

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE FORUM MEETING

Venue: Virtual

Agenda: 4 July 2023

Attendees and who they represent:

Councillor Fi Hance (**FH**) (Chair) representing Bristol City Council
Abigail Holman (**AH**) representing Bristol City Council
Dakota Ferrara (**DF**) representing Bristol City Council
Karen Daniels (**KD**) representing Bristol City Council
Ricardo Sharry (**RS**) representing Bristol City Council
Sarah Jenkinson (**SJ**) representing Bristol City Council
Alice Firebrace (**AF**) representing Bristol City Council
Adam Crowther (**AC**) representing Bristol City Council
PC Quinton (**PQ**) representing Avon and Somerset Police
Saif Hussein (**SH**) representing BBLTA
Steve Lohia (**SL**) representing BDriven
Mike Bullock (**MB**) representing Bristol Executive Cars
Mohamed Aideed (**MA**) representing Bristol Blue Taxis
Shoukat Malik (**SM**) Private Hire Driver
Gary O'neill (**GO**) Private Hire Driver
Mohammad Islam (**MI**) Hackney Carriage Driver
Tim Fowler (**TM**) Private Hire Driver

1. Welcome, Introductions, Apologies

- Apologies
 - Jonathan Martin
 - Mahad Jama
 - Desmond Broster

2. Agree minutes from last meeting

Minutes from 10 May 2023

Actions:

- Notifying operators of revocations (JM) Ongoing
- Timings on signs on Park Street (KD) Ongoing

- Maintenance requests (KD) Ongoing

3. Licensing Team Update (AH)

AH updated the forum on a number of points

- Videos for renewals – We have appointed a new Management Information Officer, who is taking on the videos, we're hoping for them to go live within the next three weeks. They will be how to videos, with subtitles. We are looking to include subtitles in other languages in the future. The website is currently being updated with clearer information on DBS Update Service. It will outline the step by step process with an overview of what will prevent you being licensed
- The vast majority of drivers have completed the Safeguarding Training, we're arranging further dates which will be sent out in a bulletin and uploaded to the website. The training sessions will continue to run, but with fewer sessions.
- Taxi representatives asked how long it takes for a licence to be issued once a completed application is submitted, **MB** raised that the website states it's 30 days, which is too long.
AH clarifies that the 30 days is the maximum turnaround for a contact form, a date had to be specified at the request of the web team, if the enquiry is straightforward it is usually responded to in a much shorter timeframe. The process time for vehicle/driver applications is around three weeks at the moment – our website and renewal letters state that it is a minimum of 10 days.
FH queries how far in advance applications can be submitted, and **AH** confirms that applications can be submitted up to six weeks prior to expiry, **FH** asks if there would be a reasonable expectation that applications submitted that far in advance would have their licence issued prior to expiry. **AH** confirms that as long as all documents are submitted at that time it would be expected that their licence would be issued before the previous licence expired.
SH raised that new vehicle applications were taking three weeks to be issued, could these be fast tracked? - ACTION
Taxi Representatives requested that applicants are notified they have not supplied the correct information straight away, and

whether the online application system could notify applications that they haven't sent the correct documents.

AH advises that the online application system does isn't smart enough to know whether the correct documents have been uploaded. The page at the start of the application states what documents are required.

RS advised that the Council are looking into options for providing support for drivers struggling with the online system, **AH** confirmed this won't be a licensing officer, and further information would be sent out to the trade.

4. Vehicle Tints (AH)

- **AH** confirms that the vehicle tint policy has not yet changed, and any applications for vehicles with tints will be referred to the Public Safety and Protection Committee. Committee has approved a consultation on changing the existing tint policy. We will be going out for consultation within the next few months, and this will include you and members of the public. There will be a link sent out to a survey which you can complete. We will be writing to you to let you know when it goes out for consultation.

