

Dear Trade Representative,

As you will have seen from the previous trade update email – we have been currently reviewing the way in which we communicate with the Hackney carriage and Private hire Trade.

This is for a number of reasons, but fundamentally –

- We want to be able to share information directly with the trade as quickly as possible.
- We want to be able to ensure messages are delivered in a transparent and open manner to avoid any misinterpretation or miscommunication.
- We need to be as efficient with our time as possible, and long meetings with multiple officers having the same points meeting after meeting is not an efficient use of our time. (Or yours)
- Over the years we have tried to facilitate the attendance of other parties at the meetings where they had some kind of impact on the trade. This has ultimately led to a blurring of the lines between the roles of the different departments/agencies which leads to confusion and duplication of activity. (This is particularly true of the Clean Air Zone.)
- Persistent arguments over who should be allowed to attend /who they represent / what are their credentials etc etc
- There appears to be a misconception amongst some representatives that the licensing service is something other than the regulator of this industry. Our fundamental duty is to the safety of the public. We **will** continue to champion the causes of licensed drivers operators and vehicle proprietors where we reasonably can, but we are not the employer, nor the union representative of the licensed trade.
- At times, the behaviour of some attendees at the meetings has fallen well below what is acceptable.

I recently met with the Chair of Licensing and Public Protection, Cllr Phil Davis as well as Cllr Waseem Zaffar and the Leader of the Council Cllr Ian Ward where it was agreed we would adopt a new approach to communicating with the trade. This was agreed by all present.

**This will mean:** The current form of Trade Liaison Meeting will cease.

**This will NOT mean:** we will not engage with the trade – we will just be doing it differently.

We will continue to circulate information to you (if you indicate you still wish to receive it directly) to disseminate as you see fit.

We will also publish all of the information on our website – For now – it will be in the “Information for Drivers and Operators” section – but we hope to introduce a clearer ‘noticeboard’ page which we can post information on regularly. We will also post links to this information on our twitter account @BCCLicensing

We will continue to consult with the wider trade on important issues, but you will of course be welcome to contribute as well.

I imagine some of you will be aggrieved by this decision, and for that I am sorry but I will be in touch soon with more details of how the new arrangements will work.

There are some excellent ambassadors for your trade amongst you and I hope you continue to be.

Kind regards

Emma Rohomon