

TAXI CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**Wednesday, 12th July, 2017**

Present:-

Representing Chesterfield Borough Council:

Councillor K Caulfield (Chair)
Councillor J Burrows (Vice-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

Representing Derbyshire Police:

Inspector John Turner

In Attendance:

Scott Ashmore, City Cars +

+ For Minute No. 5

1 CONFIRMATION OF SELECTION OF TRADE REPRESENTATIVES FOR 2017-2019

Further to the nominations made to the meeting on 19 June, 2017, it was confirmed that the representatives appointed for two years from 2017 – 2019 were:

Representing Hackney Carriage Licence Holders:

Mr S Atkin
Mr C Brown
Ms M Shaw

Representing Private Hire Licence Holders:

Mr S Aldersley
Ms A Dickens
Mr D Madin

2 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declarations of interest were received.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19 APRIL, 2017

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 April, 2017 were agreed as a true record.

5 ISSUES OF INTEREST FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

The Chair welcomed Scott Ashmore, operator of City Cars, to the meeting to discuss issues of interest with members of the Committee.

It was noted that City Cars (formerly Club Taxis) was one of the largest operators in Chesterfield and that it was part of a wider group of operators across South Yorkshire and Derbyshire.

Arising from discussion of a number of issues, it was confirmed that:

- Where operators became aware of issues or complaints they should provide specific details to the relevant operator and Licensing section to enable these to be investigated;
- City Cars had been dealing with complaints corporately, but were now reverting to these being dealt with locally;
- Licensing would deal with issues as appropriate if there was a need to issue penalty points;
- Information be made available for customers about how complaints could be submitted.

6 DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS ISSUES

Further to Minute No. 37, Simon Tranter reported that following the first stage of consultation on the proposals for the use of bus lanes by hackney carriages, comments had been taken into account and the proposals would shortly be advertised in the Derbyshire Times. Any formal objections submitted within the three week consultation period would need to be considered by the County Council's Cabinet prior to the proposals being implemented.

It was confirmed that the proposals related to allowing the use of bus lanes only by hackney carriages, not private hire vehicles, in line with most other authorities, and that the signage required by the legislation would refer to use by 'taxis' (defined as hackney carriages in the legislation). Steve Aldersley expressed concern that there may be some confusion as other authorities locally did not pursue enforcement action against private hire vehicles using bus lanes. It was confirmed that the provisions once implemented would be enforced by the Police in line with the relevant legislation. It was suggested that any available evidence relating to this from other authorities be submitted to Brian Offiler before the next meeting for consideration at that meeting.

Representatives were encouraged to submit comments during the formal consultation period once this was advertised.

7 POLICE ISSUES

Inspector Turner submitted the reported crime figures for the period 1 April to 30 June, 2017 for the Chesterfield and the Bolsover and North East Derbyshire Policing sections, totalling 31 reports, which included:

26 occasions where the driver was the victim
4 occasions 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 taxi office staff was the victim
1 occasion where the driver was an offender

Timing – 15 crimes were between 0000 hours and 0600 hours.

Violence against drivers – 6 cases

The breakdown of crimes was:

15 – making off without payment
4 – damage to vehicle
4 – assault on driver
3 – theft
2 – public order
1 – assault on taxi office staff
1 – robbery
1 – sexual assault on driver

The outcomes from investigation of these reported crimes were:

5 – restorative justice
10 - suspect identified (5 arrested and charged, 4 no further action, 1 investigation ongoing)
2 – investigations ongoing
14 – undetected.

Inspector Turner thanked operators for their cooperation in providing information to assist in the investigation of crimes.

It was noted that this would be Inspector Turner's last meeting of the Committee as he would shortly be retiring. The Committee expressed thanks to him for his contribution to its work.

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

Trevor Durham reported that during the previous three months one driver's licence had been revoked.

17 vehicles had failed their test, which was a record low, with penalty points being issued on two occasions.

The issuing of vehicle licences at the Eckington test station had commenced on 15 May, 2017. A concern was raised that the test station was insisting on fitting new backing plates at each test. Trevor Durham was pursuing this with North East Derbyshire District Council.

Three policy changes had come into effect on 28 June, 2017:

- All new and renewal DBS checks would be processed using the DBS update service;
- The Council would maintain and publish a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles – operators were asked to notify Licensing of any wheelchair accessible private hire vehicles which could then be included on the list along with wheelchair accessible hackney carriages;
- Any CCTV fitted in a licensed vehicle must not be on continuous audible recording.

Simon Tranter asked representatives to notify DCC Highways of any locations where dropped kerbs were required to enable access for wheelchairs to vehicles.

Mandy Shaw requested an update on the simplification of the policy documents which had been previously proposed, as these were very large, with significant repetition and were difficult to understand for prospective drivers sitting their test. Trevor Durham explained that it was hoped to simplify the documentation, whilst ensuring that it included sufficient detail to enable its enforcement where necessary and to ensure that drivers understood what was required of them. It was noted that the test process had already been streamlined to some extent (no geographical paper for private hire licences; requirement to resit only the paper failed), but Trevor agreed to submit a report to the next meeting on further improvements to the policy documents.

9 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS FOR 2017/18 COUNCIL YEAR

The following dates were agreed for future meetings of the Committee in 2017/18:

Wednesday, 18 October, 2017

Wednesday, 17 January, 2018

Wednesday, 18 April, 2018

each meeting starting at 6.00 pm.