

	AGENDA ITEM NO.																																								
Report Cover Sheet																																									
Name of Meeting:	Regulatory Committee																																								
Date of Meeting:	3rd December 2007																																								
Report Title:	Changes to private hire hackney carriage rules																																								
Summary of report:	To consider certain suggested changes to the certain processes within the licensing of drivers and vehicles for hackney carriage and private hire.																																								
For Further Information Please Contact (report author):	David Davies, Licensing Services Manager, Members' Services. Tel: 01926 456107. david.davies@warwickdc.gov.uk																																								
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Policy Framework:	No																																								
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budgetary framework:	No																																								
Wards of the District directly affected by this decision:	No																																								
Key Decision?	No																																								
Included within the Forward Plan?	No																																								
Is the report Private & Confidential	No																																								
Background Papers:	None																																								
Consultation Undertaken																																									
Below is a table of the Council's regular consultees. However not all have to be consulted on every matter and if there was no obligation to consult with a specific consultee they will be marked as n/a.																																									
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="137 1429 520 1469">Consultees</th> <th data-bbox="520 1429 724 1469">Yes/ No</th> <th data-bbox="724 1429 1449 1469">Who</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1469 520 1509">Other Committees</td> <td data-bbox="520 1469 724 1509">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 1469 1449 1509"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1509 520 1550">Ward Councillors</td> <td data-bbox="520 1509 724 1550">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 1509 1449 1550"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1550 520 1590">Portfolio Holders</td> <td data-bbox="520 1550 724 1590">Yes</td> <td data-bbox="724 1550 1449 1590">Councillor Kinson</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1590 520 1630">Other Councillors</td> <td data-bbox="520 1590 724 1630">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 1590 1449 1630"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1630 520 1738">Warwick District Council recognised Trades Unions</td> <td data-bbox="520 1630 724 1738">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 1630 1449 1738"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1738 520 1823">Other Warwick District Council Service Areas</td> <td data-bbox="520 1738 724 1823">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 1738 1449 1823"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1823 520 1863">Project partners</td> <td data-bbox="520 1823 724 1863">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 1823 1449 1863"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1863 520 1904">Parish/Town Council</td> <td data-bbox="520 1863 724 1904">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 1863 1449 1904"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1904 520 1944">Highways Authority</td> <td data-bbox="520 1904 724 1944">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 1904 1449 1944"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1944 520 1984">Residents</td> <td data-bbox="520 1944 724 1984">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 1944 1449 1984"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1984 520 2024">Citizens Panel</td> <td data-bbox="520 1984 724 2024">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 1984 1449 2024"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 2024 520 2065">Other consultees</td> <td data-bbox="520 2024 724 2065">n/a</td> <td data-bbox="724 2024 1449 2065"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Consultees	Yes/ No	Who	Other Committees	n/a		Ward Councillors	n/a		Portfolio Holders	Yes	Councillor Kinson	Other Councillors	n/a		Warwick District Council recognised Trades Unions	n/a		Other Warwick District Council Service Areas	n/a		Project partners	n/a		Parish/Town Council	n/a		Highways Authority	n/a		Residents	n/a		Citizens Panel	n/a		Other consultees	n/a	
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Officer Approval

With regard to officer approval all reports must be approved by the report author's relevant director, Finance Services and Legal Services.

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Relevant Director(s)	16/11/07	Robert Inman
Chief Executive		n/a
CMT		n/a
Section 151 Officer		n/a
Legal	16/11/07	Simon Best
Finance	16/11/07	Gary walker
Final Decision?		No
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 Members are asked to consider suggestions for the modification of the venue for driver medicals, signs on vehicles and wheelchair compliant hackney carriages.

2. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The changes are recommended to the Committee in the light of consultation with and suggestions from licensed drivers.

2.2 Driver medicals:

At present, driver medicals are conducted by a company called, "Driver Medicals". At a meeting of the Warwick District Hackney Carriage Drivers Association, the Committee suggested drivers should be able to approach their own doctors to complete the necessary medical report forms. Officers do not see a problem with this. It has also been suggested that Croft Medical Centre is a suitable place to carry out such medicals. Officers have visited the centre and concur that it is a thoroughly professional clinic and is able to offer the service that is required.

Proposal:

That drivers should be allowed to make their own choice of Driver Medicals, Croft Medical Centre or their own doctor to have their medicals carried out.

2.3 Signs on vehicles

Private hire vehicles have had the following condition attached to their licences:

Signs, Notices, etc

Signs not exceeding 50cm long and 25cm high may be displayed on the front doors of the vehicle, which may contain the following:

- ***Name of operator***
- ***Telephone number of operator***
- ***The words "Advance bookings only".***

The sign may be attached by means of transfer, and must be submitted for approval by the Council before being used. Magnetic easily removable signs will not be permitted.

Under no circumstances may the vehicle be fitted with a roof sign

Further signs will not be allowed on vehicles.

Hackney carriages have the following condition attached to their licences:

Signs, Notices, Etc

The vehicle must display a fixed roof sign with the word "TAXI", which must be illuminated only when plying for hire.

THE TAXI ROOF SIGN MAY ONLY BE REMOVED WITH PERMISSION OF THE COUNCIL.

Additionally, signs not exceeding 50cm long and 25cm high may be displayed on the front doors of the vehicle, which may contain the following:

- ***Name of the proprietor***
- ***Telephone number of proprietor***

The sign may be attached by means of transfer, and must be submitted for approval by the Council before being used. Magnetic easily removable signs will not be permitted.

Further signs will not be allowed on vehicles.

Until the meeting of the Regulatory Committee on 24th January 2007, anyone that wanted to put any notices on their vehicle had to apply to the Committee for permission to put any other writing or advertisements on their vehicles. The Committee decided that, in the interest of fairness, it would be sensible to prohibit any additional signs or advertising and to delegate officers to refuse any future applications for advertising/signs. The reasoning behind this was that, at one meeting one group of Members may decide to allow the advertising and at another meeting a group of different Councillors may refuse another one. This may be because of substitutes or varying attendees.

At present, there are numerous licensed vehicles with signs and advertisements that haven't been sanctioned by officers or the Committee.

Decisions required:

Either

- (a) Ratify the previous Committee's decisions and not permit any signs on vehicles that do not conform to those described in the conditions of the licence; or
- (b) Permit limited signage on the rear of the vehicle, for example. If this is the case, a limit of what should be displayed is required and the height of the letters permitted to be used. For example, "The company name and telephone number or web site address."

Officers have no recommendation or views on the Committee's decision, save to say that, for safety reasons, no writing or signs of any kind be permitted on any glass areas of the vehicles.

2.4 Wheelchair accessible vehicles

At a meeting of the Regulatory Committee on 30th July 2007, a report was submitted by officers suggesting that the remaining none wheelchair compliant vehicles that remained licensed by the District should become wheelchair compliant after 1st January 2008. This would be done over a period of time when vehicles were replaced for reasons of age or any other reason.

The decision was challenged by both driver groups and the National Association of Private Hire Drivers on the grounds that both insufficient consultation was conducted by officers, and that the legislation issued by the Department for Transport was not finalised and implemented yet.

Officers have now consulted with eleven disability organisations, but, at the time of writing this report, no replies have been received.

Proposal

That the previous Committee's decision not be implemented until the legislation has been clarified fully and full consultation conducted.

Officers will report back to the Committee when more information is available.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 No alternatives may be considered.

4. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 This report has no budgetary considerations for the Council.

5. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 The conditions will be added to any hackney carriage licence issued to horse drawn carriages.