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TITLE: STRETCH LIMOUSINE PROM SAFETY CAMPAIGN

Committee: Licensing Committee

Date: 8 December 2010

Author: Licensing Officer (Enforcement)

[K202]

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1.0 ISSUE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the current stretch limousine prom safety campaign to raise public awareness regarding the hiring of stretch limousines for school proms and other social events.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That Members note this report.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 East Cambridgeshire District Council is aware that school proms attract a number of stretch limousine bookings. The Licensing Team is concerned that children may be using companies that have not been licensed to provide that service.

3.2 Borough and district councils are responsible for licensing private hire vehicles, which include stretch limousines and chauffeur driven vehicles to carry up to eight passengers only. The licensing process ensures that vehicles and drivers are vetted to ensure that they are suitable, fit and safe. Vehicles undergo strict compliance tests and drivers undergo criminal record bureau checks and medicals.

3.3 Using an unlicensed vehicle may place children at risk from drivers who have not been adequately vetted, and, in the event of an accident, the insurance may not cover injuries to passengers or other injured parties.

3.4 A 'stretched limousine', is a saloon type vehicle that has undergone an increase in length by extending the wheelbase after manufacture. An 'American stretched limousine' is a stretched limousine imported from the USA and typically will have been manufactured originally by Lincoln (Ford) or Cadillac.

3.5 In the case of a stretched limousine, the Council's Taxi and Private Hire Guide conditions relating to hackney carriage and private hire vehicles

specify that stretched limousines must reach the following standards prior to being issued with a private hire vehicle licence:

- (a) All Limousines will meet the QVM (Quality Vehicle Modifier) issued by the Ford Motor Company or the CMC (Cadillac Mastercoach Builder).
- (b) The stretch extension shall not exceed 120 inches (10 feet).
- (c) The maximum weight of any converted vehicle will not exceed 7,100 lbs (3,200 kg).
- (d) Stretch Limousines must be constructed on the appropriate heavy-duty packages as specified by the QVM/CMC.
- (e) All replacement Parts must be manufacturer approved. Replacement tyres must be of the appropriate size and weight bearing.
- (f) Side facing seats in limousines will only be permitted if they meet the minimum requirements of lap belts.
- (g) American Stretched limousines over 7 years of age on the date of first application will not be licensed unless there are strong mechanical representations as to the vehicle's fitness.

3.6 Stretch limousine drivers are also required to sign a declaration that they will not carry more than 8 passengers.

#### 4.0 ARGUMENTS / CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Over the last two months, letters, leaflets and posters have been sent to Bottisham Village College, City of Ely Community College, King's School, Soham Village College and Witchford Village College. A copy of the safety campaign letter is **Appendix A** to this report.

4.2 Head teachers have been asked to support the safety campaign by displaying the posters on student notice boards and by passing the information leaflets to parents and guardians of the students. A copy of the parent leaflet is **Appendix B** and safety poster is **Appendix C** to this report.

4.3 The launch of the prom safety campaign on 4 October 2010 at Soham Village College was attended by Cllr Ron Bradney, Chairperson of the Licensing Committee.

4.4 The press release for the safety campaign is **Appendix D** and photographs of the prom safety event are **Appendix E** to this report.

#### 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no costs associated with this report.

## 6.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A Prom safety campaign letter

Appendix B Prom safety parent leaflet

Appendix C Prom safety poster

Appendix D Prom safety press release

Appendix E Photographs of the prom safety event

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<b><u>Background Documents</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Contact Officer Lin Bagwell</u></b>
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976	Room The Grange Ely	Licensing Officer (Enforcement)  <a href="mailto:lin.bagwell@eastcambs.gov.uk">lin.bagwell@eastcambs.gov.uk</a>

*This matter is being dealt with by:*

Lin Bagwell

Telephone: 01353 665555  
E-mail: Lin.bagwell@eastcambs.gov.uk  
My Ref:  
Your Ref:

Dear

### **Stretch Limousines and Proms Nights – Safety Campaign**

East Cambridgeshire District Council is aware that school proms attract a number of limousine bookings. We are very concerned that children may be using companies which have not been licensed to provide that service.

Borough and district councils are responsible for licensing private hire vehicles, which include stretch limousines and chauffeur driven vehicles, **to carry up to eight passengers only**. The licensing process ensures that vehicles and drivers are vetted to ensure that they are suitable, fit and safe. Vehicles undergo strict compliance tests and drivers undergo criminal records bureau checks and medicals.

