



## AGENDA ITEM: 7

### SUMMARY

<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Licensing Health &amp; Safety Enforcement Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>03 February 2015</b>
<b>PART:</b>	<b>1</b>
If Part II, reason:	

<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Petition in respect of taxi testing station policy</b>
Contact:	Ross Hill – Licensing Team Leader, Legal Governance
Purpose of report:	To detail a petition received in respect of the Council's taxi testing station policy.
Recommendations	That the Committee note the report and petition.
Corporate objectives:	Dacorum Delivers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficiencies</li> </ul>
Implications:	No changes are proposed at this time; therefore no implications arise.
Consultees:	None
Background papers:	None
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. All vehicles which are presented to the Council for licensing as hackney carriages or private hire vehicles are required to satisfactorily complete a roadworthiness and standards inspection ('MOT and compliance test') before they will be licensed. More recently, the Council has begun requiring vehicles over 10 years of age to complete two such tests in each year. The purpose of these tests is to satisfy the legislative requirement that vehicles are safe and mechanically sound for the proposed use, offer sufficient comfort to passengers, and are of satisfactory appearance.
- 1.2. All tests are undertaken at a testing station authorised by the Council to conduct such tests. The station must also be approved by VOSA to carry out the MOT test. As the checks carried out go beyond the basic requirements of the MOT, an MOT certificate obtained from another test station will not be acceptable proof of compliance with the licensing standards set by the Council.
- 1.3. Since 2005, the Council has operated a policy of contracting a sole testing station within the borough. On each renewal, this contract is subject to a competitive tender exercise, to ensure value for money. The current testing station contract runs until June 2016.
- 1.4. Prior to 2005, the Council appointed two testing stations. This approach was discontinued by the then-Head of Public Protection, following concerns around the consistency in application of standards between the two stations, leading to drivers favouring one station as they felt they would be treated more leniently. Multiple test stations also dramatically increase the amount of officer time required to be spent in ensuring consistent application of standards and facilitating the testing of vehicles.

## **2. PETITION**

- 2.1. A petition has been received from the Dacorum Taxi Drivers Association requesting that the Council revert to the previous policy position and appoint a second test station. Two grounds are cited:
  - a) To offer further choice for drivers and alleviate pressure on the existing test station; and
  - b) A conflict of personalities between test station staff and drivers.
- 2.2. The petition is reproduced at Annex A.

## **3. OFFICERS COMMENTS**

- 3.1. Officers do not agree with the petitioners' claims that a change in approach to the appointment of test stations is required or beneficial. The change to a single test station was made as a result of demonstrable problems arising from the inconsistent application of the Council's standards between the two test stations. While there were some initial teething problems and a number

of complaints when the switch to a single station was made, in the main these arose from an instruction given to the test station by the licensing authority to rigorously assess the standards, particularly in respect of paintwork damage (e.g. scratches and chips). This instruction was subsequently relaxed, and the rate of complaints dropped considerably, with just two complaints received in the last 30 months.

- 3.2. Under the current testing contract, a minimum of 3 appointments per day are made available exclusively for the testing of Dacorum's licensed vehicles (i.e. around 780 appointments per year, for a fleet of around 410 vehicles), and further appointments will typically be made available upon request, subject to availability. It is very rare that an appointment cannot be offered to an applicant within 2 working days. It should be noted that although many vehicle proprietors follow the advice given to them and submit their applications early, thus securing their preferred appointment date and time, a minority persist in not making applications until very close to their licence expiry date, thus increasing the likelihood of their preferred appointment having already been booked.
- 3.3. The second ground, in respect of a conflict of interest, is vague and not borne out by complaints made to the licensing authority, of which there are very few. Although there will inevitably be dissatisfaction from time to time around the failure of a vehicle on a particular fault, we are not aware of any no complaints from drivers alleging that they have been treated unfairly or improperly by test station staff have been substantiated in recent years.
- 3.4. A bigger problem has been identified with the unclear nature of the current compliance standards, which are largely left open to interpretation. Officers have already held preliminary discussions with both the test station staff and the driver's association to propose updating this document so as to increase the clarity and consistent application of the applicable standards, and this work will continue in the coming months, with a view to reporting to a future meeting of this Committee.

**Annex A**  
**Petition in respect of taxi testing station policy**

**DACORUM TAXI DRIVERS ASSOCIATION**

This is the petition presented to Dacorum Borough Council by the taxi Association on behalf of the taxi and private hire trade within Decorum

Its the opinion of the trade that there should be **2 MOT/compliance testing station** giving drivers more choice when having vehicles tested with the introduction of two MOTs a year for older taxes we feel this would help in alleviate pressure on the existing one Testing station and give drivers a Choice and Reduced waiting time when booking a test

we have found that sometimes there is A conflict of personalities between the testing station Staff and the taxi drivers This has been an ongoing situation since the council changed the policy and reduced to 1 testing station

With 2 testing stations this would remove this problem

all drivers that have signed this petition are in support of the reintroducing 2 MOT/compliance testing stations for taxi and private hire cars And urge the council taxi committee to amend the policy.

