

AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE 7TH SEPTEMBER 2026

Trade Liaison Group Meeting

Date: 7th September 2026

Time: 16.30

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Chair: Ben Thomson

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair, Ben Thomson, welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Attendees included representatives from Bury Council, Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and trade associations including Michael Bridge, Babar Ibrahim, Sham Raja, Charles Oakes, Habib Ur-Rehman and Dave Lawrie.

2. Minutes and Actions of Previous Meeting

The minutes and actions from the previous meeting were noted. No additional amendments were raised.

3. GMP Update

Taxi Incident Update

Peter reported that GMP had recorded 22 taxi-related incidents during the previous three months. These included five assaults, three vehicle damage incidents, one report of racial abuse, six bilking incidents, two thefts involving taxi plates and three disturbance-related incidents. No significant increase linked to the World Cup had been identified.

Stolen Taxi Plates

Trade representatives queried the theft of two taxi plates. Peter confirmed the incidents occurred on 5 June and 20 June and agreed to investigate where the affected vehicles were licensed. Michael Bridge advised that no related reports had been received by Licensing and agreed to check whether replacement plates had been issued. Members reiterated the importance of reporting stolen plates to the police and obtaining a crime reference number before replacement plates are issued.

Assaults Against Drivers

Trade representatives requested further detail regarding the five reported assaults, including whether those involved Bury licensed vehicles. As investigations remained active, Peter could not provide a breakdown at the meeting but agreed to supply a high-level summary where legally permissible.

Reporting of Incidents

GMP and Licensing officers highlighted that increased incident numbers may reflect improved reporting by drivers. Members were encouraged to continue reporting assaults, thefts, disturbances and any suspicious or criminal activity to help build an intelligence picture across Greater Manchester.

Driver Safety and CCTV

Following discussion regarding assaults on drivers, trade representatives requested that Bury Council reconsider introducing CCTV requirements within licensed vehicles. It was noted that national minimum standards are expected to include mandatory CCTV requirements and that any local approach should align with national developments. Concerns were also raised regarding compliance, enforcement and officer training.

Members discussed introducing vehicle signage warning passengers that violence, abuse and fare evasion may lead to prosecution. Officers advised that the existing "Respect the Driver" campaign materials could be refreshed and introduced earlier than originally planned.

E-Bikes and E-Scooters

Members discussed concerns regarding e-bikes and e-scooters, including dangerous riding, use on pavements and roads, vehicle damage and links to criminal activity. GMP advised that enforcement activity is intelligence-led and that seizure powers are available in certain circumstances. However, wider regulation would require national legislative change. Trade representatives suggested that a registration system for e-bikes and e-scooters would assist enforcement and accountability. Officers acknowledged the potential benefit but noted this would require legislative change at national level.

4. Clean Air Update

Hackney Carriage Funding

Michael Bridge confirmed that all eligible Bury Hackney Carriage proprietors had accepted the funding available to support vehicle upgrades, resulting in 100% uptake of the scheme.

Private Hire Funding

Members were advised that a separate Greater Manchester funding stream would provide eligible private hire proprietors with a one-off, non-repayable grant of £2,500 per vehicle. The previously proposed loan arrangement was no longer being considered.

A whitelist of eligible vehicles was being prepared, with the scheme expected to launch during September 2026. Operators would receive further guidance, application details and reference numbers once the scheme opened.

There were currently 21 non-compliant private hire vehicles identified, including wheelchair accessible vehicles that may qualify for funding.

Compliance Deadline

The meeting discussed the 4 January 2027 deadline for non-compliant private hire vehicles to meet emissions standards. Trade representatives expressed concern that the timescale between the launch of funding and the compliance deadline may be too short, particularly during a busy trading period. Suggestions included extending the deadline to the end of January or February 2027. Officers requested urgent feedback from trade organisations to inform any review of the deadline.

5. Enforcement / Service Issues

Review of Convictions Guidelines

Michael Bridge advised that Bury's convictions policy, introduced in 2014, is being reviewed as part of a wider Greater Manchester workstream examining the Institute of Licensing fitness and propriety guidance, with a view to improving consistency across authorities.

Written-Off Vehicle Policy

The current Bury policy does not permit any written-off vehicle to be licensed or relicensed where the write-off occurred after 1 April 2025. Officers confirmed there are currently no written-off vehicles licensed under the policy.

Members discussed the possibility of allowing Category N vehicles, and potentially Category S vehicles, where independent engineering or structural reports demonstrate vehicle safety and roadworthiness. Trade representatives supported reviewing the policy and highlighted the increasing cost of replacing vehicles.

Written comments from the trade were requested to support preparation of a future committee report.

Taxi Rank Misuse and Enforcement

Trade representatives raised concerns regarding ongoing misuse of taxi ranks by private vehicles, particularly at Kay Gardens and during evening periods. Officers confirmed that reports had been referred to Parking Services and outlined current enforcement activity. The Chair requested continued reporting from the trade and confirmed that future meetings would include enforcement statistics and actions taken.

6. Specific Subjects for Discussion

National Licensing Standards, CCTV and Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

Dave Lawrie provided an update on national discussions concerning wheelchair accessible vehicles, CCTV requirements and national minimum licensing standards. Members were advised that national standards would form a minimum baseline, while local authorities would retain the ability to adopt stricter requirements where appropriate.

Discussion also covered:

- Proposals relating to wheelchair accessible vehicle quotas.
- Challenges with existing accessible vehicle registers.
- The importance of wheelchair accessibility training for drivers.
- Future decisions concerning vehicle testing requirements and compliance standards.

Michael Bridge requested a set of summary bullet points from Dave Lawrie for inclusion in future minutes and updates.

7. Any Other Business

Trade Representation and Committee Support

The meeting discussed support available to drivers attending Licensing Committee hearings. Trade representatives confirmed that organisations can provide advice and representation where requested, although support depends on drivers engaging with the organisation and the merits of the individual case.

Members noted that some applicants choose not to engage legal representation because of cost, and alternative support arrangements may include attendance by a family member or friend.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The Chair proposed that the next meeting should take place before the 4 January 2027 emissions compliance deadline if possible. Initial dates considered included 23 November 2026 and January 2027; however, availability, leave commitments, room availability and Christmas trading pressures meant that no date was agreed during the meeting. It was agreed that further dates would be circulated and preferences sought from members. If a suitable meeting room could not be secured, a Teams meeting would be considered, although members expressed a preference for an in-person meeting.

COUNCILLOR

Chair

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