

Report to Licensing Committee

Date of meeting: 30 August 2012



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Taxi Ranks

Officer contact for further information: Alison Mitchell

Committee Secretary: Adrian Hendry

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Committee:

- (1) notes the progress made in the consultations;**
- (2) instructs the Senior Licensing Officer to proceed with negotiating the placing of ranks in the supermarket areas which the Committee considers should be progressed;**
- (3) indicates which of the possible areas identified by the North Essex Parking Partnership which it would support going forward to the next Partnership meeting; and**
- (4) Whether there are any other areas which the Committee would wish to have considered as a taxi rank.**

Report:

1. At its meeting on 12th October 2011, the Licensing Committee decided that a public consultation exercise should be undertaken to determine the need for a taxi rank in any particular area of the District.
2. The results of that consultation were considered at the meeting of the Licensing Committee on the 11 April 2012. However, there were a large number of sites identified and members resolved as follows:
 - (a) That a special meeting be convened in the summer to consider a more detailed report on proposals for taxi ranks within Epping Forest District;
 - (b) That, once sites had been identified, the local ward councilors be notified and their views sought; and
 - (c) That the Senior Licensing Officer or an officer acting on her behalf seeks consent if on private land or the Highways Agency if on Highways Land.

Consultations

3. A copy of the result of the previous consultation is attached. After the April Committee meeting, Licensing Officers contacted the owners of any private land that was identified as a taxi rank and the highways authority in respect of any areas which are public highway.

Supermarkets

4. The parking areas next to supermarkets are usually owned by the supermarkets concerned. As they are private land the consent of the land owner must be obtained prior to the land being used as a taxi rank. The Licensing Officers sent letters and subsequently made telephone calls to those supermarkets which were identified in the consultation.

The following supermarkets have agreed to enter into further discussions with the Authority prior to the land being used as a taxi rank.

Supermarket Identified	Respondents In favour	Respondents against
Tesco's Stores, Epping	12	1
Marks & Spencer's, Loughton	15	2
Sainsbury's, Loughton	23	3
Waitrose, Buckhurst Hill	16	2
Sainsbury's, Ongar	0	0

Stations

5. The consultations identified all stations in the district as potential places for placing taxi ranks.

6. Loughton Station adjoins the public highway and it is therefore necessary to obtain agreement from the highways authority as it will be necessary for a traffic order to be made as well as an order by this authority. A meeting was held with representatives of the North East Parking Partnership and the Authority's Parking Manager who have agreed that this is a possible site for a taxi rank.

7. The forecourts of the remaining stations in the District are privately owned. The managers of the individual stations as well as London Underground Limited were included in the original consultation. The Authority received a reply on behalf of Ongar Station which rejected the proposal. Transport for London and the managers of the other stations did not reply.

8. Following the April Committee meeting further letters were sent and follow up calls were made but no interest was expressed in dedicating the land outside the remaining stations.

Public Highways

9. Officers met with a representative from the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) to discuss whether Essex County Council would agree to permit taxi ranks to be constructed on the highway and what would be NEPP's requirements. A list of the highway sites which had been identified by the consultation was supplied to NEPP and a subsequent survey of those sites was carried out by an officer from NEPP and the Authority's Parking Manager.

10. NEPP has identified the following possible rank locations:

Highway Sites Identified	Respondents In favour	Respondents against
Epping High Street outside Barclays Bank	6	0
Loughton Station	69	2
Loughton High Street – no area yet identified	76	21
Debden near the Churchill Public House	1	0
Waltham Abbey on the service road at the rear of the Co-operative.	0	0

11. The exact position in Loughton High Street is not yet known. Although the service road in Waltham Abbey has not been specifically identified it is in near to some other areas mentioned in the consultation.

12. NEPP has indicated that draft a report with their recommendations will be prepared by the end of August so that a consultation process can take place prior to its meeting in October. The partnership meeting will consider all reports for the partnership area and, those approved, will each be given a priority. This means that although a proposal is agreed there may be considerable delays in implementation.

13. NEPP has indicated that the installation cost of installing a taxi rank is approximately £3,000 for four bays. It will be necessary for the Traffic Order to be advertised and the cost will depend upon the wording and whether they can be combined. For each area identified a public notice will have to be placed in the local press which will cost in the region of £1,065.00 for each notice. NEPP will not charge for this or officer's time.

14. If NEPP refuse any location because of lack of priority or the delay is unacceptable NEPP has stated that it will consider a proposal for the Authority to fund the work itself. If the Committee decides that is an option it would wish to consider the cost to the Authority of the highway surveys, works and advertising will be identified.

The Procedure and Costs of Creating a Taxi Rank under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

15. The District Council's responsibility when making a taxi rank is the same whether the land is adopted highways or private. The Licensing Authority must place public notice in a local newspaper. Any objections received within 28 days of the advertisement to the proposed site or sites must be taken into account together with any comments from the police.

16. If any objections or representations are made as a result of the consultation a report would be put before the next Licensing Committee to take account of.

17. If there are no objections or representations the Authority may proceed, and the rank could be constructed immediately if the land concerned is privately owned e.g. the Supermarkets.

18. If the bays are to be sited on the public highways then the District's consultation and report would be timed to fit in with NEPP's timetable for works.

Consultations

20. If the Committee decides that it would consider it desirable for a taxi rank to be installed at any of the supermarkets, the Senior Licensing Officer will contact the supermarket to discuss terms and a consultation carried out with the appropriate town and parish councils. An update will be given to the next licensing committee meeting in October.

21. The Committee is asked to specify which of the sites identified by NEPP should be made into ranks and officers will then inform NEPP. It is unlikely that NEPP will have made a decision as to the suitability of any of the identified areas before the Licensing Committee in October. If the decision is favourable in respect of any of the proposed sites then a consultation exercise will be carried out with the Town and Parish Councils concerned and the occupiers of the neighbouring properties. A report will then be prepared for the April 2013 meeting.

22. If members decide that another rank is required on a highway area not identified by NEPP then NEPP could be asked to agree to this Authority paying the full cost. This is unlikely to meet the deadline for the NEPP October meeting because of their procedures but an update will be provided the next Licensing Committee meeting. If NEPP agrees to this proposal a consultation in respect of that area and costs of consultants and works reported to the next appropriate meeting.

23. When the potential costs are known a report will be made to the Cabinet asking for DDF funding.

Resource Implications:

If the taxi rank is being installed by NEPP the Authority will have to pay the cost of an advertisement for each site adopted in the local press in the region of £1,100 each

If the Committee decides to pay its own costs for installing a rank on the public highway additional costs of consultants to advise on road safety, advertising costs of road traffic orders and installation costs. This would be reported to the next meeting.

If it is agreed to install ranks at supermarkets the cost of the marking out in the region of £3,000 per rank, the advertisement and any other requirements of the supermarket. Terms and costs would be reported to the next meeting.

There is no money in the current budget for this work and an application would be made to the Cabinet for DDF funding.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

The provision of taxi ranks will assist travelling members of the public to access a taxi quickly which may be a priority at night.

Consultation Undertaken:

Public Consultation which was reported to the Licensing Committee in April
North Essex Parking Partnership

Background Papers:

The result of the consultation - attached
Committee reports and minutes of the Licensing Committee in October 2011 and April 2012

Impact Assessments:**Risk Management**

There is a requirement that all necessary procedures are followed.

Equality and Diversity

This policy will be of advantage to all groups. However, it was identified that older people, people with disabilities and vulnerable people will especially benefit.