



Partnership Management Group 15 January 2007

Key Decision	Yes
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1. Taxi Marshal Scheme operating at Xscape building

On 9th November 2006 a 12 week pilot of a taxi marshal scheme was instigated in Central Milton Keynes by MKC Taxi Licensing Department. 2 marshals employed by Bradzone Ltd, have been based at Xscape building hackney carriage rank between the hours of 11.00 pm and 4.00am on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. The pilot scheme ends on 27th January 2006.

The aim of the scheme is to ensure the safety of hackney carriage drivers and assist in achieving the target to reduce public place violence by enabling safe and rapid dispersal of people from leisure and entertainment areas at peak times.

The marshals supervise the queue and have contact with Xscape security control room via a Barwatch scheme radio. The Xscape security team monitor the area via CCTV and can alert the police and their own security staff to issues as they arise.

The scheme is being evaluated by ITP Ltd. The evaluation is being funded by Taxi Licensing and the Community Safety Partnership.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to establish sustainable funding for a taxi marshal scheme for Milton Keynes.

3. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Milton Keynes Community Safety Partnership agrees to fund the taxi marshal scheme after the end of the original 12 week pilot until March 31st 2007.

This would allow MKC Taxi Licensing Department to extend the pilot scheme and fully evaluate its effectiveness. This timescale would also allow for alternative funding streams to be identified and secured.

- 1.2 That the Milton Keynes Community Safety Partnership agrees to consider mainstream funding for this project after the pilot scheme and the results of the evaluation by ITP Ltd.

4. Issues and Choices

Alcohol related violence associated with the night time economy is a major contributor to public place violent crime figures. Taxi marshals have been shown to be effective in assisting to reduce alcohol related violence in other large cities with thriving night time economies.

Early anecdotal evidence gathered in the evaluation from the hackney carriage trade and local businesses based at Xscape shows positive outcomes from the pilot scheme. Hackney carriage operators report they feel more confident in working late nights in the city centre and queuing times appear to have reduced. More people are leaving the city centre quicker.

It is already becoming clear that to enable the scheme to be fully effective a third marshal would be required. There is an issue surrounding illegal and out of area private hire vehicles, as well as public vehicles, disrupting the ranking area. A third marshal would be able to monitor, report and move on such vehicles. They would also assist the marshals regulating the taxi queue at peak times or when incidents occur in the vicinity.

Removing the taxi marshals after the pilot would decrease confidence in both hackney carriage operators and the public in the safety of the city centre.

An alternative to a full time scheme is to fund marshals at peak times of year such as Christmas and New Year and when there are major events in the city that would attract an increase in visitors.

5. Implications

5.1 Resources

Costs of pilot scheme 09/11/06 to 27/01/07 are shown below.

Pilot Scheme		09/11/06 to 27/01/07
Item	Cost	Funded by
2 x marshals at £15ph pp x 5 hours x 3 night's p/w for 12 weeks.	£5, 400	MKC Taxi Licensing
Evaluation by ITP Ltd.	£2,000	MKC Taxi Licensing CSP Night Transport Group
Total	£7,400	

Costs are reflected below for continuing the existing pilot of 2 marshals against the addition of a 3rd marshal, as suggested above.

Cost 01/02/07 to 31/03/07	
Item	Cost
2 x marshals at £15ph pp x 5 hours x 3 night's p/w for 13 weeks.	£5,850
3 x marshals at £15ph pp x 5 hours x 3 night's p/w for 13 weeks.	£8,775

5.2 Legal

Within the Milton Keynes Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008:
Key Target 2: to reduce offences of violence in public places by 20% per 1000 population by 31st March 2008.

5.3 Sustainability

Alternative funding streams will need to be secured to establish sustainability of this project. Partners such as the hackney carriage trade, local businesses through the Barwatch scheme and Xscape should be approached for contributions as they directly benefit from the scheme. In terms of public confidence in security and ease of access to transport, this encourages more visitors to use the night time economy.