

17 July 2025

Taxi Liaison Group

Location: Bristol and Bath Science Park, Dirac Crescent, Emerson's Green, Bristol.
BS16 7FR

Time: 10am

Chair Cllr Alex Doyle (AD) alex.doyle@southglos.gov.uk

Present

Cllr Alex Doyle (AD), Cllr Keith Cranney (KC), Cllr Chris Davis (CD), Cllr Mike Drew (MD), Cllr Raj Sood (RS), Cllr Carol Strange (CS), PC Quinton (PQ), Lily Brine (LB) SGC, Kayleigh Morris (KM) SGC, Iain Fortune (IF), Broad Lane Garage, SGC, Fran Wilson (FW), Broad Lane Garage, SGC, Cllr Dave??, Kerry Harding (KH), Sharon Shaw (SS), Alison Pilkington (AP) SGC

Apologies

Cllr Mike Bell
Mike Worley

1 Welcome and introductions

Cllr Alex Doyle (AD) welcomed everyone to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

2 Previous minutes, matters arising – Table of action reviewed

The minutes of the previous meeting of 24 April 2025 were agreed as a true record with the following amendment:

- Change Kerry Shaw to Kerry Harding as now married.

Table of action reviewed

LB will send details of how to complain about a Cllr:

- LB confirmed that she distributed information as requested.

Disability and Awareness Safeguarding courses – LB will contact the providers and see when the next session is available, you can book ahead if you know badge expiration is coming up, and going forward they will try and publicise even further such as SGC social media:

- LB confirmed that she had contacted both providers to ensure consistency. Also approached SGC Learning and Disability Panel and due to meet in September to review content.

Q KH – Is it possible to have the Disability awareness courses amended to run every 2 years in line with the licence?

A LB – These are valid for 3 years from a licensing point of view.

Q KH – Why are the courses differently priced?

A LB – Providers can choose what price they charge as independent although need to be within a specific price range. Currently considering a fourth provider.

Q KH – Website isn't clear as was told cost would be £40 whereas website states £35-£50.

A LB – We will review our website to make it clear that course content is same but prices may differ and can choose any course.

Q SS – Would it be also be possible to make it clear that it is actually valid until badge renewal?

A LB – Yes can amend.

Q SS – I attended recent course delivered by Green Penny and disability content was limited. Focussed on dementia but very little on autism and concerned that it is easy to cheat. Happy to attend any future courses if required to highlight any potential problems in order to make improvements.

A LB – We need to ensure the courses meet the needs of service users as well as providing education for the drivers – need to get the right balance.

Q KH – How much in advance can someone take the Disability training?

A LB – Up to 6 months before licence is due to expire.

Q KC – Can the Disability training be delivered 'in-house' and work with other LAs to keep costs down?

A LB – We could consider this in the future but don't currently have the resources. I have planned to attend Bristol City Council's Safeguarding course for comparison.

Q SS – Could I accompany you when attending Bristol City Council's Safeguarding Course?

A LB – I will investigate but there may be a cost.

Comment – PQ – I have attended the course provided by Bristol City Council which is very good. However all authorities deliver this differently and aware of some mandatory changes in the future which should be considered before making any changes locally.

Quarterly newsletter – LB will potentially look at other forms, has looked before, but can look again:

- LB confirmed that she had carried out a benchmarking exercise with other LAs. Not all LAs are able to provide a quarterly newsletter. When our Privacy policy has been reviewed we will be able to consider our coms in more detail.

Q KC – Does this involve data being logged?

A LB – Our Privacy policy relates to who we communicate with, what information requested and how it is stored to ensure we are using data as intended and informing the service user of this correctly.

Licensing Team Enforcement – AD will speak to cabinet member and see if they can do anything about being able to use bus lanes:

- AD has raised this but has very little influence. Will continue to offer advice when applicable
- Filton Airfield – LB working with Planning and site developers and proposing to include private hire vehicles with next scheme to benefit both the trade and members of the public
- AD – Please raise any future access problems on an individual basis.

