

REVIEW OF PROVISION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE STANDS

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Grubb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Simon Wilkes – Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

Members are asked to consider a number of proposals suggested for increasing the number and amending the location of, hackney carriage stands (taxi ranks) in the Borough and to direct officers to engage with all relevant stakeholders to explore the possibility of implementing the proposals.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members direct officers to engage with relevant stakeholders to explore the possibility of the following:

- a. The creation of a new hackney carriage stand at Redditch Railway Station
- b. The creation of a new hackney carriage stand at the Alexandra Hospital, Redditch
- c. Making alterations to the current hackney carriage stand located at Unicorn Hill and creating a new hackney carriage stand in Bates Hill

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The costs associated with officers carrying out engagement with stakeholders will need to be met from existing budgets held by Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 Section 63 (1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 states that, a district council may from time to time appoint stands for hackney carriages 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.
- 3.3 Section 63 (2) states that before appointing any stand for hackney carriages or varying the number of hackney carriages to be at each stand in exercise of the powers of this section, a district council shall give notice to the chief officer of police for the police area in which the stand is situated and shall also give public notice of the proposal by advertisement in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district and shall take into consideration any objections or representations in respect of such proposal which may be made to them in writing within twenty-eight days of the first publication of such notice.
- 3.4 Section 63 (4) states that nothing in this section shall empower a district council to appoint any such stand—
- (a) so as unreasonably to prevent access to any premises;
 - (b) so as to impede the use of any points authorised to be used in connection with a local service within the meaning of the Transport Act 1985 or PSV operator's licence granted under the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981, as points for the taking up or setting down of passengers, or in such a position as to interfere unreasonably with access to any station or depot of any passenger road transport operators, except with the consent of those operators;
 - (c) on any highway except with the consent of the highway authority;

and in deciding the position of stands a district council shall have regard to the position of any bus stops for the time being in use.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.5 A hackney carriage stand is a place where licensed hackney carriages can wait for passengers. No other vehicle, apart from a hackney carriage licensed by the relevant Council can wait on a hackney carriage stand.

- 3.6 As part of its functions and responsibilities in relation to the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, the Council can appoint stands for hackney carriages, which are also known as taxi ranks.
- 3.7 In addition to the hackney carriage stands appointed by the Council, private land owners are at liberty to set aside space on their own land for hackney carriage vehicles to wait for passengers. Such private stands are often found at locations such as railway stations and close to the entrance of supermarkets.
- 3.8 Details of the current known hackney carriage stands in Redditch Borough will be provided to Members at the Licensing Committee meeting.
- 3.9 The Licensing Committee has asked officers to bring forward this report with a view to the Council reviewing the existing provision of hackney carriage stands.
- 3.10 Potential options that have been suggested by the Chairman of the Committee as part of this review include the following:
- Seeking the provision of a new hackney carriage stand within the Redditch Railway Station
 - Seeking the provision of a new hackney carriage stand at the Alexandra Hospital.
- 3.11 It has also been suggested that alterations could be considered to the current hackney carriage stand at Unicorn Hill with a view to providing some car parking spaces for users of the nearby shops during the daytime. It is suggested that this could be achieved by:
- a) Leaving space during the day for 3 – 4 hackney carriages to stand at bottom of Unicorn Hill with the remainder of the space on the existing stand being given over to short term car parking.
 - b) Converting the car parking bays at Bates Hill into a hackney carriage stand, removing the bollards at the bottom and making the road one way (bottom to top). This rank could operate as a “feeder” to the Unicorn Hill stand.
 - c) In the evening, all of the current Unicorn Hill stand could revert to being a hackney carriage stand along its entire length.

3.12 In order to be able to take forward any of these suggestions, it will be necessary for the Council to seek engagement with and the support of a variety of stakeholders including:

- Worcestershire Highways
- West Mercia Police
- Relevant landowners

3.13 Officers believe it would also be beneficial to engage with representatives of the Redditch Taxi Association at an early stage to ensure that any concerns from the hackney carriage trade can be considered before any proposals are explored further.

3.14 Members are therefore asked to consider whether to direct officers to engage with relevant stakeholders to explore the possibility of taking forward the suggestions detailed above.

3.15 Officers would then provide updates to the Committee later this year as to the outcome of this engagement.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 None

5. APPENDICES

None

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Dave Etheridge – Senior Practitioner (Licensing)
Worcestershire Regulatory Services

E Mail: dave.etheridge@worcestershire.gov.uk

Tel: (01905) 822799