

Title: **Provision of Taxi Ranks in Melksham**

Portfolio holder: **Councillor Linda Conley**

Reporting officer: **Clive Harland**

Service Manager: **John Carter**

Key decision: **No**

Purpose

- To seek approval for agreement in principle and consultation on amended taxi rank arrangements in the Market Place and High Street Melksham.

Background

- A taxi rank has been located in the Market Place Melksham for a long period of time. In 1995 a Tuesday market was established in the Market Place and at that time this taxi rank provision was amended so that the rank was not in operation on Tuesdays. A substitute rank was then established in High Street which operated only on Tuesdays.
- The market no longer operates and we have been requested by Wiltshire County Council to remove the Tuesday rank in High Street and to make the rank in the Market Place operational 7 days a week.
- The taxi trade in Melksham continue to advise licensing staff that there are not enough taxi rank spaces in the town. There seems to be an opportunity to extend the front of the Market Place taxi rank by 6.6 metres to provide an additional space.

Key issues

- The legal process for making taxi ranks ('hackney carriage stands') is contained within the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. This council needs to publish its intention to make orders relating to taxi ranks in a local newspaper and consider any representations made. In addition the Police must be separately consulted and the consent of the Highway Authority must be obtained.
- The removal of the High Street rank and making the Market Place rank operational 7 days a week reinstates the situation prior to 1995.
- It seems a good opportunity to seek the additional rank space at this time as the legal process is being carried out for the above.
- The intention is that the consent of the Highway Authority will be dealt with before any further work is carried out. This will ensure that the proposed order and newspaper advertisement reflects their view.
- Should the rank be extended some line painting will be required. It is expected that this can take place at the same time as other work and should cost a maximum of £200
- A plan and aerial photograph is attached showing both ranks are attached.

Effect on strategies and codes

- The provision of additional taxi rank space supports the improvement of our market towns priority.

Risk management Implications

- None.

Finance and performance implications

- The cost of advertising the proposed order is likely to be approximately £400 which will be met from existing budgets
- Should the Market Place rank be extended the cost of line painting is expected to be a maximum of £200 which will be met from existing budgets.

Legal and human rights implications

- Legal advice has been taken relating to the processes and the consultation process will enable interested parties to express their views. Lawyers will continue to be involved in making any order.

Next Steps

- Seek the approval of the Highway Authority for the proposals, including the additional space at the front of the Market Place rank. Request its response by 1 August 2008. Subsequent timings may be brought forward if the response is received earlier.
- Advertise the proposed order in a local newspaper 8 August 2008. This will include removal of the High Street rank, the Market Place rank to operate on all days and, providing the Highway Authority has given its consent, the additional space in the Market Place.
- Consult with the Police at the same time as the newspaper advertisement.
- Cabinet to consider any representations made by the public or Police at next available meeting.
- Make the order
- Implement new arrangements

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1 Agree to request the consent of the Highway Authority to the proposals in this report.
- 2 Agree its intention to make a hackney carriage stand order to:
 - a. Remove the current taxi rank in High Street Melksham,
 - b. Make the current taxi rank in Market Place Melksham operational 7 days a week and,
 - c. Subject to consent being given by the Highway Authority extend the front of the Market Place Melksham rank by approximately 6.6 metres to provide an additional vehicle space.

Background papers

File HC11A Melksham taxi ranks proposed changes 2008 held in the Licensing Office G-3

