

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL – TAXI LICENSING

**MINUTES OF MEETING WITH YORK HACKNEY CARRIAGE
AND PRIVATE HIRE ASSOCIATIONS**

WEDNESDAY – 5TH APRIL 2017

Present: Lesley Cooke – Licensing Manager CYC (LC)
Angela Ruane – Taxi Licensing Officer CYC (AR)
Matt Boxall – Acting Head of Public Protection CYC (MB)
Rodger Lovelace – York Private Hire Association (RL)
Mohammed Iqbal – York Private Hire Association (MI)
Mark Heaney – York Private Hire Association (MH)
Jim Kerr – Independent Taxi Association (JK)
Glenn Jardine – Independent Taxi Association (GJ)
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)

1) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

LC circulated minutes from the last meeting with the HC Associations. The PH meeting was cancelled by the Association.

2) LETTER SENT TO LOCAL MP'S

LC – Advised by Local Government Association to write to MP's, other MP's are lobbying to put Taxi Licensing back on the Department for Transport agenda and to share with the Licensing Committee. Rachael Maskill is reporting back to Westminster.

3) REPORT TO NEXT COMMITTEE REGARDING EXEMPTION POLICY

MB/LC – The next Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee is on 24.04.17. A report is going to committee in relation to window tints in executive vehicles. Agenda to be published 11.04.17.

4) ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

LC – The new enforcement officer, Helen Sefton, has been undertaking enforcement activities with a member of the Public Protection team, stopping both York and out of town vehicles.

CM asked when we last did enforcement and how much enforcement took place in 2016.

LC – Enforcement was undertaken on 16.02.17 (8 York vehicles and 5 out of town vehicles with defects) and 18/19.03.17 (one of our vehicles suspended as no MOT and

all out of town vehicle told to go back to their local authority area with any issues reported back to their home authority). We do not have the resources to go out every weekend.

YD/MH queried the procedure for vehicle inspections and interim safety inspections and suggested a system to flag up vehicles without MOT's.

LC/MB advised it is the driver's responsibility, we do not have the resources to put a system in place.

JK reported that out of town vehicles are touting in the city centre with the worst areas being outside McDonalds and Harkers. They are also pulling up on ranks when there are no York vehicles on the rank.

AG – ranks need marshals.

CM – need to focus on touting between midnight and 4.00am.

MI – Uber scouting York & Ebor fares, high percentage of fares picked up by out of town vehicles.

MB advised he is looking at how to recruit another enforcement officer.

A general discussion took place.

YD advised the Police do not know the difference between hackney carriage and private hire and between 2.30am and 5.00am they are not seen to be around. York drivers are getting very frustrated with all the out of town vehicles working in York and are wanting to do something themselves.

MB advised there could be potential health and safety issues with the out of town vehicles and to keep reporting any issues with dates, times etc.

5) OUT OF TOWN VEHICLES – LACK OF PROSECUTIONS

MI advised not enough prosecutions.

RL queried enforcement for out of town vehicles.

LC advised one prosecution last week. Intel needed to go to court for prosecutions. The council's legal team approve if viable to go to court.

LC has met with other local authorities, enforcement to be put in place has to be approved by full Council.

MB advised there are rules and a procedure for evidence gathering.

A general discussion took place regarding enforcement issues.

6) OUT OF TOWN VEHICLES USING COPPERGATE

AR advised that the Local Traffic Order allows out of town licensed vehicles to use Coppergate.

LC advised the Highways team are responsible and to communicate with both LC and Highways.

7) PRIVATE HIRE PICK UP POINTS – DAVYGATE/LENDAL

MH advised they are not required.

YD advised always 6/7 vehicle ranked up on them.

LC advised we will look at removing the pick up points. It was an informal agreement for collection from McDonalds for private hire. We will monitor McDonalds and Salt & Pepper pick up areas.

A general discussion took place.

