

Installation of “Cabtivate” in licensed Hackney Carriages

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 28 July 2006

Author: Group Director, Environment and Leisure

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To consider approval for the installation of a “Cabtivate” advertising and news system into licensed Hackney Carriages.

Recommendation

The Sub-Committee Committee is asked to : -

- Approve the installation of “Cabtivate” systems into licensed Hackney Carriages

1. Reasons

- 1.1 This Sub-Committee has a duty to consider issues relating to Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing on behalf of the Licensing Committee.

2. Detail

- 2.1 Permission has been sought by Cabtivate Media Ltd to install flat screen wireless TV in hackney carriages. The screens and equipment are located within the driver compartment behind the driver’s head. The TV screens are viewed by passengers through the plastic bulkhead and play moving images for advertising. They also play ‘content’, which consists of weather and news reports and local and public information.
- 2.2 The systems are automatic and commence once the vehicle ignition is turned on. The driver has no influence as to the content of the material being viewed. Images are displayed installed and updated remotely by the company supplying the system, using wireless mobile phone technology. The systems are generally updated monthly, although it could be more frequently.
- 2.3 The Cabtivate System cannot be switched off by the driver, although he can pause the system allowing him to communicate with the passenger as and when required. Passengers can, however, switch both the sound and visual off. Cabtivate feels this requirement is necessary since some passengers can be affected by flickering screen images which can induce fits. If a passenger has elected to switch off any system then this will remain off for the remainder of the journey. Research by Cabtivate indicates that removing passenger choices creates points of conflict with the drivers and therefore passengers must have control as outlined above.

Installation of “Cabtivate” in licensed Hackney Carriages

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 28 July 2006

The controls are situated near the passenger seats such that a passenger does not need to leave the seat to operate them.

- 2.4 The images are played on a continuous loop, the length of which can be set by the company according to the average journey time. Typically the loop would be between 6 and 20 minutes.
- 2.5 Hackney Carriage vehicle owners receive an income for advertising they permit within their vehicle.
- 2.6 All advertisements displayed would conform to the British Code of Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing (‘the Code’).
- 2.7 The Cabtivate system has a website to which the Council would have remote access.
- 2.8 The proportion of ‘content’, i.e. news, weather, short films, or digital TV channels, is understood to be around 25%.
- 2.9 Cabtivate have supplied data from research carried out into passenger views (‘The Key Facts’, *Cabtivate 2004*) and this states:
 - 2.9.1 92% of passengers watched the screen for the whole or most of their journey
 - 2.9.2 74% of passengers find the inclusion of the screen showing advertising an enjoyable addition to the taxi journey
 - 2.9.3 79% of passengers disagreed or disagreed strongly that the inclusion of a screen showing advertising was an irritating addition to the journey
 - 2.9.4 Only 8% found the system irritating, of that 8% only 1% turned the system off.
 - 2.9.5 The addition of equipment into a vehicle must not interfere with other systems provided for the safety or comfort of occupants. The system installations will be approved by the vehicle manufacturers. Confirmation will be obtained from the vehicle manufacturer that the system will not interfere with the vehicle systems, components or integrity.
 - 2.9.6 All equipment will comply with any legislative requirements in respect of Construction and Use Regulations.
 - 2.9.7 All equipment will be designed, constructed and installed in such a way and in such material as to present no danger to passengers or driver, including from impact with the equipment in the event of an accident or damage from the electrical integrity being breached through vandalism, misuse or wear and tear.
 - 2.9.8 The equipment will not interfere with any other safety, control, electrical, computer, navigation, satellite or radio system in the vehicle
 - 2.9.9 The intensity of the screen will not be such as to be visually intrusive or dazzling.

Installation of “Cabtivate” in licensed Hackney Carriages

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 28 July 2006

2.9.10 The position of the screen will not obstruct the passenger’s view of the meter and the visibility of the screen to following vehicles will be minimal. The Cabtivate screen intensity reduces as the ambient light diminishes.

2.9.11 The screen will be no larger than 15”.

2.9.12 All equipment will be installed in the driver’s compartment and will not be visible from the driver position.

Alternative Options

- To maintain existing Licensing Policy and not permit the use of the Cabivate system.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, although there may be financial implications for Hackney Carriage proprietors if the installations described in this report are not approved. There are no procurement issues arising from this report.

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

A Healthy and Caring Place; An Economically Prosperous Place; An Environmentally Friendly Place; A Safe Place.

Consultees

The Director of Finance (s.151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.

Mr D Coates, Group Leader, Passenger Transport

Councillor D Glaholm, Shadow Lead Member, Environment and Leisure

Councillor S Pajak, Shadow Lead Member, Environment and Leisure

Councillor C Lovell, Chair of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Sub-Committee

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix ‘A’: Letter received (by e-mail) from Cabtivate Ltd.