



Agenda:

Originator: K Darch

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Report from: The Chief Highways Officer

To: Licensing and Regulatory Panel

Date: 18th November 2008

Subject: Taxi Rank Review Phase II - Update Report

Electoral Wards Affected:

City & Hunslet

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In
(Details contained in the report)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following concerns expressed by this Panel's Members and by the Hackney Carriage Trade a further review of taxi rank provision is being undertaken. Several suggestions have been lodged by the taxi trade representatives and work is ongoing to assess and implement additional facilities where considered practicable to do so.

This report seeks to keep members of the Panel informed.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 To update members on the current position with regard to taxi ranks within the city centre and progress on additional sites suggested by representatives of the taxi trade.

2.0 Background Information

2.0 Members will be aware that previously work was carried out to increase the taxi rank provision within the city centre and more recently a new project has commenced to investigate a new list of options subsequently submitted by the taxi trade.

2.1 As well as the work undertaken by the Panel, highways officers have re-established a liaison meeting with the taxi trade representatives to discuss issues relating to both existing ranks and new proposals raised by either party.

3.0 Main Issues

- 3.1** The new taxi rank on Greek Street is still gaining in popularity and part of the trade has instigated their own call / booking system from this rank that not only relieves pressure from other locations such as the railway station, but also encourages a presence on the rank that in turn increases the public's confidence that they will be able to find an available taxi.
- 3.2** Following support from both Members of this Panel and the taxi trade representatives, work has been carried out to upgrade the on-street taxi signing and markings on all existing city centre ranks. At the present time all ranks north of The Headrow have been surveyed, working drawings produced and work instructions issued to our contractors for the necessary works to be carried out. At the time of drafting this report the survey work for the remaining ranks has been completed and the detailed drawings are being prepared. The target is to issue the work before the date of this Panel meeting, so an update will be provided at the meeting.
- 3.3** Work has started on site for the Boar Lane / Mill Hill project and the central island has been removed which now permits taxis and other vehicles wishing to turn right into New Station Street to form a queue in such a position that does not hinder the movement of traffic along Boar Lane.
- 3.4** The attached schedule lists the city centre locations raised by the taxi trade and gives an update for each location. Highways officers are working on actions to pursue the agreed measures as quickly as possible and in line with the priority agreed with the taxi trade representatives.
- 3.5** Plan No TF34/54/10/CHo shows the existing taxi rank locations within the city centre together with the location of the suggested additional ranks currently being pursued.
- 3.6** Initial consultation with the Emergency Services, Metro and local Ward Members has been undertaken and the comments received are being reviewed. The next stage is to seek approval from the Highways Joint Board to advertise the taxi rank proposals formally to enable the general public and local businesses to comment if they wish to do so.
- 3.7** The suggested ranks outside the city centre are not included on the attached schedule as there has not been the opportunity to allocate staff to them at the moment. However, some consideration is being given to the suggested rank location on Whitehouse Lane adjacent to the Airport.
- 3.8** Unfortunately, we are no further with receiving authority from the Government Office with regard to the legality of using bus stops as taxi ranks after the bus services have stopped operating. Highways officers are continuing to press for a response and keep re-stating the aims and objectives that are being pursued.

4.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

- 4.1** This report does not affect Council Policy and Governance.

5 Legal and Resource Implications

- 5.1** The provision of new and amendments to existing taxi ranks is subject to traffic regulation Orders, which must follow a set legal procedure. Work associated with the new ranks is on-going and initial consultations have been carried out in accordance with the Order making procedure. Approval is required from the Joint Highways Technical Board to formally advertise the proposals and a report is being prepared to be submitted for consideration.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1** Work to improve existing city centre rank use and identity is on-going.
- 6.2** Work on the list of additional suggestions from the taxi trade is being progressed.
- 6.3** The new taxi ranks will help reduce the high demand at particular locations and help cater for the high taxi demands within the city centre.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1** Members are requested to note the contents of this report.