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**TITLE: SPECIFICATION FOR COUNCIL APPROVED HACKNEY CARRIAGE ROOF SIGNS**

Committee: Licensing Committee

Date: 14 September 2011

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(Commercial)

[L115]

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1.0 ISSUE

1.1 For members to decide on the 'Council Approved' hackney carriage roof sign.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That Members approve the proposed defined standard at Appendix 1.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 During the Licensing Committee of 15 June 2011, Members resolved that Hackney Carriages must carry a 'Council Approved' roof sign at all times.

3.2 Whilst there was a clear decision for roof signs to be 'Council Approved', no further clarification was made at the time of the meeting as to what constitutes a 'Council Approved' roof sign.

3.3 A definition to describe the 'Council Approved' hackney carriage roof sign is required for the purposes of clarification, enforcement and transparency.

4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

4.1 It is important that a definition/description of the Council Approved Roof sign is determined, so that any signs on display, not meeting the approved standard can be identified and confirmed.

4.2 Hackney carriage vehicles are required to be presented to one of the Council approved garages for inspection, on an annual or twice annual basis, depending upon the age of the vehicle. Part of the inspection relates to the display of the roof sign on a hackney carriage. As such, garages need to be clear as to the description as to what constitutes a Council Approved Roof Sign, in order to determine whether the vehicle should pass or fail that relevant part of the vehicle test.

4.3 On inspection of Hackney Carriage vehicles, where a vehicle is found not to be displaying a Council Approved Roof Sign, Enforcement Officers will need a description to refer to in order to demonstrate to the vehicle owner that the

roof sign on display is not to the approved standard, and for persistent non compliance, to demonstrate to Licensing Committee and potentially the Magistrates Court, either on appeal or during a prosecution, that the roof sign did not meet the required standard.

- 4.4 It is recommended that the original licence condition, which was tabled at the Licensing Committee Meeting on 15 June 2011, relating to the Hackney carriage roof sign (Appendix 2) be turned into the Council Approved roof sign standard. To add further clarification, sizes and dimensions have been added to the proposed specification.
- 4.5 The wording and description of the original licence condition for the roof sign, referred to above, was consulted on widely with the trade and the trade have agreed that this is acceptable to them.
- 4.6 If Members are minded today to reject the proposal to adopt the original suggested wording/description, then it will be necessary for Members to formulate an alternative wording and description and further consultation with the trade, etc will be required. This may well delay the implementation of the new roof signs, which is scheduled for 1 January 2012.
- 4.7 Members are therefore requested to accept the wording and described as originally put forward.

#### 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The financial implication relates to existing licensed Hackney carriage vehicles having to change their roof signs by 1 January 2012 as agreed by Licensing Committee. This equates to approximately 101 vehicles.
- 5.2 Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) completed.

#### 6.0 APPENDICES

- 6.1 Appendix 1 Proposed defined standard for Council approved roof sign for Hackney Carriages.
- 6.2 Appendix 2 Original licence condition for roof signs tabled at Licensing Committee on 15 June 2011.
- 6.3 Appendix 3 Impact and Needs/Requirements Assessment (INRA).

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<b><u>Background Documents</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Contact Officer</u></b>
Licensing Committee Report, 15 June 2011.	Room SF209 The Grange Ely	Mrs E A Bailey PEHO (Commercial) (01353) 665555 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Elizabeth.bailey@eastcambes.gov.uk">Elizabeth.bailey@eastcambes.gov.uk</a>

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **SPECIFICATION FOR COUNCIL APPROVED STANDARD ROOF SIGN FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES IN EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

A Hackney Carriage vehicle shall carry the Council approved roof sign on the roof, which is illuminated when available for hire. The roof sign will carry the single word 'TAXI' in black capital letters, which will be visible at the front and rear of the roof sign. No other lettering, numbers or symbols are to be allowed on the roof sign. The sign is to be red at the rear and white at the front when illuminated. The sign dimensions are to be (approximate) length 18 inches, width 6 inches and height 4.5 inches. Light bulbs used in the roof signs are to be LED.

