

**Minutes of: TRADE LIAISON MEETING**

**Date of Meeting:** 12 January 2023

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|           | <p><b>Present:</b></p> <p>Ben Thomson – Head of Public Protection – Chair<br/>Cllr. Charlotte Morris – Cabinet Member for Culture and &amp; Economy<br/>Cllr. Sandra Walmersley – Chair of Licensing<br/>Michael Bridge – Licensing Unit Manager<br/>Laura Swann – Assistant Director Operations Strategy<br/>Nazmul Islam – Business Engagement Officer<br/>Sandra Walmersley – Chair of Licensing<br/>Habib – GMB Northwest Private Hire Rep<br/>Charles Oakes – The Hackney Drover Assoc. Ltd<br/>Charles Oakles – the Hackeny drivde assoc ltd<br/>David Lawrie – National Private Hire Taxi Association<br/>Muhammad Warraich– Private Hire Drivers Association Bury<br/>Peter Eccleston – GMP Bury District Licensing Officer Bury district licensing officer<br/>Matthew Freckleton - Uber<br/>Raja Adil - PSG<br/>Kirsty Wild– Whiteline – Magnum Whiteline Taxis<br/>Naveed – Private Hire Drivers Association Bury<br/>Naveed Aijaz – Private Hire Drivers Association Bury<br/>Sham Raja – PHDA</p> <p><b>Minutes:</b> Maureen Foden</p> |
| <b>1.</b> | <b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|           | <p>Sgt. Andrew Vernon, Khalid Hussain,</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Matters arising Agree minutes of previous meeting 12/10/22</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|           | <p>The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>GMP Update</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|           | <p>Peter Eccleston attended the meeting on behalf of Sgt. Andrew Vernon and gave the following update.</p> <p>A private hire taxi driver was held at knife point and his taxi was taken and found two days later in Milton St North. This investigation is ongoing with CID, with every effort being made to identify the perpetrator. On the night this happened it was rang in 10 minutes after the incident occurred later, this is why there was not an automatic response. Investigation is ongoing. Seemingly, the driver gave chase and was asked to back off as a knife was involved. A meeting was held by GMP to try and allay drivers fears and to give assurance that everything is being done to resolve this. Licensing Service have reached out to the driver and are working with GMP to help with this investigation.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

There was another incident involving a private hire driver who went through a red light, was stopped and the car was searched, and with Class A & B drugs were found, which he was arrested for intention to supply drugs and failing to provide a sample. This is still under investigation and was a Wolverhampton licensed driver. This was not a Bury licensed driver.

A driver gave an account of an incident that he was involved in where he was physically assaulted and had issues with the response received when reporting it. This is being investigated by Sgt. Vernon as there is a lack of confidence amongst the drivers for GMP.

GMP are looking at funding 10 cameras in private hire taxis, they will be trialled for both day and evening night shifts to monitor what is happening. This will be looked at for the as long term if successful.

They are also looking at offering self-defence classes for drivers which will be provided by the police and will go through some self-defence techniques.

There are hot links, which is targeted at the night-time economy on Friday and Saturdays, where asked officers are asked on night shifts to visit the various calls at the ranks and private Hire operator offices to catch up and see if there are any issues.

The GMCA, Police and Council are pulling together a video for drivers on safety measures.

GMP are pulling together a warning letter to give out to all operators to give to those people who regularly do not pay fares as non-payment is a criminal offence.. The Police can only take this so far and it is then up to the CPS and courts on how far any arrests are taken.

There were mixed responses to the initiatives that the Police are suggesting with some drivers giving a positive endorsement of the CCTV pilot and would also want them to be put in Hackney cabs. Other drivers were not so welcoming about the initiative. This applied to the self-defence training, there was positive feedback however there were also concerns over drivers being pulled into situations that may result in them being suspended. Need to have further discussions with GMP, Licensing and drivers to come up with a protocol. If there are any incidents all cases will be investigated and dealt with on their own merit.

CO delighted with the initiatives that the Police are suggesting and would like to see some of the cameras to be put in Hackney cabs.

The CCTV cameras are part of the driver safety initiative that the Council is working collaboratively on with GMP who will be funding it. There was a commitment under the CML to develop a policy around CCTV so will be exploring this further especially in light of some of the serious incidents that have occurred recently. It was acknowledged that some drivers would not like to see CCTV mandated therefore reassurance was given to balance the different views. And also, consideration needs to be given to funding as this will

be a challenge.

