

CONSULTATION ON KNOWLEDGE TEST PROCEDURES

Aberdeen City Council are seeking comment on proposals to amend the process for applying for a taxi or private hire driver's licence.

As things currently stand applicants are entitled to three attempts at passing the Street Knowledge Test ("the Test") once an application for a licence has been submitted. As all applications require to be determined within six months this effectively imposes a six month time limit within which the Test must be passed. This has proved challenging for a number of applicants and has resulted in a substantial number of applications being referred to Committee solely as a result of the applicant having failed to pass the Test and the Committee generally have no option but to refuse those applications.

In an attempt to make the process more efficient and to provide a greater degree of certainty to applicants it has been proposed to amend the process by requiring the Test to be passed before an application for a licence can be submitted. In order to facilitate this a separate charge of £20 will be imposed for each attempt at the Test.

This will remove the six month deadline for passing a test and applicants will be able to study at their own pace and apply for the test when they feel it is appropriate. It is hoped that the introduction of the separate charge will encourage applicants to only apply for the Test when they are confident in their ability to pass, which will have the effect of increasing standards. There will however be no limit on the number of times an applicant can apply for the Test.

It is intended to make more information on the Test available on the Council's website in order to allow applicants to tailor their studies appropriately and it is hoped to include an example of a Test to inform applicants on the type of questions they will face.

At the meeting of 12 September 2017 the Licensing Committee instructed officers to consult with the trade on the proposals prior to any action being taken and also whether an element of proficient operation of a sat-nav device should be incorporated into the test. Accordingly if you have any comments please direct them to licensing@aberdeencity.gov.uk with the heading "Knowledge Test Consultation" before 31 January 2018.