

INFORMAL MEETING PRIVATE HIRE AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE

MINUTES

Thursday 13th October 2022

Virtual Platform

Present:

Cllr Hamid Khurram(HK)	Chairman of the Licensing & Environmental Regulation Committee (Chair)
Cllr Hilary Fairclough (HF)	Deputy Leader
Patricia Clyne (PC)	Licensing Manager (LU)
Asma Mohamed (AM)	Licensing Officer
Joe Fox (JF)	Principal Engineer Highways
Andrew Bolan (AB)	Head of Regulatory Services
Mahmood Akhtar (MA)	BPHA
Yasif Khan (YK)	BPHA
Charles Oakes (CO)	BBHA

Apologies:

Lisa Timmins	Senior Licensing Officer
Benjamin Brookfield	Police Licensing Officer GMP
Eddie Shah	BTDA

1.	Apologies
	Above.
2.	Minutes/actions from last meeting (ALL)
	<p>No actions and minutes agreed.</p> <p>HK mentioned having face to face meetings in future rather than virtual. PC informed the next meeting could be face to face. CO prefers virtual. YK and MA happy with both virtual and face to face. HK informed this will be looked into. PC suggested the officer/trade meetings could remain on Microsoft Teams and the meeting with Members face to face. HF agreed with this suggestion.</p> <p>PC gave an update on GMP 'taxi watch' scheme, set up to tackle anti-social behaviour, that this was working well and GMP had been engaging with the trade. MA informed the group the monthly meetings had ceased. PC informed communications had been sent to entire fleet to contact police to report incidents.</p> <p>Action – PC to look into having face to face meetings in future as suggested.</p>
3.	Digital Update (LU)

	<p>PC provided an update on digital provision. Information has been shared with the trade reps. regarding online payments. Online forms have been tweaked and work is being done with the digital team to ensure the medical/conviction declaration forms are part of the online application, but 3rd party forms would still need to be attached. PC advised if there are any issues with the online forms or the process the trade reps. need to contact Lisa Timmins.</p> <p>PC the trade will hopefully move to 'client accounts', which includes a 2-step verification. Information/demo on this will be shared with the trade reps. as soon as available.</p> <p>YK wanted to know why the client account hadn't been shared with the trade reps. yet.</p> <p>PC replied we don't have the client accounts as yet but trade reps. will be included once we do, similar to the format for the 2020 digital roll out.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Bus Lanes (BPHA)</p>
	<p>MA raised issue about other towns giving Private Hire Drivers permission to drive in bus lanes at peak times but Bolton Council not allowing this.</p> <p>YK also raised concerns about not being allowed to use bus lanes when drivers are sitting in traffic and council have a duty of care for those passengers being taken to school, hospital appointments etc.</p> <p>JF advised Bus Lane policy is set at GM level. Following discussions at the GM Traffic Managers Group the issue around the difficulty in distinguishing between Private Hire Vehicles from other vehicles was highlighted. JF informed this issue needs to be raised at GM level and not locally.</p> <p>YK commented you can distinguish Private Hire Vehicle from other vehicles due to livery being displayed on it. JF informed he is not aware of systems in place in other towns, so they can identify if it's a Private Hire Vehicle and this could be abused as anyone can then display stickers on vehicles.</p> <p>CO commented bus lane signs state the word 'Taxi' and should state Hackney. JF advised it states Taxi in the legislation and it's national signage that's used.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Train Station (BPHA) Rank Size (BTA)</p>
	<p>YK raised issues about drivers blocking the train station box junction resulting in Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles not being able to exit the train station. JF informed Department of Transport are inviting Local Authorities to apply for powers to take action against those committing traffic offences. JF advised we should get these powers in time to deal with this and the train station will be one of the first place they target.</p> <p>CO also commented about the box junction being a problem.</p> <p>CO raised concerns about the length of ranks not being adequate for Hackney Carriage Vehicles as vehicles are getting bigger in size and there is less space on the ranks. CO requested a review of rank sizes to take into account bigger vehicles.</p> <p>JF replied they are looking at rank in the Town Centre but there are certain limitations. JF informed it is difficult to extend current ranks as they are at their maximum size, however they can review provision but will struggle extending rank length.</p> <p>CO replied not asking to extend existing rank length but to take this into consideration for any future ranks</p> <p>YK raised concerns about the road condition when you travel from the train station to Bradshawgate.</p>

