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REPORT TO LICENSING BOARD

Subject:	Installation of CCTV in licensed vehicles
Cabinet Portfolio:	Community
Corporate Lead:	Service Director of Environmental Health & Consumer Services
Meeting Date:	16th February 2012
Status:	Public
Contact:	Keith Evans, Licensing Officer, ☎ 01202 451180 keith.evans@bournemouth.gov.uk

1.0 Summary:

The Council has an opportunity to acquire a fully digital CCTV camera system suitable for installation in all public carriages. The equipment would be owned by the Council and leased to vehicle owners to make the system more affordable.

2.0 Recommendation:

To consider a condition to require the installation of approved CCTV cameras in all licensed vehicles and to produce copies of the CCTV images within a reasonable period when requested by a Licensing Officer or Police Officer where alleged offences are reported or suspected.

3.0 Reason for recommendation:

At its meeting on 28 June 2011 the Board resolved that 'electronic equipment which is not supplied with the vehicle as standard should be only be for the receiving and fulfilling of bookings and be of an approved type.

CCTV cameras provide protection for both drivers and passengers in a number of situations. They deter assaults, theft and non-payment by passengers and protect passengers from inappropriate actions of drivers. Digital evidence with video and audio recording can be used to prove or disprove the content of complaints made to the Council.

Evidential quality CCTV is expensive compared to video equipment, which is generally available, typically costing £600 - £700 per vehicle. Therefore, it is proposed that the Council lease CCTV units to vehicle proprietors for approximately £15 per month. To put this cost into perspective officers consider 75 pence per day or 3.75 pence per hour for a 20 hour shift to be a reasonable cost when considering public and driver safety.

The attached articles marked Appendix A & B highlight some of the issues that officers seek to affect.

4.0 Background detail:

Sections 47 & 48 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 give the Council the power to attach such conditions to the granting of a vehicle licence as may be considered reasonably necessary.

5.0 Consultation:

Views have been sought from trade representatives and members of the public via the E Consultation Panel, which are attached as Appendix C.

Officers hope to have an overview of the responses received for consideration. However, it may be appropriate for Members of the Licensing Board to defer their decision until the consultation is complete or, decide on the course of action to be adopted in each scenario.

6.0 Alternative options:

6.1 Approve the proposal
6.2 Reject the proposal

7.0 Summary of Financial/Resource Implications –

The sample quotation supplied on Green Paper has been acquired in order to demonstrate the initial cost of the equipment, and the installation and maintenance costs that may be incurred. It is likely that any potential supplier of this type of equipment will need to go through the formal tender process in view of the size of any financial agreement that may be agreed.

8.0 Summary of legal implications –

As this is a secure digital system recordings will only be accessible to investigating officers and will only be accessed to investigate potential criminal offences.

9.0 Summary of Environmental impact N/A

10.0 Summary of Equalities and diversity impact N/A

11.0 Summary of Risk Assessment: N/A

Background papers: None

Appendix A

Highlighting the dangers facing night-time cabbies

2:00pm Friday 25th February 2011

A terrifying knifepoint attack on a Bournemouth taxi driver earlier this week graphically illustrates the dangers night-time cabbies face every time they get behind the wheel.

As well as running the risk of verbal and physical abuse from drunken revellers, drivers also have to contend with passengers being sick in their cabs, attempting to dodge paying their fares or disputing the fare.

Earlier this week, grandfather Thomas Newton escaped with his life after refusing to hand over his takings in Boscombe. But the story could have been very different if public-spirited binmen hadn't come to his rescue after Thomas's throat was slashed during a scuffle with two robbers.

It wasn't the first time the 66-year-old grandfather had been threatened at knifepoint while just trying to do his job.

He told the Daily Echo: "Four years ago I was confronted with a knife but didn't give them any money that time either. It gets me into trouble with my daughters but I can't bring myself to hand over what I've just earned."

Thomas was understandably nervous about resuming his night shifts.