Q Lockleaze to Cheswick – KC mentioned that there are potential problems with the scheme.

A LB – Will investigate and provide feedback.

Q Bus gate from Cribbs to Charlton Road – KC mentioned that there are potential problems with the scheme.

A LB – Will investigate and provide feedback.

Comment – KC – A uniform approach is needed when schemes are approved.

Westlink – AD to chase this:

- Still chasing response from WECA.

Q SS – Westlink using Yate bus terminal as a taxi rank to pick up passengers. Also vehicles advertising that they are sponsored by SGC and therefore subsidised enabling them to compete with us which is unfair as they don't need a licence, DBS and not environmentally friendly running 16 seater vehicles for 1 person. They are able to take on more contract work from us as we require WAVs. We need to be treated the same and made fair. Happy to attend any meetings if back up from the Trade is needed to help.

Grants have not been made available to us as considered a rural area unlike other LAs and we are struggling to survive.

A AD will consider and discuss with WECA to ensure Westlink provide the service as intended.

A PQ – Been stopping and checking Westlink vehicles and yesterday stopped one with no badges.

DA Course – LB to feed this back and confirm:

- LB confirmed that comments were followed up and will be attending future Learning and Partnership Board meeting to discuss with individual companies and to continue with the regular reviews.

What is a zone – LB to check and report back:

- Still an ongoing action and awaiting a response.

Home school runs:

- Carried forward.

Q SS – Other Councils have listened to drivers and stopped Uber, what is SGCs position?

A LB – This will be covered by our Privacy policy and can then report any suspensions/revoked drivers and vehicles once policy has been finalised.

Q KH – What if an individual hasn't got an operator's licence?

A LB – Need to ensure information provided is consistent.

A AD – Members are keen to ensure operators are aware of any suspended drivers otherwise they could lose their licence to operate.

Q SS – Do you get confirmation that the operator has received information regarding suspended drivers?

A AD – Once finalised we will ensure that this happens.

Q KH – Do you keep a record of which private hire driver is linked to which operator?

A LB – Several years ago we were informed that we should not be requesting this information and will enquire whether more recent legislation available.

Q KH – Does a hackney driver driving a private hire vehicle need a licence?

A LB – Will investigate and provide feedback.

Q PQ – If an operator contacted SGC to ascertain whether a driver of a particular badge number is suspended, would you have that information available?

A LB – We could if just providing a number, however unable to disclose information if a name is provided. We are currently working on our Public register.

Q SS – We are required to submit private hire driver information before they are able to commence any contract work and therefore if we are able to retrieve all necessary information, why can't SGC?

A LB – We may have all the information applicable but we are unable to share it due to our Privacy policy.

Q Is it possible to work for 2 operators at the same time?

A SS – Yes.

Comment – PQ – Different LAs follow different legal advice e.g. Bristol do list exempt companies. Wolverhampton provide badges which can be scanned providing exempt information instantly, despite information displayed on paperwork.

Would probably be helpful for a requirement to be introduced for all operators within SGC to submit their registers monthly detailing drivers and vehicles like some other LAs.

Action: LB to complete

Review coms distributed including renewal letters and website to make it clear that individuals can choose any provider, content the same but waiting time may differ.

Action: LB to complete

To contact course provider and request them to make it clear that valid for 3 years.

Action: LB to complete

Investigate whether SS could accompany LB to attend Bristol City Council's Safeguarding course and any potential costs.

Action: LB to complete

To investigate whether still contribute financially when new schemes approved.

Action: All to complete
Raise any future access problems individually.

Action: LB to complete
To investigate potential problems with the two schemes mentioned above and provide feedback.

Action: AD to complete
To discuss the Westlink service with WECA and ensure service provided is as intended and funds used to maximum benefit. To request SS attend future meetings if applicable.

Action: LB/AD to complete
To consider providing information regarding suspended drivers once Privacy policy has been finalised.

Action: LB to complete
To investigate whether a hackney driver driving a private hire vehicle needs a licence and whether more recent legislation available.

