

**Agenda Item No:** 7 **Report No:** 137/12  
**Report Title:** Hackney Carriage Livery  
**Report To:** Licensing Committee **Date:** 28 August 2012  
**Cabinet Member:** Cllr R Robertson  
**Ward(s) Affected:** All  
**Report By:** Director of Planning & Environmental Services  
**Contact Officers:** Ian Kedge, Head of Environment & Health  
[Ian.Kedge@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:Ian.Kedge@lewes.gov.uk) 01273 484353  
Robbie Clark, Hackney Carriage Licensing Officer  
[Robbie.Clark@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:Robbie.Clark@lewes.gov.uk) 01273 484276

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**Purpose of Report:**

To consider a request from a Southern Taxis (Brighton) Ltd to adopt a livery scheme for their company vehicles.

**Officers' Recommendation:**

The Committee is recommended to approve the request from the proprietor of Southern Taxis for him to adopt a livery scheme for his company vehicles.

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**1 Reasons for Recommendations**

To respond to the request from Southern Taxis wishing to adopt a livery scheme for their company vehicles.

**2 Information**

- 2.1** In 2011 South Coast Taxis and Premier Cabs were taken over by Southern Taxis from Brighton owned by Mr Andrew Cheesman. The company had previously been owned by the late Jon New.
- 2.2** South Coast Taxis and Premier Cabs have at present 40 Hackney Carriage Vehicles and 40 Hackney Carriage Drivers attached to their company, including four cars that are owned by City Cabs and these are presently hired to Lewes District Council Licensed Drivers.
- 2.3** A request has been received from the owner of Southern Taxis that permission be given to trial a scheme where, over a period of time, vehicles from that company would be liveried.
- 2.4** The livery would consist of licensed vehicles being sprayed white in colour with a black bonnet.

- 2.5 It is understood that this trial would run for a stipulated period to gauge reaction from members of the public.
- 2.6 The object is to see if a more corporate image would give a competitive advantage to the company and it is also hoped that their other existing drivers would see the benefits of this policy and would agree to having their own vehicles liveried.
- 2.7 The trial would also be to see if a liveried vehicle may improve public confidence for passengers, especially at night.

### **3 Background**

- 3.1 There is at present no livery policy for licensed taxis in the conditions of Lewes District Council.
- 3.2 It could be argued that in the present economic climate it may not be the right time for a Local Authority to introduce their own livery policy.
- 3.3 Estimates for a car to be resprayed to the suggested livery, of a white vehicle with a black bonnet, is approx £800 - £1,000.
- 3.4 If a taxi company is willing to trial such a policy at this time it may be beneficial to monitor the results for future reference.

### **4 Options**

- 4.1 Lewes District Council could decide to introduce its own livery policy from a date to be agreed. This could include Lewes District Council logo and anything else that the Committee may wish.
- 4.2 There are clearly cost implications to the trade which would have to be taken into account before the introduction of such a change.
- 4.3 If permission is given to South Coast Taxis for this proposal to go ahead it should be stressed that this decision would not fetter Lewes District Council from introducing its own livery policy at a later date. That policy would clearly take precedent over any permission if granted at this time to South Coast Taxis.
- 4.4 If South Coast Taxis livery is adopted, the Committee is recommended to authorise the Director of Planning & Environmental Services to write to the company pointing out that it would introduce the livery scheme at its own cost and risk. If at any future date the Council wishes to introduce a livery scheme for all vehicles, he would have to convert all his vehicles to any such new livery at his own cost.

### **5 Environmental Implications**

I have completed the Environmental Implications Questionnaire and there are no significant effects as a result of these recommendations.

## **6 Risk Management Implications**

The changes/issues covered by this report are not significant in terms of risk. No new risks will arise whether or not the recommendations are implemented or rejected

## **7 Equality Implications**

There are no Equality Implications to this report.

## **8 Background Papers**

There are no Background Papers to this report.

## **9 Appendices**

Appendix 1 – E-mail from Southern Taxis requesting a livery.

## Appendix 1

>>> "Mick Hildreth" <mick.hildreth@205205.com> 01/08/2012 10:29 >>>

31th July 2012

Dear Robbie,

Further to our recent conversation relating to our company Southern Taxis (Brighton) Ltd T/A South Coast Premier Taxis, and my request to Lewes District Council to operate with restricted Private Hire Drivers and allowing our company to trial a corporate identity scheme.

I have listed below our requests for consideration by Lewes District Council.

### **Restricted Private Hire Driver Licenses.**

Our company has for many years concentrated on corporate account work predominately School contracts for Brighton & Hove City Council and East Sussex County Council.

We have for some time been aware that a licensed Lewes District Council Private Hire Operator namely Mini-Bus Travel has approval from Lewes District Council to operate restricted licensed private hire drivers to cover school contract work.

Our company would like to apply for the same status as Mini-Bus Travel so we can compete financially with our competitors and offer an economical professional service.

To help with your considerations I can confirm the following working practises our company will follow and we are also willing to comply with any other conditions Lewes District Council decide to apply.

The drivers will be used solely for school contracts working four hours per day, five days per week during the 38 week school year. We are hoping to attract the older driver that this type of work tends to lend itself to who are looking to work part time only.

These drivers will only be employed for the school runs which are fixed routes which the drivers do each day.

On behalf of our company I would also request exemption from the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) Taxi test and Assessment, This request is made because of the nature of the work and the time elements in place that place a heavy burden on Companies to try and locate and prepare new drivers before the new school term starts.

Our Company will put in place their own suitable instruction and procedures for a private DSA Test to be carried out by a qualified instructor as per Mini Bus Travel.

I can also confirm we will be applying for a Private Hire Operators License from our office in Longridge Avenue, Saltdean in the name of South Coast Premier.

### **South Coast Premier Taxis Corporate Identity Scheme.**

Our company wishes to introduce a corporate identity scheme which would mean over a period of time cars working on South Coast Premier would all be white with black bonnets. Our rationale in requesting this concession is based on customer safety and a smart corporate identity for our company.

The customer safety aspect would be achieved in many ways but predominantly the white and black colour scheme of a South Coast Taxi would make the identification for the customer very easy, ensuring that our clients always got into a licensed Lewes District South Coast Taxi.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Lewes District Council for considering our requests and would be more than pleased to offer any further assistance.

Kind regards

Mick Hildreth  
Operations Director  
Southern Taxis (Brighton) Ltd  
T/A City Cabs & South Coast Premier Taxis