Date 25/11/14

DATE	Drivers Name	Badge no	Signature	
26/11/14	Theresa King	264	T. King	304
26/11/14	GARY MITCHELL	94/170	G. MITCHELL	
26/11/14	Gerald Kingsell	HO 038	G. Kingsell	112
26/11/14	ROBIN TAYLOR	282001	R. Taylor	282
26/11/14	TONY CHILDS	29	T. Childs	004
26-11-14	MOHAMMAD WAJID	342	M. Wajid	306
26-11-14	TARIQ MAHMOOD	136	T. Mahmood	102
26-11-14	KEVIN KEARNS	176	K. Kearns	116
26-11-14	ANDREW JELLS	060	A. Jells	067
26-11-14	RUSSELL ANWERS	072	R. Anwers	233
26-11-14	Shakrel Ahmed	077	S. Ahmed	308
26-11-14	M-ADREES	350	M. Adrees	100
26-11-14	ZABIER AHMED	263	Z. Ahmed	085
26/11/14	MARK BISHOP	156	M. Bishop	149
26/11/14	ALAMMAR AWAN	HD376	A. Awan	HV303
26/11/14	PAUL WAGLAR	037	P. Waglar	HV117
26/11/14	Haniffa Sakran-Joe	XD263	H. Sakran-Joe	193
26/11/14	Abrar Khan	HD144	A. Khan	069
20/11/14	TONY GROVE	LD132	T. Grove	210
26/11/14	S.A. RAZA	HD109	S. A. Raza	HV206
26/11/14	M. HANLON	HD030	M. Hanlon	HV253
26/11/14	N KHAN	HD174	N. Khan	250
26/11/14	H. Fanacian	HD298	H. Fanacian	122
26/11/14	MR. G. RASOOL	HD330	G. Rasool	039
26/11/14	TONY CLARKE	HD180	T. Clarke	5455314 112

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Date 25/11/14

DATE	Drivers Name	Badge no	Signature
4/12/14	BABAR ALI	PD 228	B. Ali
4/12/14	WAHID RAJA	PD 160	W. Raja
4-12	SHAUKAT ALI	PD 216	Shaukat
04/12/14	M. WAHEED A BHATTI	H.D.341	M. Waheed
04/12/14	NADEEM, KIAN	PD003	Nadeem
04/12/14	Shafiqat Khan	XD279	Shafiqat
04/12/14	A.T KARAN	PD105	A.T Karan
4/12	ABDUL	PD 286	Abdul
4/12	SHARJEEL	HD355	Sharjeel
4/12/14	Jamir	PD 160	Jamir
4/12/14	I. RANSOME	HD031	I. Ransome
4/12/14	I. HAIDER	PD252	I. Haider
4/12/14	M. Hasani	HD090	M. Hasani
4/12/14	Luke McIlwain	XD164	Luke
4-12-14	M. NAEEM	DF56KPK	M. Naeem
5/2/14	M. USMAN	XD340	M. Usman
5-12-14	L. HURLEY		L. Hurley
5.12.14	G. MUSTAFA	PD201	G. Mustafa
5.12.14	S. B. IER	PP224	S. B. Ier
5/12/14	G. ALI	HD300	G. Ali
5/12	ANDREW LIDMAN	PD 210	Andrew Lidman
16/12	T. PAV	PD 313	T. Pav
19/12	N. AZHAR	HD158	N. Azhar

