



# Walsall Council

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## REPORT OF THE INTERIM REGULATORY MANAGER

### TAXI/PRIVATE HIRE LIAISON GROUP

13 FEBRUARY 2013

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS ) ACT 1976

### PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENSING

#### DRIVER TRAINING COURSE

#### **1.0 Summary of report**

- 1.1 To advise the group of the proposed new arrangements in carrying out the driver training course (classroom based) for all new applicants applying to be licensed drivers within the Walsall borough.

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That members note the report and recommend approval of the new scheme to the Licensing and Safety Committee. The scheme to come into force as soon as all the necessary administrative arrangements, have been agreed between the licensing unit and Walsall Adult Community College.

#### **3.0 Background information**

- 3.1 The group will be aware that in September 2012 the Licensing and Safety Committee resolved that English Skills Assessments be conducted by Walsall Adult Community College (WACC).
- 3.2 This was transferred successfully to WACC on the 2 January 2013.
- 3.3 It is now proposed that the driver training course (classroom based tuition) also be transferred to WACC to further improve the service offered to new applicants and to consolidate all training provision under one provider.
- 3.4 Currently all new applicants for driver licences within Walsall are required to complete a driver training course and associated examination. This is conducted 'in house' by the licensing/licensing enforcement team and takes place for half a day approximately every 3

weeks.

- 3.5 Given the increased daily demands on both the licensing and enforcement unit, transferring this course to WACC will free up officer time particularly in relation to the licensing unit as it utilises 2 officers for a complete day. Significant officer time is also taken up dealing with booking arrangements and producing course materials.
- 3.6 The driver training course consists of three parts, disability awareness, highway code/road safety and conditions of licence that are applicable to Walsall licensed drivers. This tuition takes approximately 4 hours to deliver. There is then a multiple choice examination on all of these individual topics and applicants must pass a prescribed percentage within 45 minutes. Anyone who fails the examination is entitled to take a free re sit examination.
- 3.7 The licensing unit has subsequently been working closely with W.A.C.C. and it is proposed to transfer such training provision to the college at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.8 There will be no changes made to the content of the course at all and the enforcement team will continue to deliver training in respect of conditions of licence.
- 3.9 The college has a number of suitably qualified trainers available to deliver both the disability awareness and highway code/driving modules. These include ex police traffic officers.
- 3.10 Trainers from W.A.C.C. have already attended a number of courses held by the licensing unit to familiarise themselves with course content and how the course is actually conducted.
- 3.11 Applicants will still be required to take a multiple choice exam paper that will continue to be set by the licensing unit.
- 3.12 All successful applicants will be provided with a pass certificate by WACC.
- 3.13 All applicants are then required to undertake a Driving Standards Agency practical driving test.

#### **4.0 Resource considerations**

- 4.1 **Financial:** The cost of the course will be met by the applicant who will pay the college directly. The actual cost of the course will remain the same (£25).
- 4.2 **Legal:** Any person aggrieved by a condition of the Council would have right of appeal to magistrates court.
- 4.3 **Staffing issues:** None.

**5.0 Citizen impact**

5.1 Applicants who are unable to successfully complete the course can receive the appropriate advice and guidance directly from the college.

**6.0 Community safety**

6.1 The public will have access to newly licensed drivers who have undergone a theoretical driver training course conducted by a recognised educational establishment.

**7.0 Environmental impact**

7.1 Nothing arising from this report

**8.0 Performance and risk management issues**

8.1 Nothing arising from this report

**9.0 Equality implications**

9.1 None arising from this report.

**10.0 Consultation**

10.1 Walsall Adult Community College.

**11.0 Contact Officer:**

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