

## **Minutes from the Taxi Forum Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018**

### **Attendees**

Cllr Walker  
Cllr Lohan  
Cllr Norman  
Cllr Brown  
Jacqueline Collins Director of Governance  
Julia Beresford Environmental Health Manager  
Susie Rhodes-Best Licensing Team Leader  
Mark Webster Licensing Officer

Drivers and representatives

### **Apologies**

Jim Day  
Jamie Germaine

### **Taxi Ranks**

Discussion took place with Taxi Reps requesting an update on progress for increasing the number of ranks and spaces.  
MDC are looking at a number of different options but unfortunately due to the nature of this work progress is slow.  
Mark Webster is due to meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> March with BID officers regarding paying for signage from the train station. Meeting rearranged because of bad weather.

### **Replacement Vehicles**

A discussion took place about the current policy. We have to adhere to the current policy but will look at it as technologies develop and we will look at electric and hybrid vehicles for the future.  
The ages of replacement vehicles were discussed. Any changes will be fully consulted on.

### **Out of Town vehicles**

A question was raised whether enforcement officers dealt with “out of town vehicles” and Mark Webster stated that within the last week alone we had liaised with Ashfield, Bolsover Wolverhampton and Gedling Council for enforcement action to be taken against their drivers.

### **Overcharging**

The drivers asked when we were going to deal with drivers that were over charging customers.

Mark said that we need evidence, when we have it we do take positive action and Mark was currently dealing with a case of overcharging.

Chris Riley asked if a notice could be displayed to advise customers about this issue. MDC will look at it.

### **Tariff Increase**

Drivers asked if they could have a tariff increase. Susie Rhodes-Best said this was not unreasonable; there had not been an increase since 2011. MDC will look at the process.

### **Black and White Hackney Vehicles**

MDC said that no decision had been made. We had to ensure that we were fully compliant with the equality act 2010 legislation.

A driver stated that the vehicles were worth between £15,000- £25,000 dependent on the condition of the vehicles.

### **Medicals**

The reason that we use the same medical provider is to ensure consistency in testing. Cllr Lohan said he would like to get medicals conducted in the town. We advised that the BMA had advised GPs in some areas not to conduct test due to litigation.

MDC will look at other providers.

### **Appeals**

A discussion took place regarding the appeal procedure for regulatory points. Cllr Walker explained the current process and it will remain as it, it will be looked at when the policy is reviewed.

### **Leeming Street Parking**

A lengthy discussion took place about the problems with illegal parking. MDC explained the responsibilities around parking enforcement. NSL have primacy in respect of enforcement. Police have limited powers since enforcement powers were devolved several years ago.

A driver stated that MDC do not enforce against private hire vehicles. Mark stated that we do regular enforcement, we do not discriminate against hackneys or PHV and will take action against anyone committing offences.

Driver asked whether they could have a newsletter. MDC to look at this.

Mark spoke to NSL and they will not enforce retrospectively. They have agreed to work on Friday and Saturday evening for a short period.

Susie said she would send a letter to Pubs to ask door staff not to park on Leeming Street.

### **MDC Finance**

Drivers raised the issue of the cost of fees and Jacquie Collins stated that MDC have moved from a subsidised to a self- financing fee structure.

Taxi reps presented a document that they had requested via FOI act, showing the number of private hire vehicles licensed with Wolverhampton and the potential loss of revenue to MDC.

Because of deregulation we cannot stop people licensing elsewhere, officers agreed they would look at the document to see if there was any action that they could take.

Drivers requested that MDC fund taxi marshals. All agreed that taxi marshals were a good idea, but MDC stated there was a cost to providing them. Mark will raise the issue at the BID meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> March.

### **Future Trade Meetings**

Cllr Walker stated that future trade meeting will be for taxi reps and invited guests only.

Drivers ask if they could attend policy meeting. Cllr Walker stated that the Council makes the policies but any proposals will go out to consultation.

### **Taxi revocations**

Mark gave an update regarding a driver that had had his licence revoked by MDC and had appealed to the Magistrates' Court who upheld the Council decision.

Future Forum Meetings

A date to be set in 3 months and reiterated that it would be reps and invited guests only.

**AOB**

Discussion around where we could have extra ranks and spaces. Suggestion was Church Street outside the old Post office. Cllr Lohan had asked for a review of the Bus station rank every 6 months and he would like to have the Queen Street rank extended.

Drivers asked for a pick up and drop sign point sign to be placed at the bus station. MDC to look at this.

Drivers asked for a notice board in the bus station with articles for drivers to read. MDC to speak to town centre team.