3 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing enforcing update

(a) PC Quinton update

PQ reported:

- Parliamentary Transport Committee – Requested evidence on cross boarder hiring and standardisation within LAs. It is possible to make any comments on our website
- Child exploitation – Working with colleagues around the country to understand how taxis have been used in the past for this to prevent anything similar happening again. Taxis have been mentioned in reports but believe that they mean private hire vehicles and therefore not certain that convicted drivers were cross boarder
- Figures for June:
 - 116 vehicles stopped and checked
 - 3 tickets issued
 - 3 prosecution files
 - 21 disclosures to LAs
 - 2 vehicle licences suspended
 - 19 non-compliance notices
 - 1 impairment test – driver arrested for drink/driving
 - 5 officers helped with their crimes involving taxis
 - 5 other colleagues helped regarding reports received
 - 38 requests received via WhatsApp
 - 3 colleagues helped regarding drivers and speeding issues
 - 2 arrests
 - 17 crimes currently being investigated
- Above figures include around 4,500 vehicles and drivers licenced for Bristol and SGlos but also includes several out of town vehicles
- Drivers have trusted me with their suspicions – they care deeply about what they do.

Q SS – Surprised how incapable some people are and not fit to do their job. Drivers need to take responsibility for their actions and why is it necessary to attend these

meetings?

A AD – Enforcement is so important and need to ensure that drivers are sticking to the rules.

Q KC – I believe that you forgot to mention the personal injury incident in the line of duty but continued to work.

A PQ – Yes.

(b) Licensing team enforcement update

LB reported:

- Team has been very busy with complaints and Information Sharing Agreement
- Been necessary to carry out more licensing sub committees
- Necessary to check DBS certificates fortnightly and therefore time consuming
- Since 1st April and changes to Disability awareness training, a number of drivers have been unable to review their license as left renewal too late which has also affected our workload
- Various changes within our Team:
 - Emma Payne, Senior Licensing Officer leaving shortly – Currently recruiting
 - Current sickness within Team but please be patient whilst we prioritise workload.

Q SS – Was the problem with accessing Disability training recent as when first implemented I was unable to get an appointment?

A LB – We communicated the changes from February informing every one of courses available and reminders sent shortly afterwards. There was plenty of availability but drivers left it too late to book.

Q SS – We have been informed of an anticipated response 1 day prior to license expiring and therefore could this be reprioritised? I have been previously informed that I am the only person complaining about a specific issue, whereas I am aware of someone else being told the same. Therefore it is important to bring these issues to the meeting as well as dealing with it on a personal basis so items can be included in minutes.

A LB – Please discuss outside of this meeting.

Q KC – Would it be possible to include more content in your reports eg. Photos?

A LB – Perhaps we need to consider a template to ensure information provided in reports is consistent.

Q Received a SP30 report during Tuesday's 10.30am meeting but contained no further information which wasn't very useful.

A LB will investigate and speak to officer concerned.

Comment – PQ – I have a written agreement with LAs about information that I am able to share. Over the last 12 months I have carried out 381 reports.

Action: LB to complete

To investigate above issue involving expiration of license and meet a resolution with SS.

Action: LB to complete

To introduce a report template to ensure information provided by team is consistent both in writing and verbally whilst considering size of pictures and colour of paper

so accessible for all.

Action: LB to complete

To investigate the SP30 information provided at Tuesday's 10.30am meeting.

4 Licensing Team update

Current service demand and process updates

KM reported:

- Really busy and cover other functions – 58 failed appointments last week mainly due to inadequate documents being provided
- Previously made 28 appointments per day but now over 45
- Will be recruiting as workload has increased
- Renewal letters now being sent out 2 months in advance and not 3 as considered too far ahead
- August – Already have 373 appointments booked
- Online forms are being finalised and hoping to go live on 3rd September – Phased approach and will lean through the process.

Q Are you overbooking?

A KM – No we need to make further bookings as individuals keep on forgetting necessary documents.

Q KH – When is the next available appointment?

A KM – 8th August 2025.

Q SS – Are many drivers rude or aggressive to staff?

