

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire consultation April – May 2019

Why are we consulting?

A consultation is being carried out to gather the views of the trade and general public on the proposal to update the Council's licensing convictions policy and on the introduction of disability awareness training for licensed drivers and operators.

Part of the 'fit and proper' person test used by the Council when considering an applicant is a review of any past criminal convictions, cautions, or fixed penalties they have received. The Council is proposing to adopt the Institute of Licensing's 'Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants and licensees in the hackney and private hire trades' and to incorporate the time periods within the guidance document into our existing convictions policy. The aim is to provide a degree of consistency by aligning with the Institute of Licensing guidance, as well as consistency across the Public Protection Partnership Councils.

The Council's Licensing and Safety Committee have agreed the introduction of mandatory disability awareness training for drivers and private hire operators. This training is proposed to cover topics such as the legal duties of Hackney and Private Hire drivers under the Equality Act, advice on dealing with passengers with disabilities, and an outline as to the important role of the licensed trade in enabling disabled people to travel. It is proposed that this training will be carried out before a licence is first granted and then refreshed every three years. Existing licence holders will be given 12 months from the date of implementation to attend a session, and then a refresher session every three years. The applicant/licence holder will be expected to pay for their own training. The session will last around three hours and the estimated cost will be £50.00. Both the cost and length of the training is subject to change, for example if the session is carried out at the same time as the already required safeguarding training.

How can you get involved?

You can help by completing our survey so we can understand your views. Please read the attached documents and complete our survey.

What happens next?

Any comments received will be fed back to the Council's Licensing and Safety Committee, who will make the decision on updating the convictions policy and to finalise the arrangements for disability awareness training.

Q1

Which licences, if any, do you hold?

Q2

Do you have any comments on the Institute of Licensing's 'Guidance on determining the suitability of applicants and licensees in the hackney and private hire trades' (see supporting documents). It is proposed for this guidance to be adopted as a document of reference by the Council.

Q3

Do you have any comments on the changes in the suggested time scales before an individual would be considered for a licence? (see supporting documents). For example, under the current policy, a person convicted of a drugs related offence would be expected to be free of conviction for at least 3-5 years for a possession offence, and at least 5 years for a supply offence. Under the proposal, the time scales would be at least 5 years for a possession offence and at least 10 years for a supply offence.

Q4

Do you have any comments on the introduction of disability awareness training for new applicants and existing licensed drivers?

Q5

Do you have any ideas as to the best way for information to be presented at this training, or any topics you wish to be covered?