

### Appendix 3 Training Review Consultation: Comments

#### Q3 Comments: YES

Think Licencing office is providing good service but waiting time is longer then normal. It would be better to contract out

Because drivers will learn how to treat customers before they go to the road

Better value for money and might be quicker than yourself.

This training should be carried out by someone who is professionally trained in Customer Care.

The waiting time for the course too long.

Should be one recognised training provider - transferable across authorities - all working to the same standard.

I think that some aspect of customer care would be best delivered by people with particular needs for example disabled people

Indepent training I would suggest would be more beneficial

The 'best' training is often more valuable than the 'cheapest'. It opens up personnel to great diversity and experience.

I think the training for the drivers that pick up adults with learning disabilities should be trained by adults with learning disabilities

I think its current training could need improving with all taxis

Then disability awareness can be covered

Likely to be better value for money.

I am disabled with arthritis using walking aids but not at wheelchair stage yet. I receive no support from private taxi drivers and some even moan when I ask them to push the seat forward at the front so that I can swing my legs in easier. Two drivers even refused leaving me with no alternative but to cause myself excruciating pain trying to get in.

It gives other people in the area an income instead of just LCC

They may have more appropriate and specific skills for training

i don't think its effective

Streamlined licensing processes benefit drivers and the consumers they intend to serve in future. It is therefore in the best interests of local licensing authorities to make any processes as efficient and cost-effective as possible. The current fragmented approach to training provision as part of the Leeds City Council private hire licensing process, in terms of both the number of courses that an applicant is required to complete and the differing organisations that provide each course, presents a significant barrier to entry for applicants. Indeed the time taken to apply for a private hire driver's licence at Leeds City Council is amongst the longest across all local authorities in which we operate within the UK. We strongly suggest that Ot only should the council consider contracting out its Customer Care training to a group of external providers, it should also seek to consolidate the content of the Customer Care training into a single course and assessment to be undertaken by an applicant as part of the private hire licensing process (alongside the content currently delivered within the Private Hire Driver seminar). Such an approach would deliver efficiencies for the Council in terms of content creation, delivery and assessment. It would also reduce the costs for the applicant whilst providing a more streamlined application process and less disjointed customer experience. Contracting out to multiple providers, rather than a single provider, will be important in terms of stimulating competition and choice - mitigating the risks of bottlenecks with a single provider, price hikes, or lengthy lead times to book onto a session.

The recommendation that can be made which adds significant value to the delivery and potentially could supersede all of the individual components and will bring all of the different training aspects is the VRQ for the Taxi industry, a couple of the occupational units as listed below and our SEAT award that we have developed here at Antrec. The VRQ can be delivered to individuals who are wanting to become a taxi

driver and individuals whom are already a taxi driver for their continuous professional development. The delivery will be Ofsted Inspected, meet OfQual regulations and will a nationally recognised qualification made up of a framework of units that constitute lifelong learning and delivered by professional educators.

It is my opinion that the Customer Care Training, though specialised in nature, would benefit from contracting out. I feel this course could be further specialised to include further information in relation to disability access and those who require further assistance when using Taxi and/or PHV's. Furthermore, unlike the other training courses, it is unlikely that the content will change on an ad-hoc basis.

The licensing service needs to concentrate on its most important functions in ensuring that there is complete integrity at the point of application and during the lifetime of a licence. Licensing staff are distracted from this by the number of enquiries, visits to the licensing office and frustrations which arise with applicants about delays in the current training and testing process. That administrative burden needs to be taken from them so they can concentrate on the really important integrity issues, improve on the administrative flow of drivers through the application process, provide improved technical solutions to driver learning pre-assessments (as distinct from blocking up the training room with applicants who have not carried out any preparatory work), improve on customer relations, introduce an appointments system which is sustainable throughout the year (including holiday periods), reduce the length of queues and improve on a range of issues the trade sees as important customer care matters. The current system has so many different venues and with a redesigned service it could be largely taken off site improving site access and safety in the car park. There are technical solutions, with appropriate support to cater for the diversity in the applicants, that could really streamline the service provision. Of course more modern delivery solutions can also equate to efficiencies in cost to the service which would filter down to considerations in the fees review. A concern for some might be the integrity issue but that should form a significant part of the tendering exercise in a procurement process and have regulatory audit controls built into the process with a successful bidder. A question to consider is 'If Leeds City Council approved a modern, accessible, cheaper, streamlined point of entry system how much would that contribute to preventing people wanting to join the trade and deciding to go to other LA's, where it's easier and cheaper to get a licence and then signing up to a 'National' operator elsewhere and still working in Leeds, with the resultant enforcement and and potential safeguarding issues'. The current training policy can drive people away from Leeds but then let them drive back in without a Leeds City Council licence. I do think that there is an opportunity, on this occasion, for Members to get a feel of the trades thoughts on developing a streamlined system and also taking the opportunity to see what's 'out there' and how training delivery has moved on. It was with this in mind that the service improvement proposals report was submitted to the Licensing Committee last year.

### Q3 comments: NO

Too expensive

It's too costly

They won't have a clue

We as in the licence sector should be better equipped to know at what level of customer care should be

No training should be done in house, to control and give the best quality

For example the English and math test are so simply and the contractors help the drivers to achieve the test mark page

Outsourcing is just money making scheme

Cost will decide but feel may not work in the interest of Leeds residents and of course the workers in the trade. Local needs must come first.

Working at Fleet Services who presently provide this service we feel that we are providing a cost effective quality training service. There are areas of other training that we feel should be looked at as these have an impact on the success of our work here in Fleet services. Many of those who come to us have great difficulty in understanding even basic information where the English language is concerned this has a

direct negative impact on not only our work with the drivers but for customers should they enter the world of service provision. It is our view that the way the selection process is conducted is the area to look at, as this is where you will get the right candidates who are able to communicate effectively and also fully understand the regulations surrounding the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire operations. We have had hundreds of very able people through our training sessions and almost everyone says that they have benefited from attending. When we arrive at a problem it is generally down to them being lacking in communication.

It's a chance to ensure the values (especially equality and safeguarding values) are properly embedded. Council staff are better than contractors for this, and it's a good way of keeping an eye on quality

Training companies will make a lot of money when it can be done by council officers cheaper and keep the money in the council for other things

At present the customer care is in-house and it is not good enough. Or perhaps it is good enough but the operators do not enforce customer care standards. Either way the standard of customer care ranges from brilliant to absolutely disgusting.

Important to maintain standards at a high level without financial motivation

Prices will hike and is already an expensive profession to get into. You would still charge £115 per year to renew license when only costs £10 to change vehicle, it does not cost anywhere near that to renew the license and cost should not increase to alleviate pressure in the office, more adequate, efficient staff is required. Most in the queue are not new drivers but old ones waiting for various things/paperwork etc.

Disabled wheelchair users require good quality training standards to be well trained fully informed of the law in supporting their needs. Disabled users and many equality customers need to feel safe in their transit with private hire journeys.

Would question what motivates external providers as when they are asked to give % passes this could lead to dubious training practices to get the desired results.

I do not believe an outside contractor would have the same knowledge and experience as somebody such as myself who has worked in the industry for over 20 years

Standardised training from the public sector with no commercial interests is a benefit for customers using the service. In my experience of private sector and public sector, customer service is higher when it is not driven by profit

No due to external companies knowing less about this industry than themselves!

