

Minutes of the meeting of the **Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee** held on 27 August 2002 when there were present:-

Cllr P F A Webster (Chairman)  
Cllr Mrs R Brown

Cllr T Livings  
Cllr C R Morgan

**VISITING MEMBER**

Cllr J E Grey

**OFFICERS PRESENT**

R Crofts	Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
S Clarkson	Head of Revenue and Housing Management
A Wyatt	Committee Administrator

**10 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 August 2002 were agreed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman, subject to the penultimate paragraph of Minute 9 being revised to read: -

“At that stage the Conditions would be advertised and objections would need to be lodged within 21 days, after which they would not be accepted. It was agreed that a press notice should then be issued.”

Matters arising

- (1) Members considered that Officers should be given delegated authority to determine the matter of vehicle engine capacity.

**RECOMMENDED**

That Officers be given delegated Authority to determine vehicle engine capacity on the basis of the following criteria; -

“The engine capacity must be adequate and serviceable for the carriage of five persons, including driver” (HRHM).

- (2) Members discussed Pre-licensing Conditions 1.9 and 1.10 for Hackney Carriage drivers, in particular the length of time a driving licence would have to be held to become a Hackney Carriage driver and how many years Officers would investigate in relation to motoring offences.

A motion, put by Councillor C R Morgan and seconded by Councillor T Livings, that Pre-licensing Condition 1.9 should be brought into line with Pre-licensing Condition 1.10, and read:-

“ a person being considered for a Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence shall:

- 1.9 Have held a full driving licence to drive a motor car for not less than three years immediately prior to making the application for Hackney Carriage drivers licence”.

was declared lost on the casting vote of the Chairman. Members then agreed that Pre-licensing Condition 1.9 should be brought forward with prospective Hackney Carriage drivers having had one year's previous driving experience, as attached to the Minutes.

## **11 STAFFING AND SERVICE COSTS**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management which invited Members to consider, in principle, the level of staffing, service delivery and cost of the Hackney Carriage office. Members noted that, since the Council had recovered the Taxi Licensing function from Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, it had been a stand alone service, with only minor integration with other revenue and housing management functions.

Members endorsed the proposal in the report, in that the Head of Revenue and Housing Management would bring forward a report for a team to be created from the Transport and Revenues administration to deal with the generic transport-related functions of Hackney Carriage Licensing, Car Park Administration and Community Transport in order to provide an improved service to both Hackney Carriage users and licence holders.

### **RECOMMENDED**

That the Head of Revenue and Housing Management draft a report for the Policy & Finance Committee on 10 September concerning:-

- Delivery of a cost-neutral “Hackney Carriage Licensing function”
- Adequate staffing levels to cover
  - (a) All administrative functions
  - (b) An agreed level of enforcement

- Integration with other transport-related functions. (HRHM)

## 12 THE KNOWLEDGE TEST

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management which sought Members' consideration of the existing Driver Qualification test which requires a knowledge of the roads of the Rochford District..

Noting that the matter had been subject to a consultation exercise with drivers and that the final knowledge test would need to be checked for accuracy, it was

### RECOMMENDED

That the amended knowledge test and pass rate as detailed in the report be adopted. (HRHM)

## 13 TAXI STANDS

The Sub-Committee had before them the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management, which sought Members' views on the provision on additional taxi rank spaces in the Rochford District. Members had before them four proposals which were dealt with individually.

### Boots Lagoon, High Street, Rayleigh

The Sub-Committee agreed that the provision of a seven vehicle feeder rank for the existing rank in Boots Lagoon should be pursued. It was further agreed that the two disabled parking spaces within Boots Lagoon should be retained.

### Outside 12 – 16 High Street, Rayleigh

Noting the provision of a taxi rank in this location would ultimately lose casual parking spaces within the High Street, it was agreed that it would be appropriate for the two spaces outside 12 – 16 High Street, to be designated as a taxi rank from 6pm to 6am daily in order to not affect trade within the High Street.

### London Hill, Rayleigh

Whilst considering the proposal for a three bay taxi rank outside the Royal British Legion, Members were mindful that any proposal would

result in lost casual parking spaces to the north of Rayleigh High Street. Concern was further expressed at the location given, one Hackney Carriage service providers office would sit directly opposite this taxi rank.

It was agreed that a taxi rank should be provided in this location, but that Officers should investigate a time-related taxi rank similar to the previous item and that any proposal should not affect the use of the parking spaces by the private motorist.

#### North Street, Rochford

Members noted the concerns of the Ward Member in relation to a three vehicle rank outside 12 – 18 North Street (Rochford Congregational Church).

The Sub-Committee were advised that Officers had investigated alternative suitable locations and had endeavoured to provide an additional taxi rank within the town centre of Rochford that was not situated directly outside residential property.

Members also noted the Ward Members suggestion for a taxi rank within Back Lane car park and were advised of the need to alter the Rochford District Off Street Parking Order in order to achieve this.

It was agreed that a two vehicle rank should be provided outside 12 – 18 North Street (Rochford Congregational Church) with additional ranking space being provided within Back Lane Car Park near to Renoufs Hotel.

#### Taxi Ranks Within Hockley

Members were advised by the Head of Revenue and Housing Management that the issue of taxi ranks within Hockley were still under investigation and that he would be meeting with Essex County Council Highways officers to look at suitable locations for Hackney Carriage stands within Spa Road, Hockley.

It was agreed that a report on this should be brought before Members at the earliest opportunity.

### **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) That a seven vehicle feeder rank be provided at Boots Lagoon with the disabled parking within the lagoon being retained.
- (2) That the two parking spaces outside 12 – 16 High Street, Rayleigh be designated as a Hackney Carriage stand from 6pm

to 6am daily.

- (3) That the provision of a Hackney Carriage stand at London Hill Rayleigh be subject to similar timings as those for the rank situated outside 12 – 16 High Street, Rayleigh.
- (4) That a two vehicle taxi rank be provided outside 12 – 18 North Street, (Rochford Congregational Church) with a further taxi rank being provided within Back Lane car park.
- (5) That the Head of Revenue and Housing Management bring a report to the Environmental Services Committee on the issue of Taxi ranks within Hockley at the earliest opportunity. (HRHM)

#### **14 CONTRACT VEHICLES**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management which sought Members consideration of the licensing conditions for vehicles formerly licensed by the Traffic Commissioner, which now come under the jurisdiction of Local Authority Licensing following the introduction of the Transport Act 2000.

Noting the implications of the Transport Act 2000 and that this Authority had granted derogation until October 2002, Members considered that Paragraph 5.7 should be considered the way forward on the matter and it was

#### **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) That contract vehicles may be operated in a private hire environment without the need for a taximeter or signage, but that the word TAXI would not appear anywhere on the vehicle  
  
or
- (2) That contract vehicles may be operated in a Hackney Carriage environment with an operating taximeter and signage. (HRHM)

The meeting commenced at 10:00 am and closed at 11.05am

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_