

**Taxi Liaison Group (TLG) meeting minutes- Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 10:30hrs**

*Dings Crusaders RFC Shaftesbury Park, Frenchay Park Road, Bristol, BS16 1LG*

**Chair:** Councillor Paul Hughes (PH)

**Minutes:** Lily Thornell

**Councillors:** Councillor Tony Davis (TD), Councillor Kim Scudamore (KS), Councillor Michael Bell (MB), Councillor Alison Evans (AE)

**SGC Licensing:** Kevin Barley (KB)

**Police:** PC Patrick Quinton (PQ)

Item			Action
1.	Welcome	(PH) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Councillors, SGC staff and the Police. Due to the number of people attending, it was decided not to introduce everybody by name.	
2.	Previous minutes and matters arising	<p>Sharon Shaw (SS) Stated that there are still some actions that have not been resolved and no closure has been gained. (PH) Agreed that actions that have not been solved need to be looked at. Some topics are ongoing but some do need closure.</p> <p>(SS) Explained that appointment time slots are not being dealt with fairly. Unprepared drivers are being subsidised by other drivers which causes confrontation. (KB) confirmed the current Licensing structure and explained that the technical support team were carrying out pre checks on the emails to reduce the amount of wasted appointments.</p> <p>(SS) Felt that new drivers need a basic understanding and need to be able to communicate in English effectively and noted that sometimes interpreters are used for an appointment. (PH and KB) confirmed part of the proposed policy, includes an English language proficiency test and therefore this may also affect some existing drivers.</p> <p>(SS) Explained that there is still the issue of the garage having the monopoly and making profit. Mike Worley (MW) suggested multiple locations, to save travelling from one side of South Gloucestershire/ Bristol to Yate, especially if vehicles have to have two inspections a year.</p> <p>(SS) expressed her concern over potential conflict between drivers on the ranks, when all HC must be WAVs, as some drivers may apply for exemptions to</p>	<p>PH/ KB to speak to the ECS procurement manager in relation to this process.</p>

		<p>carry wheelchairs. (KB) confirmed that all HCs must be WAV by the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.</p> <p>Confirmation given that the law in relation to 'No Smoking' signs has not changed.</p> <p>(MW) raised concerns that WAV details being published online. (KB) confirmed that this does not include the licence holder's personal details.</p>	
2.	PC Quinton (Taxi Cop) update	<p>(PQ) confirmed how to sign up to the WhatsApp groups that he runs, explains the benefits and states from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021, he has received 125 jobs from licence holders.</p> <p>(PQ) stated that there has been a reported increase in the number of drinks being spiked, he reminded drivers to be aware of this and be mindful of this, as alcohol may not be the only thing affecting a passenger and if a driver has concerns, they should report it.</p> <p>In relation to wearing masks, (PQ) confirmed that it's not currently law, however this Licensing Authority recommends that they are worn, and some Private Hire Operators have it as a condition of working under their Operator's licence, which they are entitled to do.</p> <p>Reminded everyone that HCDs cannot refuse a fare without good cause, it would be for the licensing authority to decide if it good cause, to refuse a fare if a passenger will not wear a mask. However, a PHD can refuse a job if the passenger doesn't wear a mask.</p> <p>Finally, (PQ) confirmed over the last 6 weeks, his workload has gone up dramatically, therefore there may be a slight delay in getting back to drivers on the WhatsApp group.</p> <p>At this point, question was asked in relation to e-scooters and what was being done about them, as it was affecting 80% of the room. (PQ) confirmed that this was a wider issue and not something that he could deal with as 'the taxi cop'. (PH) said as it was affecting so many, that he would speak to WECA.</p> <p>(SS) raised concerns in relation to the number of vehicles that (PQ) finds below the legal limit. (PQ) confirmed that the legal minimum limit on a tyre is 1.6mm</p>	(PH) to contact WECA in relation to e-scooters