Keep down costs

It is too expensive

Think that the council is best placed to provide good quality training to taxi drivers. It could retain proper control over standards.

the financial incentive corrupts the quality

#### **Q4 comments: YES**

Again application process is too long

Drivers will benefit from the training they will receive

No reason it shouldn't be. It's just learning road names and directions

if the council can make money from its knowledge that's a good thing in times when budgets are stretched

Should be independently contracted to be a fairer system

If you can market your skills, I don't see why not.

Likely to be better value for money.

There is a much more helpful approach from black and white taxi drivers (not sure why that is) and if this can be passed to on hackney carriage drivers it would certainly benefit me and I am sure I am not the only one that has these problems.

Giving others business and income instead of LCC

this would free up time of the staff

The training could be designed and bespoke delivered in conjunction with the VRQ for the industry. Again this training would be subject to quality Ofsted inspections, OfQual regulations and delivered by teaching and education professionals with occupational knowledge.

There are viable technical solutions to this which can be delivered more quickly, with greater access to appointment opportunities and at significantly less cost than the costs of senior officers of the council delivering it. An enterprising organisation could also work positively and constructively with the HC trade to update the existing system.

#### Q4 comments: NO

Too expensive

It's too costly

Keep it in house

In house training only

We should set our own standard of service albeit high

Control and Quality of training

It will make the process more complex for driver

To retain an air of professionalism, these tests should be set locally to determine most up to date routes etc.

TPHL has undertaken this for many years and has demonstrated that the service they provide is fit for purpose and staffed by able employees. To remove this from LCC control would be a potential ruin to the service. At the moment it is a source of income in an already very cash starved world. To outsource it would become a cost to TPHL and the Authority as a whole, with very little control over potential spiraling costs.

They have contracted out the English/Maths testing to LearnDirect and that is a nonsense with drivers passing that speak little to no English. I have heard that LearnDirect testers actively 'help' the applicant. So contracting out the Knowledge training could only result in a poorer standard of applicants becoming licensed drivers. As it is the test is difficult and many or even most do not pass first time but there is a reason for that - to keep the standard of driver HIGH.

Probably would be lower quality and can't see it representing value for money

Maintainance of standards

Why should it? Unless there is a better course then no. It will increase costs for drivers and then indeed customers in the long run.

In- house maintains quality

because as the licencing authority you should provide all training and accept all liability if any problems arise, instead of pushing the blame onto other contractors.

How can an external company teach knowledge to a badge holder of more than 15yrs?

As before keep down costs

LCC have a more up to date local knowledge of transport developments.

it is too expensive

As previous. Think the council is best placed to retain control to ensure a quality standard

I don't believe that this part of the training should be contracted out. As has been seen within certain other authorities, such 'tests' are open to forms of cheating and manipulation. I feel that it would be best for this portion of the training to be kept within Leeds City Council. The Council are then responsible for any decisions made and can keep the training up to date with current routes whilst maintaining the strong standards that underpin the Hackney Carriage trade. Moving away from the current model will surely see standards slip and open up the Council to complaints of cheating or unfairness.

#### Q5 comments: YES

It would appear more professional if an outside body provided the Seminar training.

Should be one recognised training provider - transferable across authorities - all working to the same standard.

again if it makes the council money do it.

Again, if you can market your skills then I don't see why not.

I think the training should be done by adults with learning disabilities

Why need to? The cost will increase and eventually be passed onto the customer.

Likely to be better value for money.

Maybe, as their standards are totally different to black and white cars. Some cars are so bad, for me who has trouble getting up, it is not good to feel that you are on the floor because the suspension is so bad. Taxi journeys are the only way I get about and it is never a good experience. Pain will always play a part for me but it is the level of pain that I encounter that is often due to attitudes and the state of the vehicle. Cars need to be improved alongside the behaviour of some and I mean a minority. Maybe these drivers would not change and improve anyway. The alternative is to pay black and white prices which is not possible when on a tight budget.

Giving others business instead of LCC

Private hire taxi's are a nuisance to our daily work in the city centre, especially the ones that are coming from out of town for example private hire drivers from Wakefield, Dewsbury etc. Their behaviour towards us is rude and they need to change their behaviour.

They may have more appropriate and specific skills for training

this would free up time of the staff

we strongly agree that the Private Hire Driver Seminar training should be both contracted out to external providers and also consolidated with other elements of the private hire application process to provide a more streamlined experience for applicants. Such an approach would alleviate some of the current issues impacting service provision at the Council's facility at 225 York Road including congestion, lengthy counter queues and wait times, and lack of adequate car parking facilities. It would also enable the Council's Licensing and Fleet Services functions to focus on their core competencies of licensing and enforcement. We note that other authorities such as Liverpool City Council have successfully consolidated their driver training into a single course (the Liverpool Standard) whilst accrediting a small number of external organisations to provide that course. We believe that Leeds City Council could make significant improvements to its own licensing process by adopting a similar approach. The Council should consider contracting out training provision to a small group of accredited organisations rather than a single organisation - this will help ensure that training capacity does not become a bottleneck within the process or applicants face a long lead time to book onto a session, whilst also preventing the scenario whereby a single provider is able to unduly control the level of fees that are charged to applicants. The availability of multiple providers, conversely, will help stimulate competition and choice.

If this was contracted out - you could then contract with a training provider whom has access to the national AEB pots of government funding and they could deliver the VRQ for the industry which will cover everything within the seminar and much more. Please see the below:- B-TEC Level 2 Introduction to the role of the Private Hire Driver 1. Health and safety in the taxi and private hire work environment – Online Test 2. Road safety when driving passengers in a taxi or private hire vehicle – Online Test 3. Professional customer service in the taxi and private hire industry – Online Test 4) Taxi and private hire vehicle maintenance and safety inspections – Online Test 5) The regulatory framework of the taxi and private hire industry – Online Test 6) Taxi and private hire services for passengers who require assistance – Observation and Report 7) Routes and fares in the taxi and private hire vehicle industries – Online Test 8) Transporting of parcels, luggage and other items in the taxi and private hire industries – Online Test 9) Transporting of children and young persons by taxi or private hire vehicle – Online Test

offer more diverse person centred training to drivers

Please see earlier comments about streamlining the whole training delivery. In respect of equality, safeguarding and customer care there is the opportunity to re-design and create a single, 'one time, date

and place' solution to this which would have great service delivery improvements and als contribute quickly to the newly licensed drivers awaiting safeguarding training. The possible introduction of a technical self assessment module would help the 'more prepared' and professional applicant to quickly pass through the system and reduce the frustrations of applicants and assessor who are being blocked by those who are unprepared for the training and testing.

**Q5 comments: NO**

Too expensive

It's too costly

Keep it in house

In house training only

It's better with the council

Quality of training and consistency

Like I said before as the council it's your responsibility to make sure each driver is capable of delivering the services in a professional way the experience I have had personally believe the contractors are useless and like before the the drivers to reach the pass mark

It's more comprehensive with Leeds city council

Will it cost more; private companies work on profits not always beneficial to our needs.

LCC values need to be front and centre of this training

As I have said earlier - contracting out has not worked around the English testing and the worst thing is - the council has no idea or control over what is happening in the tests. By keeping the work in-house it is open to scrutiny and TPHL can monitor the standard.

In house have more understanding than third parties

Maintainace of standards

Again - maintains quality assurance

All hire journeys must be safe,user friendly and honest as standard enforced by law.

