

Taxi Liaison Group

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Location: Yate Outdoor Sports Complex (YOSC), Broad Lane, Yate, South Gloucestershire, BS37 7LB

Chair: Councillor Paul Hughes

Attendees: Councillor Tony Davis (TD), Councillor Kim Scudamore (KS), Kevin Barley (KB) Kayleigh Morris (KM), Paula Gillett (PG), Lily Brine (LB), Jasmine Price-Lawson (JPL)

Apologies: PC Patrick Quinton (PQ), Councillor Michael Bell (MB)

Item	Description		Action
1	Welcome and Apologies	(PH) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Councillors and SGC staff. Apologies were made for PC Patrick Quinton.	
2.	Previous minutes, matters arising	(PH) confirmed that going forward actions table is to be published on website. Sharon Shaw (SS) acknowledged that since the previous TLG meeting changes had been made and she appreciated that actions take time to resolve. Mike Worley (MW) questioned about the 6 monthly fitness inspections and concerns were raised as to if the Broad Lane Garage had the capacity. (KB) confirmed that 6 monthly inspection letters will be sent out to all licence holders with 1 month to obtain the vehicle fitness inspection certificate.	
3.	Home to school transport update -	(KB) confirmed that the Client Transport team (formerly ITU) are currently going through a tendering	

	guidance and enforcement work with Client Transport team (ITU)	process for new companies, details within the current taxi newsletter. Paul Kelly of that team will be resuming the usual inspections following a pause in enforcement work due to the risk with Covid 19.	
4.	Licensing Office - current service demand, service staff resource update, and intended over-the-counter service changes.	<p>(PG) confirmed that from 04.04.2022 the Technical Support team will have 13 staff with 5.5 new starters since December 2021 and 4.5 new started in March/ April. Training and induction will be a priority. Regarding over-the-counter service, Integra DBS appointments will resume in person from 04.04.2022 and although the Technical Support team are currently based in the office 3 days a week, this will change to 4 days a week from May. Currently renewal appointments are 2 weeks ahead and new driver appointments are 3 months ahead.</p> <p>(PG) confirmed that the total number of licensed drivers as of 22.03.2022 was 2510 and the total licenced vehicles as of 22.03.2022 was 2286 with 117 of these being Hackney Carriage vehicles.</p> <p>(SS) questioned as to if Private Hire Operator confirmation was required when licensing a vehicle, (KM) confirmed that this is not something that is required however will need to be answered on the application form.</p> <p>(SS) requested that receipts are produced for documents that are brought into the office (e.g. Medicals, plates.)</p> <p>(PG) wanted to give a special thanks to the Technical Support team for helping to maintain the service even with the staffing issues.</p>	Acknowledged by (KM) and (PQ) to be implemented going forward
5.	Broad Lane Garage	(KB) confirmed that the current waiting time for an appointment with the garage is 2 weeks.	

		<p>Concerns were raised regarding the change of vehicle procedure for urgent inspections that may be required.</p> <p>(KB) confirmed that going forward the Broad Lane Garage will be taking the payments during the appointment rather than the Technical Support team. The fee for a fitness will increase to £40 on 01.04.2022 and the fee for an MOT and a fitness test will be £83. (SS) raised a query regarding drivers not having access to the company credit/ debit card so will not be able to make payment in person.</p> <p>Drivers' queried inconsistencies within the Broad Lane Garage inspecting and passing/ failing different vehicles for the same issues. (KB) confirmed that on booking all applicants are given the fitness inspection checklist to use to 'prepare' the vehicle. (LB) has requested that if anyone has any specific examples that they can be forwarded onto her to investigate further.</p>	<p>(KB) and (LB) to discuss the potential for Licensing Officers/ Assistants to inspect these vehicles.</p> <p>(KB) is going to discuss with Fran at the Broad Lane Garage different options for payment.</p> <p>(KB) has also agreed that he will have a discussion with the Broad Lane Garage.</p>
6.	New driver learning and suitability assessment package	<p>The new driver learning and suitability assessment package is still currently being finalised with the intention to pilot it soon.</p> <p>Currently the Technical Support team are clearing potential new driver applicants, those that have previously passed the knowledge/basic skills test, with the intention that all potential 'new applicants' will have been cleared from the system by the time the new package is ready to go. (KB) confirmed that once the package is in place all operators will be sent a letter to confirm.</p> <p>(KB) also stated that discussions on how to enhance the current CSE (child sexual exploitation) awareness training, and CCE (child criminal exploitation) awareness training to be introduced are currently in progress with the third party trainer.</p>	

