

## **Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Knowledge Tests**

**Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee** Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Author:** Group Director, Environment, Regeneration and Community

**Wards Affected:** All

### **Purpose**

- To consider amendments to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Knowledge Tests

### **Recommendation**

The Sub-Committee is asked to: -

- Agree the amendments to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver knowledge tests as set out in the body of the report and introduce, from 1 April 2010, a further section of 10 questions on the Highway Code.

## **1. Reasons**

- 1.1 The requirement for prospective Hackney Carriage drivers to take and pass a test of their knowledge of locations within the Borough, and licence conditions, was introduced in January 2002, with a similar test for private hire drivers being introduced in April 2004.

## **2. Detail**

- 2.1 The current driver test is multiple choice and covers 50 questions in four sections:
  - 2.1.1 Identification of building locations – 15 questions
  - 2.1.2 Identification of road/street locations – 15 questions
  - 2.1.3 Identification of correct and quickest routes to be followed – 10 questions.
  - 2.1.4 Rules and Regulations – 10 questions.
  - 2.1.5 Currently an applicant, in order to pass the test, must score at least 80% on sections 1, 2 and 3, and 100% on section 4.

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- 2.2 Officers have over the past 12 months noticed an increase in the amount of complaints and comments from the general public regarding the perceived lack of roadcraft and driving ability of licensed drivers.
- 2.3 It is proposed to add, from 1 April 2010, a further section of 10 questions, with a pass mark of 80%, on the Highway Code and associated matters. A sample of proposed questions is attached at Appendix "A".

### **Alternative Options**

- The tests would remain as they are at present.

#### **Risk Management**

##### *Financial and Procurement Implications*

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. There are no procurement issues arising from this report.

##### *Legal/Human Rights Implications*

There are no legal implications to this report. Human Rights have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

##### *Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)*

A Healthy and Caring Place; An Economically Prosperous Place; An Environmentally Friendly Place; A Safe Place.

### **Consultees**

The Director of Finance (s.151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.

### **Background Papers and Appendices**

- Appendix "A" – Specimen of questions to be asked regarding the Highway Code.

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**Appendix “A” – Specimen of Proposed Additional Quations**

1.     You are approaching traffic lights that have been green for some time. You should:  
      (a) accelerate hard  
      (b) maintain your speed  
      (c) **be ready to stop**  
      (d) brake hard
  
2.     You should only use a mobile phone when:  
      (a) receiving a call  
      (b) **suitably parked with the engine switched off**  
      (c) driving at less than 30mph  
      (d) driving an automatic vehicle
  
3.     Your vehicle is fitted with a navigation system. How should you avoid letting this distract you while driving?  
      (a) Keep going and input your destination into the system  
      (b) Stop immediately to view and use the system  
      (c) **Stop in a safe place before using the system**  
      (d) Keep going as the system will adjust to your route
  
4.     Tailgating means:  
      (a) **Following another vehicle too closely**  
      (b) Reversing into a parking space  
      (c) Using the rear door of a hatchback car  
      (d) Driving with rear fog lights on
  
5.     You are following a vehicle on a wet road. You should leave a time gap of at least:  
      (a) Two seconds  
      (b) Three seconds  
      (c) **Four seconds**  
      (d) One second
  
6.     What should you use your horn for?  
      (a) To signal your annoyance

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- (b) To alert others to your presence
  - (c) To greet other road users
  - (d) To allow you right of way
7. You are driving in traffic at the speed limit for the road. The driver behind is trying to overtake. You should:
- (a) move closer to the car ahead, so the driver behind has no room to overtake
  - (b) wave the driver behind to overtake when it is safe
  - (c) keep a steady course and allow the driver behind to overtake
  - (d) accelerate to get away from the driver behind
8. If your vehicle uses diesel fuel, take extra care when refuelling. Diesel fuel is:
- (a) sticky
  - (b) odourless
  - (c) clear
  - (d) slippery
9. It is essential that tyre pressures are checked regularly. When should this be done?
- (a) after any lengthy journey
  - (b) when tyres are cold
  - (c) when tyres are hot
  - (d) after travelling at high speed
10. You will use more fuel if your tyres are:
- (a) under-inflated
  - (b) of different makes
  - (c) over-inflated
  - (d) new
11. Skidding is mainly caused by:
- (a) the weather
  - (b) the driver
  - (c) the vehicle
  - (d) the road
12. A driver pulls out of a side road in front of you. You have to brake hard. You should:
- (a) ignore the error and stay calm
  - (b) flash your lights to show your annoyance
  - (c) sound your horn

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- (d) overtake as soon as possible
13. A driver's behaviour has annoyed you. It may help if you:
- (a) wind your window down and shout abusive language
  - (b) gesture to them with your hand
  - (c) stop and take a break**
  - (d) follow their car, flashing your headlights
14. You are turning left into a side road. What hazards should you be especially aware of?
- (a) One-way street
  - (b) Pedestrians**
  - (c) Traffic Congestion
  - (d) Parked vehicles
15. You see a pedestrian with a dog. The dog has a yellow or burgundy coat. This especially warns you that the pedestrian is:
- (a) elderly
  - (b) colour blind
  - (c) dog training
  - (d) deaf**
16. You are driving in town. There is a bus at the bus stop on the opposite side of the road. Why should you be careful?
- (a) The bus may have broken down
  - (b) Pedestrians may come from behind the bus to cross the road**
  - (c) The bus may move off suddenly
  - (d) The bus may remain stationary
17. You are travelling behind a bus that pulls up at a bus stop. What should you do?
- (a) Accelerate past the bus sounding your horn
  - (b) Watch carefully for pedestrians**
  - (c) Be ready to give way to the bus
  - (d) Pull in closely behind the bus
18. You are travelling in very heavy rain. Your overall stopping distance is likely to be:
- (a) doubled**
  - (b) up to 10 times greater

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- (c) halved
  - (d) no different
19. Which of the following statements describes the correct procedure when approaching a roundabout.
- (a) The broken white line at a roundabout means I must stop and give way to traffic already on the roundabout
  - (b) The broken white line at a roundabout means I must give priority to traffic already on the roundabout
  - (c) The broken white line at a roundabout means I should give way to any traffic approaching from my immediate right
  - (d) I have priority and should ignore traffic already on the roundabout
20. Why is travelling in neutral (coasting) wrong?
- (a) It will cause the car to skid
  - (b) It will make the engine stall
  - (c) The engine will run faster
  - (d) There is no engine braking
21. To correct a rear wheel skid you should:
- (a) not steer at all
  - (b) steer away from it
  - (c) steer into it
  - (d) apply your handbrake
22. You are approaching a busy junction. There are several lanes with road markings. At the last moment you realise you are in the wrong lane. You should:
- (a) continue in the lane you are in
  - (b) force your way into the correct lane
  - (c) stop until the area has cleared
  - (d) use clear signals to cut across
23. You may drive over a footpath:
- (a) to overtake slow moving traffic
  - (b) when the pavement is very wide
  - (c) if no pedestrians are near
  - (d) to get into a property
24. You lose control of the car and damage a garden wall. No-one is around. What should you do?
- (a) Report the incident to the Police within 24 hours

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- (b) Go back and speak to the house owner the following day
  - (c) Report the incident to your insurance company when you get home
  - (d) Find someone in the area and tell them about it immediately
25. Who is responsible for ensuring the vehicle is not overloaded?
- (a) the driver of the vehicle**
  - (b) the owner of the luggage being carried
  - (c) the licensing authority
  - (d) the private hire operator