

# **HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE FORUM Meeting**

**Venue: Virtual via Zoom**

**Agenda: 30 July 2020**

## **Attendees and who they represent**

Cllr Ruth Pickersgill (RP) representing Bristol City Council  
Jonathan Martin (JM) representing Bristol City Council  
Abigail Holman (AH) representing Bristol City Council  
Saif Hussain (SH) representing BBTLA Chair  
Steve Lohia (SL) representing Prestige Cars  
Stephen Pick (SP) representing Bristol City Council – Public Transport Team  
Hannah Nuttall (HN) representing WECIL  
Tazim Lahdu (TL) representing UNITE  
Amelia Orchard Smith (AOS) representing Bristol Suicide Prevention  
Alan Dyte (AD) representing BPAC  
Preash Patel (PP) representing Unknown  
Gary O'Neill (GN) representing V Cars

## **1. Welcome, Introductions, Apologies**

- Apologies – Patrick Quinton

## **2. Agree minutes from last meeting and Fares update**

Minutes from last meeting to be distributed with these.

Fares increase

- Draft is with the BBLTA for revision
- Council need proposal as soon as possible even if this is a 0% proposal
- SH to provide this as soon as possible (ACTION)

## **3. Results of survey of disabled people and taxis from Hannah Nuttall from WECIL**

HN delivered presentation – document to be provided with minutes

- Highlights included:

- Small group, pre-Covid-19
- 70% said they used taxis
- Some of the comments on improvement could be easily resolved, lots of really positive comments as well as ones to learn from.
- The trade reps agreed that sometimes drivers didn't act appropriately and this was not acceptable. They supported the comments and wanted issues to be taken seriously. It was acknowledged that sometimes information doesn't pass down to drivers, or it is not understood by them.
- It was noted that disabled people with specific access needs should find the vehicle which is suitable for them and there was no problem if this wasn't the first one on the rank and that HCs requirements in the policy were based on comments from BPAC so most should be suitable but each person would have different needs.
- It was highlighted that there was a national survey also available which was completed by the Guide Dogs for the Blind which may also provide more perspective, this survey found many blind customers were not treated as well by drivers.
- It was confirmed that the presentation would be forwarded to the Licensing Team to be distributed with the newsletter, and an article in the newsletter highlighting the issues. (ACTION)
- JM confirmed that work was taking place to produce an online tutorial regarding access for disabled and visually impaired people to support drivers in feeling more confident in dealing with them.

#### **4. Training available from Unite from Tazim Ladhu**

TL spoke about learning available from Unite, and through a Government funded project.

- There were many courses she felt could help drivers, including health and safety, English, maths, and customer service.
- Working patterns can make it difficult to fit in learning, some of the courses can be done online or over the phone during breaks or between calls.

- Some courses were available to non-members, as well as there being additional advantages available to members such as legal and financial advice.
- Happy to speak to people on a one to one basis to find out what their needs are. Contact details: [tazim.ladhu@unitetheunion.org](mailto:tazim.ladhu@unitetheunion.org) 07508 082716
- RP highlighted that it may be useful for existing drivers who are looking to develop or update their skills, as well as those who might be looking for other employment at the moment.
- It was noted that this could be a useful opportunity for personal development, and reaffirm learning already undertaken. Covid-19 has highlighted gaps in skills, in particular with IT and these courses help people to be inclusive in both work and the community.
- Links for more information were provided and membership forms were available in different languages:
- <https://unitetheunion.org/why-join/member-offers-and-benefits/>
- <https://join.unitetheunion.org/>
- <https://unitetheunion.org/why-join/member-offers-and-benefits/member-get-member/>

## **5. Presentation from Bristol Suicide Prevention – Amelia Orchard Smith**

AOS spoke about volunteering for Bristol Suicide Prevention.

- They work 9pm to 3am all week patrolling hotspots in Bristol
- They try to intervene and signpost to help
- They are looking to introduce a programme of awareness so others can identify the signs of potential people at risk.

Additional points were raised:

- This falls into a similar category to safeguarding and is important to highlight. Consider how we might be able to include in safeguarding training

- Drivers can make a big difference, and should report concerns to the police if there is an imminent emergency or risk. Can contact Suicide Prevention Bristol.

## **6. Update from Steve Pick on progress with ranks**

SP showed details of the ranks and each update. He acknowledged that it had been a difficult time with Covid-19 pandemic and the pressure to create new cycleways and pedestrian facilities.

- Rank near Motion has been implemented
- Queen Charlotte Street and Baldwin Street ranks have been implemented
- St Augustines shelter is now implemented and there have been some amendments to times.
- Some Capital Infrastructure funding is available to deal with some ranks
- Project to look at signage and improve visibility, quality and wayfinding for ranks.
- Some issues are being created by taxis backing up into the bus stop from the Union Street rank, this needs to be discouraged as it creates traffic flow problems, and issues for passengers getting on and off buses.
- Concerns were raised about the location of the BRI rank and the signposting. SP was going to contact the transport officer at the hospital to get some positive action to improve the directional signage from the hospital and make sure it is really accessible to disabled people.
- The traffic restriction on Bristol Bridge was queried and it was confirmed that it was permitted for both Taxis and Private Hire vehicles. It was also highlighted that the temporary road closures would in the long run help both the hospitality trade

and hopefully the taxi trade as a result, increasing the capacity of businesses to encourage customers to use them.

## **7. Policy Updates - Feedback on policy consultation to date and timescales, Feedback from meeting with Mayor and South Glos, Government guidance on National Standards**

It was noted that all of these topics fed into each other. There had been a meeting between the Bristol Mayor and Cabinet Lead and the leader of South Gloucestershire Council to discuss aligning the policies with reference to the national minimum standards and assess how we can work more closely together. It was felt this was a positive meeting with a commitment to work together.

National Standards have also recently been introduced, which create a set of baseline standards across local authorities. It was noted that it does not change the legal position with regard to cross border hiring, or vehicle standards. Work is currently being undertaken to map these standards against current policies, and the policies will definitely be affected, in particular the convictions policy. JM would circulate the link to the standard (ACTION C)

- It was noted that the new standard would affect all drivers, including those already licensed.
- It did not address cross border hiring, however the driver vehicle and operator still needed to be licensed by the same authority, as had always been the case.
- Noted that any person could address meetings or write to South Gloucestershire Council to express their concerns.
- Concerns were raised about the delay on policies being consulted on or implemented. Covid-19 had definitely been a significant factor in this.

## 8. AOB

*None*

## 9. Actions for next meeting:

Action Point	Matters arising	By Whom	Completed?
A	SH to provide revised fares proposal to council asap	SH	Yes Yes – in newsletter
B	Disability survey to be distributed with newsletter	JM	
C	JM to circulate link to national standard	JM	
D	SP to contact the transport officer at the hospital to improve the directional signage	SP	

**Next meeting: 5 November 2020**