7.	Regulatory Committee- January meeting update in reference to LEVs and clarification WAV policy.	The next Regulatory Committee meeting is on 24.03.2022. At the previous meeting in January it was requested that the WAV policy be reviewed. (KB) clarified that the WAV policy remains as stated in policy, all new HCVs must be wheelchair accessible, and all HCVs must be wheelchair accessible from 1 st April 2023. At the January meeting it was also agreed to draft a LEVs policy and present to the committee at the July or September meeting, taking into account the impact on WAVs, and for this to then go out to public consultation.	
8.	Licensing 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. (KB) noted that a representation had been received from (MW) in relation to plate exemption requests and this had been included and responded to in the report. To be determined at the Regulatory Committee meeting on 24.03.2022.	
9.	Hackney Carriage Table of Tariffs and Fares 2022	(KB) confirmed based on the current agreed methodology in policy, the HC table of tariffs and fares will likely be increased by 8.57%, to reflect the increase in fuel prices, inflation and pay, as stated in the agreed methodology. The proposal to increase has gone out to public consultation. To be determined at the Regulatory Committee meeting on 24.03.2022.	
10.	Covid-19 (omicron) grants (£500)	(KB) asked the meeting attendees if anyone had received a letter from the grants department. No one had received the grants letter and (KB) confirmed that it is not Licensing that deals with the grants but that he will investigate information that has been sent out via the Grants team further.	(KB) to confirm with Grants team).

		Florin Talos (FT) speaking on behalf of a group of drivers, expressed the drivers concerns in relation to bigger private hire operators, stating 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.	
11.	Cheltenham festival feedback	<p>(KB) confirmed that Licensing Officers and Assistants helped with enforcement at the Cheltenham festival alongside (PQ). Some non-compliance was found when inspecting South Gloucestershire licensed drivers and vehicles and these issues are being dealt with.</p> <p>Drivers queried as to why during the festival the Uber app was preventing them from working. An Uber representative was present and confirmed that there were technical issues before the event and was the reason why South Gloucestershire drivers/vehicles could not accept bookings whilst in Cheltenham.</p>	
12.	Customer fares - card payments	(KB) reminded that HCVs must be able to facilitate cash payments. Card payments can be taken for journeys in licensed vehicles, but all customers must be made aware of charges prior to commencing a journey.	
13.	Out of area (district) charging	(KB) clarified that if the journey is to a destination outside the district, then the driver can negotiate a different fare with the customer, but this must be done prior to the customer entering the taxi. If no such negotiation is entered into then the driver is required to set the meter and charge as normal.	
14.	Any other business	(SS) queried the amount of liaison work carried out by (PQ) rather than enforcement work. (KB) confirmed that going forward more of the mobile	

		<p>surgeries will be located within the South Gloucestershire district. (SS) also queried the quality of the vehicle plates being produced by the Technical Support team. (KM) and (PG) acknowledged and said that they would monitor going forward. (SS) also queried if there was an option to charge for failed Licensing appointments. (KB) confirmed that this was not possible and (PG) confirmed that going forward following training with new staff they will be looking at how they can reduce the amount of failed appointments via triaging the inbox and documents sent in.</p> <p>A driver raised a query regarding putting Euro 6 specifications onto a Euro 5 vehicle.</p> <p>(MW) requested that everyone is notified of cancelled TLG as soon as possible to avoid having to turn jobs down.</p> <p>Juan Sanzo (JS) raised concerns over WAVs and the current options available to hackney carriage drivers to get ready for the change on 01.04.2023. (KB) confirmed that this would be discussed at the Regulatory Committee in July/September. (KM) confirmed that she would also start to find more information regarding electric vehicles.</p> <p>Driver also asked how other drivers can be informed and notified of TLG meetings. (PH) confirmed how the process works and how to add items of concern to the agenda.</p>	<p>(KB) to check with legal, but conversion kits (exhaust and emission control) are available on the market to meet Euro 6 compliance.</p>
15.	Next meeting	Wednesday 22 nd June 2022, 10.15hrs - Yate Outdoor Sports Complex (YOSC), Broad Lane, Yate, South Gloucestershire, BS37 7LB	(KB) to book.