The CCTV cameras are part of the driver safety initiative that the Council is working collaboratively on. There are mixed views on it there was a policy for the CMLS regarding the CCTV and need to balance the views.

CO the Council has an opportunity, Mr Lawrie has been helping CO on CCTV and endorses his knowledge on fitting CCTV in vehicles.

DL frustrating that when reports are made it is such a lengthy process, the reality is that when nothing is done it gives the wrong message.

Regarding non-payment it is a criminal offence.

The self-defence classes are welcomed.

It was confirmed that it is CCTV cameras that are being proposed and not dashcams. Assurance was given that the cameras cannot be remotely monitored and therefore drivers' privacy for domestic use would not be compromised.

Other areas have run pilot schemes which have been very successful, to look at how it works for them and to see what data is collated and where is it held.

Bury are part of the discussions regarding CCTV as it is part of the MLS across GM, and there will be a policy in place. It is a complex issue that will need to comply with ICO guidelines and Bury will also adopt a locally driven policy. It was requested that it is CCTV that is being proposed and not dashcams.

Common Minimum Standards, when it is coming in

York, Hull and Sheffield all found the pilot scheme very successful; funding is an issue and some Councils are offering full funding.

There is a lack of confidence for drivers to report incidences as they have had negative experiences. Naveed described an incident he was involved in over Christmas. Depending on what is happening elsewhere is dependant on what support is available. It was suggested putting a formal complaint in.

Having CCTV in Hackney cabs, majority of taxis use dashcams need to explore more options.

Kirsty there is a concern as a civilian doing self-defence, if there is no evidence either way there is a worry that the driver will be suspended. Need to have further discussions with GMP to come up with some protocol. All cases will be investigated on their own merit. Need to make decisions quickly.

Other authorities doing mandatory CCTV, to look at them to learn from them, data and where is it held. Bury are part of the discussions, the issue of policy is that there will be policy in place. Part of MLS across GM which will not be happening yet but will be looking at it in Bury. Need to look at ICO guidelines with a locally driven policy.

It was raised in that the issue of CCTV with regards to MLS has not been progressed throughout the GM region. This will not mandate CCTV but the aim of CCTV is to protect drivers and passengers. There was support from some trade reps and also some opposition on the topic of CCTV.

CO is not involved in the Police meeting held today and therefore was not aware of the safety training. The Police focussed on the private hire sector for the meeting today due to their concerns over recent events but will ensure that all drivers are contacted. PE gets CO and DL contact details for future meetings if indicated.

**ACTION 1: MF to share the mailing list of this meeting with GMP so they can invite all to future meetings**

SR pleased about the proposed CCTV.

Muhammad self defence training needs to be explored more as there are concerns that things can get out of hand.

CCTV lots of private hire drivers have dashcam massive support from Council, but it is still very expensive. Also when use the vehicle for private use and storage of data.

Nothing is going to be imposed regarding CCTV; it will be investigated in detail with comprehensive engagement from with the trade. The discussion has highlighted the need for education around CCTV, does what is the data does it back up the implementation up and what are the cost implications need to look at costs.

Will look into the self defence.

**ACTION 2: MF to include MLS and CCTV as a separate items on the next agenda to explore in more detail further**

Have been working with GMP and reached out to driver re the incident at Christmas.

**4. Enforcement / Service Issues**

**a. Online applications for vehicle – go live date**

The online application system is up and running and it now enables drivers to report change of addresses, convictions, and accidents.

Licensing have also been working with the Transformation Team so that drivers booking a test at Bradley Fold can do this online choosing a date and time to suit, they will then receive an acknowledgement and reminders. There is an information guide that will be shared, and the system will go live next week. Naz Aslam will also be available to answer any questions. To enable this to happen drivers will have to create a One Account, and all paperwork will have to be approved first and drivers will then be notified that their tests can be

booked. If anyone is experiencing problems, please contact [taxilicensing@bury.gov.uk](mailto:taxilicensing@bury.gov.uk) This only applies to Bradley Fold, Sunnybank is a private company therefore it will be a business decision for them if they want to implement.

The current customer service standard for applications is five working days however vehicle proprietors and drivers have up to eight weeks to apply to renew their licenses. The general feeling is that the five-day target is not being met. It is hoped that this new system will help to quicken the process, if not to highlight any problems to MB if experiencing any problems. The online system will be able to track applications, this will help ensure that the five-day service is being met.

