

TAXI CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 18th October, 2017

Present:-

Representing Chesterfield Borough Council:

Councillor K Caulfield (Chair)
Councillor V Diouf
Trevor Durham
Stephen Oliver

Representing the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade:

Stephen Aldersley
Stephen Atkin
Chris Brown
Ann Dickens
David Madin
Mandy Shaw

Representing Derbyshire County Council:

Simon Tranter
Bridget Gould

Representing Derbyshire Police:

Inspector David Nicholls

The Chair welcomed Inspector Nicholls to his first meeting of the Committee.

10 **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations of interest were received.

11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

12 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY, 2017

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July, 2017 were agreed as a true record.

13 PROPOSAL TO INCREASE HACKNEY TARIFF

A proposal to increase the Hackney Carriage tariff was received from the Hackney Carriage representatives and a table of the current and proposed charges was distributed at the meeting. The proposed increases were approximately 10%, although it was noted that the tariff had not been increased for five years, and it was felt this was appropriate to enable the standards expected by the Council to be maintained.

The proposal was supported by the Committee, it being noted that this would be recommended to the Council's Appeals and Regulatory Committee for approval, following which it would be advertised in the local press with a period of 14 days in which objections could be raised. It was hoped that it would be possible to implement the proposed increase before Christmas. It was agreed to invite Chris Brown and Stephen Atkin to the meeting of the Appeals and Regulatory Committee on 8 November when the proposed increase would be considered.

14 DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS ISSUES

Further to Minute No. 6, details of the responses to the survey of other local authorities on the use of bus lanes by hackney carriages / private hire vehicles were attached to the agenda.

Simon Tranter distributed maps showing the detailed proposals for the use of bus lanes by hackney carriages, which would be the subject of the formal three weeks consultation period starting on 19 October, 2017. Any objections would need to be made in writing to Derbyshire County Council, following which a Cabinet member decision would be made. If the proposals were agreed it was hoped that work to install signage would be undertaken over the next four months.

It was noted that work to improve pedestrian safety on Church Way would also be undertaken and road safety would be monitored once implemented.

15 **POLICE ISSUES**

Inspector Nicholls submitted the reported crime figures for the period 1 July to 1 October, 2017 for the Chesterfield and the Bolsover and North East Derbyshire Policing sections, totalling 23 reports, which included:

- 17 occasions where the driver was the victim
- 1 occasion where a member of the public was the victim
- 3 occasions where the driver was a suspect
- 2 occasions which were racially or religiously aggravated
- 1 occasion where a taxi company was the victim

Timing – 10 crimes were between 0000 hours and 0600 hours.

Violence against drivers – 3 cases

The breakdown of crimes was:

- 13 – making off without payment
- 2 – damage to vehicle / taxi office
- 2 – assault on driver
- 2 – theft
- 2 – public order
- 1 – threat to taxi driver
- 1 – assault by taxi driver

The outcomes from investigation of these reported crimes were:

- 2 – restorative justice
- 7 - suspect identified (3 arrested and charged, 2 no further action, 2 investigation ongoing)
- 14 – undetected.

16 **ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE LICENSING TEAM SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

Trevor Durham reported that work was ongoing to modify the documentation provided for the knowledge tests, but that this had

diversified in to making more appointments available. It was intended to tender for a computerised system of written knowledge tests to improve availability of tests for applicants, to remove the subjective element of marking the tests and thereby to speed up the process of applying for a driver's licence. It was hoped to have the new system in place by April, 2018.

Trade representatives expressed concern at the time taken to apply for a licence. It was explained that currently extra tests were arranged if applicants were waiting more than one month for an appointment to sit the test and that where they failed the test they only needed to resit the failed paper. Applicants were advised to pass their written test before applying for their DBS check as this needed to be no more than one month old when the application was considered.

It was recognised that the documentation about the policy needed to be simplified, but that this needed to be redrafted carefully to ensure it was legally sound.

Trevor Durham reported that during the past three months one driver licence had been suspended.

22 vehicles had failed the six-monthly vehicle test, although it had only been necessary to issue penalty points in two cases.

Another test purchase operation had taken place in September to identify any private hire vehicles plying for hire, but no offences had been detected.