
Meeting: Regulation Committee

Date: 19 May 2010

Subject: Advertisements on Hackney Carriages

Report of: Gary Alderson – Director of Sustainable Communities

Summary: This report proposes permitting advertisements on hackney carriages, in order to take advantage of current marketing practice, providing no objection is received from the trade.

Contact Officer: Margaret James, Licensing and Enforcement Officer

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Supporting and Caring for an ageing population – provision of safe public transport supports independent living.

Financial:

Fees are payable for this type of licence, the fees being charged represent the cost of the Council of producing this type of licence.

Legal:

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
Town Police Clauses Act 1847.

Risk Management:

Ensuring that Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles operating in Central Bedfordshire are safe and properly regulated.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

There are no staffing implications.

Equalities/Human Rights:

The Council has a legal duty to proactively promote race, gender and disability equality and to tackle discrimination experienced by other vulnerable groups. In order to ensure the personal safety of all vulnerable groups wishing to use licensed vehicles, conditions attached to licences ensure that this duty is met.

Community Safety:

Contributes to a safer public transport system and a safer night time economy. The Council has a statutory duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act to do all that it reasonably can to reduce crime and disorder in its area. The provision of sufficient numbers of taxis is a key component of reducing crime and disorder problems linked to the night time economy and licensed premises. In addition, it is essential to ensure that the public, and particularly more vulnerable members of the community, are not left without safe transport options which may lead them to take decisions which put their safety at risk.

Sustainability:

By regulating this service area we can ensure that those businesses who are compliant can be supported and resources can be focused at those businesses that will not comply.

RECOMMENDATION:

that the Committee consider permitting advertisements on the outside of hackney carriages provided no objection is received from the hackney carriage trade.

Background

1. The Council is the Licensing Authority for hackney carriage and private hire drivers, vehicles and operators and is responsible for providing a licensed service to the community that is safe and accessible.
2. The hackney carriage and private hire trade have a right to expect a fair and reasonable licensing regime.
3. The conditions attached to hackney carriages state:

'Vehicles currently licensed as wheelchair accessible hackney carriages will be permitted to be re-licensed annually provided they pass the mechanical requirements, but any replacement vehicle will be required to meet all requirements'.
4. The signage allowed on hackney carriages formally licensed by Mid Bedfordshire District Council permitted an inscription on the outside of the vehicle identifying the proprietor of the licensed vehicle or the association of proprietors to which he or she belongs, together with a telephone number.
5. The signage allowed on hackney carriages formally licensed by South Bedfordshire District Council permitted advertisements on the outside of the vehicle promoting the proprietor. It also permitted advertising on the outside of the vehicle promoting certain products or companies to take advantage of current marketing practice.

Central Bedfordshire permitted signage.

6. The current conditions attached to hackney carriages do not permit advertisements.
7. Members may wish to consider, therefore, permitting advertising on the outside of hackney carriages.
8. If Members do wish to allow such advertising, it is recommended that the hackney carriage conditions be amended to include the following permitted signage:
 - (a) An inscription identifying the proprietor of the licensed vehicle or the association of proprietors to which he or she belongs, together with a telephone number.
 - (b) Advertisements on the outside of the vehicle promoting certain products or companies providing the proprietor has the prior approval of the Council for the content of the advertisement.

Consultation with the trade.

9. Before a local authority can make a decision on policies and conditions affecting the hackney carriage trade, they must consider the views of all interested parties.
10. If Members do wish to allow advertising on hackney carriages, it is proposed that such a condition be permitted providing no objection is received from the trade.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

None

Location of papers: The Council Offices, Dunstable.