

TAXI FORUM

Notes of Meeting held on 12th December 2018

Present (Taxi Trade): David Williams, Makhmood Hussain, Paul Bates, Colin Jones, Harry Jones

(SBC Officers): Julie Wallace, Katie McKinney, Emma Brigham, Leo Parkes

		ACTION
	<p><u>PART A</u></p> <p>1) Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Introductions were made.</p> <p>A short discussion was had regarding Emma’s maternity cover, and that Licensing were gaining a new starter on Monday. Advised the card printer was offline and so the Team are experiencing a delay on producing the driver badges. Hoping to be fixed ASAP.</p> <p>2) Summary of 2018</p> <p>Forum from February 2018 was reviewed regarding the guest speakers from Pubwatch discussing the issues re: Lucky Seven. The Action Point was that the complaint was to be escalated to the local MP and to Stoke Council. JDW is speaking with Rachel from Stoke who has set up a working group for members of their panel to educate them on these issues and their responsibilities. JDW advised drivers need to be there to help the situation in Stone when Lucky Seven vehicles have been moved on.</p> <p>PB commented that the size of the rank at Stone wasn’t big enough for Stafford drivers. HJ also advised that it would be helpful to know when the Licensing Team are out in Stone so they can be prepared to get cars up to help the public get taxis easier – JDW commented that certain operations cannot be shared as to when they’re happening however it is encouraged that they are present in Stone regularly. PB stated that there should be consequences for the Operator however this is down to Stoke on Trent Council to enforce and at the moment they aren’t revoking licences even though we’ve had prosecutions.</p> <p>PB asked what progress is being made on the taxi rank moving – JDW advised Stone rank can’t be moved at present, but will look into rank being 24/7.</p> <p>The Equality Act 2010 and WAVs were discussed. The list is currently on the website as per Section 165 of the Act.</p>	(HC drivers)

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	<p>The Forum from May was reviewed regarding the stickers on the WAVs. JDW is currently looking at this and a decision will be made in the future.</p> <p>PB also requested details of who organises the medical forms – JDW advised the questions are set by Occupational Health and the checks are becoming more stringent.</p> <p>DBS renewals were discussed with regard to the Update Service. PB commented that the drivers were paying twice. JDW advised that a certificate is required and the sign up is a separate fee to the DBS directly, but it is imperative that drivers adhere to the Policy.</p> <p>The point regarding the toilet on the service road for the drivers proposed by CJ was raised; however no action has been taken on this.</p> <p>CJ would like a list of suspended names for drivers – The Action Point was for JDW to check GDPR Rules. This has been done and the trade cannot have this list.</p> <p>The issue over people advertising lifts home on forums such as Spotted Stafford was raised, however no actions have been taken due to no evidence.</p> <p>The Forum from September was reviewed. The lack of taxi marshals was discussed. The new marshals should have started in November; however the contract company Enigma were having trouble recruiting for the hours needed. A short discussion was had regarding the budgets and the cost of the marshals.</p> <p>The Police have also stated they potentially could be present when shifts are in place.</p> <p>Issues were raised over the tender re medicals – JDW to check with HR. PB and HJ believe that the taxi drivers should be a separate entity and shouldn't be classed as part of the 'Council' service.</p> <p>3) Reminders re DBS and Medicals due</p> <p>JDW advised that the Licensing Team are still finding drivers are ignoring the reminders. HJ suggested immediate revocations for the drivers who don't comply.</p> <p>A point was raised by DW that the MOT renewal letters still have the old MOT providers on – EBR to check with SC in office about adding the new providers on.</p>	<p>JDW</p> <p>EBR</p>

		ACTION
	<p>4) Reminder re changing address – 7 day notification</p> <p>This was communicated to the forum. The Team are currently issuing warnings to drivers who don't inform us of a change in details.</p> <p>5) Criminal Activity - taxis out of the Borough</p> <p>KM gave an overview of an issue that has been raised by the CCTV department regarding taxis who are licensed elsewhere (Wolverhampton, Telford, etc) coming into Stafford and being involved in criminal activity, either directly or indirectly. Advised drivers just to be aware of this and report anything suspicious to us.</p> <p>CJ and HJ stated that out of town taxis are coming into the Borough quite regularly. JDW advised that she will discuss with Sgt Burney about keeping a look out.</p> <p>6) Signage</p> <p>JDW advised the group that the new taxi signage in the new taxi boards on the ranks are up and in place. 'Taxi Information' sign will be in place soon for the boards on the service road and South Walls. CJ mentioned the point regarding other vehicles blocking the rank. JDW advised that she has spoken to the County Council and cameras are in place.</p> <p>DW advised there's no signage for Clark Street as a rank has appeared there. JDW is hoping to relinquish the ranks at Salter Street and Clark Street to put South Walls in place. The new development has signage to point towards South Walls for the taxi rank. JDW advised that once negotiations have gone through we will have the rank where the drivers want it to be.</p> <p>7) Duplicate Books</p> <p>Taxi Inspection Report books are now in place. These will be used by Licensing when inspecting a taxi and faults have been noted. The driver will get the top copy (which is pink for easy identification) and Licensing will scan the bottom copy to the vehicle record. PB suggested that the onus should be on the operator to inspect all vehicles before they go out to work. JDW is meeting with the operators to encourage more responsibility. PB also commented on the idea of mystery shoppers, JDW to take this under advisement for the future.</p> <p>A comment was made by DW and HJ regarding some drivers taking longer routes than necessary. The forum confirmed it was sometimes hard for passengers to come forward to make statements. This is encouraged by Licensing in order to take action.</p>	<p>JDW</p>

