

TAXI CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 4th July, 2018

Present:-

Representing Chesterfield Borough Council:

Councillor K Caulfield (Chair)
Steve Ashby
Stephen Oliver
Ian Waller

Representing the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trade:

Jim Brookbank
Ann Dickens
Mandy Shaw

Representing Derbyshire County Council:

Simon Tranter

Representing Derbyshire Police:

Inspector Dave Nicholls

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

No declarations of interest were received.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Burrows and V Diouf, David Madin and Trevor Durham.

3 POLICE ISSUES

Inspector Nicholls presented the reported crime figures for the period 1 April to 30 June, 2018 for the Chesterfield and the Bolsover and North East Derbyshire Policing sections, totalling 31 reports, which included:

- 19 – making off without payment
- 4 – damage to vehicle
- 3 – assault on driver
- 2 – robbery
- 2 – public order
- 1 – assault by driver

It was noted that there had recently been two cases in North East Derbyshire of money being stolen from drivers.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 18 APRIL, 2018

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 April, 2018 were agreed as a true record.

5 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT - TAXI CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE - 2017/18

The Committee considered the draft annual report of the Taxi Consultative Committee for 2017/18, which provided information on the meetings of the Committee held and issues considered during the year.

It was agreed that the annual report be approved and submitted to a future meeting of the Council's Appeals and Regulatory Committee.

6 DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS ISSUES

Further to Minute No. 33, Simon Tranter reported that the County Council Cabinet Member decision on 26 April, 2018 had approved an 18 months experimental period for the use of bus lanes by hackney carriages. Orders had been placed for the necessary electrical and signage work, which it was hoped would be completed by September, 2018. The experimental period could be ended earlier than 18 months if problems arose, but if it proved successful, it would become a permanent arrangement at the end of 18 months.

He confirmed that once further details had been received from the developer in respect of proposed loading bays and taxi ranks on Elder Way, detailed proposals for the taxi rank in the longer term on Knifsmithgate would be prepared and comments would be invited at that

stage. Trade representatives emphasised the need to take account of the availability of taxi ranks near the town centre shopping area.

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

Steve Ashby reported that further amendments to the taxi policy were being considered, covering:

- Electronic knowledge tests;
- Removal of the need for references;
- Modification of terminology used in the dress code in light of recent advice from the government's equality office;
- Amendment to the exclusion period for those with convictions to fall in line with national guidance recently published by the Institute of Licensing and supported by the government - exclusion periods to run from the end of the sentence instead of the date of conviction;
- The payment of an application fee, to be deducted from the full fee if successful;
- Requiring private hire drivers to notify the Council of which operator they are working for.

Once formulated, the amendments would be subject to consultation.

During the previous three months one driver's licence had been revoked and five drivers had been suspended for failing to attend child sexual exploitation (CSE) awareness sessions. CSE awareness sessions for new applicants would be delivered jointly with North East Derbyshire and Bolsover from August, alternating between the town hall and NED's offices at Wingerworth.

20 vehicles had failed their test, with penalty points being issued on only one occasion.

Due to the increase in taxi numbers (20% over last 3 years) the licensing section would shortly be recruiting additional staff - $\frac{1}{2}$ post enforcement, $\frac{1}{2}$ post officer and $\frac{1}{5}$ post assistant.

Trade representatives expressed concern at the length of time for new drivers to become licensed, resulting in some operators using drivers licensed in other authorities to fulfil contracts. Steve Ashby explained that the DBS, medical, knowledge and driving tests were necessary in order to

ensure public safety and that electronic knowledge tests would increase the availability of tests. He confirmed that a three month temporary licence could be issued if an applicant had a long wait for a driving test and that applicants from abroad had to produce a certificate of good conduct from the previous country.

8 TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was suggested that future meetings of the Committee commence at 5.00 pm, which was agreed subject to consulting those members not present.