A KM – The Team will always try to help any drivers which need our help.

Q SS – Will the online forms be introduced within next 6 months?

A LB – Will initially create a higher workload for us but improvements later.

Q KH – Badge appointments are currently face to face. Will this remain the same when digital forms are introduced and why do they need to be face to face?

A LB – Hoping to accept these digitally in time. There will be a number of changes but please be patient with us as we are trying to make things easier for you all.

Q KH – How quickly are you able to update SGC public website if informed of an issue as recently made a change within 3 minutes?

A LB – We will act quite quickly but not that quick. Please contact us separately regarding the incident for us to investigate thoroughly.

Action: KH to complete

To provide LB with information regarding recent amendment to information on website for her to investigate.

5 Items for the trade

LB reported:

(a) Number of licence drivers and vehicles

LB reported:

- Concern was expressed regarding private hire drivers and vehicles – SGC unable

to legally stop number of applicants

(b) Private Hire operators and workloads

- Concern was expressed regarding workload pressures and distributing work unfairly – SGC unable to get involved.

(c) Passengers that don't pay – What can we do?

- Please request this by email and a fact sheet can be provided.

(d) Could these meetings be hybrid?

- Not sure whether room has capacity for this but will investigate.

Q Believe that Bristol City Council limit number of private hire drivers?

A LB – Need to carry out a needs assessment and limited to hackney carriages only.

Q SS – Do you limit the number of kebab vans?

A LB – No we are unable to limit these. Other LAs may not have available Testing resources and we have similar problems.

Q SS – Would it be possible to attach 'Passengers that don't pay' factsheet to newsletters?

A LB – This information was originally available on our website but has been removed after review. We have a number of factsheets available and therefore not sure whether beneficial to include them all.

Q SS – If future meetings are to be hybrid, need to ensure that people are unable to join throughout the meeting as disruptive.

A LB – It will be possible to control joining times.

Action: LB to complete

To investigate the possibility of future meetings to be hybrid.

6 Any other business

(a) Broad Lane Garage update

IF reported:

- Increased resources in workshop – someone is available daily from 7am until 4pm to provide support and continuity
- Emails – Allowed daily support for this
- Still significant 'no shows' – Causing problems as we are unable to support your requests especially at short notice.

Q KH – Can I leave vehicles with you for you to fit in as and when – was also informed that vehicles cannot be left overnight.

A IF – Vehicles need to be considered on an individual basis as we have limited parking and need required resources.

Q SS – Can initial first plate appointments be charged in advance?

A IF – Currently considering introduction of booking system to include advance payments.

A LB – Broad Lane Garage are now charging for missed inspections which is different to licensing. Considering improvements to online booking system to ensure

consistency. Also considering CSE to be chargeable in advance and removed from licensing.

Q SS – Concerned that Broad Lane Garage is running a monopoly and others unable to tender. Licensing is a non-profit organisation whereas Broad Lane Garage makes a profit. Would be grateful if you could review previous notes to consider our previous Appeals.

A IF – We have a high failure rate in excess of 10% and it is important to set a standard for continuity. Please let me know if you have any suggestions to improve our service.

(b) Plating of vehicle over 10 years old

Q KH – Had a vehicle over 10 years old in plating but was informed unable to carry out works. As it was a WAV, I believed that there was no limit on the licence, would it be possible to clarify as licence is due to expire the day before and will be out of the UK and receiving conflicting, confusing information. In the meantime information provided on website has been amended.

A LB – Depends how you accessed our website as google search is different than our public SGC website. Please contact me to discuss this after meeting.

Q My vehicle will be 10 years next year and will need to be relicensed in August. Why will I need to replace that vehicle when it has limited mileage and in immaculate condition?

A LB – You won't need to if it has been adapted for specific school contract.

(c) Medical certificate

Q KH – What information do you require on a medical certificate and if whole document is required, why?

A LB – GP can provide extra information within the document and therefore we need the whole certificate which is in line with other LAs and DVLA.

Q KH – So will you be reviewing any previous medical certificates received?

A LB – They should all be compliant but will check.

