

LICENSED TRANSPORT FORUM

Thursday, 4 November 2021 (10:00 am – 11:35 am)

PRESENT:

Councillor David Airey	Chair - Cabinet Member for Transport
Councillor Derek Pretty	Cabinet Member for Economy
Phil Bates	Licensing Manager
Paul Naylor	Executive Head of Neighbourhood Services
Andy Jeffery	Licensing Enforcement Officer
Nicki Moorhouse	Senior Chartered Legal Executive
Leigh Dodds	Hackney Carriage Representative
Steve Lucas	Hackney Carriage Driver Representative
Kevin May	Vehicle Hire Owner Representative
Jason Kauder	Private Hire Trade Rep
Roger Vivian	Private Hire Driver Representative
Arron Andrews	Hackney Carriage Driver Representative

Apologies were received from Councillor Wayne Irish and Michael Keohane

23. MINUTES

**RESOLVED –**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

24. TAX CHANGES

The Licensing Manager updated the forum that there were notices on the website and letters had been sent out to inform drivers that from April 2022 checks would be in place to make sure that Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers had registered with HRMC for tax purposes.

25. ACTION LIST

The Licensing Manager provided verbal updates to the Action List (Agenda item 4).

26. ENFORCEMENT SUMMARY

The Licensing Manager presented the Enforcement Summary as set out in the Agenda (Item 5) and reported that the team had been busy and had not had much time to resurrect mystery shopping and test purchases but had carried out some rank checks.

The Chair expressed hope that the team could carry out mystery shopping and test purchases over the Christmas and New Year period so that an update could come to the next forum.

Steve Lucas requested that checks also take place in evenings and weekends, and not just in the daytime.

27. SAFEGUARDING

The Licensing Manager confirmed that laptops had been ordered for 10 drivers per session to attend the training packages provided by New Forest District Council, which they hoped would start in January 2022, and that there would be no additional charge to existing drivers.

Steve Lucas requested that existing drivers be scheduled for 10am test times to allow them to complete their school run bookings without detriment.

28. GUIDANCE ON FITNESS AND PROPRIETY

The Licensing Manager confirmed that the consultation period for the suitability and handbook was due to end on 8 November 2021 and they had currently received 107 responses. It was due to go before the Administration Committee on November 22 2021 for approval.

29. IVA TESTING

The Licensing Manager provided an update to say that IVA testing was going well and they were approaching the end of the process.

30. VEHICLE SIGNAGE (JK)

Jason Kauder raised concerns that some private hire drivers were not happy with the signs on the side of vehicles, especially independent drivers who have school run contracts. He also mentioned one driver had been told that the signs were going to be on rear doors, approximately half-way up.

The Licensing Manager confirmed that the vehicle signs were still in the consultation stage and no decision had been made on them yet.

The Chair stated that vehicle signs aided public safety in that they could clearly identify private hire vehicles, and that Licensed Transport Forum representatives would be able to have their views heard at the Administration Committee once the consultation period had finished.

(NOTE: Leigh Dodds joined the meeting at 10.32am.)

31. PROTECTING AND SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HIRE INDUSTRY (JK)

Jason Kauder mentioned concerns that they needed to encourage more drivers into the trade as he was having to turn down local work due to not having enough drivers.

The Chair confirmed there was a driver shortage in various trades.

The Licensing Manager recognised the concerns and agreed that there was a shortage of taxi drivers overall.

32. SCC BUS LANES, CAMERA POINTS AND ABOVE BAR ACCESS (SL)

Steve Lucas raised concerns that there was some confusion on which bus lanes in Southampton City Centre private hire and Hackney carriage vehicles who were not licensed by Southampton City Council could use.

Jason Kauder raised concerns that drivers were concerned about receiving traffic violation tickets and some were avoiding bus lanes altogether.

The Licensing Manager confirmed that Above Bar was restricted to traffic but not a bus lane, therefore private hire and Hackney carriage vehicles could drive in Above Bar. He confirmed taxi vehicles should be using the bus lanes they were licensed to and that he would be concerned on their fitness and propriety to drive if they were not using them for fares that ran on the meters. The Licensing Manager said he would check for any alternative routes and email the Licensed Transport Forum Representatives.

33. TAXI RANK MARKINGS ON HIGH STREET (AA)

Arron Andrews requested that the taxi rank markings on Eastleigh High Street be put forward for repainting as they had faded.

The Executive Head of Neighbourhood Services agreed to speak to Eastleigh Local Area Committee to see if it could be done.

34. POSSIBILITY OF RANK IN HAMBLE SQUARE (AA)

Arron Andrews requested that the possibility of a taxi rank in Hamble Square be looked at.

The Chair stated that the possibility had been raised before and had been taken to Bursledon, Hamble and Hound Local Area Committee for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) decision.

The Senior Chartered Legal Executive located the decision and found that in October 2015, Bursledon Hamble and Hound Local Area Committee had decided not to continue with the TRO due to various reasons.

35. PCV DRIVING TEST FOR DRIVERS (KM)

Kevin May questioned whether drivers who hold a Passenger-Carrying Vehicle (PCV) licence could bypass the driving assessment needed by private hire drivers.

The Licensing Manager stated that a driver assessment was currently needed but he would do some research and have some conversations outside of the Licensed Transport Forum to see whether it was something that the Licensing Team could support and requested that an update be added to the Action List.

Roger Vivian raised concerns around the fees for drivers to hold both a private hire licence and a Hackney carriage licence.

The Senior Chartered Legal Executive stated that this issue had been raised in 2015, and that she would look into it with the Licensing Manager and report back to the next Licensed Transport Forum.

The next meeting will take place on 10 March 2022 at Eastleigh House