

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

LICENSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

17th JULY 2006

Wyre Forest Taxi Liaison Group Meeting 2nd June 2006

**Request to Change Detail contained within the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Vehicle
Driver's Badge**

OPEN ITEM	
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Planning, Health and Environment
CONTACT OFFICER:	Brian Kent Brian.kent@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES	Appendix 1 – Example of driver's badge pre March 2004 Appendix 2 – Example of driver's badge post March 2004 Appendix 3 – Letter form Mr R K South

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At the last meeting of the Wyre Forest Taxi Liaison Meeting on the 2nd June 2006, Mr R K South requested that a driver's name should not be required to be displayed on the Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Vehicle Driving Licence issued by the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to DECIDE:

- 2.1 **The current format of the Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driving Licence, containing the full name of the Licence holder, be supported and, consequently, no recommendation be made to the Cabinet to change this policy.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Vehicle Drivers' Badges are granted under the provisions of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, and Section 54, of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, which enables the Council to issue a Driver's Badge in such form as may from time to time be prescribed by them.

Old Style Licence

- 3.2 The Council has issued such badges from the adoption of the Legislation in 1976, until March 2004 in the following forms:

Example Number One

This badge was produced on a black and white template to include:

- The Photograph of the Holder
- The Badge Number
- The Name of the Holder

These badges were produced in-house, not in a corporate style and were easily forged.

(Copy at Appendix 1)

Example Number Two

In February 2004, various changes were proposed to the trade and examples of the new Driver's Badge were published

by MOGO in the Wyre Forest Corporate Colours.

The style, and data content of the badge are to a nationally agreed pattern in the interest's of:

- Driver security
- Passenger Safety
- Corporate Style

(Copy at Appendix 2)

Basic Differences

- 3.3 - Example one is in black and while whilst example two is in colour
- Example one is a little smaller than example two
 - Example two carries a silver hologram for security purposes
 - Example two carries an expiry date

The Badges issued by the Council have always been issued in duplicate - one copy for information of the public and worn on the outside of the driver's outer clothing, and the second copy to be displayed in the passenger compartment for the information of the fare paying passenger.

All Drivers' Badges were renewed from the 1st April 2006 for a period of two years in the new style.

- 3.4 On the 20th April 2006 a personal letter was received from Mr R K South Taxi Driver, who outlined a concern that the new Driver's Badge contained his full name. **(Copy at Appendix 3)**

Mr South repeated his concern at the Wyre Forest Taxi Liaison Group which met on Friday 2nd June 2006.

He feared that customers might be able to identify him from the Badge, and subsequently his home address, and asked that the Council should remove the requirement for a driver's name to be endorsed.

- He recommended that a Badge should show a photograph, accompanied by a large identifying Badge number.
- He said that bus and coach drivers only have numbers on their badges.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 MOGO report that 136 Councils nationally use their style of Driver's Badge, and none have asked for the names to be removed on the grounds stated.
- 4.2 The name of each Driver is entered on a Public Register that is open for inspection by the public so any driver could be identified quite easily from enquiry.
- 4.3 Clear Identification of a Driver is essential for Officers to investigate concerns / customer complaint.
- 4.4 No other driver has made representations indicating a concern over the endorsement of their name.
- 4.5 The Driver's Badge has always carried the name of the driver since 1976.

5. NEIGHBOURING COUNCILS

- 5.1 Neighbouring Councils have the following policy:

Worcester City Council	- No Names on Badges
Wychavon	- No Names on Badges
Malvern Hills	- Requires Names on Badges
Bromsgrove	- Requires Names on Badges
Redditch	- Requires Names on Badges
South Shropshire	- Requires Names on badges

6. FINANCIAL

- 6.1 It would cost the Council circa £1000 to change all of the Drivers' Badges for the Taxi Fleet.

Based on :

- Driver's Licences Templates are purchased at £1.95 each from MOGO
- There are 250 drivers on the Taxi fleet therefore the total cost to purchase £500
- Officer time to produce over 2 weeks £500

7. OPTIONS

7.1 The options open to members are:

- To leave the Badge design in the manner previously prescribed by the Council ie as they are now.
- To remove the names from Drivers' Badges immediately and reissue at a cost of £1000.
- To remove the names from Drivers' Badges at the next period of renewal i.e. in two years time at no extra cost.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 Any change in policy must be common to all drivers without exception.

9. CONSULTEES

9.1 Head of Legal and Democratic Services

3.7.06