

CHRISTMAS TAXI CAMPAIGN

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council has promoted the use of taxis at Christmas and the New Year as part of the wider initiative to discourage drinking and driving. This has taken the form of business style cards and posters for distribution to licensed premises by the taxi proprietors.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The high profile campaigns against drinking and driving raise public awareness principally during the period from the beginning of December to early January each year. With the emphasis on Police roadside checks at that time the effect is to discourage risks being taken by motorists. However at other times of the year they may perceive the risk of being caught to be reduced and therefore more willing to take chances. The use of the business style cards is no longer considered to be effective. Those produced by the taxi trade can contain contact information and are of greater assistance when transport is required.

2.2 STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

- 2.2.1 Encouragement should be given to the use of public transport and public awareness that taxis are an integral part of that service provision must be emphasised. With the availability of People Carriers licensed by the Council for up to 8 passengers, potential environmental benefits can be achieved by reducing the need for groups to travel in two smaller vehicles.
- 2.2.2 Any campaign should not be time specific but form part of a continuous process of education to encourage responsible attitudes towards road safety and the environment.
- 2.2.3 It is considered as an effective alternative to the previous taxi based campaigns; resources should be channelled into an effective advertising and media promotion. This would complement that which exists on a national basis and strengthen the message beyond the festive period from December to mid January.

3 OPTIONS FOR CAMPAIGN

- 3.1 Produce and distribute posters for display in licensed premises and other public buildings encouraging the use of public transport including taxis; the emphasis to be on the avoidance of drinking and driving combined with benefits from reducing traffic pollution. Regular features

within Rochford Matters would be intended to keep the subject to the forefront.

- 3.2 If the campaign were to continue to be taxi specific, the same basic approach (outlined in 3.1) is proposed. The production of the business style cards is not advocated. Emphasis would be placed on the identification of taxis, with the display of the Council's logo and vehicle specific licence plate, to gain public confidence.

6 FINANCE AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The cost of the campaign without the provision of business style cards would be substantially less than that incurred in previous years and met from the Safer Communities Budget.

7 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RECOMMENDS**

- (1) That the Council sponsor a campaign for a period of twelve months, encouraging the avoidance of drinking and driving and promoting the use of public transport, including taxis.
- (2) That public awareness of the measures taken to enhance personal safety of passengers in taxis be promoted. (HRHM)

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Background Papers:

None

For further information please contact F G Spence on (01702) 546366