		(KB) confirmed that (PQ) post was funded 50% by SGC and 50% by BCC.	
3.	Schools Transport Update	<p>(KB) confirmed over the last 18 months, enforcement work with ITU has been limited, based on a risk assessment as the number of Covid 19 cases in and around schools is so high.</p> <p>A driver raised concerns about having to have multiple DBS checks when swapping between contractors for ITU. (KB) stated that drivers should only need one check as long as checked to enhanced and the barred lists, and must be subscribed to the DBS Update Service, this information can be provided to ITU.</p>	(KB) to confirm with ITU what their current process is.
4.	Fixed pricing, unfair dismissals and driver/ vulnerable passenger's safety	<p>Florin Talos (FT) speaking on behalf of a group of drivers, expressed the drivers concerns in relation to bigger Private Hire Operators, namely Uber not engaging with drivers and listening to their concerns about minimum pricing and fares. (KB) stated that there was no mechanism within law for the Licensing Authority to set a minimum fare for PHVs as there is with HCVs.</p> <p>(KB) stated that there are concerns that passengers are being left on the side of the road, through jobs being cancelled by drivers when they 'get a better price'. (KB) confirmed that this is not acceptable and legal advice had been sort on whose legal responsibility it was to fulfil the booking once a job is accepted.</p>	<p>(PH) to liaise with Uber to facilitate a meeting between them and the drivers.</p> <p>(KB) to confirm with legal.</p>
5.	Licensing office	<p>Previously licence holders have been advised to ask for a receipt when dropping documents at Broad Lane. However, concerns were raised in relation to technical support, refusing to give a receipt when its requested.</p> <p>Further concerns were raised, into the number of documents i.e. medicals and DBS certificates that are being misplaced.</p> <p>(MW) asked if plates could be posted to licence holders as it was easier. (KB) explained that plates and badges had to be collected in person, due to the public safety concerns in relation to vehicles utilising the licence with expired plates on display.</p> <p>(PH) to speak to (KM) in relation to a technical support representative attending in future.</p>	<p>(KB) to speak to (KM) in relation to receipts being given and original documents.</p> <p>(PH) to speak to (KM).</p>
6.	Taxi policy review	(PH) and (KB) confirmed the proposed taxi policy will be reviewed and determined at the regulatory	

		<p>committee meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021, this is a public meeting, so anyone can attend. (KB) confirmed that all applications from the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021, will be determined under the new policy.</p> <p>(PH) stated that as a Licensing Authority we are trying to raise the standards and work in partnership with service users and the travelling public.</p> <p>(SS) raised concerns that about section 10.4 of the proposed policy in relation to the age of a vehicle. She asked that other needs and disabilities are taken into consideration and not just WAVs i.e., if a vehicle has been modified for a school contract, can a company apply to be exempt from the age limit. (KB) confirmed that each request would be considered on its own merit.</p>	
7.	Fees and charges 2022-23	(KB) confirmed based on the current forecasting and accounting of all costs, that it will be proposed that fees and charges remain the same for the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing function.	
8.	HC tariff and fares 2022-23	(KB) confirmed based on the current agreed methodology, the HC tariff and fares will likely be increased, to reflect the increase in fuel prices, inflation and pay, as stated in the agreed methodology. Any proposal to increase would go out to public consultation.	
9.	Any other business	<p>Drivers asked if there could be a supply and demand and put a cap on the number of PHV licences that SGC allow. Confirmation that this was not something that was being considered at the moment.</p> <p>Juan Sanzo (JS) raised concerns that he didn't feel that electric vehicle complied with the current HC requirements. (KB) confirmed that this was something that would be fully consulted on, over the next couple of years, in relation to any policy changes.</p> <p>(SS) asked if it was possible to get an annual pass for the clean air zone in BANES.</p> <p>(SS) asked if there is a problem with Eventbrite and booking knowledge tests as she has been unable to book tests for months. (KB) confirmed that there is limited availability with tests and it's first come, first served.</p>	(KB) to send (SS) a link to the public website.

		In relation to the cost of electric vehicles, (PH) stated that he hoped that some funding or grants would be programmed into the future but he wasn't sure.	
10.	Next meeting	Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2022.	