

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE - 1 NOVEMBER 2000**

#### **SELF-ADVERTISING ON TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE CARS**

##### **Report by Director of Community Services**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To allow the Sub-Committee to consider regulating the form of 'self-advertising' permitted on Taxis and Private Hire Cars.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The practice of advertising the name of the company operating the vehicle and a contact telephone number on both taxis and private hire cars has developed over the years. Until now, the Council and the trade in general have accepted such advertising, provided it was kept within reasonable limits.

#### **3. DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 Over the past few months several complaints have been received from East Ayrshire Taxi Trade Council and from individual taxi operators regarding the practice of private hire car companies advertising names and telephone numbers on licensed vehicles.
- 3.2 In particular, East Ayrshire Taxi Trade Council and officers are concerned that this form of advertising gives members of the public the impression that private hire cars are available for hire in the same way as taxis. There is an ongoing problem in this area with private hire cars accepting fares which are not pre-booked and the restriction of self-advertising may, at least partially, address this issue.
- 3.3 The Licensing Section has investigated each individual complaint and instigated any necessary action, but this has involved a considerable amount of officer time. In addition it is considered that some of the complaints received from operators against fellow licensees may be motivated more by business rivalry than by concern for public safety.
- 3.4 Council Officers and representatives of East Ayrshire Taxi Trade have discussed the subject and are of the opinion that the Council should implement a policy whereby the operator of a taxi or private hire car is limited to advertising the name and telephone number(s) of his/her taxi or private hire car company on the vehicle as detailed below.

- (i) Advertising shall only be permitted on the front and rear windscreens of the vehicle, outwith the windscreen wiper pattern area and to the satisfaction of the Councils' Examiner.
- (ii) Lettering shall not exceed 75mm in height.
- (iii) The advertising shall be contained in one line, unless smaller lettering is used, but the combined height of any lines of lettering shall not exceed 75mm in height.
- (iv) The use of the rear of the taxi roof sign for advertising a company name or telephone number shall continue to be permitted.

3.5 If the Sub-Committee agree to the above policy, it is recommended that it should come into effect immediately for all new vehicles and that all existing vehicles be fully compliant by 31 January 2001.

3.6 A copy of this report has been forwarded to East Ayrshire Taxi Trade Council for comment and any response from that organisation will be circulated at the meeting

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Nil.

#### **5. LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 In terms of Section 10( 4) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 the Licensing Authority must be satisfied as to the suitability of the type size and design of any vehicle to be used as a taxi or private hire car.

5.2 In terms of Section 14(1) of the Act, there shall not be displayed on or in a private hire car any word, sign, notice, mark, illumination or other feature which may suggest that the vehicle is available for hire as a taxi.

#### **6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Nil.

#### **7. CONCLUSIONS**

7.1 Complaints have been received regarding the size and form of self-advertising on taxis and private hire cars.

7.2 Council Officers and East Ayrshire Taxi Trade Council have discussed the subject and are of the opinion that the Sub-Committee should implement a policy restricting the size and format of self-advertising.

7.3 A formal policy on this issue will reduce officer time investigating and acting on these complaints.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 It is recommended that the Sub-Committee agree

- (i) to restrict the form of self-advertising on all licensed vehicles as contained in this report, or
- (ii) to restrict the form of self-advertising on all licensed vehicles, taking into account any response received from East Ayrshire Taxi Trade Council, or
- (iii) to restrict the form of self-advertising on all licensed vehicles in such a manner as may be determined.

William Stafford  
**Director of Community Services**

11 October 2000  
WS/GS/LAF

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil.

**AGENDA**