

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE FORUM MEETING

Venue: City Hall

Agenda: 10 May 2023

Attendees and who they represent:

Councillor Christine Townsend (**CT**) (Chair) representing Bristol City Council

Abigail Holman (**AH**) representing Bristol City Council

Dakota Ferrara (**DF**) representing Bristol City Council

Karen Daniels (**KD**) representing Bristol City Council

Steve Pick (**SP**) representing Bristol City Council

Sam Kirby (**SK**) representing Bristol City Council

Saif Hussein (**SH**) representing BBLTA

Steve Lohia (**SL**) representing BDriven

Mohammed Aideed (**MA**) representing Bristol Blue Taxis

Emma Jones (**EJ**) representing Club Cars

Rupert Mall (**RP**) representing Club Cars

Phil Paul (**PP**) Hackney Carriage Driver

Tim Lloyd (**TL**) Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver

Nadeem Malik (**NM**) Private Hire Driver

Malik Nagina (**MN**) Private Hire Driver

Tim Fowler (**TL**) Private Hire Driver

1. Welcome, Introductions, Apologies

- Apologies

Jonathan Martin

Mahad Jama

Gary O'Neill

2. Agree minutes from last meeting

Minutes from 8 March 2023

Actions:

- Transfer payment – AH advises that the company that provides our licensing software does not have an option for Transfer

applications, and therefore we are unable to take payment for them online

- Safeguarding certificates from Training Provider – AH confirms that these are certificates of attendance and are automatically sent out by the training provider regardless of if the driver has passed the training.
- Notifying operators of revocations (JM)– Ongoing
- Send Forum app forms across to GO - Complete
- Timings on signs on Park Street (KD) – Ongoing
- Maintenance requests (KD) Ongoing

3. Licensing Team Update (AH)

AH updated the forum on a number of points

- A couple of permanent members of staff had left, and a couple of temporary officers were being recruited. The team are going through a restructure, so we will reassess once this had concluded
- There was currently a slight backlog due to the amount of recent bank holidays. The team are currently working on applications received on 26th April which is around ten working days. There have been ongoing issues with incomplete applications being submitted, ie when an application is submitted without a VIC, which is then submitted weeks later. All documents should be submitted at the same time, and an application isn't considered complete until the date the last document is submitted. Sending documents in separately adds to our workload. There have been instances where drivers have applied online, and then immediately uploaded supporting documents via three separate contact forms.
- Due to a recent change of supplier, vehicle plates have changed. Work has been done to keep them as similar as possible. An email was sent out outlining the changes. Brackets are available from Fleet Services, no charge this year, but replacements will be chargeable. Doing away with magnets, string Velcro. Needs to be securely fixed- shouldn't be able to be pulled off. Once a vehicle is licensed it's always licensed so plates need to be displayed at all times.

4. East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood (SK)

SK showed a presentation which outlined the East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood Scheme

- The project is a pilot scheme, that covers Barton Hill and parts of Redfield and St George, south of Church Road and north of the River Avon.
- There are a number of similar schemes across the country. Intention is to create safe, healthy, inclusive, and attractive places where everyone can breathe clean air, have access to better quality green spaces and safe spaces to play, and feel a part of a community.
- It is proposed that modal filters and bus gates are implemented to restrict vehicle traffic through some roads to prevent “rat-running”, it was confirmed that the trade would not be able to use the bus gates
- The project has been underway for around 18 months, currently talking to communities about what they like, and what changes they would like to be made.
- Trade representatives raised concerns about changes to routes, and concerns customers may think they’re taking an unnecessary long route
- Concerns were also raised that this could increase pollution. SK advised that the intent is to reduce the overall amount of vehicles on the road, and increase journeys undertaken on foot

5. Transport Updates (KD)

- At a previous forum the trade requested that East Street could be used by Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle’s 24/7. SP advised that this had now been raised to senior management. A Site visit was undertaken last week. Feedback was that there is no real issue with the proposal. Next steps will be for it to go out to consultation.
- Trade representatives asked if the signage would be updated. SP advised it would be unlikely due to the amount of time the legal process takes, it would be likely that by the time signs were able to be put up the works would have ended.

6. Issues from BBLTA and issues from Private Hire

- The trade raised concerns that some licensees feel that the current licensing system isn't working efficiently. The main concerns were that the only way of contacting licensing officers is via the contact forms, and that responses can take up to 30 days. The trade requested that there is an officer available for face-to-face appointments every day
- Cllr Townsend raised that the Licensing service is self-funded and cannot draw on central funds. In order to accommodate this licence fees would have to be raised significantly or an officer would have to be taken away from issuing licences.
- AH advised that during the pandemic a number of staff were let go. Licensing don't just deal with taxis, the team also deal with premises, gambling street trading, SEV's etc. Our workload didn't decrease during Covid. The move to applying online is consistent among local authorities. CSP don't have capacity to have other people in due to high numbers of vulnerable visitors.

7. AOB and Date of next meeting

- Trade representatives raised that they were aware of a driver who had recently had three vehicle licences issued for vehicles which didn't meet policy. Concerns were raised that this driver was being favoured over other drivers. AH advised that she could not comment on individual applications but advised that vehicles which aren't compliant with policy are referred to the Public Safety and Protection Committee with recommendation for refusal, where each application will be considered by members of the committee on its own merits.

Wednesday 5th July 2023

Action Point	Matters arising	By Whom	Completed?
1			
2			

3			
5			
6			
7			
8			

Next meeting: Wednesday 5th July