

LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

14 SEPTEMBER 2006

MEETINGS WITH THE TAXI TRADE

Report from: Deborah Upton, Assistant Director (Legal, Contract and Property Services)

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Licensing and Safety Committee to agree in principle to meet with the Medway taxi trade and if so, to authorise the Licensing Manager to commence appropriate arrangements.

2. DECISION ISSUES

- 2.1 The committee has delegated powers to determine this matter.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the committee consider the report and whether to agree in principle to meet with the taxi trade and if so, to authorise the Licensing Manager to make appropriate arrangements in accordance with paragraph 5 of the report.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Currently, the Licensing Team liaise and meet with the taxi trade via (i) the Transport and General Workers Union (Medway Cab Branch) (T & G) and (ii) the Association of Independent Taxi Drivers (AITD). These are currently the only "trade bodies" in the council's area.
- 4.2 Some time ago, at the request of the chairman of the T & G, the leader of the council and the Licensing Manager met with him to discuss a number of taxi related issues. It was agreed that it would be useful if representatives of the taxi trade met regularly with representatives from the Licensing and Safety Committee and appropriate council officers, to discuss items of concern and interest.
- 4.3 The committee is therefore requested to agree (or not) in principle to appoint representatives to meet with the taxi trade and if so, to authorise the Licensing Manager to make the appropriate arrangements.

5. COMMENTS OF THE LICENSING MANAGER

- 5.1 It should be remembered that there are sections of the hackney carriage and private hire trade (e.g.: executive, airports, school runs) who are not currently represented by either the T & G or the AITD or able to have a voice.
- 5.2 In the circumstances therefore it is proposed that the meeting takes the form of a forum. This forum would consist of appointed Councillors from the Licensing and Safety Committee and officers, elected representatives from across all sections of the hackney carriage and private hire trade i.e. T & G, AITD, hackney carriage and private hire drivers not belonging to any association, private hire (airports), private hire (school runs) private hire (executive car hire), operators and any interest groups where relevant.
- 5.3 Taxis forums set up on this basis by other local authorities have proved successful in establishing a constructive and representative link between the council and the trade. If for example the forum were considering a matter that would involve a change of policy, the forum's views would be forwarded to the appropriate council committee for consideration prior to deciding on any changes.
- 5.4 Finally, it is important to note that the forum would consider relevant taxis related items and put forward views and recommendations to the appropriate council committee(s). It would not be a decision making body.

6. LEGAL, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct legal and financial implications for Medway Council concerning this matter at present.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 There are no specific background papers associated with this item.

Any further information is available from:

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