

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE

19 JUNE 2014

REPORT OF HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Report prepared by Lorraine Neale

1. REVIEW OF TAXI RANK PROVISION

1.1 Issue for Noting

1.1.1 To advise Members of the progress arising from consultation of Hackney Carriage proprietors in respect of current taxi rank provision.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Housing and Community Services

1.2.1 That Members note the responses received to date and agree that officers continue to produce draft proposals for wider consultation prior to updating rank provision.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 In 2012 the Council commissioned a survey to study the use and demand on the Hackney Carriage service provided in the Maidstone Borough area. The survey report which was received in 2013 also highlighted a number of recommendations relating to the associated issues, one of which was the number of taxi ranks and their location in the Borough.

1.3.2 The Survey's results made no recommendation regarding the provision of additional ranks in the Borough. However, it did recommend that consideration be given to extending the bays available at the rank in the High Street as this was to be the location for a new rank suggested by most members of the public and drivers at that time.

1.3.3 On 14 November 2013 Members resolved that a review would take place as a result of both the survey and difficulties with researching historic creation of ranks to respond to a question from a PHV operator.

1.3.4 During the course of the survey it became apparent that the taxi rank provision should be investigated thoroughly as the regeneration of the

town centre was affecting the historic rank provision and causing confusion with the trade and public. An ideal opportunity to look at the current needs for provision had been presented and it was felt that the first step to take would be to ask the trade the following questions to determine a start point in assessing what the current requirement is and what it should be.

Where do you believe the current ranks in Maidstone are situated?
Are they in the correct place?
Do you think any should be removed?
Where do you think any new ranks should be sited?
Other comments

1.3.5 The letters (Appendix A) were sent out to all the Hackney carriage proprietors on 25 April 2014 giving a response date of 16 May 2014. The responses received are attached as Appendix B. The proprietors appear to have a good knowledge of where the official ranks are. It appears that they would like permanent bays at the bottom of the High Street and to swap the bays outside Lush with the disabled bays outside the NatWest Bank. There are also other suggestions for additional spaces.

1.3.6 The next step would be to approach and involve the necessary Agencies/Partners in consulting on proposals and whether consent would be given where required for any changes to provision.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 We could do nothing but this is not considered to be the way forward to provide the most appropriate facilities for the service.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 A review of taxi rank provision in the Borough will have a positive impact on the economic vitality of the town by providing an update on efficient and effective sitings of ranks for the use of members of the public and provide clarity for the Authority and the trade.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 Clear new creation of all ranks within the Borough will also reduce any risks associated with the need to evidence creation in any legal action related to them.

1.7 Other Implications

1.	Financial	X
2.	Staffing	
3.	Legal	X
4.	Equality Impact Needs Assessment	
5.	Environmental/Sustainable Development	
6.	Community Safety	
7.	Human Rights Act	
8.	Procurement	
9.	Asset Management	

1.7.2 Financial – the cost of undertaking the review may have some financial implication in consultation and any subsequent legal costs, publication of notices and other matters such as Traffic Regulation Orders and signage.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

1.8.2 Appendix A and B

1.8.3 Background Documents

none