

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL and LICENSING COMMITTEE held on
16 JANUARY 2002 at COUNCIL OFFICES SAFFRON WALDEN at
7.00 pm**

Present:- Councillor R B Tyler – Chairman
Councillors Mrs J F Cheetham, P G F Lewis and D M Miller.

Officers in attendance:- Mrs M Cox, M Hardy, M Perry, R M Secker and
Mrs A Turner.

DCL98 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs M A Caton and
Mrs I Loughlin.

DCL99 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2001 were agreed as a
correct record, subject to adding an additional resolution at Minute No DCL83
“ that the Chairman or Vice-Chairman be appointed to attend any subsequent
appeal.”

DCL100 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Minute DCL83 – Determination of Private Hire Drivers Licence

Members discussed the decision taken at the last meeting and were advised
that the driver had appealed against the suspension. The Chairman would be
representing the Council at the appeal.

DCL101 CHANGE OF LICENSING CONDITIONS FOR PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

The Committee was advised that over the last few years there had been an
increase in the number of stretch limousines used to convey passengers for
normal hire. Most limousines carried more than 8 passengers and the
responsibility for licensing them fell to the traffic commissioner. However, the
use of the smaller type of limousine was increasing (less than 9 passengers)
and the licensing of them fully within the jurisdiction of the local authority.
These vehicles were imported direct from the United States and were left-
hand drive. The Council's current private hire vehicle conditions prevented
any operator from using left hand drive vehicles.

Officers considered that the conditions should be amended to allow the
licensing of these limousines to ensure the safety of the travelling public.
The conditions of the licence should be worded so that they applied only to
this type of vehicle, that was limousines specially constructed and with an
extended wheel base to accommodate up to 8 passengers. The drivers of the
vehicle would need to hold a private hire drivers licence and the operator

would also need to be licensed. Standard criteria and scrutiny would be applied to all such applications.

The Head of Legal Services stressed that there should be very clear reasons for making this exception to the no left-hand drive policy and the wording of the conditions should reflect the special circumstances.

Members considered that the vehicles would be used mainly for corporate use and not for general hire. Road safety would not be a major issue because passengers would not normally disembark on the road and a chauffeur was likely to open doors as part of the services provided.

Officers would investigate how other districts had dealt with this issue.

RESOLVED that the Head of Legal Services in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee agree the wording of the licensing condition to allow the use of left-hand drive stretch limousines, subject to any concerns being referred back to the next meeting of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm