

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL – TAXI LICENSING

MINUTES OF MEETING WITH YORK HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE ASSOCIATIONS

WEDNESDAY – 4 OCTOBER 2017

Present: Lesley Cooke – Licensing Manager CYC (LC)
Angela Ruane – Taxi Licensing Officer CYC (AR)
Matt Boxall – Acting Head of Public Protection CYC (MB)
Helen Sefton – Licensing Enforcement Officer CYC (HS)
Tim Brown – York Private Hire Association (TB)
Jim Kerr – Independent Taxi Association (JK)
Keith Hatfield – Station Taxis/York Taxi Association (KH)
Colin Metcalfe – York Hackney Carriage Association (CM)
Yousaf Din – York Hackney Carriage Association (YD)
Anthony Green – York Hackney Carriage Association (AG)
Bill Brolly – Secretary, Independent Taxi Association (BB)
Allan Davies – Chair, Independent Taxi Association (AD)

1) Minutes of last meeting

LC circulated minutes from the last meeting held on 12 July 2017. CM asked could they be sent out before the meeting to save time.

2) Future meetings

LC At the last meeting we discussed holding joint meetings. As we do not have time or resources to dedicate to holding two separate meetings the following is proposed: the first hour of the meeting dedicated to private hire issues, the second hour to joint issues and the third hour dedicated to hackney carriage issues.

AG pointed out the agenda needs to be smaller.

3) Racecourse

TB raised issues over moving HC rank. LC confirmed there will be an end of season meeting to sort out any issues.

4) Coaches in York

TB raised issue of coaches driving through city. Advised to refer to parking/highways as not a licensing issue.

5) Licensing Enforcement

TB asked for clarity on reporting complaints/issues and an update on the out of town/West Yorkshire combined enforcement.

HS confirmed all reports to be sent to public.protection@york.gov.uk or 01904 551525.

LC updated that the West Yorkshire and York authorities working protocols are all drawn up and await final approval – all officers will attend a training/briefing session to ensure consistency. They will still refer back to home authorities about out of town vehicles failing to meet conditions but will have more power to suspend for issues such as mechanical defects etc. MB pointed out this will only affect other West Yorkshire vehicles, not ones from for example Wigan or TFL.

SD made a formal request for other Councils to be approached again to send their Officers over to do some enforcement work in York.

6) Appendix price listing

TB asked if charges for licensing services change, are they published. LC confirmed they are all published annually.

7) Euro 5/6 consultation

TB asked when were the trade consulted on the changes to Euro 5/6?

LC confirmed a full consultation exercise was undertaken, every member of the trade was written to and some did address the committee – this was in April 2016.

BB query whether there was a route of appeal.

LC stated that the policy could only be judicially reviewed. The conditions could be appealed within the correct time frame (21 days).

8) Traffic Wardens

TB queried behaviour of traffic wardens. He was referred to Graham Titchener, Head of Parking Services.

9) The future of taxi trade in York

TB asked with new vehicles, new prices and new training, did CYC think they were pricing people out of the trade?

LC advised this was a personal decision for applicants if they wish to pursue this career. It is their choice, all the costs are published to applicants in advance.

BB made the comment it was like any other career path, if you want qualified people you have to pay for it, i.e. HGV drivers pay £1,000s for their licences.

10) Uber operator licence

AD asked were CYC looking to suspend or revoke Uber's operating licence?

AG stated the issue was in the public interest and hoped committee would be open and in the public domain.

LC confirmed that Uber's operating licence expires on 24/12/17. They have been sent a renewal application and it will be determined by committee when/if it is received. In anticipation of receiving an application CYC have set a public hearing date so interested parties can speak. It will be up to the committee chair as to who gets to speak and for how long.

SD asked if any other operator had received hundreds of complaints would they not have had their licence suspended or revoked?

LC stated that the majority of complaints were not about Uber York but about Uber elsewhere. The committee will be made aware of all the complaints we have dealt with in York.

KH stated that changes will only come if the legislation actually changes.

11) Purchase of vehicles

AD stated there were issues with proprietors privately buying vehicles who now have to supply Statutory Declarations as CYC will not accept receipts. He felt this was onerous and degrading.

LC stated this was brought in as CYC were aware of claims from drivers stating they were the rightful owners of vehicles when they were not. The Statutory Declaration clears up the grey area over ownership and it protects the proprietor over false claims.

SD asked if there was any funding to help with buying newer cleaner vehicles?

LC and MB confirmed if any funding becomes available the AQ team will inform members as it is a priority for York.

12) Cost of checks/courses

The costs of the new training course was queried. LC advised the course is administered by a separate company to the council at a competitive cost covering rate. The cost of the room hire was queried as it is within the council offices which are publicly owned. MB confirmed the council tax payer should not be expected to pay for drivers training costs.

13) Driver training

SD confirmed members of the trade are not happy with the new training requirement and would like a review. They feel the cost is high (see point 12) and many have done the NVQ so why do they need to do another course? Members have also objected to the content and tone of the letter sent out.

LC confirmed the training is an update and brings us in line with other Local Authorities who are already doing this level of training and more. The half day course is a

refresher not a full course. It has all been put together by a professional trainer and is intended to improve the standards in our trade.

AG commented that the trainer needed to be suitably qualified and experienced.

JK queried the sign up system on line and why does so much personal information have to be inputted.

TB asked for the qualifications of the trainer and their costs.

LC replied the qualifications of the trainer were not known, however, the costs covered the trainer, rooms, resources, equipment etc and that she had negotiated a considerable discount.

14) Change to policy on where drivers live

AG queried would there be a possibility of bringing in a policy that all applicants have to live in York?

AR confirmed this requirement was removed many years ago and most would not welcome this back.

15) Change to tariff for multi seater vehicles

AG asked that as we need to try and encourage the purchase of multi seater vehicles can we change the tariffs to charge more for these vehicles.

It was pointed out there is already the extra person charge.

LC stated the prices would be reviewed next year and the association will, as usual, be consulted.

16) Parking on taxi ranks

Reports should be made to parking hotline when not a PHV or HCV.

17) Enforcement update

Reminder that it is a condition of licence to display plates on exterior of vehicle, far too many are still being seen in windows.

CM queried the work of the two night time LEO's. MB confirmed their contracts expire at end of October and he is looking to replace them.

AG requested a police presence at the next meeting.

18) Date of next meeting

To be confirmed.