

Committee: Licensing Committee
Date: 13th July 2011
Title: Quality Taxi Partnership
Author: Murray Hardy – Licensing Officer

Agenda Item

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Item for
information

Summary

- 1 This report has been prepared at the request of Councillor Perry. Members are reminded however that policy decisions relating to matters referred to in this report are executive functions and as such fall within the remit of the cabinet.

Recommendations

- 2 Members note the content of this report.

Background Papers

Views of Steering Group Members regarding preferred supplier.

Impact

Communication/ Consultation	Consultation has taken place with ULODA, QTP Members and bona fide companies that specialise in installing CCTV in licensed vehicles..
Community Safety	The main aim of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade is to secure the safety and comfort of the travelling public.
Equalities	None
Finance	All monies provided for the provision for installing the equipment has been made by Essex County Council. There is no cost to this Council.
Human Rights/ Legal Implications	None.
Sustainability	The Steering Group which has been set up will monitor the progress following installation of the equipment.
Ward-specific impacts	None.
Workforce/Workplace	None.

Situation

- 3 On 4th December 2009 a Quality Taxi Partnership was formally launched in this District in conjunction with our major stakeholders which include Essex Police, ULODA, Essex County Council, Uttlesford District Council, the Licensing Committee and Essex Fire and Rescue Service.

- 4 The aims of the partnership can be summarised as follows.
- Promote accessibility to everyday facilities for all
 - Meet the needs of people without access to a car
 - Reduce crime and fear of crime on the transport systems
 - Improve quality and quantity of taxi/phv services in Uttlesford
 - Support services for people who cannot use conventional services
 - Reduce Road Traffic Accidents that cause death and serious injury
- 5 The objectives of the partnership can be summarised as follows:
- To improve the customer care skills of drivers
 - To improve on-street waiting facilities for customers
 - To provide priority access for taxi/phv where possible through the district
 - To improve working relationships and understanding between partners
 - To assist in developing a locally deliverable training package (see 11 below)
 - To make all journeys as safe as they can be
- 6 Following the formation of this partnership Essex County Council provided £10,000 for the provision of CCTV being installed in some licensed vehicle within our District. This money is ring fenced solely for this project and nothing else.
- 7 In order to make a bid for the use of this money a Hackney Carriage Proprietor or Private Hire Operator must have signed up to become a member of the partnership and be willing to operate in accordance with the charter.
- 8 On the 6th June 2011 the Steering Group interviewed 3 representatives from different companies and following those interviews each member submitted their recommendation as to which of the 3 were most suitable for our needs. The view of each member of the group is included as a background paper.
- 9 A memorandum is to be submitted to the Chief Finance Officer seeking authorisation to purchase 13 individual units at a cost of £545 plus VAT. The Council will remain the owners of this equipment with the Proprietor or Operator being responsible for any ongoing costs after the 1 year guarantee has expired.
- 10 A legal document is being drawn up our Solicitor Mrs Nicholson regarding safe custody of the equipment, correct use and the return of the equipment if the individual has no further use of it.
- 11 Essex Police are to provide a protocol to all users of the equipment in respect of evidence gathering and the retention and safe custody of such for use in any criminal proceedings.
- 12 The establishment of QTP in Uttlesford would not replace the role of the licensing committee when considering issues involving the hackney carriage and private hire trade. QTP is a tool for the partners to use to improve the quality of the service provided.

- 13 Training of drivers in the use of this equipment will be provided by the preferred supplier.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Licensed Proprietors/Operators do not wish to avail themselves of this funding, which would result of the funds being returned to the County Council.	1 This authority does endeavour to work in partnership to encourage the licensed trade to make use of this facility.	4 Installation of this equipment will greatly enhance the safety of the travelling public and reduce even further the fear of crime	Appropriate measures will be in place to ensure protection of drivers and passengers.

1 = Little or no risk or impact.

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required.

4 = Near certainty or risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.