Same as my previous statement, stop contracting work to companies so that you evade any blame when problems arise. Training for private hire drivers should now meet the criteria for those seeking a hackney carriage licence. Training on safeguarding children, especially vulnerable girls, should be your top priority. Too many private hire drivers think it's acceptable to complement/make flattering remarks towards underage girls. Some girls look older than they are, this needs to be addressed. Proper training and full vetting is needed.

All training should be kept in house, rather than result led hastily rushed sessions being delivered primarily for a tick box purpose.

How can a third party company with no knowledge of the industry hold seminars?

too expensive

The council should keep this in house to ensure good standards

I don't feel that it would be appropriate to contract out this portion of the training package for a number of reasons. Firstly, this part of the training is catered to the needs and ethos of Leeds City Council, it is interchangeable and as it's internal, these changes can be made without fuss or delay. Secondly, such training is notorious for cheating and as such, it is only the Council who I deem as being fit to undertake such training and assessments of the drivers who are seen. Otherwise, by allowing such training and tests to be externally handled, this could open the system up to cheating and other persons undertaking training on behalf of a prospective candidate (See TFL issues). This is also an important milestone in a drivers application as it is at this point that a Council employee can assess an individuals attributes and attitudes to the material being discussed. It is at this point where flaws in external training (English Language) are Oted and drivers can be further assessed. An external provider may not share such a strong ethos and the high standards expected will surely be lost. Leeds is held in high regard in terms of it's standards and this is why some applicants do not meet the grade and go elsewhere, does Leeds want these individuals who



fall below the expected standards passing? I believe that this ability to retain only the strongest of candidates will be lost and Leeds would soon see an influx of 'below par' drivers. Safeguarding of the public is a key element of the training undertaken, this is where the Council has the opportunity to instill its ethos in all those drivers who wish to attain a license. An external provider may not share such a vision and the messages may become diluted. This would not only effect the passengers of Leeds but would effect the department when undertaking prosecutions. Doing so would be a step backwards and the Council would struggle to retain these high standards.

**Q6 comments: YES**

The council understand more to give the training that is required

Leeds should have a comprehensive training programme for new and existing drivers. Being trained once is not enough so should be repeated and updated regularly. Outsourcing is very expensive.

It's predominately LCC responsibility

Other agencies aren't reliable enough

All of it

Disability training. All drivers deal with special needs passengers wether they have a WAV or not. These high standards should be set by Leeds licensing as a benchmark to other authorities.

The standard should be high and the standard should be set by the council

A full service should be provided by an outside body until a driver has passed all relevant parts. This would free up the staff at York Road to service the existing drivers etc.

It's better with council if the waiting time can be reduced

All training should be done in house to keep the standards high

From the start to finish the training should be in-house

Education : Basic English and customer care; along with geographical area knowledge.

Just the HC local knowledge.

As much of the process as is possible should be retained within the Council. TPHL has the job of enforcing and monitoring the way in which these drivers conduct their services in all aspects. It is therefore highly important that the Council sits firmly incharge and in full control of these processes. This is the only way in which a consistent approach can be maintained and a fair and transparent means of both training, assessing and then enforcing can be undertaken.

All of it except the DVLA running the actual driving test.

The whole process should be dealt with in house

Mot and customer care

Knowledge test for hackney and private hire

Maintainace of stndards

All of it, train your own staff to deliver any course, more cost effective in the long run not only for the council bit for new and existing drivers and indeed the customer

Leeds Council has legal responsibilities and a duty of care.

Safeguarding.

Unlikely to be cost-effective.

I do not believe outside contractors would have the necessary experiencing of this particular industry

Customer service

All

Knowledge training and literacy numeracy test as then they can see if a driver struggles with the basics

With all work carried out at york rd there should be ample room to have in house training

This would enable us to have more influence over the support, selection and training of drivers to fit with the city's strong econ, compassionate city ambition. It cld offer us more opportunity to target promotion

and access in some of our more deprived communities and to some of our priority groups rather than just leaving it to market forces. Thus applying some of the same principles we apply to other aspects of the council's recruitment to driver recruitment if/wherever possible.

Should be cheaper and should be specifically for drivers

Should all be kept in house

a theory test should be taken every 5 years

needs to be local

I don't believe any other external providers should change.

The great danger is that the whole process slows down again when there are multiple venues, trainers and appointment systems and repeated verification checks. It is the design of the service, it's quality content the training provider and how it is delivered that is important.

#### **Q6 comments: NO**

I think that the best organisation for the task should deliver it and that is not necessarily the council

The Council cites a strategic objective of Customer Focus, with a desire to improve the customer experience and reduce the need for customers to visit the Council's offices. Retaining any aspects of driver training and testing in-house would be contradictory to these objectives. The Council has a primary responsibility to ensure the taxi and private hire industry is trusted and meets the needs of the local communities, whilst protecting the traveling public. The Council's available resources should be focused on its core competencies of licensing and enforcement of license conditions, allowing specialist external providers to focus on training and assessment.

The only aspect should be accessing the DBS information that is returned to the council and issuing the relevant taxi badge for the local authority area. The training and testing could all be funded under government initiatives which would in turn save the council extra headcount costs but then be inspected by national quality auditors within Ofsted, SFA etc. This will ensure the professionalism of the industry but that all organisation are then accountable for ensuring quality standards.

#### **Q7 comments: YES**

More consistent approach to training. Taking a holistic approach rather than training in silos

All should be Leeds Council

All should be in house. 99% of advise is ignored by your drivers

Cost

Save money

Good idea

Training done in house

Definitely

In house I feel is better.

One training package to cover all areas.

I feel that there are things that could be consolidated, there are always things that can, however it is if things are legally allowed to be brought together that is the question. Fleet would have not difficulty in giving some form of area knowledge training to drivers if it was thought appropriate and staff at TPHL were already stretched to the limit. I feel that the first areas to look at are the ones being sourced outside of the Authority which could be done inside the fence so to speak, thus saving costs.

try to save money where ever possible

Keep it all in-house. This issue is such a hot-potato with all kinds of issues around safeguarding etc - the council must keep as much control as possible.

I think that to get the best quality training it is probably useful to involve providers with different areas of expertise



In house equals more understanding of learning material and would cost less

To save time and money

As mentioned before, go for what is best--that which provides the better, more robust training.

Shockingly, quality often has a price--you get what you pay for. As a council you should tender out your requirements and go with the lowest bidder that meets the best skillset you require.

It needs to be affective but cheep

It will likely be cheaper

It might save money hopefully

Because you are responsible for handing out licences, let's not pass the blame onto contractors here. It's your responsibility to vet drivers and ensure they are properly trained.

Consistency

The business of the department should be led by the department itself. They can then see who is being taught and going through the process and where the errors are occurring.

Choose the best, giving them more or all of the work will reduce their costs to you. That way we all win. Easy.

It sounds like it would be less complicated and time consuming to deal with less contractors, and possibly save money

Does it save money? Is it beneficial? Will it give better results?

Saves wasting more licence payers money in a very hard industry to earn money already.

So you can keep an eye on trainers

To save on costs

I only have a general rationale for this based on commissioning providers - if there are fewer, although it can limit training capacity, it usually means we have: more influence over quality, more commitment from providers (assuming they have a greater investment), better buy in to strategic objectives (as per previous response)

Just to be done by Leeds Council

Should all be done in house to provide good consistency and quality. This is a service for the people of Leeds (and people visiting in Leeds) and should be provided by Leeds City Council. Often people's first experience of a city is via taxi and that should be a good experience. The quality of driving they experience and the quality of customer care they should receive should be the very best if we are to achieve our ambition to become 'best city'

this depends on the courses. Standard need to be raised

keep things consistent and simple

To reduce costs and simplify the process.

As noted earlier, we strongly recommend that the Council seeks to consolidate training so that it can be undertaken by an applicant within a single course. The current fragmented approach to training, with several courses and a mixture of external and in-house providers, is a primary reason for the Leeds process taking so long. Consolidation of all components into a single course would have significant benefits for the Council, for applicants and ultimately for the travelling public. Accrediting a small number of contractors or training providers would be prudent in terms of controlling delivery whilst monitoring quality and performance. However it is equally important to ensure that those external providers have sufficient capacity, or at least the capability to scale, to be able to adequately manage the volume of future applicants to Leeds City Council. Availability of training and assessment slots must not become a barrier for those seeking to obtain a private hire licence, as that would be detrimental both to the applicant and members of the public wishing to use the applicant's services in future. As mentioned previously it is also important to ensure that limiting the number of training providers does not lead to a situation whereby those providers are able to artificially inflate the cost of training delivery. Indeed we would suggest that the Council should look to maintain a degree of control over the fees charged to applicants for training and assessment.

The current system is clogged up, time consuming and very frustrating for the trade. Please see earlier comment.

#### **Q7 comments: NO**

Get the best people for the relevant training

I believe a fair and transparent procurement exercise needs to happen which should then result in a list of approved suppliers based on the assessment matrix. This would then ensure that unfundable training delivery is kept to a minimum for those that cannot access government funding due to competition and that there are enough providers to deliver a quality service versus the number of current drivers and expected new driver counts.

I don't see any problems with how the training is conducted and with the providers already used. I don't think the Council would benefit any further from consolidating the training packages provided.

Don't think this is necessary

#### **Q8 comments: YES**

Stop contracting training

If you do it yourself then you will know to what level the people you are training are at or who you should be passing

Training should be done by LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

May be on a costing level; more control over finance.

Should be only for new drivers

For reasons mentioned previously, long term lower costs of retain the trained staff.

Sick and tired of Leeds City Council moving goal posts on the industry with drivers wasting time and money on it.

It should be providing training in house

financial incentives to these companies attracts corruption

**LITERACY & NUMERACY** Advances in technology have reduced the need for drivers to have high standards of English or adequate math skills to calculate change owed, or write out receipts. It is of course important that drivers can communicate effectively with their passengers, but this is increasingly facilitated by apps and technology. With app technology, fares are calculated automatically and passengers receive receipts straight to their email or phones. We therefore recommend that any assessment of literacy and numeracy, in the context of Private Hire, must be proportionate to the role of a private hire driver and should be consolidated into the Private Hire Driver seminar. **DRIVING STANDARDS ASSESSMENT** Many local authorities have taken the decision to rely on a driving licence as a measure of someone's driving capabilities, rather than requiring an additional test. Indeed the empirical evidence that the costs incurred to complete the driving standards assessment result in a satisfactory improvement in public safety are not known. The Council must be mindful of the costs and barriers that the additional driving standards assessment introduces into the licensing process. Apart from the cost of the assessment itself, mandating a third party test will increase the total time taken to get a licence, as long wait times can build up to book a test. This can also have a knock on effect as prospective drivers will not want to pay and complete other steps in the process until they have passed the driving test should they need to retake it. The Council should bear in mind the DFT guidance which states "Many local authorities rely on the standard car driving licence as evidence of driving proficiency. Others require some further driving test to be taken. Local authorities will want to consider carefully whether this produces benefits which are commensurate with the costs involved for would-be drivers, the costs being in terms of both money and broader obstacles to entry to the trade". Competition is the biggest driver of improving standards within the Private Hire industry, and operators should be encouraged to innovate and provide new ways to improve standards. For example technology is constantly improving the way Private Hire operators can monitor driving patterns and track safe driving through things like real-time feedback or telematics. Telematics allows

operators to use data captured through smart phones to encourage drivers to reduce harsh braking and driving above the speed limit. Requirements for additional driving proficiency tests, over and above the UK practical driving test, are therefore increasingly unnecessary. Based on the above we therefore recommend that Leeds City Council remove the Driving Standards Assessment. PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER SEMINAR: LEEDS KNOWLEDGE & LEEDS CITY CENTRE knowledge Historically, knowledge and topographical tests were necessary to ensure a driver was able to transport passengers to their destination in a direct and timely manner. Given the significant advances and proliferation in GPS and mapping technology, such tests are no longer relevant in today's Private Hire market and should not be mandatory. GPS technology provides a much more accurate way of identifying the quickest or shortest route and is now ubiquitous. DFT Guidance also makes a clear distinction between topographical knowledge requirements for Taxi and Private Hire drivers. It states that such tests may be appropriate for Taxi Drivers but are "unnecessarily burdensome" for Private Hire drivers, given that Private Hire drivers are all pre-booked, meaning that a journey can be planned in advance if necessary. Analysis of tens of thousands of trips taken on the Uber platform in Merseyside has shown no difference in driver ratings or trip quality between drivers who have taken a topographical test (via a Sefton private hire driver's licence) and those who haven't (via a Knowsley private hire driver's licence). We therefore recommend that Leeds City Council remove the Leeds knowledge & Leeds City Centre Knowledge component from the Private Hire Driver Seminar.

**Q8 comments: NO**

They should still give training

Leeds City have a responsibility to provide training and this should be done by the Council

Regular training

There aren't that many contracts in place in the first instance anyway.

Training has to be provided by someone!!

I think there should be more tests.

As you are taking a fee I believe you should supply all the necessary information needed that is with in the test

Important to retain some control over what licence holders achieve/ need to be re-trained.

It is too important and the Council must remain firmly in control of these processes

training is important on a service like this

If the council are the ones controlling access to hackney or private hire licenses then there needs to be some criteria as to who can have one. How else except by training applicants to a set council standard. As it is the training is not detailed enough. Many drivers can not use a GPS or rely on one completely in which case they are lost without. VERY few can read a map or an A-Z even though this is supposedly part of the test that the council currently does.

All the training is essential

It's a service to the public and it would be a good way to ensure standards

Some training is necessary

safeguarding and disability awareness should be extended and more thorough

I don't see how that would benefit anyone.

Council needs to keep on top of all training

Driver, standards need to be improved, not outsourced as this always seem to lower standards

The training is essential to maintain high levels of service

A mixed package of training is essential for private hire vehicles

The training is fully trained and has a duty of care.

Why would you stop providing training? Are you deliberately trying to create an even further unsafe industry?

Training is really important to the quality of the service

I think the council should be involved in the training of drivers in some way, as it's important

I believe that the drivers need to be trained otherwise the customer may not get the service they are paying for. Customer care is particularly important and drivers should be instructed not to impose their cultural/religious values on passengers - for instance, being rude to women some drivers think shouldn't be allowed out on their own, or disapprove of their dress.

Training is vital to ensure that all drivers have a good understanding of all their responsibilities etc as a taxi driver. I don't think it makes any difference whether it is delivered in house or contracted out - providing it meets the needs and delivers the right outcomes. If contracted out then the contract monitoring needs to be robust

Training is essential for new applicants

The training appears to me to cover many aspects of both customer and driver safety and comfort

It needs to be done to keep a high standard

Taxi driver training is vital, especially where disability awareness raising is concerned.