A AD – All the data is protected under our Privacy policy and if you aware of a Data breach please let us know as we will take this very seriously.

Q KH – How often do you need a medical certificate?

A LB – We receive one with your first licence and then every 6 years until aged 65 years in line with your licence and then in line with your birthday. However GP or DVLA may request this information more often.

Q SS – I have been providing medical information more frequently but unsure why?

A LB – Will look at your specific information that we hold on file and ensure compliance.

Q I have been having medical every 3 years although I have no medical problems. Have I therefore been renewing too often?

A LB – I will investigate information held on file regarding yourself and clarify. Will also provide general medical requirements in newsletter.

(d) Gipsy Patch Bridge

Q KC – Mentioned concerns regarding design of above and accident of 24th June.

Would it be possible to have speed camera installed due to number of complaints received?

A AD – Necessary to contact local Beat Team for them to investigate.

A PQ – There is a link on our website on how to report any speeding issues which I will share with LB for her to distribute.

(e) Louise Casey's report

Q Cllr ?? – Is it possible to obtain feedback from drivers and whether they regularly work out of their own area and if so, why?

A PQ – In Bristol during the evening SGC vehicles outnumber Bristol by approximately 4:1.

A SS – Previously expressed concerns as no longer required to go to or from your area to accommodate UBER, however their representatives attend their own meeting and not this one.

Q Cllr ?? – How does one sell a private hire vehicle?

A PQ – Need to declare that it was a private hire vehicle, de-plate it and then able to sell it privately.

(f) CSE Course

Q SS – I attended the above in March which Sue facilitated. Although a stimulating course I have a number of concerns:

- Only 2 others on course as some attendees cancelled and started late as waited for others to arrive
- Although free, included in our costs and those that didn't turn up will need to do it at a later date
- No paperwork or handouts were provided, although encouraged to take notes
- Answers to questions were available for anyone to read
- Took many photos of answers throughout course to pass
- Basically felt like a box ticking exercise – especially when told that tutor's pass rate is 100% and that she would provide extra support for those finding answers difficult
- Given a certificate after passing and instructed to write my name on it. However I didn't and could have therefore copied it later and given to anyone
- We were able to hold conversations during the actual exam and able to refer to our notes
- Able to take exam sheet home and could have given to anyone

LB has already addressed some of the issues but obviously very concerned.

A LB – Will thoroughly investigate concerns raised.

Q SS – How far in advance can we sit the CSE Course and how long does it last?

A LB – 6 months in advance and lasts 3 years.

(g) Distinguish between people

Q SS – Is it possible to introduce a system to prevent people swapping badges when look alike?

A AD – We could possibly implement something but difficult to check.

A PQ – When I believe badges are being used fraudulently used I have a number of tactics available to deal with the situation.

(h) Coalpit Heath bridge closure

Q SS – Is it possible to obtain an update regarding the above?

A AD – Will investigate.

(i) 'Road to nowhere' (Yate)

Q SS – Can this road be opened?

A MD – Monies not available.

Action: LB to complete

To consider introduction of online booking system to ensure consistency together with changes to CSE bookings.

Action: All to complete

Please contact IF with any suggestions to improve the service that Broad Lane Garage provides.

Action: LB to complete

To review information on file regarding SS and then ensure compliance.

Action: LB to complete

To review ?? medical requirements and include general medical requirements in next newsletter.

Action: LB to complete

To contact local Beat Team regarding Gipsy Patch Lane bridge and to share link provided by PQ.

Action: LB to complete

To encourage feedback from drivers regarding the Louise Casey report.

Action: LB to complete

To investigate concerns raised above regarding CSE Course.

Action: LB to complete

Consider implementing a system where photos are required to be renewed every 3 years.

Action: AD to complete

Investigate whether able to provide an update regarding Coalpit Heath bridge closure.

Action: LB to complete

Investigate whether the 'Road to nowhere' in Yate can be opened and provide an update at next meeting.

6 Proposed date and venue of next meeting

9 October 2025.

Meeting closed at 12.34pm