

MINUTES OF TAXI TRADE FORUM

MEETING DATE Wednesday, 27 March 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Barbara Nathan (Chair), Jane Bell, Malcolm Donoghue and Harry Hancock

OFFICERS: Mark Marshall (Head of Licensing), Stephanie Fairbrother (Licensing Officer) and Coral Astbury (Trainee Governance and Member Services Officer)

TRADE: 3

24 Welcome

The Chair, Councillor Barbara Nathan introduced herself as the Chair of Licensing along with fellow members of the Committee who were in attendance at the meeting.

25 Note of the Last Forum

The notes of the last meeting were circulated.

26 Policy Review

The Head of Licensing explained to members of the Trade that there was two main policy reviews to be reported to the General Licensing Committee in June.

The first review would be around general driving standards and driving convictions. With a proposal being suggested that the existing requirement for drivers to undertake the NVQ prior to being given a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Licence be made more flexible.

The second review would focus on the current requirement of checking the DVLA status of drivers every year with a view to only checking the DVLA status upon driver renewal.

The Vehicle Policy will also be reviewed in October following on from the results of a supported unmet demand survey which Licensing had undertaken.

Members of the Trade expressed concern that they were being targeted as the main cause of air pollution rather than larger vehicles such as Buses and HGV's. The Head of Licencing assured the Trade that all commercial vehicles were being targeted and not just Taxi's.

27 Fees and Charges

The Head of Licensing explained that there would be modest increases in the fees and charges in respect of new and renewal applications for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licences.

The decision was made to increase the fees as there had been no increases for two years and the Authority needs to move towards being cost neutral and closing the gap in the funding deficit.

Members of the trade expressed concern that modest increases would only put the Authority further into deficit. They were assured that discussions were being had with the Authority to secure funding to support the service.

The fees will be implemented on the 30 April providing there are no objections.

28 12 Monthly Renewals

Members of the Trade requested this item and explained that they would like to be given 12 monthly licences or the option of having a twelve monthly Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence. They explained that this would be more time effective for drivers.

The Head of Licensing acknowledged that moving to a 12 monthly system would save drivers time however, it was explained that the current system works well as drivers are required to submit their 6 monthly roadworthiness test certificate at the same time as the renewal. Moving to a 12 monthly renewal would mean extra administrative work as drivers would need additional reminders to submit documents which are still required 6 monthly.

Members of the Trade requested that a move to 12 monthly renewals be included in the Vehicle Policy Review to go to Members of the General Licensing Committee which was confirmed by the Head of Licensing.

29 Customer Service

Councillor Jane Bell praised the Trade for the high levels of customer service that she has recently received from a number of different operators. Members of the trade welcomed the praise and assured that this would be passed on.

30 Taxi Rank Remaking Update

Members of the Trade provided an update from the last meeting that there were still certain taxi ranks across the borough that needed remarking. The Head of Licensing confirmed that he had been in discussion with Lancashire County Council and was due to meet with Highways Officers to discuss the repainting of the taxi ranks and to look at officialising the ranks at Tesco and Leyland Railway Street.

31 Cross Bordering

Members of the trade reported that they had recently seen a Private Hire Vehicle with plates from another Borough working in the South Ribble area displaying signage from a South Ribble Operator.

This had been investigated by Licensing and it was explained to the Trade that the Operator is allowed to sub-contract vehicles from his other Company to work in the South Ribble area provided that the sub-contract is made clear on bookings.