		ACTION
	<p>8) PHTM stickers</p> <p>These have been received and were handed out to the group.</p> <p>9) CCTV in vehicles</p> <p>Guidance was handed out to the group from PHTM magazine regarding the regulations on the installation of CCTV in licensed vehicles.</p> <p>Dash cams aren't suitable – JDW advised the Policy will soon reflect this more clearly. CCTV systems will be allowed if inspected and meet the guidance. HJ asked why dash cams weren't suitable and it was made clear that for insurance purposes they can be allowed but not for any incidents regarding customers or for <i>internal use</i>.</p> <p>JDW made a point regarding a possible extension on the life of a WAV- JDW to look at this and update Policy where possible; however this will likely need to go back out to consultation with the trade. HJ suggested that Licensing allow WAVs that are older – JDW to consider HJ suggestion. PB raised a point if this applied to electric vehicles.</p> <p>10) Taxi Marshals</p> <p>(Already been mentioned in the Summary section)</p> <p>11) Future Forum dates confirmed.</p> <p><u>PART B Open Forum</u></p> <p>JDW giving out cards for complaints – these are to be handed out to customers.</p> <p>DW commented that those who have been CSE trained through the County Council get a badge – advised we don't issue these at SBC.</p> <p>JDW advised that there has been an issue about the permits for the train station brought to the team by Shabir Khan. Permits are dealt with by Virgin Rail, so JDW to speak to contact at Virgin Rail to cross reference the list of current permits to ensure there aren't any revoked drivers currently on the list.</p> <p>JDW has spoken to the County Council about the double yellow lines at the train station and the issue of the taxis having to temporarily park there whilst waiting for the rank to clear and then getting approached by parking enforcement. Requested that the officers 'go easy' on the taxis on the run up to Christmas.</p>	<p>JDW</p> <p>JDW</p>

		ACTION
	<p>There have been a number of incidents recently centred on the refusal of guide dogs. The Guide Dog Association have also been in contact and have gotten involved. Drivers were reminded of the rules on this and enforcement is being carried out through suspensions and warnings to those drivers who breach conditions.</p> <p>Refusal of wheelchair-bound customers was also discussed. DW stated that medical exemptions should be revoked on these cases, however JDW advised there is a medical basis for issuing these exemptions (for example through musculoskeletal problems or mobility issues with the drivers themselves). Official exemption certificates to be produced.</p> <p>An issue was brought up by DW and HJ regarding 6 seaters plus luggage- Team to check application forms and whether it needs to be made clearer that larger cars are licensed for <i>less passengers</i> in order for luggage to be accommodated.</p> <p>A possible provider for a wheelchair (to be used by enforcement during inspections) to be looked at in Stoke – KM to look up and contact.</p> <p>A vehicle was mentioned for driving with no lights – information provided and KM to contact for an inspection.</p> <p>Information to be put out (via press release or a tweet, etc.) regarding taxi safety during the Christmas period – KM to ask press officer.</p>	<p>JDW & Team</p> <p>Team</p> <p>KM</p> <p>KM</p> <p>KM</p>
	Date and Time of Next Meeting	
	27th February 2019, 12pm– Craddock Room, SBC	
	HC drivers to have more of a presence in Stone going forward	(ongoing)
	Check medical tender with HR re taxi drivers – completed	JDW
	Check MOT renewals and add on new providers – completed	EBR
	Mystery shoppers to be used in future operations	JDW
	Extending life of wheelchair accessible vehicles – update Policy, etc.	JDW
	JDW to speak to contact at Virgin rail re permitted vehicles list	JDW
	Official exemption certificates to be produced	Team
	Team to check application forms re number of licensed passengers + luggage	Team
	Wheelchair provider in Stoke to be researched and contacted – completed 17/12/18.	KM
	Vehicle with no lights – contact for inspection – completed	KM
	Information re taxi safety to be put out. – completed 18/12/18	KM