

**Minutes of Taxi Liaison Group Meeting on Thursday 09<sup>th</sup> February 2012**  
**Ridgewood Offices**

Chair: Councillor Shirley Potts (SP)

Attendees: Councillors Keith Cranney (KC) and Alan Lawrance (AL)

SGC Licensing: Kevin Barley (KB)

Avon and Somerset Police: Gerry Treacy (GT)

Taxi & Private Hire Service: William Sanzo (WS), Mike Andrews (MA), Paul White (PW), Neil Sage (NS), Nick Bailey (NB), Robert Lonsdale (RL), Sharon Shaw (SS), Angela Marsh (AM), Dave Blake (DB), Brian Prosser (BP), Mike Worley (MW), Mike Platten (MPI), Ahmed Duale (AD)

Ultimate Fire & Security Solutions (UK) Limited: Spencer O'Leary (SO), James Whiting (JW)

Apologies: Emma Pain (EP), Mark Pullin (MP), Peter Harris (PH), Mark Parry (MPa)

		<b>Action</b>
<b>I) Welcome</b>	SP welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
<b>II) Previous Minutes</b>	<p>A run through and discussion of previous minutes and action notes from KB. All agreed a true reflection of meeting, SP seeking amendment of Licensing review comments and KB to amend these for clarity.</p> <p>SS still not receiving e-mails for taxi newsletter or update articles, KB not sure why as all other members of the e-mail group appear to be receiving e-mails when sent. KB to investigate alongside SS and ensure problem solved.</p> <p>NS and MW also raised the issue of PSV 'O' Licence vehicles being used to pick up passengers outside a hotel premise. They both feel that this is misleading the public as the word 'taxis' are stated as advertising on the vehicle. KB clarified that the vehicles are not licensed by SGC and are operating under legislation enforced by VOSA, if the public are being misled then this is a matter to be reported to Trading Standards for investigation. KB stated that he was not aware of any public complaints in reference to this over the past 3 years. KB stated that the PSV 'O' Licence vehicles are regulated by VOSA and not part of the Licensing remit. VOSA had recently written to operators to clarify the law and requirement for compliance, Licensing can do no more and take each case on its own merit if dealing with unlicensed drivers or vehicles.</p> <p>SP, KC and AL suggested that VOSA and Trading Standards are invited to the next meeting to brief the group, KB stated that not sure what information either could give to the group that has not already been discussed, KB will extend invites though and report back.</p> <p>KB clarified with NS, NB and SS to whether MPa had contacted</p>	<p><b>KB</b></p> <p><b>KB/SS</b></p> <p><b>KB</b></p>

	them following issues from last meeting, no correspondence received.	
<b>III) Licence Fees</b>	KB stated that he had carried out benchmarking nationally through Institute of Licensing (IOL) members and NALEO members. All responding LA's stated that collection of licence fee due when licence is issued and as an annual or 3 yearly fee. Drivers, vehicle owners and operators are aware of costs and can budget accordingly as good business practice. If multi-payments were installed this would require additional administration of issuing further licences and chasing persons if payments not made and Licensing not prepared to create unnecessary work. KB stated that any driver, vehicle owner or operator that may have financial issues can approach him in the first instance, and at least 1 month in advance of an application being made, to discuss and maybe put into place possible actions – KB reiterated this must be done well in advance and not on the day of application.	
<b>IV) Top Signs &amp; Licence Plates</b>	KB clarified that no further actions had taken place at this time as was awaiting outcome of corporate IT project, to then establish the direction for Licensing. KB has received confirmation of this and will now review the present system in place for production of licences and vehicle plates. As discussed before KB looking to change to windscreen plate number display and rear mounted plate, and will re-evaluate the size of a top sign for Hackney Carriages.	<b>KB</b>
<b>V) New applications - Age of wheelchair accessible vehicles</b>	NB stated that drivers must be able to have business plans when investing in WAV's and SGC taxi policy should reflect that. NB stated that London legislation allows a TX vehicle up to 15 years of age to be licensed. KB agreed that there is a range of age policies across the UK and willing to put matter before LRGP Committee for consideration, all information gathered will be contained in report. KB confirmed that there are some vehicles over 10 years of age licensed by SGC; these are special occasion vehicles and some WAV's that have been inspected and licensed on their own merit away from policy. KB re-iterated that public safety paramount and each vehicle taken on its own merit for present condition, service history and amount of usage/mileage.	<b>KB</b>
<b>VI) Out sourcing of H/C &amp; P/H Council Vehicle Fitness Test</b>	KB stated that had not moved any further forward with this and is requesting further information of proposal made by WS, upon receipt of this then can action and review proposal. KB stated that still developing working partnership with Broad Lane staff and Licensing have recently produced a generic vehicle inspection sheet for all Officers to use and produce to vehicle owners and licence holders. Licensing have also produced a generic stop notice and this will also be used by Broad Lane staff where required and with reasonable cause. WS requested to see the vehicle inspection list and KB will send a marked copy for reference.	<b>WS</b>          <b>KB</b>

