

REFERENCE FROM TRANSPORTATION SUB-COMMITTEE – FUTURE CONSULTATION PROCESS ON TAXI LICENSING

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members to consider the role of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) in their representation of Rochford District Taxi Drivers.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 At the Transportation Sub-Committee meeting of 6 September 2001, Members considered a referral from the Taxi Licensing Working Group on the admission of additional advisers to the Working Group.
- 2.2 Following strong representations made by licensed drivers that the membership of the Working Group did not admit sufficient representation for them, it was considered whether the number of nominated advisers ought to be extended to eight to include a representative from the TGWU.
- 2.3 Currently circuit proprietors are invited to attend along with one representative of independent drivers. As the invitation is sent to the operating company, on occasions, more than one representative has attended from that company. Drivers view this as unfair and were looking for Members to authorise an equal number of independent drivers, or their representative, to attend.
- 2.4 At a meeting of the Taxi Licensing Working Group of 20 June 2001 consideration was given to this proposal and the Group recommended this to the Sub-Committee.

3 CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Generally, taxi operators revenue comes from the radio rents which drivers pay. Additionally, some operators also lease vehicles to drivers.
- 3.2 The drivers' revenue comes only from the taxi fares they take from paying customers.
- 3.3 Accordingly, it has always been drivers' submission that operators and drivers view the trade from different perspectives. The more licensed Hackney Carriages in the District means higher revenue for the operators, but a dilution of trade for the drivers.

4 UNION REPRESENTATION

4.1 During discussion on this item at Transportation Sub-Committee a Member asked:

“Did this Council formally recognise, in addition to NUPE (UNISON), other unions, such as the Transport and General Workers Union?”

4.2 The Head of Legal Services was unable to provide information at the meeting but now confirms that “official recognition” of any negotiating body would really only occur in a contractual employer/employee situation and on the basis alone UNISON is the only “officially recognised” union.

4.2 The drivers are concerned that at any Working Group meeting their views should be represented in an articulate and researched manner, which they believe to be the origins of why the Group was formed.

4.3 “Official recognition” of the TGWU is, therefore, not a matter for consideration but more one of “representation”. A significant number of Drivers have indicated that it is their wish that the TGWU represent them at future Driver Forum meetings and with the proposal to initiate two separate fora Rochford should now achieve the levels of representation it aimed for when it originally recovered Taxi Licensing from Southend on Sea Borough Council.

5 PROPOSAL

5.1 The Transportation Sub-Committee recommended to the Transportation and Environmental Services Committee:

(1) That, subject to this Council formally recognising the Transport & General Workers Union, the consultative for a for this Council be

- The Taxi Drivers Forum comprising Councillors on the Taxi Licensing Working Group, Rochford District licence holders, and a paid employee of the Transport & General Workers Union.
- The Taxi Circuit Owners Forum (the Taxi Licensing Working Group) comprising Councillors on the Taxi Licensing Working Group and the taxi circuit owners.

(2) That the two consultative fora report to the Transportation Sub-Committee.

6 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

To advise Transportation Sub Committee that although TGWU is not a "recognised" negotiating body for local government purposes at this Council, there is no reason why the Union should not represent local taxi drivers at any Driver Forum meetings as this appears to be the wishes of a significant number of Rochford Licensed Drivers

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Background Papers:

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