

**LICENSING
COMMITTEE**

17th December 2012

**UPDATE ON SHORT STAY PARKING/TAXI RANK REDDITCH TOWN
CENTRE**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Rebecca Blake
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Steve Jordan – Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To receive a report following the 12 week consultation on the short stay parking and the Hackney Carriage rank on Unicorn hill.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to consider

whether or not to reduce the Unicorn Hill taxi rank by four spaces during the day whilst maintaining its current status during the evening.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications to Redditch Borough Council if Members decide not to reduce the rank by four spaces. However, if the Committee decides to agree to the removal of four of the Hackney Carriage rank spaces the costs of changes to road markings will have to be borne by the Highways department of Worcestershire County Council. Members are referred to paragraph 3.16 of this report which refers to this issue.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 Under Section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Borough Council may from time to time appoint ranks for Hackney Carriage for the whole or any part of a day in any highway in the district which is maintainable at the public expense and, with the consent of the owner, on any land in the district which does not form part of a highway so maintainable and may from time to time vary the number of Hackney Carriages permitted to be at each stand.

**LICENSING
COMMITTEE**

17th December 2012

- 3.3 In the absence of any right of appeal set out in the legislation, the decision of the Committee on this matter could only be challenged through an application for judicial review.
- 3.4 Before appointing any rank or varying the numbers to be at each rank, the Council is required to notify the Police for the areas in which the stands will be situated.
- 3.5 A District Council may not appoint a rank:
- a) so as unreasonably to prevent access to any premises;
 - b) so as to impede the use of bus stops, or in such a position to interfere with access to any station or depot of any passenger road transport operations, except with the consent of those operators;
 - c) on any highway except with the consent of the Highways Authority.
- 3.6 It is necessary for ranks to be signed and the road marked out accordingly.

Service / Operational Implications

History

- 3.7 A petition (Petition 1) was received by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 24th May 2011 from the Business Owners/traders located in Unicorn Hill, Redditch, whose concern was the detrimental effect on trade which has arisen since the siting of a taxi rank on the left side of Unicorn Hill (looking down the hill from the Churchyard).
- 3.8 The Committee on the 24th May 2011 referred the petition to the Council's Licensing Committee for further consideration.
- 3.9 The Licensing Committee considered the petition on 14th July 2011.
- 3.10 The petitioners requested that the rank either be moved or the hours of operation restricted. Following receipt of the petition licensing staff conducted a short consultation exercise with the relevant agencies, West Mercia Police, West Mercia Road Traffic Management Police, Redditch Taxi Association (the trade) and Worcestershire County Council.
- 3.11 The consensus amongst those consulted was that the current position/location of the Hackney Carriage rank on Unicorn Hill was the

**LICENSING
COMMITTEE**

17th December 2012

most ideal location to service members of the public that side of the town. The Committee therefore decided as follows:-

The Committee RESOLVED that

- 1) the Petition and the report be noted; and**
- 2) no further action be taken.**

Current Petition

- 3.12 A further petition (Petition 2) was then received regarding the provision of short stay parking in the Town Centre on the 29th November 2011. (Appendix 1).
- 3.13 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the petition on the 29th November 2011 and resolved to defer to the meeting on 24th January.
- 3.14 On January 24th 2012 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the petition. The lead petitioner and other members of the public invited to speak expressed concern that the absence of a short stay car parking facility on Unicorn Hill was compromising the function of local businesses. It was felt that this was having a negative effect on business, particularly as suppliers were currently unable to park outside a particular unit for a short period to drop off supplies. The petitioners did not feel that the facility for short stay car parking on Bates Hill was sufficient to meet the needs of local business and customers. Members of the public invited to speak commented that not only did they represent the views of their business colleagues on Unicorn Hill on this issue, but also their customers.
- 3.15 Officers explained that a town centre parking meeting had been held on 2nd December 2011 to facilitate further discussion on the matter. It was the opinion of relevant agencies, including the Police and the Worcestershire County Council, that there were no other suitable locations in the town centre for short-stay car parking, including Unicorn Hill.
- 3.16 The Executive Committee of 31st January 2012 received a referral from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the above petition. The Executive Committee;

RESOLVED that

Officers hold a meeting with relevant agencies and stakeholders, including the petitioners, to discuss proposals for short stay car parking in the town centre.

**LICENSING
COMMITTEE**

17th December 2012

Outcome of Town Centre Parking Meeting 1 March 2012

3.17 Please see attached minutes (Appendix 2), in summary;

County Councillor Clayton supported alterations to the following Traffic Orders to be carried out on a 12 month experimental basis. The Traffic Orders affected included Unicorn Hill as follows:-

- 1. Unicorn Hill – The 4 Taxi Rank spaces nearest the Traffic Signals be changed to limited waiting in the day, times to be the same as those on Bates Hill, and Taxi Rank at Night. Worcestershire County Council to incur costs for lines and signs associated with this.**

3.18 A member of staff from Licensing was unable to attend the meeting held on 1st March to highlight the implications of making changes to the rank and to remind the meeting of the outcome of the previous petition received less than six months earlier. Therefore Licensing Officers asked for a meeting to be held to discuss the issues.

3.19 On 9th May 2012 a meeting was held where the matters of consultation with the Hackney Carriage trade, the costs to be incurred of amending the rank such as re-marking, new signage and advertising the rank were discussed.

3.20 These matters were reported to the Licensing Committee on the 12th July 2012 updating Members on the issue and requesting whether or not a 12 week consultation should be conducted.

3.21 Following the Licensing Committee meeting of the 12th July 2012, Officers conducted a 12 week consultation and the closing date for responses was 19th October 2012.

3.22 On the 19th October 2012 a representation in the form of a further petition (Petition 3) was received from the Redditch Taxi Association (Appendix 3). To summarise the signatories of Petition 3 are opposed to any plans to reduce the number of Hackney Carriage spaces at the rank on Unicorn Hill, and are also opposed to the introduction of short stay parking bays either above or below the existing rank.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

None

**LICENSING
COMMITTEE**

17th December 2012

5. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - Petition Prayer
- Appendix 2 - Minutes of Town Centre Parking Meeting on 01.03 2012
- Appendix 3 - Redditch Taxi Association Response

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Sue Garratt – Licensing Manager.
Worcestershire Regulatory Services

E Mail: sue.garratt@worcestershire.gov.uk

Tel: (01527) 534196