The online application system can now reports change address, accident and any.... Working with Transformation Team to enable applicants that chose Bradley Fold they can book tests on line and will receive acknowledgement and reminders. There is an information guide that will be shared and the system will be live from next week. Naz Aslam will be available to answer any questions. To enable this to happen drivers will have to create a One Account, the only issue is that all paperwork will have to be approved first and then tests can be booked. [taxilicensing@bury.uk](mailto:taxilicensing@bury.uk)

Muhammad – when complete application form will this quicken the time. Drivers have eight weeks to put their applications in. This only applies to Bradley Fold, Sunnybank is a private company it will be a business decision for them to implement. The feeling is that this does not happen in five days. It is hoped that this new system will help to quicken the process, to highlight any problems to MB is experiencing any problems. With the online system will be able to track and ensure that the five day service is being met.

**ACTION 3: MB to look at how to monitor the license renewal processing going forward to ensure the five-day target is met**

Drivers must put applications in as soon as possible.

**b. Clean Air Update**

There is not much to update in this area.

GM have published a new case for a new investment led GM clean air plan with a no charging Clean Air Zone. This was submitted to Government on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 non charging zone, still waiting for a formal response from Government.

£120m in government funding to help people upgrade to compliant vehicles will remain in place to support implementation of a new Plan. The details of how funding packages will work will be finalised once the new plan is approved.

Work is progressing to deliver the rapid electric vehicle charge points for taxis. These will be sited at:

- Foundry Street

- Trinity Street
- Whitefield Park and Ride

These points are scheduled to be installed in Spring. They will allow 2 vehicles to charge at the same time.

Concerns were raised that there will not be enough EV points to service the trade and there is no funding for upgrading vehicles.

EV charge points for taxis are going in in spring Foundry St..... two charge points in each area.

There are concerns that there will not be enough EV points to service the trade and there is no funding for upgrading vehicles.

If there is demand for more taxi points this will be monitored. If there is a demand for more taxi points this will be monitored.

The clean air taxi fund was linked to the GM clean air plan, which is currently under review, once the outcome of the review is known it will be shared. It is hoped the response will be out by the end of January.

Report submitted to Government 27/07/ revolving door policy is impacting on the response, should be out by January.

It was acknowledged that at the moment drivers cannot afford the electric vehicles, it is accepted that people cannot afford the cross over however the Council do need to provide some facilities for those drivers who do have them.

It was also confirmed that the current vehicle emissions policy in Bury is euro 4 petrol and euro 6 diesel.

### **c. Bury Driver Safety Initiative**

Assurance was given that this is progressing, and the Council are working alongside GMP on this. As well as piloting CCTV they are sourcing a company to provide training materials and resources. in response to the recent consultation.

## **5. Specific Subjects for Discussion**

### **a. Petition from Hackney Carriage Association**

The Bury Drivers Association has submitted a petition in relation to rear loading vehicles and lifts, it is asking the Council to review their current policy. Advice has been sought from Information Governance regarding this petition and Licensing was advised that they were able to write to all petitioners who had made representation. Letters have been sent out to the petitioners to find out what their concerns and difficulties are and on receipt of the replies this will be looked at and a report will be prepared for the Licensing Safety Committee to

consider.

Bury Drivers Association has provided a petition on rear loading vehicles. IG advised that Licensing were able to write to all petitioners to find out what their concerns were and on receipt of the replies this will be looked at and considered.

It was noted that Hackney taxis are dwindling in Bury therefore, and the people who will suffer will be those people that need assisted support with access, this urgently needs to be addressed.

It was clarified that there is no 5-year age policy in Bury, it is 10 years and 5 years for new vehicles coming onto the fleet. Existing licensed vehicles have been given an extension up until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and can continue even if they are older than 10 years old. That may be reviewed, and that time period is under discussion. It is then hoped there will be funding to assist drivers to upgrade their vehicles in the future.

There is no 5 year age policy for Hackney cabs it is 10 years, the 5 years is for new vehicles. Existing vehicles can continue even if they are older than 10 years old and the time period is under discussion. Hoping there will be funding to support in the future.

This urgently needs addressing.

There is 33 Hackneys in Bury.

To feedback on the outcomes from the petition will be fed back at the next meeting.

## **7. Trade Agenda Items**

### **a. Private hire ranking up on Hackney carriage taxi rank**

This is an issue with out-of-town drivers near the interchange, this is impacting on the trade.

