

TAXI CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 18th April, 2018

Present:-

Representing Chesterfield Borough Council:

Councillor K Caulfield (Chair)
Councillor J Burrows
Trevor Durham
Ian Waller

Representing the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade:

Stephen Atkin
Jim Brookbank
Chris Brown
Ann Dickens
David Madin

Representing Derbyshire County Council:

Simon Tranter

Representing Derbyshire Police:

PC Jordan Richardson
PC Matt Rodda

In attendance for Minute No. 32:

Neil Johnson, Assistant Director - Economic Growth, Chesterfield
Borough Council
Patrick Middleton, Project Manager, Northern Gateway, Chesterfield
Borough Council

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MR BRENT TAYLOR

The Chair referred with sadness to the recent death of Mr Brent Taylor, a Chesterfield licensed Private Hire / Hackney Carriage driver. Members of the Committee stood for a minute's silence in his honour.

27 NOMINATION OF REPLACEMENT TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Further to Minute No. 22, following confirmation from Stephen Aldersley of his resignation from the Committee, nominations for a replacement representative of private hire vehicle licence holders had been invited. One nomination of Jim Brookbank had been received, and it was therefore confirmed that he be appointed as a representative until May, 2019.

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

No declarations of interest were received.

29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor V Diouf, Mandy Shaw, Stephen Oliver and Inspector Nicholls.

30 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January, 2018 were agreed as a true record.

31 POLICE ISSUES

PCs Richardson and Rodda submitted the reported crime figures for the period 1 January to 30 March, 2018 for the Chesterfield and the Bolsover and North East Derbyshire Policing sections, totalling 39 reports, which included:

33 occasions where the driver was the victim
2 occasions where a member of the public was the victim
2 occasions where the driver was a suspect
2 occasions where a taxi company was the victim.

Timing – 30 crimes were between 0000 hours and 0600 hours.

Violence against drivers – 7 cases

The breakdown of crimes was:

- 25 – making off without payment
- 7 – assault on driver
- 4 – damage to vehicle
- 1 – assault on taxi office worker
- 1 – theft
- 1 – malicious communication to taxi company

The outcomes from investigation of these reported crimes were:

- 9 – restorative justice
- 12 - suspect identified (1 arrested and charged, 11 investigation ongoing)
- 14 – undetected
- 2 – no suspect identified, investigation ongoing
- 2 – support retracted by drivers.

It was noted that there had been an increase in cases of customers making off without payment, particularly in the Bolsover and North East Derbyshire area.

Representatives expressed concern at vehicles parking in the area of the temporary taxi rank on Knifesmithgate, restricting the space available for taxis. It was confirmed that the Police could take action if vehicles were obstructing the highway, but otherwise representatives were advised to contact the parking enforcement officers to seek assistance with specific issues. It was agreed to ask the Borough Council's parking enforcement team to assist in minimising problems in this location as far as possible.

32 UPDATE ON TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENTS

Neil Johnson, Assistant Director – Economic Growth, and Patrick Middleton, Project Manager, Northern Gateway, gave a presentation on the progress of the developments at the Northern Gateway, referring to:

- Refurbishment of the old Co-op store building to provide an 89 bed hotel, restaurants and leisure fitness centre. It was anticipated that the hotel would open by the end of 2018;
- Construction of a new 529 space multi-storey car park to replace the demolished one on Saltergate, with improved facilities and security. The planning application had been submitted and a

contractor appointed with an anticipated completion date of March 2019;

- Construction of a new Enterprise Centre on part of the existing Donut roundabout, with space for 36 businesses, providing up to 170 jobs. It was hoped to appoint a contractor shortly with an anticipated completion date by March 2020 at the latest;
- Development of a pedestrian friendly streetscene environment on Elder Way and Knifemithgate, including loading bays, drop off points and improved taxi rank provision on Knifemithgate, with an anticipated completion date by March 2019.

The developments were planned to enhance the town centre economy and leisure offer, and there would be further public consultation on the plans during the summer of 2018.

It was noted that design of the streetscene environment would need to consider achieving a balance between the need for loading facilities, a suitable taxi rank, bus stops and drop off points for the hotel.

It was explained that members of the Taxi Consultative Committee would be consulted again in the future on the other developments at Peak Resort and the Waterside, including improved access to the railway station, which were part of the longer-term town centre masterplan.

33 DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS ISSUES

Further to Minute No. 24, Simon Tranter reported that the County Council Cabinet Member decision on the introduction of an 18 months experimental period for the use of bus lanes by hackney carriages was due to be taken on 26 April, 2018. Following the decision work would need to be completed to install the necessary signs and lighting before the experimental period began.

34 ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE LICENSING TEAM SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Further to Minute No. 23, Trevor Durham confirmed that following the period of consultation the revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy had been approved and was now in operation.

He reported that during the past three months two drivers' licences had been revoked and one driver's licence had been suspended (for failing to attend a child sexual exploitation awareness training session).

It was noted that over 500 drivers had attended the awareness sessions. It was agreed to notify operators of those drivers who had not attended and of remaining dates for the training to encourage drivers to attend.

28 vehicles had failed the six-monthly vehicle test, although it had not been necessary to issue penalty points in respect of any of these cases.

A supplier had been appointed for electronic knowledge tests and representatives would be invited to test the process once this was available before coming into operation in the summer.

It was confirmed that there had been no increase in fees and charges for the second successive year.

Further to Minute No. 25, it was noted that the Eckington test station office staff would be available until 5.00 pm to issue plates or would post plates the day after an evening test. Representatives expressed concern that this may not fully resolve the issue of drivers having to return to collect plates.

Representatives raised concern at the revised arrangements for buses at Chesterfield railway station and the restricted space available for taxis dropping off, especially with wheelchair passengers. It was noted that this was on private land and was not part of the Highways Authority's responsibility. Trevor Durham agreed to investigate further and report back to the next meeting.

35 DATES OF MEETINGS OF TAXI CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE FOR 2018/19

The following dates were agreed for meetings of the Taxi Consultative Committee in 2018/19, each meeting starting at 6.00 pm:

Wednesday, 4 July, 2018

Wednesday, 24 October, 2018

Wednesday, 30 January, 2019

Wednesday, 10 April, 2019