In the past five years alone, Bournemouth cabbies have been held at gunpoint, attacked with CS spray, subjected to racist abuse, spat at, punched and kicked unconscious and threatened with a beer bottle. Their vehicles have also been vandalised and one was forced to stop on a busy dual carriageway.

Two judges, sitting at Bournemouth Crown Court, pledged to protect taxi drivers after hearing how one had been assaulted after trying to stop his passengers smoking and another had been forced to drive a drunken teenager home.

In January 2009 a cabbie was robbed by a gang of hooded men near Pokesdown railway station. In August that year, drivers were furious when a man who threatened a Bournemouth cabbie with a kitchen knife during a drunken argument walked free from court.

Shocked by the latest assault, cabbies at Bournemouth railway station taxi rank yesterday were wary of being photographed or talking about the perils of their jobs.

One, who did not want to be identified, said: "I haven't worked nights for 10 years because it's just not worth the risks involved. It got to the stage where I was either going to kill one of them or they would kill me.

"It's the general aggression and unpleasantness that make nights so difficult.

"Years ago we only had to put up with drunken passengers; now they're on drugs as well.

“The money we’re paid isn’t enough to warrant the dangers. When you work days, getting an old lady with her shopping trolley safely to the shops and back home is the most hassle you face.

“The introduction of 24-hour drinking has made the situation so much worse. There’s still the same number of passengers, but nights now drag on until 6am or 7am.

“When I worked nights I was threatened with a knife.

“Unfortunately, by the time you know how serious the threat is, it could be too late.”

Appendix B

Taxi driver held at knifepoint crashes into house (From Bournemouth Echo)

8:50am Thursday 11th November 2010

A TAXI driver with a knife held to his throat crashed into a house in the early hours of yesterday morning.

The driver told residents he thought he was going to die in the attack, which happened in Morley Close, Pokesdown, at about 12.45am.

Police were responding to a report of a robbery in the same street when they learned the taxi had crashed into the house of mum-of-two Ann Steele.

“I thought a bomb had gone off. The whole house shook. My son, Dan, came running downstairs and said: ‘There’s a taxi in the side of the house’.

“My husband, Steve, ran out to see what had happened. The driver was holding his face as if he’d been hit,” said Mrs Steele.

The crash caused a large crack in the side of the house and left the driver shaking uncontrollably, she added.

“I made him a cup of tea but he was shaking so much he couldn’t hold it. He said he’d had a knife put to his throat and kept saying: ‘I thought I was going to die’.

“He was talking about his son having to grow up without a father,” said Mrs Steele.

Ashley Miller, from the Bournemouth Taxi Trade Association, said drivers were always at risk, especially in saloon cars lacking a protective panel between the driver and passengers.

“Taxi drivers are vulnerable to attack because they work by themselves. You’re very open to what can happen.

“A lot of the cars have cameras fitted that photograph the passenger, and panic buttons. Fortunately, these incidents are very few and far between,” said Mr Miller.

A Dorset Police spokesman said: “Following the incident, a 36-year-old taxi driver was taken to hospital where he is being treated for facial injuries.

“A 22-year-old man from Bournemouth and a 23-year-old man from Poole were arrested and are currently being questioned by police.

“Witnesses and anyone with information should contact Dorset Police on 01202 222222 or Crimestoppers, in confidence, on 0800 555 111.”

Part No.	Description
MDVR1	1 x 250GB HDD Mobile DVR (4 channel)
DINCAB1	1 x AV in BNC Connectors (1 x per cam)
PCDVR01	1 x LED IR Camera with Audio (internal)
VIBRO1	1 x Vibration Absorbers

Outright purchase of single camera CCTV unit approximately £560 plus vat

Outright purchase of 500 x single camera units approximately £225,000 plus vat

500 x single camera units including installation and full 5 year term maintenance cover.

60 months £6,950.44 per month excluding vat 0.45p per day per unit

Phased installation on licence renewal approximately 40 vehicles per month over 12 months

Vehicle proprietor to pay £20 per month from installation