<b>VII) Fare/Tariff Increases – LRGP Committee</b>	SP stated that Committee had resolved on 26/01/12 that there be no increase in fares although there had been much discussion about this. KB confirmed that this was in consultation for 14 days and if no objections would come into effect. SP confirmed that Committee also resolved to review fares in six months time, everyone was in agreement with this to see what the situation is like.	
<b>VIII) Knowledge Tests</b>	WS raised concern that potential applicants are having to wait long periods of time to sit the knowledge test. KB clarified that another knowledge test booked in for 13/03/2012 as initially agreed with Darren in the office when WS first raised the issue. Those persons booked in for April knowledge test will be contacted and have the option to move forward to March. EP will monitor situation to whether further tests will need to be pencilled in.	<b>EP</b>
<b>IX) CRB's – update of Home Office guidance</b>	KB stated that the Home Office had informed the Criminal Records Bureau and LA's in January that the law will be amended so that enhanced CRB's for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers can be carried out. GT clarified that CRB applications do not sit around in Police Stations; SS had concerns that other professions given priority.	
<b>X) Taxi Newsletter</b>	KB stated that the winter edition of the Taxi Newsletter had been produced by Keith Jones, and was e-mailed to the TLG e-mail group mid-January and was available in Ridgewood reception. All newsletters will be available on the SGC website once the new website has been launched late February/early March.	<b>KB</b>
<b>XI) Licensing Enforcement Updates</b>	KB confirmed that day-to-day enforcement continues to take place with vehicle inspections carried out at the taxi ranks and through S50 inspections at Ridgewood.	
<b>AOB</b>	<p>NS stated that had concerns with advice given by PH at Kingswood Regent Street rank about journeys made from South Gloucestershire to 'out of district'. KB acknowledged and will speak with PH about this to clarify advice given to drivers. Also concerns that advice given to Taxi driver at Parkway Station to use top sign although just dropping off and then leaving site as no permit for vehicle. KB clarified that Taxi can use top sign and can ply for hire once off Parkway Station land.</p> <p>Heron Way, Yate – still concerns that this issue has not been resolved. SP to follow up with MPa – e-mail was sent by KB to TL e-mail group on 16/02/2012 to clarify current situation. GT confirmed that traffic regulations would be enforced until traffic amendment comes into effect.</p> <p>DB raised issue about article in Bristol Evening Post relating to Taxi Bus route. KB stated that poorly written article as the use of the word taxi not appropriate in relation to a new bus route service, and not part of Licensing remit. SP clarified content of</p>	<p><b>KB</b></p> <p><b>SP/KB</b></p>

	<p>story with Councillor Brian Allinson who sits on PT&amp;SE Select Committee – e-mail was sent by KB to TL e-mail group on 16/02/2012 to clarify current situation.</p> <p>UK Skills literature from SS to be sent to KB for distribution to TL e-mail group.</p> <p>KB also clarified that Private Hire Vehicles (PHV) cannot state the words 'taxi' or 'cab' as current PHV conditions and Licensing Enforcement Officers will be dealing with each vehicle if non-compliance found. This condition has been in place for many years as part of the SGC Taxi Policy which all licence holders acknowledge and sign for when issued with a licence.</p> <p>No other business so SP closed the meeting at 11-25hrs.</p> <p>Following the meeting Spencer O'Leary and James Whiting of Ultimate Fire &amp; Security Solutions (UK) Limited gave a CCTV presentation for licensed vehicles. SO to send copy of presentation to KB for onward distribution to TL e-mail group for information.</p>	<p><b>SP/KB</b></p> <p><b>SS/KB</b></p> <p><b>SO/KB</b></p>
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**Next Meeting: Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2012 @ 10:00hrs, Ridgewood Offices – Conference Room (tbc)**