Wld limit influence as outlined in earlier response

Training is an essential element of obtaining a PHD or HCD licence. It ensures that applicants are aware of the requirements expected of them and the relevant rules/regulation they must follow. It also safeguards the public as licensed drivers receive training to ensure they are competent to carry out their role.

Should provide the training and not contract it out

training is essential

Training is vital and these courses look important.

We believe that further training needs to happen - there are specific Vocationally related qualifications that are aimed at the taxi driver industry. These support the driver to ensure professionalism and that they are equipped with all the knowledge required to work within the industry. Here at Antrec Limited (the busiest taxi driver academy in the Orth West) we also include the VRQ, our SEAt training and training for a professional accountant with regards to self employed tax returns.

As mentioned previously, it is imperative for the Council to remain in control of some aspects of the training but not all.

Taxi drivers need to speak better English

As mentioned previously, it is imperative for the Council to remain in control of some aspects of the training but not all. training is needed - need more awareness if anything

Absolutely not. It is an essential part of the 'fit and proper' person assessment and to drop to the lowest level of entry would be a significant backward step for the Authority which has led the way in terms of standards of drivers.

#### **Q9 comments: YES**

Consistency, professionalism and transferability

Beacuse drivers from other area such as bradford and wakefield even as far as wolverhampton are working in leeds since the new goverment law

Only if its properly checked

Helps the drivers

I have always wanted to ask Leeds licensing if I could take an advanced driver training course and the operations manager has mentioned this in one of the newsletters as well. I strongly believe you are never a good driver until you have achieved a qualification to better your driving and can be assessed on it. Even Transport For London looks to Leeds licensing and adopts some of their rules.

As there are a lots of driver coming in to leeds from other councils to work. As they are working in our district they should be given same training as us or they shouldn't be allowed to work in our district.

This trade does not carry enough recognisable merit which the general public know nothing about.

Common sense!!

but if this is done it must go out to all drivers, unlike the failed NVQ VERY POOR

To work as a combined authority all licence holders must attain the same standard.

It's a good idea

Only if the map/route/A-Z training is more thorough.

It's a flexible approach

ensuring staff are trained

Of course--standardisation of qualifications/accreditation is beneficial to everyone--it saves on 'red tape' and it saves money, time and effort when equivalent skills have already been acquired. Standardisation is inherently best.

With apps like UBER drivers from other areas in West Yorks are operating in Leeds, so uniform standards would be beneficial

Sounds a good idea

So all drivers are of the same standard and paying the same fees

It provides continual assessment and refresher opportunities

Demonstrates a commitment to the service

Leeds sets high standards and must determine the regional standards.

I don't fully understand the question, but from what I make of it if you're trying to make it harder to obtain a licence, and apply thorough testing, then 1, I fully agree.

To ensure the service levels are as good from drivers outside Leeds

It needs to be regulated to the same standard and this would make it easier to implement and monitor.

Good to transfer to other authorities, to give individuals flexibility

I think drivers do move between companies, so it makes sense to have transferable qualifications and modular accreditation might be easier to manage for companies and drivers

It would make sense to operate to the same standards countywide.

It is really useful for members of the public to be able to expect consistent professional standards

It makes sense to transfer skills rather than have to complete training already gained in another council area

It saves re doing it for other places - therefore saving money and time

all working to a professional standard

It makes sense.

Makes sense for the skills development of the city's working population and may increase value for money/economies of scale

This creates a level playing field across the local area and ensures the travelling public can be confident that all licensed drivers in that region have had suitable training.

Makes sense the the accreditatoin and transferable qualifications are recognised across West Yorkshire absolutely. the drivers are representing lcc

its the way forward

Drivers often work across local boundaries so working with other West Yorks authorities seems to be a good idea. Also it will help to standardise the process across the county and could help to save money through collaborative working.

We strongly agree with the vision for a single, harmonised approach to private hire licensing (including driver training and assessment) across West Yorkshire. This will deliver greater consistency across the region in terms of standards, and provide greater flexibility for drivers to operate across the region as the barriers to transfer a licence from one authority to another reduce. Consistent standards are also positive in terms of enforcement across the West Yorkshire Combined Authority area. The Council should carefully consider any intention to introduce recognised driver qualifications and accreditation, particularly in terms of the cost implications. Introduction of a nationally recognised qualification such as a Vocationally Related Qualification (VRQ), for example, carries with it considerable cost - both in terms of lengthy classroom

training delivery and the enrollment fee levied by the accredited examination body. It is not uncommon for such courses to cost an applicant upwards of £250. Previously there were various funding sources available that could cover the cost of such training (for example the European Social Fund), however many of these sources are no longer available. As a result the costs of such training are more likely to be borne by the applicant themselves and, if significant, could pose a considerable barrier to obtaining a private hire driver's licence in Leeds.

The recommendation that can be made which adds significant value to the delivery and potentially could supersede all of the individual components and will bring all of the different training aspects is the VRQ for the Taxi industry, a couple of the occupational units as listed below and our SEAT award that we have developed here at Antrec. The VRQ can be delivered to individuals who are wanting to become a taxi driver and individuals whom are already a taxi driver for their continuous professional development. If for instance that a driver is unable to cope with the demands of the IT based end point assessment within the B-TEC qualification then the modular NVQ qualification would be appropriate as different methods of gathering evidence can be shown - this is only applicable if the driver is currently in employment. The NVQ can't be delivered if the driver isn't within an employment opportunity at the time of wanting to take the qualification

Better quality Service

Only if this was done across other West Yorkshire Authorities and it is not used as a backdoor to out source training. Such accreditation would benefit certain drivers but not all. Maybe this should be an optional extra for drivers.

It would be good to know we have trained taxi drivers for safety

ensures consistency

Professionalising the trade is always good and the Combined Licensing approach would have a significantly beneficial effect. In respect of the professional driver accreditation Leeds should lead the way and highlight its best practice as long as it considers how and when it might impact on the existing trade. Members might feel that the existing PH driver conditions in respect of 'Requirement to undertake training' might adequately cover this point if it was applied when appropriate and possibly in necessary modules.

#### **Q9 comments: NO**

Just penalise Leeds drivers and losing revenue.

I am sure that if Leeds provided training it would be of a high enough standard/quality to be accepted across all WY authorities

Who would gain from this

I think everyone council should be separate so there's no cross bordering and each driver responsible to their own areas. But I do believe the officers of each areas cross West Yorkshire should be able to stop any driver as the DBS and the medical examination also should be expected across the West Yorkshire

It will more complex

Drivers working in Leeds should attain their badge through city council only

Drivers who have already completed their training have already invested a significant amount of time and money in getting trained and accredited in their profession. To now have to do this all over again, takes them away from their work places, hence losing more money and costs them further charges. Would it not be fairer to commence this with NEW drivers and phased the accreditation with existing drivers in over, for example over 5 years gradually (taking up to 5 years to be accredited).

We already have that training previously with NVQ

It needs leaving alone

A driver is a driver, why the need for qualifications?

With all the different courses that have been done I would say that most drivers are accredited

I strongly feel that this should be optional and not forced upon drivers. I understand why you are doing this however some people don't have the time or are not interested in these qualifications and hate doing tests and classroom training hence and dread doing this. So if you do go ahead with this which is fine



however it should be the choice of the drivers if they would like to do or not.