Using an unlicensed vehicle may place children at risk from drivers who have not been adequately vetted, and, in the event of an accident, the insurance may not cover injuries to passengers or other parties injured. It is legal for a limousine licensed by one authority to work in another local authority area and a licensed driver will have a badge from the issuing licensing authority and the vehicle licence plate will be displayed on the rear of the vehicle.

Further to my email of 30 September 2010, I am asking for your support in two ways:

- Please display the posters enclosed in prominent positions on your students' notice boards;
- Please ensure that the information leaflets enclosed are passed to parents and guardians of all students in those years for which proms are being organised.

It is an offence to sell alcohol in a limousine without a premises licence having been granted under the Licensing Act 2003. To date, no licensed limousine operators in the East Cambridgeshire district have been issued with a premises licence to allow alcohol to be sold.

The safety, protection and wellbeing of the general public is our priority and this can only be ensured by a robust licensing regime. I trust you will be able to assist us in our safety campaign and I should like to thank you for your support.

If you require any further information please contact the Council's Licensing Team by telephone or e-mail using the contact details above.

Yours sincerely

Lin Bagwell  
Licensing Officer (Enforcement)

# Prom Nights

Are you using a limousine to arrive in style at a Prom Night?

Are you sure it is licensed?

Do you know the risks of entering an unlicensed vehicle?

Only use a licensed limousine – If you are unsure whether the limousine is licensed contact the local Licensing Authority where the limousine is based.

If you use a vehicle that isn't licensed then you could be in danger. A licensed vehicle and driver are scrutinised by borough and district councils to ensure your safety.



For further information please contact  
East Cambridgeshire District Council's Licensing Team on 01353 665555  
who will be happy to assist you with your questions.

# **Parents – Are You Limo Wise for Prom Nights?**

**Is your child using a limousine to attend a Prom Night?**

**Are you sure it is licensed?**

**Do you know the risks of your child using an unlicensed vehicle?**

**An unlicensed vehicle will not be insured.**

**If an unlicensed vehicle is stopped it will be taken off the road. If this happens you will need to make arrangements for your child to be taken home safely.**

**When hiring the limousine make sure that no alcohol will be supplied.**

**Only use a licensed limousine – if you are unsure whether the limousine is licensed contact the local Licensing Authority where the vehicle is based.**

**If you use a vehicle that isn't licensed then your child could be in danger. A licensed vehicle and driver are scrutinised by borough and district councils to ensure your child's safety.**

**For further information please contact East Cambridgeshire District Council's Licensing Team on 01353 665555 who will be happy to assist you with your questions.**

***STAY SAFE BE LIMO WISE***  
***Always use a Licensed Limousine***

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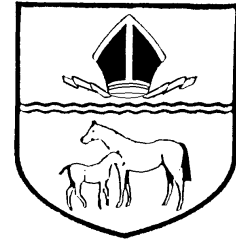
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Ref: 102/10  
Author: Tony Taylorson  
Date: 05/10/10

## APPENDIX D

### News Release

#### IS YOUR LIMO LICENSED?

Going on a night out, planning a hen party or thinking of arriving at a Prom in style then check the transport that is hired is properly licensed.

That is the message from East Cambridgeshire District Council who are advising anyone ordering a Limousine to check the vehicle, driver and operator are official.

Using an unlicensed vehicle may place passengers at risk from drivers who have not been adequately vetted or, in the event of an accident; the insurance may not cover injuries to those involved.

Cllr Ron Bradney, Chairman of Licensing Committee at East Cambridgeshire District Council, said: "The last thing you want to worry about on your night out is whether your driver is approved and the vehicle is roadworthy. We know people want to arrive at their event in style, whether it is a ball, hen do or a night at the races but for your own peace of mind it's important to make sure you know that vehicles, drivers and operators are properly licensed.

"When booking transport, ask for the vehicle and driver licence numbers and the name of the authority issuing the operator's licence. Before the journey, check that the driver can show you the vehicle licence and a driver badge. These are really small checks which the driver won't mind taking the couple of minutes to do so please make the time to be sure you travel safely."

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undergo strict compliance tests and drivers undergo criminal record bureau checks and medicals.

For further information please contact East Cambridgeshire District Council's Licensing Team on 01353 665555.

**ENDS**

Notes for editors

For further information contact Tony Taylorson in the Communications Team on 01223 699285.



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For further information please contact East Cambridgeshire District Council's Licensing Team on 01223 66035 who will be happy to assist you with your questions.

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