

# LICENSING COMMITTEE



Report subject	<b>Provision of Taxi Ranks</b>
Meeting date	9 March 2023
Status	Public
Executive summary	<p>At the Committee meeting on 10 March 2022 the taxi trade raised a question about whether the level of provision and location of hackney carriage ranks was meeting current need.</p> <p>Subsequently officers and members of the BCP Taxi Trade worked together to undertake an audit of all the ranks. Together all ranks were visited and any defects or suggestions for improvement was noted.</p> <p>The provision of ranks is provided by the Highways team and following this audit the findings have been fed back to Highways for them to programme any necessary works.</p>
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <p><b>Members considered the contents as shown.</b></p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>The rank survey was undertaken following the formation of BCP Council and was a form of audit to determine the number, provision, and suitability of ranks within the conurbation.</p> <p>Members of the Committee requested that the outcome of the proposed rank's survey was reported back to the Committee.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Bobbie Dove- Community Safety and Regulatory Services
Corporate Director	Jess Gibbons – Chief of Operations
Report Authors	Trudi Barlow – Licensing Officer
Wards	All
Classification	For information

## Background

1. Historically the three legacy council areas have provided hackney carriage ranks at key locations usually dependant on need. A rank is provided by way of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which then controls the number of hackney carriage vehicles that can use the rank and the times that the rank is in force.
2. During the Committee meeting of 10 March 2022 members requested that an officer report be produced following a BCP Taxi Private Hire Association (the trade) request, that the current provision of ranks across the BCP area be reviewed.
3. During the summer of 2022 members of the trade, Mr David Lane, Mr Peter Vass and Mr Paul Sondheim, together with officers, Mrs Trudi Barlow and Mr Wesley Freeman from the taxi licensing team visited all the ranks within the conurbation to ascertain the current condition of signage and road markings and positioning of each rank. In total 70 ranks were inspected.
4. During the survey the trade views on each ranks were sought and incorporated into the findings which are summarised below:-

Issue	No. of ranks affected	Action taken
Rank no longer exists/disappeared	3	Notified highways who will address this
Rank no longer required	2	Notified highways who will address this
Rank relocated due to transformation or development	5	Sits with highways and will be reviewed in line with TROs which controls this.
Removal of a rank	1	This was a disused rank on Dear Hay Lane in Poole.
Signage (some mixed messages about rank use and times which was confusing) some	17	Reported to highways to correct and clarify as needed

missing and other damaged		
Road Markings missing/faded	23	Notified highways to address
Spaces provided needed amendment	3	It is recognised that at certain ranks such as Westover Road or Exeter Road the ranks can be full during busy nights such as Friday and Saturdays However, there it is very difficult to find other alternative locations which would meet the requirements of the trade and Highways. This will remain under review as changes are made to the town centre areas.

5. Generally, it was found that parking by non-licenced vehicles on ranks was an issue. When witnessed by officers or when complaints are sent to the taxi licensing team, a referral is made to parking enforcement for action.
6. During the survey, it was noted that the appearance and signage of ranks in legacy council areas was different. Highways have confirmed they are looking to harmonise this as improvements and changes are made to the ranks.
7. Officer observations during the survey concluded that many of the ranks were underused, such as in Christchurch, there was only 1 vehicle seen on the rank in the whole legacy area. In Poole the normally busy George, train station and lower High Street only had a maximum of 3 vehicles per rank. Ongoing observations by officers have confirmed this is not unusual.
8. Large scale transformation of roads has resulted in changes to ranks, as such licensing officers are now liaising with highways officers to review all TRO's which relate to taxi ranks.

#### **Summary of financial implications**

9. Improvements to ranks and replacement signage and markings are undertaken by highways.

#### **Summary of legal implications**

10. The provision and maintenance of ranks sits with the highways team and is outside the remit of licensing officers.

#### **Summary of human resources implications**

11. The survey was undertaken within current team resource levels.

**Summary of sustainability impact**

12. Not applicable

**Summary of public health implications**

13. Not applicable

**Summary of equality implications**

14. Not applicable

**Summary of risk assessment**

15. Not applicable

**Background papers**

BCP Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles Policy

[BCP Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Policy \(bcpcouncil.gov.uk\)](http://bcpcouncil.gov.uk)