

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

ORIGINATING SECTION: PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE

REPORT TO: LICENSING COMMITTEE 4th FEB 2016

TITLE : REVIEW OF COUNCIL POLICY ON ADVERTISING ON OR IN TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES AND THE TYPE OF VEHICLES WHICH CAN BE DEEMED EXECUTIVE VEHICLES.

1. PURPOSE

To invite the Licensing Committee to consider the introduction of a Council Policy on advertising placed on or in taxis and private hire vehicles. In addition to consider the introduction of a policy on what can be deemed an executive vehicle and exempt from the need to display licence plates and door stickers.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That members request a consultation exercise to take place with trade to formulate a policy on advertising placed on or in taxis and private hire vehicles and what can be deemed an executive vehicle.

3. KEY ISSUES

Currently the only guidelines that control advertising on taxis and private hire vehicles are the conditions that are attached to each licence.

For Hackney Carriage Vehicles this is :-

No signs or advertisements other than approved door signs shall be displayed on hackney carriage vehicles unless:

- (a) the advertisement may be extended across both front and rear doors; and*
- (b) the advertisement is no greater than 180cm x 60cm; and*
- (c) the advertisement is subject to the approval of Officers, acting under delegated powers and in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee.*

For Private Hire Vehicles this is :-

unless required by statute, order, or as mentioned in paragraphs (b) and (c), no signs, lights, advertisements or other fittings shall be displayed on or from the vehicle except a radio aerial which is to be fitted in such a manner as to satisfy the council.

the proprietor shall display suitable signage on the vehicle to the satisfaction of the Council, the sign to include the business name of the operator, but not to include the word 'taxi' in any form. The suitability of all signs to be approved by the Director of Regeneration in conjunction with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee.

"The proprietor of a private hire vehicle shall display within the upper half panel on each of the rear side passenger doors of a private hire vehicle a vinyl notice, (which shall have the text "Licensed Private Hire Vehicle" and the text "Advance Booking Only") approved by the Council, identifying the vehicle as a private hire vehicle, and also the plate number. No other letter, numbers or any other type of livery may be displayed on the signage of these doors.*

**On MPV's (Multi passenger vehicle) licensed as private hire vehicles, the signs must be displayed on the rear near side passenger door and on the opposite panel on the offside of the vehicle.*

There are a number of the traditional style London cabs that have advertising livery on their vehicles and each advert must be approved by the council. Without a policy in place stating what is and what isn't acceptable it can be difficult to make decisions.

Currently the alternative type purpose built taxis are not permitted full livery; this is due to the fact that the same vehicles can also be licensed for private hire.

It is recognised that a significant percentage of the population are not aware of the differing operating regimes of taxis and private hire vehicles and so it is up to the council to maintain distinctions between the two regimes, and the advertising policy must reflect this.

A number of requests have been made from private hire operators for extra "self advertising. For example advertising mobile apps, or bumper stickers displaying the telephone number.

Currently there are a number of "Executive, Limousine" vehicle licences that have been issued. These vehicles do not display adverts or licence plates. The criteria for vehicles to qualify as an executive vehicle is also in need of a review to make the determination of an application more consistent and transparent.

4. RATIONALE

An advertising policy would give transparency and consistency when approving signage and livery.

The policy may state advertising standards of what is and is not acceptable. This can include the content of the advert, and where it is displayed on or in the vehicle

The policy would also detail the criteria for executive vehicles, which would give applicants and the council guidelines on what vehicles can be granted or refused.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Should members be minded to propose the introduction of an advertising policy it will be necessary to consult with all current stakeholders in that process.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The introduction of a policy would support council decisions when determining an application for an advert and what is deemed a suitable vehicle to be classed as an executive car.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications.

9. CONSULTATIONS

If the Committee are minded to introduce an advertising policy then a consultation will need to take place with the trade.

10 . CONTACT OFFICER

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