**Q10 comments:**

Lack of disability awareness among drivers. Particular issues for passengers with a sensory disability. Accommodation of assistance dogs. Adequate guiding skills taking partially sighted passengers from doorstep to taxi and from taxi final walking destination

Equality and Wheelchair training

Operators need their city knowledge updating. It's not possible to use specific roads and pick ups or drop offs are not possible.

I as a private hire driver have found very recently I have been giving first aid i.e. Cleaning wounds and wrapping bandages to some customers or passers by. God forbid the day I encounter an accident I the highest severity. I certainly don't want to be running round like a headless chicken. I would want to help them. So for that reason first aid training should be made compulsory for every driver. This can come in handy in all walks of life and help even when off duty.

Dementia. The old. Good practice. Customer care.

Customer service and other subjects covered in the NVQ, that was stopped for some reason

What is in place I think it covers everything

There is already enough training steps for a driver

Feel we have this covered.

Many of the drivers will not deal with a wheelchair user who travels seated in their wheelchair, this training should be separate and be specific to those who hold or are seeking to hold a permit to do this type of transport provision. As already said, it is communication that is the key to everything and we need to ensure that the right candidates are selected to do the job. The problem is how do you expand the training to new levels if you are limited by the ability of those who you are trying to educate?

I don't know the current syllabus (you've not told us what this is) but equality areas are vital in particular age ability/disability (including physical, learning disability, mental health & sensory impairment) users of mobility aids hate crime working with people who don't have English as a 1st language

I book taxis for several disabled people as part of my job. It is very hard to book several wheelchair accessible taxis at one time and they are often late. HOWEVER I blame the operators and their admin staff because I email booking in and they do not seem to pass the info to the drivers. For example: a blind elderly lady with a guide dog. She will need an estate vehicle so the dog can go in the back. She will need a driver who isn't funny about dogs and not refuse to take the dog. She will need a CAR rather than a minibus or people-carrier as she can't get up into a high vehicle. She will need a patient caring driver to help her out if she needs and not rush her. I can repeatedly ask the operator for all these things and get NONE. I have many further examples.

The needs of disabled people are often not adequately met by taxi drivers, that includes people who use wheelchairs, people with learning difficulties and people with autism

More taxi drivers need training in getting the customer in the taxi in an electric wheelchair or a small mobility scooter

awareness of people with support needs, disability but also vulnerability of learning disabled people and other young people

I inherently laud training to appropriately (sensitively) deal with vulnerable demographics.

We have had various problems with drivers leaving people with learning disabilities at the wrong place or speaking to people in the wrong way. So more training on how to deal with adults with learning disabilities.

A lot of private hire taxis need training in all this area

All the above. Some drivers seem to be quite ignorant of the issues these groups face

Because emerging issues will require awareness raising

Disability awareness /supporting young people / wheelchair training

Leeds should train and support all areas of diversity and equality including dementia.

Safeguarding for children and any vulnerable persons. Drivers need to be professional and have an education when it comes to things such as grooming etc. It should be safe to put a 13 year old girl in a private hire car alone in 2017, but it's not is it. I think there's some serious work to be done here, and it needs to start with training drivers. The regulations need to be very strict, no excuses. no language barriers, if they can't speak English then it's a straight "X". How about a knowledge test of the city, such as routes and destinations? Nobody should have to give directions to a taxi driver. You wouldn't give directions to a bus/coach driver would you? People are paying for a service, not to educate the driver!

Dementia particularly

Too much training in the world already.

Consideration...drivers often do not have any because they (and I understand to a degree) want to get to the next paid job. This often means you are rushed and feel more pain/embarrassment. I wonder if you involve disabled people in your training? Either wheelchair or walking stick? Often it is the persons approach to me that matters and the journey is much easier when the driver is friendly and not making me feel that I am the customer from hell just because I need some help with them moving their seats forward. I know there are problems finding companies for people who need help getting in and out of vehicles, or use wheelchairs. Also, anyone with disabilities, dementia or mental health problems can have difficulty communicating, and people do need training in this area.

Drivers should have to attend training in all the subjects you suggest, plus, treating women with respect. All areas of equality need to be considered, and the barriers that some people face and how they can be overcome. If taxis are not accessible (in the widest sense) to all then this prevents people from participating fully in life

Existing drivers already have that through work experience

Hidden disabilities - I have a hidden disability and use taxis to and from work regularly. Drivers need to be aware that not all disabilities can present as obvious as sensory impairments or wheelchair user. Also better training with wheelchair users. It's nice to have conversations but I'd prefer not to listen to really sexist remarks from drivers - as well as other bigoted remarks about race, religion, gender etc etc - I don't need to explain why I don't have a husband or children for example.

We are private hire/taxi drivers not social services!

Some drivers still do not understand how to deal with vulnerable clients. It infuriates me. This needs more training.

Private hire drivers need to be trained as to how to behave when driving into the city centre and not to quarrel with and come in the way of hackney drivers.

I am the Service Coordinator for a service for adults with Autism in Leeds (Specialist Autism Services). A number of our service users use taxis to travel to/from our service. Traveling is one of the commonest areas of difficulty for individuals with ASC and can be very anxiety-inducing. Having taxi drivers with a greater awareness of ASC might really help them. A few improvements that might help our members: - If the driver is going to be late, inform the customer - If the driver needs to travel by an alternative routes (e.g. because of traffic/road works) inform and give the reason - Be patient (do not rush individuals) - Be aware that some with ASC find it difficult to make / can become anxious in being invited to make small talk

All these were done 5 years ago

Drivers seem to have very little understanding of people with hidden disability (autism)

I believe there should be specific areas on Disability Awareness; Helping Passengers with a Visual Impairment; Invisible Impairments; Helping Passengers with Multiple Impairments

I would absolutely support this for a number of reasons: dementia is growing, there are more older people and more disabled people so there will be a growing need. More importantly, its the right thing to do in line with our compassionate city , best city to grow old...etc ambitions. Also, as per previous responses, wherever/however appropriate or possible, we shld also look at inclusive recruitment.

It is important that licensed drivers are aware of how to deal with all customers they encounter.

basic first aid. driver theory testing every 5 years

its something that keeps cropping up - drivers knocking on a door for a deaf customer. Or refusing some wheelchairs. The drivers need to be aware that their customer is a real person

LGBT Awareness - as a member of the LGBT community I am aware of friends and colleagues who have felt uncomfortable or discriminated against by taxi/private hire drivers due to their perceived sexuality or gender identity.

Antrec Limited have developed over a 6 year period the below units which we deliver to the majority of taxi drivers across our region in Merseyside. These units are industry leading which is the Service Enterprise Awareness Training, this can be delivered pre or post-employment but will give all drivers the necessary awareness needed to offer exceptional customer services and be able to be vigilant in the 21st century and mindful as to what potential activities they could be a witness too and how to report / deal with these incidents

An awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation and Child abuse – Portfolio of evidence 1 know how to recognise abuse in children and young people. 2 Be aware of factors that make abuse and sexual exploitation more likely 3 Know how to respond to suspicions or disclosures of abuse or sexual exploitation

An awareness of Safeguarding Adults – Portfolio of evidence 1 know how to recognise abuse in adults 2 know how to respond to suspicions or disclosures of abuse in adults

An awareness of the Prevent Concept – Portfolio of evidence 1 Have an awareness of the Prevent Concept 1.1 Define the terms 'British Values', 'Radicalisation' and 'Extremism' 1.2 Identify examples of possible extremism 1.3 Identify factors that may make a person more vulnerable to exploitation 1.4 Outline your rights as a citizen in the UK in relation to discrimination, hate crime, extremism and radicalisation. 1.5 State the correct procedure for reporting and recording suspicions of radicalisation and extremism.

