



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
City Wide

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:
Cabinet

5 October 2009

Approval for Licence Holders to Install CCTV in Taxis

Report of the Director of Environmental Services

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval for the holders of licences for hackney carriages and private hire vehicles to install CCTV systems in their taxis.

2 Summary

- 2.1 The City Council has been asked to approve a CCTV system for use in hackney carriages and private hire vehicles. Details of the system are set out in the report.
- 2.2 Subject to Cabinet's approval in principal, it is proposed to develop a system specification which CCTV systems in taxis would be required to meet.

3 CCTV System

- 3.1 The system that has been proposed for approval is marketed by Xtron UK Limited. The key features of the system are:
- Fully encrypted audio and video data to ensure data protection;
 - High quality digital images;
 - Time and date stamped to provide evidence continuity;
 - Downloading and conversion to DVD format by provider company or police;
 - Remote monitoring and checking of system by supplier every three months;
 - Some models provide panic button which opens live feed to supplier's control center;
 - System in use by a number of larger local authorities.
- 3.2 The system has been evaluated by Leicester Constabulary, who are supportive of its introduction.
- 3.3 The introduction of a CCTV system is seen as benefiting both drivers and passengers. CCTV footage could be used as evidence in prosecutions for criminal offences, such as assaults, criminal damage and bilking (customer absconding with out paying). As such it is likely to have a deterrent effect and improve drivers' safety. It would also prevent reassurance and increase passenger safety, particularly for vulnerable people such as women traveling alone and children on school journeys.

- 3.4 There is a concern that cost the cost of the Xtron system could present a barrier to some drivers signing up for CCTV. The cost is £750 for a single camera system and £985 for a 4-camera system. A 4-camera system is probably the most suitable for hackney carriages. There is also a hire purchase payment plan of £39 per month for three years. The company is also proposing an advertising plan in which adverts are displayed on a LCD screen inside the cab providing income for the driver. This is projected as covering the rental cost of the CCTV system and ultimately a regular income stream for the driver. It is feasible that should other suitable systems be subsequently approved, see Paragraph 3.6 below, then these may cost less.
- 3.5 Licensing Committee considered the installation of CCTV in taxis on 21 July 2009. They considered that the Xtron system was suitable and that in general CCTV's in taxis would be beneficial from a community safety perspective. They felt that if other suitable systems were proposed, these should also be approved. Finally, the Committee made proposals that installation of a CCTV system should be conditional on the data being freely available to enforcement authorities but not to other third parties.
- 3.6 Since Licensing Committee considered the Xtron system, a number of other system providers have contacted the Council. It is proposed therefore, rather than seek approval for each system individually, a system specification is developed, in consultation with the Leicestershire Constabulary, that will allow approval of systems at officer level. It is envisaged that the specification will cover areas such as:
- Image quality
 - Image compression
 - Information retention period
 - Operational period and operational triggers
 - Recording frame rate
 - Data encryption
 - Provisional day/night (infra red) cameras
 - Availability of data to enforcement agencies
 - Method of fixing data storage devices

4 Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with the police as indicated above. The two hackney carriage trade associations have also been consulted and support the proposal. Licensing Committee's views are reported above.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 Cabinet is asked to:
- a) Approve for installation by licence holders the CCTV system provided by Xtron UK Limited.
 - b) Confirm that approval to install the system in individual taxis is conditional on recordings being made freely available to the police, licensing officers, the data controller (the company providing the system), but not being made

available to any other third party except the data subject under any circumstances.

- c) Give delegated authority to the Director of Environmental Services, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Environment, to approve a system specification for CCTV systems in taxis and to approve systems complying with that specification.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The Council is not contributing to the cost of the CCTV system and hence there are no financial implications.

Martin Judson, Head of Finance, extension 7390

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The CCTV purchase operation and installation will be the responsibility of the taxi owner /operator. However prior to this the Council will have to impose conditions on how the CCTV system if fitted should be used and operated. These should be in accordance with relevant legislation and the Information Commissioners Office CCTV Code of Practice, so that the sound and images can be used successfully in any criminal or civil investigation.

Jamie Guazzaroni - Legal Services

8 Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within the report
Equal Opportunities	No	
Policy	No	
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime and Disorder	Yes	Throughout
Human Rights Act	No	
Elderly/People on Low Income	No	

10 Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Report to Licensing Committee – 21 July 2009

11 Consultations

RMT
Leicester Black Cab Association
Leicestershire Constabulary

12 Report Author

Mike Broster – Head of Licensing and Pollution Control

Key Decision	No
Reason	N/A
Appeared in Forward Plan	N/A

Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet)
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