

Taxi Liaison Group
Thursday 25th April 2013, 10-00hrs

Bradley Stoke Jubilee Centre (*The Oak Hall*),
Savages Wood Road, Bradley Stoke

Chair: Councillor Shirley Potts (SP)

Attendees: Councillors Keith Cranney (KC), Howard Gawler (HG)

SGC Licensing: Keith Jones (KJ), Dave Calloway (DC), Lily Thornell (LT)

Taxi & Private Hire Service: Dave Blake (DB), Mike Platten (MPI), Chris Dwyer (CD), Brian Maby (BM), Geoffrey Wilkey (GW), William Sanzo (WS), Janet Platten (JP),

Apologies: Mark Pullin (MP), Kevin Barley (KB), Peter Harris (PH), Emma Pain (EP), Chris Jones (CJ), Chris Studley (CS), Sharon Shaw (SS), Tony Lidbury (TL), Bob Lonsdale (BL)

Item			Action
I.	10.00h Welcome	(SP) welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
II.	Previous minutes and matters arising	<p>Matters arising from previous minutes and subsequent actions were discussed. All agreed minutes and were signed off as a true and accurate reflection.</p> <p>(KJ) advised as yet nothing had arisen from DfT consultation</p> <p>Fares - Brought to current Agenda</p> <p>Discussion around new drivers entering from Europe. (KJ) confirmed that where drivers use a European Domestic Driving Licence, they must still register with DVLA, Swansea for green counterpart. Also that processes exist for liaison with Consulates and Immigration Service</p> <p>In response to opinions around communication issues with foreign drivers particularly at UWE, (KJ) (DC) explained current developments re: knowledge test</p> <p>(CD) questioned why South Gloucestershire school runs were being given to a Bristol</p>	DC

		Company who then task a driver over the air rather than use a dedicated driver. (DC) will take up with ITU who deals with school runs.	
III.	PSV 'O' Licence vehicles – update from Regulatory Committee letter sent to Traffic Commissioner	<p>(SP) read aloud her recent letter (<i>sent 13th March</i>) from Committee to Office of the Traffic Commissioner (Bristol) who have not yet replied. (WS) had also written previous week but no reply.</p> <p>Discussed and agreed that the Office of the Traffic Commissioner (Bristol) is an accountable public body and who needed to clarify and give direction regarding the situation before the matter could be progressed any further locally. (SP) will write further to the Office of the Senior Traffic Commissioner based in Warrington.</p>	SP/KB
IV.	Taxi Fares – six monthly review (for October 2013), item for Regulatory Committee meeting to be held on 13th June 2013	<p>(KJ) read aloud briefing note from (KB) regarding his providing a pre-committee briefing paper in advance of 13th June. A full report (including AA fuel price reports) will be produced for Committee with the recommendation to go out for consultation as legally required.</p> <p>In discussion (BM), (CD) expressed concern that there had been no change to fares in last 3 reviews as based on “fluctuating fuel costs” but review didn’t appear to take account of 20% increase in insurance/maintenance/ins. Bristol paying much less in licence fees allowing them to undercut South Gloucestershire tenders. (SP), (KJ) explained other reviews will look at such issues and information.</p>	KB
V.	Taxi Policy review (2013 -2016) - item for Regulatory Committee meeting to be held on 13th June 2013	(KJ) advised that (CJ) & (EP) have reviewed the Policy to reflect legislation changes and reduce any ambiguities but are holding the draft policy until outcome of Law Commission report which could then influence final version. If draft policy has to be “held” until August 2013 then TLG will be informed and it will be recommended to go out for consultation when considered by the Regulatory Committee.	
VI.	Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (ratio of new applications - 1in 3 or 1 in 5)	<p>Discussion raised several points for consideration:</p> <p>(KJ) advised that guidance and/or legislation is still awaited regarding disability access and National Transport strategy. Bristol are moving to 100% wheelchair access vehicles. South</p>	All

		<p>Gloucestershire Council Licensing seeking reasoned proposals from TLG members regarding ratios. Reiterated that no decisions have been made.</p> <p>(CD) Stressed it would need careful consideration as initial vehicle costs were higher but there may not be sufficient business to support cost for smaller operators.</p> <p>(BM) suggested a benefit to operators e.g. waiving initial test fee for accessible vehicles or sponsorship.</p> <p>(WS), (CD) agreed with a ratio but 1:5 too high – (KC) questioned if Community Transport and associated initiatives could be utilised for cross border pick ups to offset any ratio.</p> <p>(KC) reminded all that disability was not just about wheelchair access.</p> <p>(BM) Asked if South Gloucestershire Council had a policy to refuse some manufactured accessible vehicles such as Fiat Doblo, (KJ) & (DC) were not aware of any such policy.</p> <p>(HG) raised issue of MIDAS training for drivers as this could be another cost if required.</p>	
VII.	Road markings at Chipping Sodbury taxi rank	<p>(KJ) reported this had been followed up by Licensing, an action has been allocated to Traffic Management team and TLG will be notified when remarked.</p> <p><i>Update from Tracey Hamblett, Traffic Management – a request has been made to refresh the yellow taxi bay markings in Broad Street as they were faded. This work has been added to the Miscellaneous lining register and the work will be implemented in the near future.</i></p>	CJ/KB
VIII.	Yate Railway Station – proposal for taxi rank on Station Road (raised by Bob Lonsdale)	<p>(KJ) reported Tracey Hamblett (Traffic Management Team) had advised there were proposals already for this and (KB) was asking for timescales and clarification in order to report back to TLG. (SP) reiterated that Tracey Hamblett be asked for exact location and (HG) requested a plan be provided. (KB) has advised (BL) to contact Chris Hanson direct.</p> <p><i>Update from Tracey Hamblett, Traffic Management – Within the 2013/14 Local Transport Capital Programme is a scheme to implement waiting restriction in the Yate area in the vicinity of the Yate Station and industrial estates. It maybe a good idea for Bob Lonsdale or yourself to make contact with the Design Engineer, Chris Hanson, providing him with details of this request in order that consideration can be given to including the work within the waiting</i></p>	KB

