

# HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE FORUM MEETING

**Venue: City Hall**

**Agenda: 10 January 2024**

## **Attendees and who they represent:**

Councillor Fi Hance (**FH**) (Chair) representing Bristol City Council  
Jonathan Martin (**JM**) representing Bristol City Council  
Dakota Delahunty (**DD**) representing Bristol City Council  
Mahad Jama (**MJ**) representing Magan's Taxis  
Gary O'Neill (**GO**) Private Hire Driver  
Mohammad Aideed (**MA**) representing Bristol Blue Taxis  
Christie Twelvetree (**CT**) representing Veezu  
Brian Purnell (**BP**) Hackney Carriage Driver  
Ismail Arab (**IA**) Private Hire Driver

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

- Apologies

Karen Daniels (**KD**) representing Bristol City Council  
Stephen Pick (**SP**) representing Bristol City Council  
Desmond Broster (**DB**) representing Veezu  
Steve Lohia (**SL**) representing BDriven

## **2. Agree minutes from last meeting**

Minutes from November 2023

Actions:

DD to add information to newsletter regarding submitting documents in advance of renew to allow drivers to submit applicant for more than one year

JM advised legal advice had been sought in relation to notifying operators of revocations. Trade representatives raised that other Local Authorities provide this information. JM to contact other Local Authorities.

MA queried how cross boarder hiring works.

## **3. Licensing Team Update (JM)**

JM provided an update:

- The tints policy went out to consultation last year. It was planned that the report would go to the Public Safety and Protection (PSP) Committee in January, it's likely this will be pushed back to February now. The report will recommend that the tints requirement of the policy is removed.

MA queried whether vehicles would still fail the vehicle inspection check.

JM advised that until the policy is changed vehicles with tints that don't meet the current policy will fail, these won't be referred to PSP and instead will be determined at officer level.

BP stated that he didn't understand why the trade want tinted vehicles and raised safety concerns.

JM advised that this had been subject to a statutory consultation after the trade had raised that there had been issues sourcing vehicles without tints.

IA asked to be notified when the change to the policy takes effect.

JM advised that information would be sent out to the trade when this happens, but proprietors with tinted vehicles are still able to submit an application.

- JM apologised for the current service levels.

The Licensing Team are struggling to recruit people into post. The number of applications for a Licensing Officer role has decreased significantly. Before covid there would be 90-100 applications per vacancy, this has fallen to 10 applications.

There had recently been a restructure within the team, and a new level 2 role has been introduced. The Level 1 role pays up to £27,000 and the Level 2 up to £31,000.

IA asked what had happened with the previous permanent members of staff.

JM advised that four permanent staff members had left; two went to USW and two to other government agencies.

The permanent staff have been replaced with temporary staff from agencies. This is a temporary fix due to the restructure. A large

amount of resource has gone to training and checking their work, and they only have to give us a weeks' notice when leaving. There was also an issue just before Christmas where the online application system went down as a result an issue with the software provider. It took them longer than it should have to resolve the issue.

A large number of applications are being submitted which are incomplete. The system will state which documents have been submitted. There have also been issues where the correct documents have been submitted but they're unreadable.

The trade raised that the system worked well when the Licensing Team were based in Princess House.

JM advised that the process has changed significantly, DVLA, DBS RTL and Tax Conditionality checks have all been introduced. government are just asking us to do more and more checks.

MA raised that medicals can't be submitted on one contact form. DD clarified that they can but need to be submitted via the "Additional documents" option.

IA raised that some vehicle proprietors are being asked for proof of their subscription to the Update Service.

JM advised that vehicle proprietors with a badge need to be on the DBS Update Service, if they don't have a badge, they need a DBS certificate. This has been in place a few years; Operators also have to do DBS checks as they're privy to really sensitive information.

IA queried that not all drivers are being asked for proof of their subscription to the Update Service

DD advised that officers only ask for this if the driver has not responded to email from CBS, the third party company who administers our DBS checks which would mean the officer would not be able to verify whether the driver is on the Update Service. Videos the videos outlining the process are now available on the website.

#### **4. Issues from BBLTA and issues from Private Hire**

MJ never known things to be this bad. Sending you multiple emails a day regarding licences not being issued.

JM There's a significant number where documents are missing.

JM In terms of recruitment we're at a low point, can't see it getting any worse. We're currently recruiting, and anticipate we'll have people in post at the end of February. They will then need to be trained.

The trade asked if wages could be increased. JM advised this is not an option as the Licensing Authority is self-funding

IA asked if a driver could renew their licence that had lapsed DD advised they would need to submit a grant application, we would then advise what checks would be required.

JM advised that HCD have to predominately work within the area they're licensed by, and that there are no requirements for PHD.

The trade asked whether this would change in the future.

JM advised that there was no mention within national standards.

## 5. AOB and Date of next meeting

Action Point	Matters arising	By Whom	Completed?
1	Add information to Newsletter about submitting documents in advance of renewal	DD	Ongoing
2	Speak to JM about Adblue diesel vehicles	FH	Completed
3	Legal advice regarding notifying operators of revocations – speak to other Local Authorities regarding providing information on revocations	JM	Ongoing
4	Timings on Park Street Rank	KD	Completed
5	Maintenance requests	KD	Completed
6	Look at options for more ranks	KD	Ongoing

6	Send contact details to DD to circulate to the trade for local plan	SP	Ongoing

**Next meeting: Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024 11:00-13:00 - Virtual**