	<p>JF informed he is aware of this.</p> <p>MA raised concerns about the difficulty when exiting the train station due to traffic from Newport Street. Hackney Carriage Drivers are also blocking Private Hire Drivers so they cannot exit.</p> <p>CO commented Private Hire Drivers are parking and picking up customers from the train station rank.</p> <p>PC advised we have engaged with the Civil Enforcement Team who issue tickets for this which is ongoing.</p> <p>HK advised for trade reps to communicate this to drivers.</p> <p>YK requested PC contacts all operators to enter on the data about not parking on hackney ranks so drivers from out of town are aware of this.</p> <p>HK agreed the need to spread the message to educate the trade and make them aware of this.</p> <p>Action 1 - PC to email the PH trade to remind them not to park on ranks. Action 2 - PC to email HC trade asking them to share information/photos relating to PH drivers parking on ranks. Action 3 - PC to do further engagement with Civil Enforcement Team.</p>
6	China Gardens/College Way filter lights (BPHA)
	<p>YK raised issue of queues as there are no right turn filter lights when turning into Fletcher Street and also when travelling from China Garden onto Moor Lane (turning left onto College Way from China Garden and then turning right to go onto Moor Lane).</p> <p>JF advised by adding filter lights you are taking time from somewhere else and causing queues in other directions, agreed to look at the issue.</p> <p>Action - JF will look at this with UTC and see what is suggested.</p>
7.	Nelson Square/Bradshawgate Rank & Gate Closure (HDA) Paderborn Rank (BTA)
	<p>CO questioned if the gate was being closed at the weekends.</p> <p>JF advised it was not and a timed prohibition order would be required. The closure of the gate was looked into during lockdown but resistance met from the Fire Service as they would require access if there was a fire so unable to do anything as yet.</p> <p>CO requested he would like the gate to be closed to stop Private Hire Drivers parking up and not taking legitimate bookings as he has seen this outside the Food Factory. CO requested the Council provide part time enforcement officers at Bradshawgate on weekends to deal with this issue and also out of town drivers who are plying.</p> <p>YK commented nothing could be done about drivers out of town and difficult for council to do anything.</p>
8.	MLS (BPHA) (BTA)
	<p>MA wanted update on MLS as trade are asking a lot of questions and wanted to know when a meeting would be arranged as promised by the Leader after the election.</p> <p>HF confirmed she will arrange a date.</p> <p>HK agreed the trade need to be kept updated so they can feedback the information to the trade.</p> <p>CO commented that the trade are not willing to move forward with Clean Air Zone or MLS unless government offers a 50% subsidy.</p>

	<p>MA commented that Martyn Cox had advised they are waiting for a decision on Clean Air Zone but this has been put back to 2026. He requested a meeting about this so information can be fed back to the trade.</p> <p>YK commented upgrading vehicles need to be feasible for drivers and if proper funding is not given older drivers will leave the trade.</p> <p>HK agreed there needs to be fair funding and this will be discussed with partner agencies.</p> <p>PC informed trade reps attended TfGM seminar recently and the slides and a survey was shared with all drivers, vehicle proprietors and trade reps.</p> <p>CO raised concerns about the difficulty for Hackney Carriage Vehicles to upgrade vehicles due to the cost of new and second hand vehicles.</p> <p>Action - HF to arrange a meeting for trade reps to meet the leader.</p>
9.	PHV Age Limits (BTA)
	<p>CO commented it was unfair for Hackney Carriage Vehicles to have age limits. Requested panel allow Hackney Vehicles to extend the licence past 15 years if the vehicle is in a good condition and also wants Private Hire Vehicle to have age limits.</p> <p>HK advised we have to make our decision according to policy and can only move away from policy in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>PC informed CO that he was part of the decision-making process in 2004 when the 10- and 15-year Hackney age policy was agreed. PC advised Hackney Carriage Vehicles have been granted extensions at Committee outside of the policy. PC also confirmed if Stage 2 MLS is adopted age policies may change as these are part of the proposals.</p> <p>YK commented Private Hire Vehicle are fit for purpose as they have a strict MOT check.</p>
10.	Vehicle Spot Checks (LU)
	<p>PC had previous shared the figures from March 22 and these were outlined in the minutes. PC also confirmed spot checks were carried out as part of Operation Avro 30th June where 23 Private Hire Vehicles were inspected. 8 were issued with a 10-day suspension and 3 immediate suspensions. PC also confirmed 2 further spot checks had been completed at the Train Station again under Operation Avro:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27th September - 14 vehicles inspected, 11 Private Hire and 3 Hackney Carriage Vehicles -7 10-day suspension notices issued due to livery, lights, tyres etc . • 28th September - 14 vehicles inspected, 10 Private Hire and 4 Hackney Carriage Vehicles -7 immediate suspension notices issued due to livery, lights, tyres etc. <p>PC raised issue regarding drivers not wearing seatbelts when they were not carrying passengers. PC requested trade reps to advise drivers to wear seatbelts.</p> <p>Action - Trade reps. to advise driver to wear seatbelts when alone in the vehicle</p>
11.	AOB
	<p>HK requested that changes to the application process be included on the next agenda, that he'd been approached and asked to bring this matter to the meeting.</p> <p>Action - PC to enter changes in application process on the next agenda</p>

Next meeting:

- **Trade and Licensing Unit 10th November (Microsoft Teams) agenda items required no later than 4th November.**
- **Trade and Licensing Unit 8th December on (Microsoft Teams) agenda items required no later than 2nd December.**
- **Trade and Chair of Licensing & Environmental Regulation Committee 12th January 2023 (face to face) agenda items required no later than 6th January 2023.**