

Notes of the Trade Liaison Meeting
30th May 2018,10.00am
Large Conference Room, Manor House

Mumtaz Mohammed (MM) - BCC, Chair
Sajid Hussain (SH) – Solihull RMT
Mozafar Ali (MA) – RMT Birmingham
Clive Thompson (CT) – BCC, TMS
Emma Rohomon (ER) – BCC, Acting Head of Licensing
Chris Arundel (CA) – BCC, Licensing
Shawn Woodcock (SW) – BCC, Licensing
Jo Spencer (JS) – West Midlands Police
Karen Jones (KJ) – West Midlands Police
Dave Humpherson (DH) – West Midlands Police
Amjid Afzal (AA) – A K Executive Cars
Stephen Hull (SH) – Private Hire Drivers Forum
Mohammed Rashid (MR) – BASTA and Elite
Shakil Bashir (SB) – BASTA and Elite
Mazaffar Khan (MK) – BASTA and Elite
Rory McLaren (RN) – Elite Radio Cars
Kieran Harte (KH) - Uber
Rebecca Wilson (RW) - Notes

Apologies:

Martin Walker (MW)
David Wilson (DW)
Imran Akram (IA) – TOA
Mohammed Farooq

2. Prevent Awareness (Karen Jones and Jo Spencer)

- 2.1 PC James Somers was due to present this item, but was unable to attend the meeting. Therefore, 10 minute presentation given by Karen Jones and Jo Spencer.
- 2.2 The aim of the project is to raise awareness around terrorism. Reps were asked to encourage drivers to report anything they feel is suspicious in any way ie backseat conversations etc. They can report via internet, phone or email (details to be added) or by via Police (101). They can also report (anonymously) via the Anti-Terrorism Hotline (0800 789 321) or pass any concerns through to Emma Rohomon or Licensing@birmingham.gov.uk (0121 303 9611). Anything urgent should be reported in the normal way (via 999).

2.3 Following a query from MM, it was confirmed that there is training available from WMP should it be required.

3. **Notes and Matters Arising from Meeting held on 28th March 2018**

3.1 The Minutes were agreed as true and accurate reflection.

Actions

3.2 Action Tracker updated.

3.3 MM asked if there was any more news on LPG retrofits? ER replied no, but there was no real prospect of anything other than LPG conversions. More information will be added to the newsletter.

3.4 In relation to point 14 (29.11.17), SH stated the trade were keen to establish what the protocol is for PH using bus lanes. In London, PH can pick up and drop off passengers in bus lanes as long as they do so promptly. ER will chase this up with David Harris in Transportation. **ACTION: ER**

4. **Transportation**

Snow Hill Public Realm Scheme

4.1 This item was to be presented by Sajeda Mahmud who was unable to attend the meeting. Therefore item to be deferred until the next meeting. Any additional information to be circulated in advance of next meeting.

4.2 Redevelopment of NatWest Tower, Colmore Row: CT reported works will incorporate the narrowing of the carriageway down to a single lane; hence the parking facility on the right hand side would be removed. There would need to be a provision of service laybys. It is therefore proposed that the taxi rank in Edmund Street be used as a loading bay during day and as a taxi rank in evenings. Reps confirmed they were happy with this.

4.3 CT advised that Centro are looking to change the bus route around Moor Street Station. This would incorporate the siting of a new bus stop outside the Station, resulting in a reduction of taxi ranks from 7 to 2- 3. He asked Reps for their feedback on this proposal.

4.4 Reps objected to the proposal on the basis of the impact on the loss of the ranks. They felt there are not enough ranks in the City Centre as it is. It was also highlighted that people can catch buses opposite the station (rear of Marks

and Spencer). Hence the necessity of having an additional stop outside the station should be questioned.

- 4.5 CT will feedback the Reps' concerns to Centro and invite them to the next meeting. He will also circulate drawings / plans in advance of the next meeting.

ACTION: CT

- 4.6 AA queried is the junction of Fazeley Street / New Canal Street to be pedestrianised? CT believed this could be something to do with HS2, but he has no information. He added there would be a diversion in place if this goes ahead. SW asked can the traffic lights be removed at Curzon Street / New Canal Street (by the Woodman Pub) as they serve no purpose. CT will look into this.

ACTION: CT

- 4.7 It was also raised that the traffic lights at Holloway Circus need to be reviewed as the congestion was getting worse.

5. **Specific Issues**

Service Issues

Nothing to report.