An awareness of the contemporary issues in your sector – Portfolio of evidence 1 Have an awareness of the current issues effecting the sector

An introduction to mental ill-health – Portfolio of evidence 1 Be aware of what is meant by mental health 2 Be aware of some of the responses to mental health issues

Have an awareness of learning disabilities and learning difficulties – Portfolio of evidence 1 Be aware of the different types of learning disabilities and learning difficulties 2 Be aware of ways to support individuals with disabilities and learning difficulties

Autism Spectrum Condition Awareness – Portfolio of evidence 1 Be aware of the concept of Autism Spectrum Condition 2 Be aware ways to support an individual with an Autistic Spectrum Condition

Sensory Loss / Impairment Awareness - - Portfolio of evidence 1 Be aware of the nature and characteristics of sensory loss and impairment 2 Be aware of ways to support an individual with sensory loss.

Customer Service Awareness – Portfolio of evidence 1 know the importance of good customer service within your sector 2 Be aware of key aspects of good customer service.

Safe transportation and handling of specimens awareness – Portfolio of evidence 1 Understand health and safety procedures relevant to safe transportation of specimens

An awareness of Health and Safety in the workplace – Portfolio of evidence 1 Be aware of the health and safety procedures relevant to your workplace

I certainly feel that the Council could do more with the training of Operators and Drivers in Disability issues. Operators need to be made aware of their own responsibilities as per the Disability Act 2010. Furthermore, with the current changes in legislation, it is important that the Council is seen to be doing everything in it's power to educate both Drivers and Operators in such issues. Too many times, disabled passengers are being let down and not provided with the service that should be provided.

All of the above. Taxis need to be accessible for the elderly to be able to get in and out of.

Somewhere close to your office with sufficient parking

dementia and older people - big need

That could be encompassed in the improved driver training module.

#### **Q11 comments:**

Computer based training would be a better idea

Classroom / face to face is probably most effective with reinforcement and confirmation as part of the delivery. Role play and real life situations. For disability awareness training involve people with disabilities

to give real examples.

Computer based training

The training should also include computer based and using satnav and map

A suitable mix depending on the subject

Face to face. Drivers ignore most of the licencing regulations. Too many breeches to list here

Classroom

Face to face.

Face to face so you know it's sinking in

More face to face training in class room

On live E-learning

I think all the training should be face to face or in a classroom as is the current situation also should introduced the new writing essay like in London as the tfl has done

Once someone goes through the licensing process he get enough training and day by day he seeks more experience. So it's pointless taking him to classrooms with new excuses again and again

Combination of both plus maybe some practical.

Local training centres/ e-learning

I think the company owners need to understand their levels of responsibility and so should have a session of learning specific to this subject. You can never beat person to person training, computer based training can be done by anyone other than the person who is instructed to do it.

I think because in my experience many drivers do not have English as their first language that face to face testing is an important part of the programme. This because issues can be caught early on ie inappropriate behaviours, very poor language skills. Drivers are clever to the extent that they can provide new applicants with the 'right' answers rather than the applicant actually thinking for themselves. However to engage the applicants in the learning more - maybe a variety of different learning tools can be used but not rely on one. The current customer care training - 0-one ever fails. WHY? because the tester is lenient? or because he 'helps' the applicants? Does he allow them to retry each question until they get it right?

Drivers need to listen to what the disabled customers needs are and how to make sure we are safe from our mobility equipment moving.

Private hire should be allowed to use bus lanes

There are pros and cons to every manner in which training/testing is delivered. Face-to-face is often more engaging whereas computer-based training offers flexibility. I would recommend a hazard/risk course for all professional drivers to understand how to deal with dangerous road conditions as well as to better experience the consequences of reckless driving.

We already run disability awareness for universities and schools and are able to offer training to drivers

Think both also think that the council needs to do more spot checks not just cars but the drivers as well

Face to face is much more useful. Can't ask a computer a question...

Online theory training could be a requirement for learning that is free but produces a certificate or reference before the classes can commence to show 'revision' and preparation.

Computer based

face to face in order to ensure understanding and stress equality of need.

Face to face in a classroom with strict test papers.

Face to face

Training for drivers who are involved with people who have complex health issues should be better equipped to deal with this. My disability is not nearly as limiting as some and as I only became disabled this way two years ago I understand first hand the differences in attitudes and problems that arise.

Overall, most drivers are good and helpful but there are a number who are not. Cars are often not suitable and make things much worse. Training with real people who have disabilities in my opinion is a must and would hopefully reduce the problems.

Face to face

I think a mixture of methods, depending on the thing being taught and tested. For things like how to help customers with different needs, it might be helpful to get groups of taxi users involved.

Face to face so you can be sure it is the person themselves undertaking the training, not somebody doing it on their behalf.

Case studies are always useful

From my experience computer based training isn't as successful as face to face. When I had staff who did computer based training, it didn't seem to sink in as much or be taken as seriously as when the training was done in person. Obviously this is a cost, but rather than rely on computer based training than doesn't deliver as well, it may be worth it.

By post

Definitely face to face so trainers can realise if any driver or operator is not competent enough

They need an information day with power points informing them how to behave

Face to face anybody can lie on a computer

Face to face in a classroom (better learning)

Face to face, with people who have first hand experience of the relevant issues.

A mixture is, on paper, better as there are quality aspects that can arguably only be assured in face to face. However, appreciating costs involved in that a mixture of methods wld perhaps be most expedient.

Should be a mix to ensure that different learning styles are catered for.

face to face is the best. Unfortunately it is also expensive. Perhaps regular training on a computer

using service users at the training, to enhance and improve the standard. ie let a blind person come to a training session with their dog and talk the drivers through their experience of getting a taxi.

Any methods should be considered as people learn better in different ways.

The Council may wish to consider a model whereby applicants are provided with access to training material online, to be reviewed at their own pace and in their own time. The accredited training provider(s) can then conduct an assessment of the applicant's understanding of that content in a controlled environment at the training provider's facility. As part of this approach we would also recommend that the training provider has the ability to submit DBS and DVLA checks on behalf of the applicant, and to verify the applicant's DBS identity documentation. These activities could be undertaken at the training provider's premises as the applicant attends for their assessment - streamlining the licence application process and reducing the number of touchpoints the applicant has with the Council. We suggest that the licensing process could therefore progress as follows: Step 1: Applicant access guidance on applying for a Private Hire Driver's Licence on the Leeds City Council website, including eligibility criteria and on-line training materials that the applicant will need to study to prepare for their assessment Step 2: The applicant is able to apply for an appointment online at one of the council's approved training providers Step 3: The applicant attends their appointment at the approved training provider where: - They complete the Leeds City Council private hire driver's licence application form (ideally this should be available on-line) - They are assessed to confirm their understanding of the online training material - Assuming they pass the assessment, they complete their DBS and DVLA applications whilst the training provider verifies their identification documents - They are provided with a Group 2 Medical Assessment form to be completed by the appropriate medical practitioner Step 4: Once the DBS / DVLA checks have been completed and the Medical Assessment has been undertaken, the applicant visits Leeds City Council with the relevant documentation and licence fee to have their photograph taken, conclude right to work in the UK checks and collect their badge (with a separate step to arrange a vehicle inspection if they are also a vehicle proprietor)

