

Report to Licensing Committee

Report reference: LSC-004-2011/12.

Date of meeting: 12 October 2011.



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Proposal of Taxi Ranks within the Epping Forest District.

Responsible Officer: Kim Tuckey (01992 564034).

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendation:

(1) That the Committee consider the need for Taxi ranks in the area and decide whether to instruct officers to carry out a consultation.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To provide a better service for members of the public and assist drivers by the introduction of taxi ranks

Other Options for Action:

Not to consider implementing taxi ranks

Report:

1. There has been a growing demand for taxi ranks within the authority. The licensing section has been receiving complaints from taxi firms and the Epping Forest Taxi Association which represents independent taxi drivers (EFTA). The requirement for ranks was also identified as part of the consultation conducted into the licensing conditions.

2. Hackney carriage vehicles are unable to pull up and ply for hire within the District due to the lack of ranks. There are no ranks at any of the underground stations. At busy times this can cause difficulties. However, only the forecourt of Loughton Station is adopted as public highway and so Transport for London would have to agree to a taxi rank being installed at any of its other stations. The provision of taxi ranks has been discussed previously with Essex County Council, however due to lack of funding at that time it was not been possible to pursue the issue.

3. A new partnership called the North Essex Parking Partnership now has authority over parking related issues and taxi ranks. The Senior Licensing Officer has made contact with the partnership to enquire about the possibility of more ranks within the District.

4. The partnership has indicated that it will support the District Council if it decides to propose sites that may be suitable for use as taxi ranks. The partnership also stated that they would provide the funds for the ranks if they were agreed and that they would carry out the necessary adoption and advertisement required. However, further information is still required.

5. The Senior Licensing Officer also discussed the provision of ranks with the Council's parking enforcement department in Loughton who have indicated that they will assist the authority but have suggested a number of other areas in addition to those listed below.

6. If members are in agreement to the proposals the following sites have been identified as possible ranks:

- (a) Back of the Co-Op service road Waltham Abbey (5 bays);
- (b) Bottom of Victoria road and Queens Road Buckhurst Hill (5 bays);
- (c) Loughton slip road opposite Morrisons (5 bays);
- (d) High Road Epping (outside Barclays 3 bays);
- (e) Buckhurst Hill station (with consent of London Underground);
- (f) Theydon Bois Station (with consent of London underground); and
- (g) Epping Station (with consent of London underground).

7. If members were minded to agree the proposals a full consultation would have to be carried out to discover whether these areas would be suitable for the taxi trade and to members of the public. The results would be reported back to the next Licensing Committee with further information regarding the requirements of the North Essex Partnership.

Resource Implications:

It will be necessary to carryout a full consultation on this matter. The actual cost of implementing the ranks would be facilitated by the North Essex Parking Partnership and would be the subject of a further report.

Legal & Governance Implications:

None.

Safer and Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None.

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Not Applicable.