		<i>restriction review.</i>	
IX.	Chipping Sodbury High Street - parking issues (raised by Tony Lidbury)	<p>(KJ) advised that this was linked with item VII. Marshalls, PCSO's and Police are responding to this and Police are taking action when/where appropriate.</p> <p><i>Update from Tracey Hamblett, Traffic Management - The Frome Vale Area Forum selected a reserve scheme at its meeting in March 2013 for an area wide waiting restriction scheme in Chipping Sodbury. The implementation of the scheme within this financial year is dependent on additional funds becoming available to carry out consultation and the processing of a traffic regulation order. If funds do not materialise this year, the scheme will be included on the Local Transport Priority list for consideration and possible selection by the Frome Vale Area forum members in March 2014. Can you please obtain details from Tony Lidbury as the exact locations in the High Street which are causing a concern?</i></p>	
X.	Yate Shopping Centre – proposal for trolley park near taxi rank (raised by Tony Lidbury)	(KJ) reported that (KB) has advised (TL) that Licensing support this but that in first instance it should be considered for placement on private property and that Yate Shopping Centre management team or Tesco management team should be initially approached.	
XI.	Badminton Horse Trials – advice issued for Taxi and Private Hire operators	(KJ) provided details and a plan to all of the traffic management for forthcoming Badminton Horse Trials. (BM) reminded all that if drivers got in wrong lane when dropping off, they remain on site till 2pm when one-way priority changed. (KB) has also e-mailed this out to the TLG.	
XII.	Knowledge Test review and updating of tests/guidance – briefing paper to be produced for Regulatory Committee meeting to be held on 13th June 2013	<p>(KJ) & (DB) informed TLG that (EP) had undertaken to review and update the test which will also enable candidates to research from stated sources. Whilst understood that the questions would not be made public to protect the test's integrity, it was asked if an overview of the test's methodology and some specimen questions could be given in future. (DC) confirmed to (KC) that guidance regarding "reasonable adjustment" for candidates with dyslexia etc was included.</p> <p>(GW) asked what Licensing did in relation to a prospective driver's actual driving test. (KJ) explained that was dealt with by DVLA/DSA not Licensing's remit but that Officers investigated all other complaints and responded to all complainants.</p>	

XIII.	Taxi licensing enforcement update	<p>(KJ) informed that last months joint enforcement operation at BIA was cancelled by VOSA but another was being planned and would be at various locations.</p> <p>(KC) asked what was being done in relation enforcement around “Stretch Limousines” (KJ) advised that Licensing were in process of writing to companies to give advice especially related to the provision of alcohol to passengers.</p>	
XIV.	Any other business	<p>(BM) expressed concern about problems of vehicles “stacking” in bus lane since change of priority at traffic lights at Coldharbour Road/A4174. Also confusion regarding if private hire vehicles could use bus lanes as several had been given fixed penalty notices for doing so. (KC) also asked for clarification from Licensing as he believed that a decision had been made previously to allow private hire vehicles to use lanes marked for taxis.</p> <p>(KC) was pleased to say that no South Gloucestershire licensed vehicles had been reported during a recent enforcement operation in Bristol.</p> <p>(KC) had been informed of instances arising from UWE where female passengers had been told by drivers that if they could not pay the fare required, the driver would want “favours.” (CD) had heard similar and believed that this was drivers picking up in Bristol in vehicles without roof signs. It was agreed that this needed investigation and more response by UWE especially as it was suggested that in the future it could be home to 10,000 students and as the campus was private property, it made enforcement difficult. (SP) requested that this be placed on next agenda as a separate item for discussion and report.</p>	<p>KB</p> <p>CJ/KJ/DC</p>
	11.45h	Meeting closed. (SP) asked for her thanks to be recorded to Officers for arranging meeting and providing tea/coffee.	

Next Meeting:

10.00am, Thursday 11th July 2013 @ Bradley Stoke Jubilee Centre
(The Oak Hall), Savages Wood Road, Bradley Stoke.