

## Report of Head of Licensing and Registration

### Report to Licensing Committee

**Date: 8 April 2014**

**Subject: Update report on the uptake of 'Wi-Fi in cabs'.**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

1. Members received a report on and approved a policy that allowed 'Wi-Fi' in licensed Hackney Carriage vehicles on 15 October 2013.
2. Members asked that an update report be provided after 6 months of the policy approval and present a further report to consider the introduction of 'Wi-Fi' throughout the rest of the licensed fleet.

### Recommendations

3. That Members note the report and that the extension of the policy should be placed in the Licensing Committee forward plan.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To inform Members of the take up of free 'Wi-Fi' in Taxis and report the current position on potentially extending the free 'Wi-Fi' facility throughout the whole of the licensed fleet

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 The report previously presented to members outlined the availability of free "Wi-Fi" in cabs' for passengers in Taxis. The policy identified that the free 'Wi-Fi' facility impacted upon the corporate advertising policy which required Members to take account of any conflicts with that policy and to consider approving the policy change proposal or otherwise.

## **3 Main issues**

- 3.1 There has been no take up of 'Wi-Fi' in the licensed Taxi fleet. Members will recall that the offer of the free facility was linked by the media agent to advertising when the 'Wi-Fi' link was opened and the advertising features matched the 'corporate wrap'.
- 3.2 The approved 'corporate wrap' policy was again re-visited by Members in their deliberations on the free 'Wi-Fi' proposal and the advertising safeguards in the existing policy were retained.
- 3.3 An enquiry with the policy proposer has revealed that many corporate organisations only want their advertising to appear on 'iconic vehicles' such as the 'London Cab' and have no desire to be associated with other vehicles licensed by this Authority. The competition between media agents and the limited number of 'London Cabs' seem to have made this a not sufficiently worthwhile venture for this original proposal.
- 3.4 Members can at least be reassured that the time and consideration put into the proposal is not totally lost as the opportunity exists for other media agents to take advantage of the policy in the future.
- 3.5 The second part of this report relates to extending the opportunity throughout the whole of the licensed fleet. To date this has not been progressed due to workloads and competing demands which Members will have noted during the interim period.

The issue is on the Section's forward plan and is scheduled to be discussed in detail at the forthcoming trade forums when more information has been obtained.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 Full consultation was undertaken on the original report in October 2013. There are no issues on which to consult in this particular report.

## **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 An equality impact screening assessment has been carried out on these proposals and there is no impact on equality issues. The screening is available as a background document to this report.

## **4.3 Council policies and City Priorities**

- 4.3.1 The Taxi & Private Hire Licensing policies contribute to the following aims:

### **Best Council Plan 2013 -17**

#### **Towards being an Enterprising Council**

##### **Our Ambition and Approach**

**Our Ambition** is for Leeds to be the best city and Leeds City Council to be the best council in the UK – fair, open and welcoming with an economy that is both prosperous and sustainable so all our communities are successful.

**Our Approach** is to adopt a new leadership style of civic enterprise, where the council becomes more enterprising, business and partners become more civic, and citizens become more actively engaged in the work of the city.

##### **Our Best Council Outcomes**

Make it easier for people to do business with us.

##### **Our Best Council Objectives**

Promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth – improving the economic wellbeing of local people and businesses. With a focus on:

- Helping people into jobs,
- Boosting the local economy
- Generating income for the council

Ensuring high quality public services – improving quality, efficiency and involving people in shaping their city. With a focus on:

- Getting services right first time
- Improving customer satisfaction

- 4.3.2 The Taxi & Private Hire Licensing policies contribute to priorities:

- Reduce crime levels and their impact across Leeds
- Effectively tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour in communities

- 4.3.3 Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults:

Leeds City Council has both a moral and legal obligation to ensure the duty of care for both children and vulnerable adults across all of its services. This cannot be achieved by any single service or agency. Safeguarding is ultimately the responsibility of all of us and depends on the everyday vigilance of staff who play a part in the lives of children or vulnerable adults.

#### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 There are no issues affecting the Council.

#### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 There are no legal implications connected to this report.

#### **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 There are no issues.

### **5 Conclusions**

5.1 That Members note the report and that any proposals for the extension of the policy to the remainder of the licensed fleet should be placed in the Licensing Committee forward plan at an appropriate time.

### **6 Recommendations**

6.1 That Members note the report and that the extension of the policy should be placed in the Licensing Committee forward plan.

### **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 Corporate advertising policy

7.2 Equality impact screening assessment

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.