

Minutes of	Taxi Trade Forum
Meeting date	Tuesday, 21 March 2023
Members present:	Councillors Jacky Alty (Chair), Harry Hancock (Vice-Chair), Derek Forrest, Keith Martin and Jacqui Mort
Officers:	Chris Ward (Licensing Manager), Justin Abbotts (Licensing Officer) and Clare Gornall (Democratic and Member Services Officer)
Other members:	Ged Byrne - Taxi trade Dave Cox – Taxi Trade

1 Welcome

Chris Ward, Licensing Manager welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Note of the Last Forum

The notes of the last meeting held on 13 December 2022 were noted and agreed.

3 Update/Changes to the Licensing Policy & Issues for the Trade

3a Update on CCTV consultation

Chris Ward explained that as there had only been twelve responses to the consultation on CCTV policy, the Council had commenced a second consultation.

A report would then be submitted to the Committee and then to a meeting of Full Council for decision later in the year.

As regards the proposals for CCTV, Chris identified some of the features and associated issues which were:

-GDPR compliance (for recording - the footage can only be requested by authorised person e.g. police).

-A panic button would enable the CCTV within the vehicle (it cannot record continuously).

-One designated laptop for CCTV access software

-CCTV recording to kept for 30 days only – after that it records over the footage

Comments from the trade representatives present were positive about the proposals to allow CCTV in vehicles.

3b Mandatory CSE training sessions

Chris Ward explained that the mandatory CSE training held at the Civic Centre was to provide an update on knowledge and sits within a context of improved risk awareness and issues surrounding county lines. The training was approximately one and a half hour and there were several sessions available.

3c Changes to the DBS application process

Chris Ward informed the Forum of the advantages of the new online "Taxi Plus" system to process DBS applications:

- Can be done at home
- Can be done on a computer at the Civic Centre - no need for an appointment with Gateway staff
- £2 cheaper for drivers – cost reduced from £60 to £58

A question was asked about the best time of year to submit a DBS application. This would depend on the time of year and how many police authorities the applicant had lived under in the last 5 years.

Chris indicated that test links were available if anyone would like to try a demo.

4 Topics submitted by the Trade

4a Progress with the college course being moved in house

Chris Ward reported that he was looking to provide an in-house course once a month.

4b Progress with allowing a three month window for drivers to pass NVQ

Chris Ward referred to the proposed introduction of a policy where successful applicants are allowed a three month grace period to work pending obtaining an NVQ qualification (subject to DBS check and other requirements being satisfactory). He said there would need to be a consultation and then a report to the Committee and Full Council later in the year.

5 Any other business

Wolverhampton Council licensed taxis

Ged Byrne raised the issue of a lot of licensed vehicles from Wolverhampton Council in the area.

Chris Ward indicated that it was a national issue where Wolverhampton has licensed around 12,500 vehicles, many of them UBER vehicles, than can legally trade outside

their licensing authority area with no requirement to travel back to Wolverhampton after the booking has finished.

The issue is a UK wide concern and local authorities have been lobbying the Department for Transport.

Clean Air Zones

Clean Air Zones will be beneficial as it will reduce the number of older vehicles on the roads.

Unmet Demand Survey

This has recently been commissioned. The Council will be looking at the rank outside the Line Bar and enquiries have been made with the Planning Manager as to the possibility of using Leyland Town Deal money.

6 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 4 July 2023 at 6.00pm.

Chair

Date