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DATE	Drivers Name	Badge no	Signature	
26.11.14	AZIZ BAKKALI	HD048	<i>Bakkali</i>	182
26.11.14	Nabil Shehadeh	HD103	<i>N. Shehadeh</i>	247
26.11.14	Armin Ali	HD326	<i>A. Ali</i>	266
26.11.14	ZUMAR KHAN	HD206	<i>Zumar Khan</i>	272
26.11.14	DAVID COOPER	HD167	<i>David Cooper</i>	170
26/11/14	Muhammad Adrees	HD127	<i>Muhammad Adrees</i>	080
26/11/14	MAHMOOD HUSSAIN	HD356	<i>Mahmood Hussain</i>	050
26.11.14	ASIA KHAN	HD296	<i>Asia Khan</i>	064
26/11/14	STEVE WILKINS	PH120	<i>S. Wilkins</i>	PH
26.11.14	CHRIS SAMBOUR	HD183	<i>Chris Sambour</i>	271
26-11-14	BENJIO	HD104	<i>Benjio</i>	30
26-11-14	CARIS VENDOR	HD2304	<i>Caris Vendor</i>	223
27-11-14	JOHN CATES	86	<i>John Cates</i>	208
27-11-14	N PRASONS	56	<i>N Prasons</i>	24
27-11-14	RASHID KHAN	305 <del>305</del>	<i>Rashid Khan</i>	078
27-11-14	SULEMAN KHAN	HD284	<i>S. Khan</i>	042
27-11-14	RAJA SHAREEL AHMED	HD246	<i>Raja Shareel Ahmed</i>	023
27.11.14	R. PUNJI	HD227	<i>R. Punji</i>	226
27.11.14	A PENVAIZ	HD101	<i>A Penvaiz</i>	009
27-11-14	K HPUSE	HD120	<i>K HPUSE</i>	061
27.11.14	R. KIRSE	HD063	<i>R. Kirse</i>	079
03/12/14	ZAFAR HUSSAIN	HD332	<i>Zafar Hussain</i>	029
3/12/14	K. KICANI	HD055	<i>K. Kicani</i>	272
3/12.14	S. SARGENT	HD085	<i>S. Sargent</i>	090
4.12.14	K HUSSAIN	HD313	<i>K Hussain</i>	092



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1	26/11	K. VIVANTI	079	
2	26/11	TERANCE CARRING-TOW	211	
3	26/11	M. D. KHAN	292	
4	26/11/14	MR FAZAL SHAH	HD 178	
5	26/11/14	MR AHSAN MOHAMMED	HD 230	
6	26/11/14	MR. M. FAYIAZ	232	
7	26/11/14	MR MUHAMMAD ASHRAF	HD 186	
8	26/11/14	MR. MANISHA KHAN	HD 286	
9	26/11/14	MR ASIM HUSSAIN	HD 312	
10	26.11.14	MR. LINGESWARAN, KANAGARAMAN	HD 275	
11	26.11.14	MASOOD KHAN	HD 121	
12	26.11.14	Gulshan Khan	XD 230	
13	26/11/14	KHIZAR HAYAT	HD 097	
14	26/11/14	ANDREW TWIGG	HD 179	
15	26/11/14	Michael Donn	HD 028	
16	26/11/14	SABIR HUSSAIN	HD 229	
17	26/11/14	BABAR KHAN	HD 058	
18	26/11/14	SAFEER AHMED	HD 113	
19	26.11.14	MOHAMMED AHMED	HD 208	
20	26/11/14	W GARLATT	HD 245	
21	26/11/14	M. RAMZAN	HD 116	
22	26/11/14	M. IJAZ	HD 087	
23	26/11/14	JHAKES	HD 129	
24	27/11/14	M. TALEB SANJA	HD 242	
25	27/11/14	G. KHAN	HD 181	



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1	27-11-14	HASEEB ISAZ	HD 322	[Signature]
2	27-11-14	[Signature]	HD 128	[Signature]
3	27/11/14	M-F. AHMED	HD 281	[Signature]
4	27. 11 14	M. GUNDAW	HD 217	[Signature]
5	27-11-14	WAJID SALEEM	HD 254	[Signature]
6	27-11-14	ANPALAGAN VISWANINGAM	XD 054	[Signature]
7	27-11-14	[Signature]	HD 248	[Signature]
8	27-11-14	M. YOUSUF KHAN	HD 166	[Signature]
9	27-11-14	JEFF BRAY	HD 021	[Signature]
10	27-11-14	MUHAMMAD AJAIB KHAN	HD 268	[Signature]
11	27-11-14	J. USMAN	HD 290	[Signature]
12	27-11-14	M.A.KHAN	HD 183	[Signature]
13	28/11/14	M. NAZIM KHAN	HD 47	[Signature]
14	29/11/14	MOHAMMED MAHROOZ	HD 091	[Signature]
15	28-11-14	Michael James	HD 090	[Signature]
16	1-12-14	SAQIB MALIK	HD 325	[Signature]
17	2-12-14	AZHAR MAHMAD	HD 142	[Signature]
18	5/12/14	mohamed Imam	HD 108	[Signature]
19	2-12-14	GULFARAZ KHAN	HD 164	[Signature]
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4.12.14	A PENNISON	H10218	[Signature]
4.12.14	N KHAN	H10373	[Signature]
4/12/14	SAJID IOBAI ICHHAN	HN185	[Signature]
4/12/14	WAQAS MIRZA	XD175	[Signature]
4/12/14	M Shisheel	XD351	[Signature]
4/12/14	C. NETSCHER	PD122	[Signature]

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