Recent Press Articles (The Times)

- 5.1 ER reported on an article in The Times, which implied that some of the drivers licensed by BCC are not good. She wanted to give assurance that we did not name the driver mentioned in article. AA had also forwarded an even worse article about Wolverhampton licensing procedures which appeared in the Express and Star.
- 5.2 ER added that LPPC do have policies on who they will license. The Institute of Licensing (IOL) have issued guidance on determining suitability of taxi licence holders. This will be presented at LPC to see if they would like to adopt the guidelines to make the policy more stringent.
- 5.3 SH stated that BCC should aspire to be the leading authority in the area. Drivers feel they are completely outnumbered by out of town vehicles, and the Reps feedback issues experienced. He would like to see drivers encouraged to be licensed in Birmingham, in order that we can better police this.

- 5.4 CA explained we have a difficult situation. Wolverhampton issue licences against very low standards. Therefore we cannot compete unless we too use lower standards. Whenever we suggest changes that would “lower” standards to LPPC, it is hard to get them to agree.
- 5.5 KH asked are the Public Policy, Sub-Committee papers and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests available online? ER replied that the Public Policy report is going to June LPPC, and that Sub-Committee reports and FOIs are available on the BCC website. KH then asked is information on the individual cases mentioned in the article available? ER replied this wasn’t in the public domain as there was personal information contained within.
- 5.6 RM asked how long is the wait to get a licence? CA replied the waiting list for knowledge test is 5 months. However, if LPPC agrees the report (being presented in June) he anticipates the backlog could be cleared within 5-6 weeks.
- 5.7 Following a comment from AA, SW confirmed he had spoken to Wolverhampton to show dissatisfaction with their standards. Their reply was that they are removing obstacles.
- 5.8 MR commented he felt there was no need for a driving test. ER pointed out that actually a lot of people fail this.
- 5.9 MM asked did we respond to The Times article, and was there any feedback from the public? ER replied Chris Neville had produced a response; this should be on our website. She confirmed we have had no feedback from the public.

Consultations

- 5.8 There are currently 4 trade related consultations on Be Heard <https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/> :

- Card Payment Facilities in Hackney Carriage Vehicles
- Hackney Carriage Vehicle Conditions Consultation
- Penalty Point Scheme Consultation
- PHV Engine Sizes

The deadline to respond is 24th June deadline. ER asked that Reps encourage as many people as possible to respond. If they have any objections, they should make it clear in their response.

6. Enforcement Statistics

6.1 Statistics for February 2018 were circulated previously.

7. Any Other Business

- 7.1 MR asked if there was an update on Dual Licences. ER replied that a report is going to June LPPC.
- 7.2 MR made reference to an email from SW regarding roof signs on taxis. He said that drivers had been misinformed and were not aware the signs were prohibited by Licensing. SW confirmed he was attending a meeting with the owners of the sign company, and they would be instructed to remove the signs from the vehicles. SW added that it the Licensing Conditions clearly states that no signs of this type would be permitted on vehicles.
- 7.3 MA confirmed that the signs have now been switched off on vehicles that have them.
- 7.4 ER apologised for the delay in the Newsletter and said it will be sent out as soon as it can be.
- 7.5 SH asked had there been any movement on the CAZ Policy? ER replied no, not that we are aware of. SH stated if there is any change to the Policy, then the Licensing Policy that sits alongside it should also be revised. To not do so would be punitive to drivers.
- 7.6 MM asked would it be possible to ask Sylvia Broadley to give an update at the next meeting? ER will speak to Sylvia. **ACTION: ER**
- 7.7 Penalty points – SH asked would be using the Nottingham system? SW replied it was similar, but not the same. SW also confirmed that was this would be applicable to Birmingham licensed vehicles only.
- 7.8 DH highlighted that the Police are taking a zero tolerance on stopping on crossings and yellow lines. He added that there are enforcement cameras operational 24/7 in Stephenson Street (outside station).
- 7.9 Following a query from SH, DH confirmed the unloading / pick up time allowed for PH & HC is 3 minutes.
- 7.10 Following a query from RM, SW to confirm when Euro 6 vehicles are due to be taken off the roads. **ACTION: SW**

- 7.11 SW reported that the LEVC showroom at Volvo, Tyburn Road is due to open in the next week. It was confirmed that there is a 14 week wait for the new electric taxi.
- 7.12 MA asked whether there was any update on the age limit policy. ER replied that the current age policy is as it stands at moment. LPPC will decide whether to change the condition of age limit.
- 7.13 ER to send out briefing note on retro fit devices (previously submitted by CN).

8. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**
25th July 2018, 10am - LCR Manor House