8) PRIVATE HIRE OPERATOR – COMPLIANCE CHECKS

No comments made.

9) SURGE PRICING BY UBER

General discussion took place in relation to surge pricing.

LC to investigate.

AR advised we cannot regulate private hire fares. Uber does have a fare chart and customers have to agree to the estimated fare.

10) RECENT MEETING AT RACECOURSE – PRIVATE HIRE TRADE NOT INVITED

MI said the meeting should have been for everyone.

LC advised that she did not know who had been invited to the meeting. It was organised by the Racecourse.

KH advised the pick up and drop off place for private hire will be in the car park including out of town vehicles.

CM advised Streamline's pick up/drop off point still in St. Chad's church yard.

LC advised no change to the hackney carriage rank and shuttle buses. Knavesmire Road is to be kept as clear as possible.

AG advised Aintree and Cheltenham have implemented same procedure and it works very well.

A general discussion took place.

11) PARKING

CM advised HC drivers cannot service certain ranks due to other vehicles parking on them. After 9.30pm is a problem when enforcement ceases. Fibbers on Toft Green and outside Kuda are affected in particular.

YD advised it is door staff that are parking on the rank and he requested that a letter is sent to the clubs as parking attendants refuse to speak to them.

LC confirmed a letter has already been sent.

12) CORPORATE LOOKING RANKS

CM advised all ranks need to look the same and need cleaning up. He has had a meeting with Neil Ferris who asked them to submit a report to see what needs to be done.

MB advised we are looking at sprucing them up.

LC – currently going through bid for rank marshals.

YD advised that hoarding has gone up on the development at Stonebow and as a result St. Saviourgate rank cannot be seen. He has requested a sign opposite The Terrace with directions to the rank, also the kebab man needs to move another 10 yards so that St. Saviourgate rank can be serviced better.

LC advised the kebab van is restricted to where he can park.

13) CCTV

YD suggested that the tree at St. Saviourgate rank is cut back as the CCTV camera is above the tree and the tree is blocking the camera.

LC advised the tree may be taken down due to the development. At the moment the CCTV camera is deemed to provide appropriate cover where it is positioned.

14) TINTED WINDOWS

CM & YD advised cannot get window tint levels to comply with the vehicle licence condition as vehicles are supplied with the manufacturer's standard factory fitted windows.

LC advised the policy was changed last year. A report is going to committee on 24.04.17 and advised they can register with Democracy Services to speak at the meeting. Formal consultation with the trade incurs additional costs and work.

A general discussion took place.

15) GOING FORWARD

AG asked what we are going to do to support the trade and not sit on the fence.

LC – York does have a good taxi trade offering a good service. As a council we have to remain neutral but we are aware of the situation.

YD – Pleased we have acknowledged their concerns as they do not always feel as though we are supporting them.

JK advised Tradex have changed their insurance policy in relation to cross border work. He will forward any information he receives from them.

LC – insurance companies are not forthcoming with information or putting anything in writing to us.

16) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

YD suggested a one stop shop.

LC – we are making some internal changes to the team. Hopefully will get more functions online in the future.

KH – need more modern looking plates.

LC advised it is not practical at the moment but this is something we will be looking at in the future.

YD mentioned the CSE course.

LC advised that due to the actions of a few people, the Children's Services section refused to do further CSE courses for taxi licensing. We are now working with the council's Workplace Development Unit to see if they can deliver a day's combined course for all training and the knowledge test for new applicants. Existing drivers will need to do a refresher course.

YD would like a dress code. He will consult members of his association and report back.

LC/AR advised we cannot put conditions on a hackney carriage drivers licence.

LC recommended to speak to members of their associations to draw up a voluntary dress code and get them to sign it.

AG asked if black hackney carriage vehicles could be a future condition.

LC stated that consultation would be needed before we could consider putting a colour restriction on hackney carriage vehicles.

17) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12th July 2017 at 1.00pm.