

# HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE FORUM MEETING

**Venue: Microsoft Teams**

**Agenda: 18 June 2025**

## **Attendees and who they represent:**

Councillor Sarah Classick (**SC**) (Chair) representing Bristol City Council (BCC)  
Jonathan Martin (**JM**) representing Bristol City Council  
Carl Knights (**CK**) representing Bristol City Council  
Patrick Quinton (**PQ**) representing Avon & Somerset Police  
Mike Bullock (**MB**) representing Bristol Executive Cars  
Emma Bright (**EB**) representing Veezu  
Karen Daniels (**KD**) representing Bristol City Council  
Paul Baker (**PB**) representing Bristol City Council  
Ismail Arab (**IA**) representing BBTA

## **1. Welcome, Introductions, Apologies**

Apologies:

Mahad Jama: Magan's Taxis  
Steve Lohia: BDriven  
Christie Twelvetree: Veezu  
Mohammad Islam: BBTA

## **2. Agree minutes from last meeting**

- Minutes from April 2025:
- MB raised concerned minutes were sent out late. JM confirmed minutes would be sent out sooner following future Forum meetings.
- MB raised concerns about the bus lanes located in North Somerset on route to Bristol Airport and lack of BCC action.  
JM Confirmed that that is a decision for North Somerset Council, however the matter has been raised with them in any event. However, use of the bus lane is outside of the control of BCC.

## **3. Licensing Team Update (JM)**

- JM provided update.  
The Licensing Team turnaround time is currently an average of 18 days. This is largely due to applications being received incomplete, which significantly impacts the overall average. The turn around average time also includes

applications that are referred to the Council's Public Safety and Protection Committee.

- MB Requested (and stated Mohammad Islam (MI) had also previously requested) a member of the Licensing Team is present in Customer Service Centre to assist with applications.

JM confirmed this service was no longer provided. However, we do provide the BBTA a weekly catch up to assist with applications, this works well. JM stated his mobile number is also widely circulated amongst the trade, and he provides assistance as required.

- JM commended the trade for the approach to this year's Love Saves the Day event. The previous year a number of HCDs had refused fares. This year test purchases carried out; no fares were refused. There were a couple of incidents where drivers did try to pick and choose fares, however these were isolated and overall, the trade performed very well.

#### 4. Update on Knowledge Test (CK)

- JM A report taken to the PSP committee two weeks ago. The Licensing Team has worked with trade representatives and elected members to find a good compromise to modernise the test. The press coverage was highly misleading, the test is not being removed, and instead topographical knowledge is being removed.

- CK updated on the PSP decision, namely that the topographical sections would be removed with topics covering issues such as disability awareness issues and planning routes using navigation devices. Confirmed that the DfT Best Practice Guidance stated that private hire drivers should not have to undergo a topographical knowledge test.

SC confirmed the existing test will remain in force until a new test is approved. IA queried if routes were included in the current test, CK confirmed these were removed a number of years previously.

- MB asked if the practical driver test (Institute of Advance Motorists) would be reinstated and stated that if it was not reinstated public safety could be at risk. JM advised extensive parts of knowledge test will be safety orientated. PQ agreed that an advanced driver test would be a good approach to improve road safety, however he stated that if BCC required IAM membership the number of licensed drivers would drop dramatically.

**Action** SC to look at IAM membership/test requirement.

- MB Questioned the need for refresher safeguarding courses.

JM advised that these were approved as part of the policy review and is essential knowledge for the trade, in addition it's a requirement of the national standards. Feedback from the trade has been positive.

PQ agreed and stated in many professions continuing professional development is essential and that this is the case for safeguarding training.

PQ has also received positive feedback from the trade and has seen positive outcomes as a result of the training such as at-risk passengers being diverted away from the suspension bridge and interventions in respect of children. BCC safeguarding training is very good compared to other councils offer.

PB agreed the training and refresher is standard and needed, so drivers are aware of current trends and issues and supports BCC's approach.

## 5. Transport update

- KD Team is responsible for making sure taxi ranks up to date and have been in close contact with MI from BBTA. Have been involved in making sure signage is correct and ensuring ranks are enforceable. Meetings are planned with MI to discuss rank provision.
- PQ Query raised about how effective the "fix my street" system works, and if drivers could use Union Street after the Broadmead redevelopment. KD meeting to take place to discuss the Broadmead redevelopment. Re "fix my street", work to be done to ensure taxi ranks appear on the system so people can report issues if required.
- IA asked if the Baldwin Street rank signage at Bristol bridge was in place. KD confirmed relevant lines and signs are now in place. PQ/KD advised that the second rank in Baldwin Street is still in progress.
- MB raised concerned that rank provision is regularly discussed and may not be necessary. Requested to know the number of licensed HCVs. JM confirmed just over 300 HCVs licensed. IA stated ranks are required for the trade to provide safe pick-up locations. PQ agreed ranks are required, important to have defined space, however, should be reviewed regularly. JM confirmed agreed with the importance of rank provision. Ranks are an important part of infrastructure and essential for wheelchair users. PQ Considered that better provision could be made available for PHVs, i.e. pick up points. MB agreed with PQ, if PHVs outnumber HCVs 4 to 1 more provision should be made for them.
- MB raised concerns about the standards of drivers in Bristol. SC confirmed concerns can and should be raised with BCC so drivers can be brought before the Public Safety and Protection Committee if necessary.

## 6. Taxicop Update

PQ provided an update:

- Safeguarding update – Next week national county lines operation. Will be working on that trying to identify county lines operations. Following the Baroness Casey report need to get a better understanding of how PHVs were

used to enable child sexual exploitation to take place. Committed to ensure it doesn't happen in Bristol so will be looking into this in more detail. Will be producing a report to identify issues that the police and council can take moving forward.

- Confirmed other updates notified via WhatsApp group
- JM Casey report did contain recommendation that the Government should take immediate steps to stop out of town vehicles. How this takes shape remains to be seen. Suggestion of moving licensing function to local transport authorities, in our case the West of England Combined Authority, however this would not stop out of town drivers working in Bristol. Only significant legislative change will prevent this from happening.

## 7. Issues from BBLTA and issues from Private Hire

No issues raised.

## 8. AOB and Date of next meeting

- KD sought clarification from PQ re email notifications for road closures from the Transport Operations Team. PQ confirmed receipt.
- MB South Glos newsletter provided similar advice to BCC re Love Saves the Day, BCC should look to provide similar advice. PQ confirmed will be sharing advice once information received from relevant police department.

Action Point	Matters arising	By Whom	Completed?
1	Legal advice regarding notifying operators of revocations – speak to other Local Authorities regarding providing information on revocations.	JM	Ongoing
2	IAM membership/test requirement	SC	
3			
5			
6			
7			
8			

### Next meeting:

**Date:** 27 August 2025

**Time:** 11:00 am

**Location:** Beira Room, City Hall, College Green, BS1 5TR (meet at main reception – front of building)