This is an issue with out of town drivers near the interchange, this is impacting on the trade. I

In the last five years there have been 13 occasions where actions have been taken regarding this, the breakdown is:

In the last five years 13 occasions

- 2017 6
- 2018 3
- 2019 2
- 2021 1
- 2022 1

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|                  | <p>Licensing has contacted NSL, who advised that they need intelligence once received they and will then action with targeted enforcement.</p> <p>Cross border taxis, there is a real issue with taxis from Wolverhampton who are ranking up at the Metrolink. Again, need intelligence and will action with targeted enforcement.</p> <p>Bury officers have no jurisdiction over Wolverhampton drivers / vehicles, any complaints need to be made to Wolverhampton Council. Bury officers have no jurisdiction over Wolverhampton drivers / vehicles, any complaints need to be made direct to Wolverhampton Council.</p> <p>Bury do not have the capacity to provide Parking Wardens or Happy Marshalls as provided by both Bolton and Manchester.</p> <p>If an out-of-town taxi is physically parked on an existing rank or they create their own rank they can be prosecuted by anyone. .</p> <p><b>b. Out of town drivers displaying door stickers</b></p> <p>Out of town drivers are using 0161 numbers on the stickers, they should be using a Wolverhampton number or a number relative to the area they are registered to. Do we know if they have operating licenses for Bury.</p> <p>Out of town drivers are using 0161 numbers on the stickers, should be using a Wolverhampton number or a number relative to the area they are registered to. Do we know if they have operating licenses for Bury.</p> <p><b>ACTION 4: MB / BT to take the issue of out-of-town drivers displaying 0161 stickers away to and look into further</b></p> |
| <p><b>8.</b></p> | <p><b>AOB</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                  | <p>Fire extinguishers are being installed in the wrong place, drivers are asking to have them next to their seats which is not acceptable and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency as they could be used as weapons. Need to look into this further with the testing stations and drivers and to get advice from the fire service.</p> <p>Fire extinguishers are being stored in the wrong place, drivers have them next to their seats and this is not acceptable and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency as they could be used as weapons. Testing manual in serviceable condition no information on where is should be stored. Need to get advice from the fire service and.</p> <p><b>ACTION 5: MB to speak to the two testing stations to ensure that there is continuity regarding the correct advice being given to drivers regarding fire extinguishers and where they should be stored</b></p> <p>There is the issue of drivers who have been in an accident and must replace their vehicles, as they cannot afford to buy a car that is 5 years old this impacts them as they are deemed as newly licensed vehicles. Therefore, there is confusion in the trade regarding changing their vehicles and this is resulting</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



in drivers registering in Wolverhampton as they have more relaxed rules. Drivers don't want to go to Wolverhampton they feel they are being forced. Confusion in trade for 5 year vehicles, changing vehicles all the time. Drivers going to Wolverhampton as they have more relaxed rules.

**ACTION 6: BT / MB to look into the issue of drivers renewing cars and feeling they have to register in Wolverhampton**

It has been rumoured that there may be a potential protest, and this is because there is an element of fear due to the knife incident. Also, the cost-of-living crisis, CMLS, and age and tint policy are other issues that are concerning the drivers. It needs to be noted that 539 drivers have already been lost to other areas or left from Bury.

It has been rumoured that there may be a potential protest, there is an element of fear due to the knife incident. Cost of living crisis CMLS, age and tint policy are issues, 529 drivers have already moved over.

Bury are trying to raise standards to protect both drivers and the public however they will take away and look at the concerns of the drivers.

**ACTION 7: MB / BT to investigate the concerns drivers have around the age policy of vehicles in Bury**

Something that needs to be considered is that some drivers have found themselves in a position where their badge has expired because they think that they are on update service, or their DBS is late. They are then classed as a new driver and have to undertake both the driving and knowledge tests again, there is no contingency. If a licence expires even for one day it cannot be renewed therefore it is imperative that the message goes out that drivers have eight weeks to get licence applications in. This applies to every licensing authority and is on the advice from legal. To reiterate that drivers must put applications in early.

Thought on update service, DBS late badge expired classed new driver test and knowledge again. There is no contingency. This is done with advice from legal

BT to take legal advice.

Reiterate that drivers must put applications in early.

The following two concerns were raised:

- Why when had accident can drivers not reapply within a set time frame of licenses lapsing
- Why written off vehicles are not replaced with like for like.

**ACTION 8: BT to look into the two concerns from Mr Oakes and will take legal advice if indicated.**

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| <b>9.</b> | <b>Date and Time of next meeting</b><br><br><b>To discuss attendance and in person or Teams meetings going forward</b><br><br><b>23rd March 2023            5pm            Meeting Rooms A &amp; B Town Hall</b> |
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**COUNCILLOR  
Chair**

**(Note: The meeting started at Time Not Specified and ended at Time Not Specified)**