

**BTech qualifications for the Hackney and Private Hire Trade
LICENSING, item 4**

Committee: LICENSING

Date: 31 MAY 2006

**Title: BTech qualifications for the Hackney and
Private Hire Trade**

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Agenda Item

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Item for
decision

Summary

This report sets out as a discussion document possible additional pre-requisites for the granting of a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Drivers Licence.

Recommendations

The current licensing standards remain unaltered.

Background Papers

Current Licensing Conditions.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	The Trade Associations have been consulted and made aware of this qualification.
Community Safety	No specific implications.
Equalities	No specific implications.
Finance	No specific implications.
Human Rights	No specific implications.
Legal implications	No specific implications.
Ward-specific impacts	No specific implications.
Workforce/Workplace	No specific implications.

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Situation

- 1 Section 46 Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and Section 51 (1) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provide for the grant of either a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Drivers Licence with the caveat that such an individual must meet the criteria of being fit and proper. This means that they meet the required Group 2 Level of fitness to drive in accordance with the standards laid down by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency. In addition, an individual is subjected to the enhanced level of checking with the Criminal Records Bureau.
- 2 As a further safeguard, this Council does have licensing standard conditions as a safeguard before the grant of a licensee, a copy of which is attached to this report.
- 3 Courses are available for employees working in the passenger transport industry the opportunity to enhance their business performance by providing training for their drivers with the end result in an individual obtaining a National Vocation Qualification. In this particular case, it would be a Btech Level 2 for Road Passenger Transport.
- 4 This qualification is primarily aimed at Bus and Coach Drivers, Conductors, Community Transport Staff, Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers, and is recognised throughout the United Kingdom in the Passenger Transport Sector.
- 5 Whilst there are a number of disciplines contained within the Level 2 qualification the main areas effecting a potential licensed driver would be:-
 - (a) Health and Safety within the work environment.
 - (b) Helping passengers with special needs.
 - (c) Conveying passengers effectively and safely.
 - (d) Educational Transport Contracts.
- 6 The cost of this form of training would have to be borne solely by employers; however funding may be obtained through the Learning Skills Council.
- 7 Courses for this type of qualification are run at Harlow and Braintree Colleges and the cost depends on the duration of the course.
- 8 The training course can last between three months to one year depending upon the speed of the individual and is a combination of day release and distance learning.

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- 9 On 21 February 2006 this matter was raised at the quarterly meeting between Officers, Trade Associations and Operators within this district and ULODA have indicated that they will consult with their members and reply in due course.

- 10 Enquiries with other local authorities within Essex and surrounding areas reveal that they have no conditions in place whereby they require this type of qualification prior to the granting of a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Drivers Licence.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
<p>Drivers of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles are required to be qualified to BTech level as a condition of holding a licence</p>	<p>Low – whilst the qualification would be valuable in the absence of a country wide policy there appears to be little to support making it compulsory</p>	<p>High – if introduced immediately there would be no drivers qualified to drive hackney carriages or private hire vehicles in the district. If introduced for new drivers only it is likely that prospective drivers not holding the qualification will seek work in adjoining districts which resulting in a diminution of the number of drivers in the district through natural wastage</p>	<p>Whilst the Council should encourage drivers to seek qualification is should not do so by way of compulsion</p>