

CANNOCK CHASE DISTRICT COUNCIL

HACKNEY CARRIAGE & PRIVATE HIRE LIAISON GROUP

Notes of the Meeting held at 11.00am on Friday 4 May 2018
Cannock Room, Civic Centre, Beecroft Road, Cannock, Staffordshire, WS11 1BG

Members of the Liaison Group (Councilors)

Cllr Carl Bennett, Portfolio Leader for Crime & Community Partnerships (Group Chair)*

Members of the Liaison Group (officer)

David Prosser-Davies : CCDC*

Sean O'Meara : CCDC*

Scot Kearney : CCDC*

Representative of the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Trade

Terrance Hurley**

Steven Toy*

Kendal Tranter*

Martin Hammond***

Steven Holroyd***

Omar Ali (Observer)**

Victor Simonczyk***

Patricia Taylor*

George Simonczyk***

Harry Griffiths*

(*) Present (**) Apology (***) Not Present / No Apology

Welcome & Apologies

Cllr Bennett welcomed everybody to the meeting and apologies were accepted. Cllr Bennett also introduced Scot Kearney, the Council's new Licensing & Enforcement Officer.

Minutes of the last meeting

The notes of the previous meeting were confirmed as an accurate record.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

Spare wheels in licensed vehicles

This agenda item was carried over from the meeting in January 2018. It was agreed that officers would consider the wording of a new condition when Council Policy is next updated. The new condition will take account of the fact spare wheels are still the best option where available but that fewer vehicles are being sold with spare wheels and that other contingencies may now be available for stranded drivers.

Darkened windows in licensed vehicles.

Once again, this item was carried over from the meeting in January 2018.

Mr Prosser-Davies said that for reasons of public safety, licensing officers needed to be able to see through rear windows of HCV's so that they could clearly see the passengers and driver inside. He also said that no significant issues had arisen because Council Policy was flexible in so far as it provided options for Proprietors who purchased vehicles with darkened windows. PHV's are permitted to have darkened rear windows but HCV's are not. This is primarily because there is no requirement for HC Proprietors to keep comprehensive records of their journeys.

Mr Toy asked whether the use of CCTV may help and it mention was made of the fact that the installation CCTV in vehicles was supported by the Council and that its wider use may now need to be considered.

Overcharging

Mr O'Meara made the group aware that the Licensing Unit had received a number of complaints about overcharging. In response, all drivers had been written to and advised that overcharging is an offence. Identification of individual drivers has proved challenging for the Licensing Unit.

Bees Lane Taxi Rank Rugeley.

Mr Toy advised the group that repairs to the taxi rank had now been completed. Cllr Bennett said that an additional £5M had been allocated by the County Council for such repairs.

Knowledge tests

Mr Toy said that prospective drivers had been asking for information about the Council's Knowledge Test (KT) and he wondered if there was any information he could obtain to give to them. Mr O'Meara advised that the Licensing Unit already provides an information sheet within the new driver pack which briefly outlines our requirements. Mr O'Meara also said that the Council were currently looking at updating the KT and it would be further discussed when the Council HCPH Policy was updated next year. The update may include an electronic computer based KT.

Littering from licensed vehicles

Mr Toy raised concern about new legislation which now permits the Council to penalise the driver of a vehicle from which a passenger throws litter. The group was reassured and advised that it was the Council's Environmental Protection Team, not the Licensing Unit, which issues fixed penalty notices for littering.

Any other business.

Mr Prosser-Davies confirmed that the taxi fare tariff increase had been implemented as no objections had been received.

Date of next Meeting

The date of the next meeting will be confirmed at a later date.