

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE – 16 MARCH 2016

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING AND HEALTH

POLICY CHANGES FOLLOWING THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE DVSA
TAXI DRIVER ASSESSMENT

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To inform the Licensing Committee of minor updates following the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) withdrawing its Taxi Driver Assessment.

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSING COMMITTEE: That

(A)	The information be noted and Members' comments be addressed by the Head of Housing and Health.
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 For a number of years it had been a requirement of being granted either a dual driver or private hire driver licence that the applicant passed the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) Taxi Driver Assessment.
- 1.2 Since August 2016 it has been a requirement of the Driver Convictions Policy that an existing driver that accumulates 9 or more (but less than 12) points on their DVLA licence has to pass the DVSA driving test within 6 weeks or their licence will be suspended until the test is successfully completed.
- 1.3 The DVSA served notice of their intention to withdraw the provision of the driving test. The notice stated that the test would no longer be provided from 31 December 2016.
- 1.4 Prospective drivers and existing drivers required by policy to undertake the DVSA driving test would have been unable to comply with the requirement if changes hadn't been made.

2.0 Report

2.1 The DVSA have, with very short notice, withdrawn the Taxi driver assessment.

2.2 A number of companies emerged offering similar tests to the DVSA Taxi Driver Assessment and the Licensing Team have looked closely at these.

2.3 Some of the providers did not offer tests locally but a number were willing to offer a bespoke service locally. Factors such as costs to applicants, appointment booking systems etc. have all been examined.

2.4 To avoid a similar issue arising again it is the intention to approve a minimum of two providers so that if one ceases to provide the service we can continue test drivers to the required standard without delay.

2.5 The requirement for new drivers was changed to the following:

That after 16th March 2017 any applicant for a driver's licence is required to undertake and pass the Council approved driving test.

2.6 The DVSA test is mentioned in paragraph 12.1 of the Taxi Licensing Convictions policy and this reference was also changed to read 'Council approved driving test'.

2.7 Since the change of provider 35 individuals have taken the revised test, 31 new applicants and 3 drivers with 9 or more DVLA penalty points. 4 drivers have failed at their first attempt but have subsequently successfully passed the test.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

Drivers Handbook and Driver Convictions Policy

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/article/22111/Taxi-Policy-and-Handbook>

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