PQ advised that his position had remained the same as last time the tint policy went out to consultation – that he did not have issues with factory fitted tints. He also advised the trade that anyone applying for a vehicle with tints could ask for their application to be referred to Committee to be treated as an exemption from Policy.

The trade raised that this process would take a long time, and vehicle's licensed by other Local Authorities were driving around Bristol with diesel vehicles fitted with tints, the trade stated they felt a consultation was unnecessary.

FH advised that the legally a consultation would be required in order for the policy to be changed.

GO raised that South Gloucester Council issues plate exemptions for executive vehicles for the life of the vehicle, and they were not required to reapply on each renewal.

FH advised she would speak to her counterpart in South Gloucester Council about requirements. **ACTION**

5. Fare Review (AH)

- The Hackney Trade have requested a fare review, which has gone to Cabinet today. We have received a Public Forum comment on this, the review will go out for Statutory Consultation. We will update all Hackney Driver's and Proprietors on the outcome of this. It will take at least three weeks to go through the process, but it depends on if there are any comments/objections. Jon and a senior manager will decide if any changes need to be made to the review.

6. Issues from BBLTA and issues from Private Hire

SH raised that the trade has been asking for more ranks for three years, including an after-midnight taxi rank on the bus stop at Hippodrome. It was stated that the Superrank has failed, and wasn't used as it takes too long, and makes the fare too expensive.

AH advised that she thinks it has been looked into before and wasn't an option, but the transport team would be able to look into it further.

PQ stated that this was discussed at length a couple of years ago and was escalated to Council Directors who made it clear they would not allow any sort of rank outside hippodrome. My recommendations haven't changed since this discussion.

MB advised that he felt the issues were caused by drivers not directing passengers, and that the rank outside of the Hippodrome was a death trap. He advised there were issues with Hackney Carriage Drivers U turning in the middle of the road. **SH** commented that he felt that 75% or those doing U turns were Private Hire Drivers and it was unfair to state Hackney Carriage Drivers are dangerous.

7. Transport Updates (KD)

- KD advised that discussion with transport colleagues concluded that, whilst PHV/HCV are not permitted down East Street from 7am – 7pm, as a result of the works in the area they would be given a grace period to enable them to access East Street between these times, and that following completion of the works to Malago Road, there will be no change to the situation prior to 2021. Trade

Representatives raised that this had not been communicated to them.

- Maintenance – **PQ** and **SH** to provide a **KD** with a new list of maintenance issues.

8. Castle Park Development and Delivery Plan (SJ)

SJ runs through a presentation on City Centre Development Plan, key points of the plans include

-Revitalise Broadmead as a thriving retail hub and cultural neighbourhood. Give people a reason to visit, work and live there. Within Broadmead the focus is on the streets and public realm, ground floor uses, and specific community needs.

-Rejuvenate Bristol’s historic Castle Park as a safer, more accessible, inclusive space for all. It will be more connected with the city and the river, and more welcoming for wildlife and biodiversity. Castle Park is a key area within the ownership and control of Bristol City Council where we can directly lead transformative change.

There were a number of questions from trade representatives, and concerns were raised around pedestrianisation, and access to certain areas. It was confirmed that these changes would impact Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles. There was some further discussion around the Council’s House Building Strategy for the City Centre. The consultation runs until 1st October.

9. AOB and Date of next meeting

TF asked for information on the time scales for PHO renewals, **AH** advised that there was a backlog, but it was being worked through.

Action Point	Matters arising	By Whom	Completed?
1	Notifying operators of revocations	JM	Ongoing
2	Timings on Park Street Rank	KD	Ongoing
3	Maintenance Requests	KD	Ongoing
4	Can vehicle grant applications be fast tracked?	AH	

5	Speak to South Gloucester Council about requirements for plate exemption applications for executive vehicles.	FH	
6	Look into options for more ranks	KD	
7	Send information to Licensing about East Street	KD	
8	Send information to Police about East Street	KD	
9	Send maintenance list to transport team	PQ and SH	

Next meeting: 13th September 2023 11:00-13:00