

<b>Report to</b>	Licensing committee	<b>Item</b>
	23 March 2015	
<b>Report of</b>	Head of citywide services	<b>6</b>
<b>Subject</b>	Abolition of Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency licence paper counterpart	

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### **Purpose**

This report invites members to consider an alternative method of checking the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) licence records for hackney carriage and private hire driver applicants and licence holders.

### **Recommendation**

That members delegate authority to the Head of citywide services to implement an alternative method of checking the information held by the DVLA for hackney carriage and private hire driver licence applicants and existing hackney carriage and private hire driver licence holders, as detailed in paragraph 9 of the report.

### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority of a safe and clean city and the service plan priority of protecting the interests of the public through the administration of the licensing function.

### **Financial implications**

Any additional costs incurred will be recouped through licence fee increases.

**Ward/s:** All wards

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Harris – Customer services

### **Contact officers**

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### **Background documents**

None

## **Background**

1. Applicants applying either for the grant or renewal of a Norwich city council hackney carriage or private hire vehicle driver licence are required to produce their DVLA photocard driving licence and paper counterpart for inspection.
2. The paper counterpart is used to by DVLA record details of any motoring convictions the DVLA licence-holder may have received. Information contained on the counterpart is used by the council to assist in determining applications and whether the applicant satisfies the statutory test of being a “fit and proper person”.

## **Abolition of DVLA licence counterpart**

3. From 8 June 2015, as part of the Government’s Red Tape Challenge initiative to remove unnecessary burden on drivers, DVLA will no longer issue the paper counterpart to the photocard driving licence.
4. Additionally, from 8 June 2015 the following will apply:
  - existing paper counterparts will no longer have legal status;
  - the DVLA photocard (or paper licence issued before 1998) will remain the official document that shows what vehicles a person can drive;
  - the driver record held by DVLA will be the only legal source of penalty points endorsements; and
  - paper driving licences will no longer be annotated with endorsements.
5. The DVLA are proposing to introduce a new ‘Share Driving Licence’ service which is proposed to provide an online alternative for those who have a ‘business need’ to check information displayed on the driving licence counterpart or paper licence.
6. It is proposed that this will work by requiring the driving licence holder to generate a unique, one-time access code for their record. The licence holder may then share the access code, plus the last 8 digits of their driving licence number to anyone who has a right to see it.
7. In addition to the ‘Share Driving Licence’ service, DVLA are developing their ‘Access to Driver Data’ service for trusted partners. This will give real-time driving licence data through a business-to-business interface. Contractual terms and conditions will need to be agreed and this service should be available in the summer this year.
8. A stake holder and commercial customer briefing back concerning the abolition of the counterpart has been issued by the DVLA and this is attached at appendix A to the report.

## **Intelligent Data Services**

9. Intelligent Data Services (IDS) have been invited to give members a presentation on their electronic licence checking service. IDS are an approved DVLA supplier and their electronic driving licence verification procedure comprises:

- Fully managed process – apart from initial set up requires little intervention other than dealing with reported issues and regular housekeeping (starters/leavers/changes)
- Applicant required to sign Data Protection Mandate (DPM) - DPM valid for 3 years from date of signature
- Applicant record accessed electronically via secure encrypted leased line between IDS & DVLA
- Results of applicant enquiry delivered to secure web application accessible only by authorised system users
- Authorised system users notified immediately of any issues: disqualified, revoked, expired, provisional (automated email notification and telephone)
- Full suite of management reports, not just penalty points and endorsements
- Dedicated customer support team to provide day to day assistance and advice

10. There would be a charge of £5.75 per check which includes the system set up and management reports referred to above.

## **Summary**

11. From 8 June 2015 DVLA licence paper counterparts will no longer have legal status and the driver record held by DVLA will be the only legal source of penalty points endorsements. To ensure that applicants and holders of Norwich city council hackney carriage and private hire driver licences satisfy the statutory 'fit and proper person' test, access to DVLA records will be required.
12. The DVLA 'Share Driving Licensing' service requires the DVLA licence holder to generate a code which can be shared with third parties (e.g. city council) to enable them to access information held by DVLA. The code will only be valid for 72 hours and cannot be redeemed after this period. It is envisaged that using this method will add to the existing administrative process in respect of taxi drivers as applicants / licence-holders who fail to supply codes or provide expired codes will have to be contacted to submit the correct details.
13. By having access to DVLA records directly, a licensing authority will instantly be able to obtain up to date information to assist and inform its decision making.
14. The licence fees for the grant and renewal of hackney carriage and private hire drivers licences would need to be increased to cover the cost of an annual