

**Meeting:** Council

**Date:** Wednesday 18 July 2012

**Subject:** Horse drawn carriage rides in Eastbourne

**Report of:** Councillor Steve Wallis on behalf of the Cabinet

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The Council is asked to consider the minute and resolution of the Cabinet meeting held on 11 July 2012.

Further copies of the report to Cabinet are available on request – please see end of this report. A copy may be seen on the Council's website at:  
<http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/council/meetings/cabinet/>

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**The Council is recommended to:-**

**Revoke its delegation to the General Licensing Committee to deal with any applications for horse drawn carriage licenses that might have come forward.**

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**\*23 Horse drawn carriage rides in Eastbourne** (Cabinet, 8 February 2012, page no. 274, minute no. 101, 2011/12 minutes).

- 23.1 Councillor Philip Ede addressed the Cabinet welcoming this review of the Cabinet's previous decision and the opportunity to consider the further representations and information which had been received and which he believed would justify a decision to revoke the earlier decision.
- 23.2 Cabinet considered the report of the Senior Head of Development and Environment. The Council had previously considered a proposal to offer horse drawn carriage rides along the seafront, and had agreed the necessary licensing and administrative procedures that the Council would need to undertake if it wished to proceed with the proposal. Full Council delegated the administration of the related licensing arrangements, including the setting of both fees and operating conditions to the General Licensing Committee on 22 February 2012. Subsequently Animal Aid, an organisation that campaigned against animal abuse, provided a briefing for members, and the evidence now received (given in appendix A to the report) about the potential impact of welfare issues on horses in a town centre environment, had led to this matter being brought back to Cabinet with a view to the original decision being reviewed.
- 23.3 The briefing for councillors held on 15 May 2012 was attended by 16 members. The briefing was led by Dene Stansall, Animal Aid's horse

consultant, and a number of concerns were presented, as follows:

- The welfare of the horses in terms of the demands made on them;
- the need for rest periods and running water;
- of the need for suitable shade/shelter;
- the unsuitability of the harness and severity of the bit; and
- the conditions of the road along the planned route such as sunken drain covers which pose a tripping hazard, in addition to cars and large vehicles such as coaches on the roads.

There were several companies who offered horse drawn carriage rides in the UK; this might be as a tourist attraction or more commonly for hire for special occasions and events such as a wedding, where a carriage that seats up to four people was typically used for a relatively short duration. However, when asked about their view of Eastbourne as a suitable location to offer carriage rides, Animal Aid were of the opinion that where a horse drawn carriage ride was planned to take place in a busy town centre, it would not be possible to introduce any measures to mitigate any of the above issues referred to above.

23.4 Representations had also received from residents about the Council's proposals, expressing concern about:

- The volume of traffic on the seafront and the suitability for mixed use with horse drawn vehicles
- The welfare of the horses and the potential for injury

One representation had been received that was in favour of the proposal.

**\*23.5 Resolved (key decision):** (1) That, after further detailed consideration of the issues surrounding the licensing of horse drawn carriages on the seafront and having taken into account the further representations received, the decision to licence horse drawn carriage rides within the Borough be revoked.

(2) That full Council be recommended to revoke its delegation to the General Licensing Committee to deal with any applications for horse drawn carriage licenses that might have come forward.

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For a copy of the report please contact Local Democracy at 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne, BN21 4TW. Tel. (01323) 415022 or 415021.  
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