The recommendation that can be made which adds significant value to the delivery and potentially could supersede all of the individual components and will bring all of the different training aspects is the VRQ for the Taxi industry, a couple of the occupational units as listed below and our SEAT award that we have developed here at Antrec. The VRQ can be delivered to individuals who are wanting to become a taxi



driver and individuals whom are already a taxi driver for their continuous professional development. For those that are unemployed they can access funding via the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) – this could potentially incorporate some additional support from the training provider whom is delivering the qualification. A provider that work with Uber at present are currently offering up to £165 support to the unemployed learners to help with Medicals, DBS and cost of taxi licensing. Those learners that are currently employed via an SME or Sole Trader / Self Employed status could access Skills Support for the Workforce (or other suitable government provision) to undertake the training which should also be of 0 cost to the individual. High Level Unit information is below:- B-TEC Level 2 Introduction to the role of the Private Hire Driver 1. Health and safety in the taxi and private hire work environment – Online Test 2. Road safety when driving passengers in a taxi or private hire vehicle – Online Test 3. Professional customer service in the taxi and private hire industry – Online Test 4) Taxi and private hire vehicle maintenance and safety inspections – Online Test 5) The regulatory framework of the taxi and private hire industry – Online Test 6) Taxi and private hire services for passengers who require assistance – Observation and Report 7) Routes and fares in the taxi and private hire vehicle industries – Online Test 8) Transporting of parcels, luggage and other items in the taxi and private hire industries – Online Test 9) Transporting of children and young persons by taxi or private hire vehicle – Online Test The training delivery would be classroom based and testing methods are stated besides each of the unit titles.

Classroom discussions and activities

Face to face to encourage understanding and diversity training. To help improve politeness and general customer care.

This should be optional... However computer based is good however not all people are computer literate so a choice should be available

face to face seems to be more effective from my experience, then follow up shorter, computer based refreshers annually or as often as needed

Very probably a mix of these but the key issues are that the process is streamlined, more cost effective to the service and the trade, has a high level of reassurance and enables the more prepared and professional candidate to access a licence much more quickly whilst never losing sight of the integrity issues. It is important that the service provider can demonstrate all of these benefits with built in integrity as a key component.

#### **Q12 comments:**

All training should be tested to prove understanding and ability to apply the training

The test is there to ensure drivers understand what they have learned.

If a person does not pass they should not be licensed. If the training is not something that the trade need to know/do then it shouldn't be in the training. 'Testing' is the only way to check understanding.

All should be tested. Failures should not allow licence renewal until passed

All should be tested to maintain high standards

not really because the test we do to get our badge is enough

All training must have a pass or re-sit test

The English and maths test the especially the new course regarding the young people awareness as a driver there is too many flaws with the current contractors everything should be within each council as what happened in Sheffield with those young girls should not happen anywhere in the country and I personally believe from the police to all other bodies included should be blamed if this ever happened

There should be just awareness courses without exams

English, Local knowledge (Tested) and customer care (Awareness).

Law, conditions, geography, literacy should all be pass/fail. Safeguarding/ customer care - awareness with on the job experience/ examples.



You MUST have some base level below which it is deemed as inappropriate for a person to undertake a task. This is the only way that standards can not only be maintained but increased. We in Fleet Services try to explain that the drivers of Taxi and Private Hire vehicles are as bigger part of the tourism and economic infrastructure of the city as anything else. They are in many cases the first and last contact a visitor has with the city and it's people, facilities and commerce. It is therefore paramount that these people are left with a positive attitude to the city. The work of TPHL is a huge step towards arriving at this and so should focus on the improvement of driver standards and behaviour.

I think all aspects of driver training should be tested. I think all the current tests should be re-examined and made more thorough and detailed and varied. Bring the LearnDirect modules back in house ESPECIALLY and make the English test harder. You HAVE to be able to communicate with your customers. Situations can quickly get out of hand if there is no communication. I also think penalties should be more severe. Everyone can relate an incident where a taxi-driver has made a scary and unsafe manoeuvre in front of them. Also enforcement officers - there should be a LOT more not only for customer protection but also driver protection too.

All drivers who have a disabled taxi should be trained up on how to secure mobility equipment so it doesn't move and we don't get hurt, I've had 2 accidents due to drivers not taking care of our equipment and it not falling on us

It would be positive to include diversity issues on the training.

Private hire drivers should be able to use bus lanes

mystery shopping!! have people score drivers

Being able to understand and appropriately deal with vulnerable demographics is something that should be vital, along with road safety.

Most of the training

Knowledge, customer care and private hire navigation should be tested.

Safeguarding, disabilities awareness, as awareness rest as test.

the licensing staff should be tested and the information on how to apply to be a taxi driver needs to be clearer giving step by step instruction, that does not appear to be clear right now.

Handling difficult conversations / situations

It should all be tested with a pass or fail. Taxi drivers work with members of the public, people who may be vulnerable or children. Why should there not be strict testing? I believe a thorough testing system would make drivers take their jobs more seriously and actually have a sense of achievement and professionalism. Things need to change.

I have looked at this from a disability perspective and know that there are other issues out there too. I have already stated that this aspect of testing should be hands on not online/paper test only. Failing should be a re-sit of the same. It is also then the responsibility of the owners of taxi companies to maintain standards and initiate driver awareness days etc for key aspects of the job.

Drivers should be tested on local knowledge - some of the ones I've met or seen driving would fail for certain.

They should be tested on everything.

I suppose it depends on whether there are any other consequences. If no consequences and the training is making no difference then it really begs the questions whether there is any point in doing it!

Language and numeracy and attitude!

all aspects should be tested.

1, all drivers should meet a minimum standard, in order to be accredited and they should pass all aspects of the training before being fully qualified.

This is not straightforward. Exclusive reliance on testing can mitigate against inclusive recruitment. However on balance, I would say include in a test if we value the learning enough and think its important drivers can demonstrate they know it. Having something that isn't tested alongside what is inevitably reduces importance - I don't know what is currently "for awareness" but it is likely to be relegated to 'optional' in someone's mind set.

There should be a test for all of it. Taxi drivers reflect our city to both the people of Leeds and to visitors. Their driving standards and standards of customer care should be the highest that they can possibly be. A taxi driver is a recognised professional driver, representing the city and as such there should be tests on their driving ability, road safety awareness and driving behaviour around other road users as well as their customer care abilities.

vehicle standard i.e. tyres, oil, water levels and lights. Being aware of current legislation

Customer service Person skills

This will depend on the delivery model that is selected. If the Council decides to provide access to all training content online for applicants to self-study (and we believe that this would be the most efficient delivery approach), then the Council may need to consider a basic assessment in each area to confirm that the applicant has indeed reviewed the relevant material.

This should be dictated by a national/ regional standard - but all awareness training should be portfolio based and internally verified by a qualifications specialist to ensure the validity, accuracy and currency of the training. This will ensure that all training delivered is achieving at least the minimum quality standards'. Certainly any aspect of the training that covers disability discrimination, touting and inappropriateness should be tested.

All of the training should be tested and especially speaking English and safeguarding awareness.

It should all be awareness only in my opinion...personally i hate tests and have nightmares prior to any test I think awareness is a starting point for drivers and there could possibly be some greater clarity after Members have had the opportunity to sit through a modular approach (which is what happened last time) prior to the final proposals going to Licensing Committee. In reality, it would be difficult and time consuming to test on every aspect of training. If there was later found to be deficiency in any drivers knowledge, understanding or application they could be referred for more specific training.