A list of suppliers of the Council Approved roof sign is available from the Council. The shape and style of the roof sign is commonly referred to as the 'Standard'.

## APPENDIX 2

### **Original Proposed Licence Condition Wording for Roof Signs for Hackney Carriages - tabled at Licensing Committee Meeting Wednesday 15 June 2011**

#### Condition 3.3

A hackney carriage vehicle shall carry a roof sign on the roof, which is illuminated when available for hire. The roof sign will carry the single word 'TAXI' in black capital letters, which will be visible at the front and rear of the roof sign. No other lettering, numbers or symbols are to be allowed on the roof sign. The sign is to be red at the rear and white at the front.

**Impact and Needs/Requirements Assessment (INRA)**  
**Initial Screening**

Initial screening needs to take place for all new/revised Council policies. 'Policy' needs to be understood broadly to include all Council policies, strategies, services, functions, activities and decisions. This stage must be completed at the earliest opportunity to determine whether it is necessary to undertake an INRA for this activity.

<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>SPECIFICATION FOR COUNCIL APPROVED HACKNEY CARRIAGE ROOF SIGNS.</b>
<b>Lead Officer (responsible for assessment):</b>	Mrs E A Bailey
<b>Department:</b>	Environmental Services
<b>Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):</b>	
<b>Date Initial Screening Completed:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> August, 2011

(a) **What is the policy trying to achieve?** i.e. What is the aim/purpose of the policy? Is it affected by external drivers for change? What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? How will the policy be put into practice?

The purpose of the policy is to specify the Council's standard roof sign that hackney carriage vehicles licensed by the Council will be required to display

(b) **Who are its main beneficiaries?** i.e. who will be affected by the policy?

Members of the public, hackney carriage users, enforcement officers, inspection garages and the taxi trade

(c) **Is this assessment informed by any information or background data?** i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction rates, performance indicators, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc.

A consultation was carried out regarding vehicle standards, and from the consultation, members have requested that a standard roof sign be introduced. Additionally, some respondents to the consultation suggested a format for a standard roof sign design. Observations of current roof signs demonstrate that there is little consistency.

**(d) Does this policy have the potential to cause an impact (positive, negative or neutral) on different groups in the community, on the grounds of (please tick all that apply):**

**Ethnicity**  
**Gender**  
**Disability**

X
X
X

**Age**  
**Religion and Belief**  
**Sexual Orientation**

X

**Please explain any impact identified (positive, negative or neutral):** i.e. What do you already know about equality impact or need? Is there any evidence that there is a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally? Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service?

By introducing a standard roof sign it will improve public safety, in that East Cambridgeshire District Council vehicles will be more recognisable, in addition to the introduction of the standard vehicle door stickers.

Visitors to the district, including overseas visitors will be able to identify and recognise hackney carriages, due to the clear roof sign.

Persons will be able to see the signs as they are of a good size and design, which may benefit persons whose sight is limited.

Public safety will be improved due to signs being lit with led lights, and there will be a clear distinction between hackney carriages and private hire vehicles (that are not required to carry a roof sign) in the district.

**(e) Does the policy affect service users or the wider community?**

**NO**

**(f) Does the policy have a significant effect on how services are delivered?**

**NO**

**(g) Will it have a significant effect on how other organisations operate?**

**NO**

**(h) Does it involve a significant commitment of resources?**

**NO**

**(i) Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities, e.g. disabled people's access to public transport etc?**

**NO**

If you have answered **YES** to any of the questions above, then it is necessary to proceed with a full equality impact assessment. If the answer is **NO**, then this judgement and your response to the above questions will need to be countersigned by your Head of Service and then referred to the Council's Equal Opportunities Working Group (EOWG) for scrutiny and verification. Please forward completed and signed forms to Nicole Pema, Principal HR Officer.

**Signatures:**

**Completing Officer:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Head of Service:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_