation, following which a further report would be presented to the Appeals and Regulatory Committee for final approval.

*** RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the proposed policy amendments be approved for a suitable period of consultation.
- (2) That licensed vehicles be allowed to display a maximum of two 'Dementia Friendly' notices in their vehicle provided the driver has undergone the necessary awareness training with the Alzheimer's Society.