

# Drivers and Operators Forum

Chair: Marianne Rolfe

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Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5HZ

Minutes: Meeting - 18<sup>th</sup> August 2014 at Leamington Town Hall

		Action
1.	<p><b>ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES.</b></p> <p>Present: Alan Lewis, Afsin Bakar Ozeker, Ahmed Rafiq, Chand Mubarak, Jangir Hussian, Maid Ali, Marianne Rolfe, Phil Court, Pritpal Bains, Richard Weare, Simon Brook, Rachael Russell, PC Steve Pittam</p> <p>Apologies: Amit Sidhu, PC Pervinder Mann</p>	
	<p><b>PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous minutes agreed with an amendment.</li> <li>• DOF agreed that when transferring a HC plate to a newer vehicle that the age limit should be raised to 7 years and not currently the five years.</li> <li>• Agreed that minutes should be placed on the website a couple of days after forum members have received them for all drivers to see. Amendment to be made to the terms of reference.</li> </ul>	<p>WDC</p> <p>WDC</p>
2.	<p><b>PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE FORUM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jangir Hussian has joined the forum. He is a Street Marshall and represents the public.</li> <li>• Officers have received a request from the university for another public representative on the forum. DOF agreed and Officer to invite to next meeting.</li> </ul>	WDC
3.	<p><b>BRAND LOGO FOR THE FORUM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOF voted for the logo they believed represented them with the inclusion of the word taxi.</li> </ul>	WDC
4.	<p><b>HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES CONSULTATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disappointing results in the numbers returned.</li> <li>• Alleged scare mongering regarding a driver who stated that the Council gave out his address to a customer to collect a lost purse. MR clarified that under no circumstances would driver's personal details be given to the public.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lot of drivers felt that the information requested was too personal.</li> <li>• Officers agreed that drivers do need a fare increase but ultimately it is the decision of the Executive Committee. A report will be drafted and sent to Executive.</li> <li>• Drivers would like it noted that it has been nearly 12 months since the petition for the fare increase was submitted. The original petition suggested a 12 month review.</li> <li>• DOF suggested there is danger of comparing ourselves to other areas as it only shows 2 mile average.</li> <li>• This average was included in previous reports to the committees and will be included in the new one.</li> <li>• The Report will hopefully be sent to Executive in Oct/Nov depending on internal procedures and availability in the agenda. Drivers will be kept informed.</li> <li>• DOF requested a copy of the fare card to be sent to each member.</li> </ul>	<p>WDC</p> <p>WDC</p>
5.	<p>CONVICTIONS AND CAUTIONS POLCIY REVIEW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation closes today on the draft policy.</li> <li>• Officers agreed that more clarification needed on certain points within the policy.</li> <li>• Officers clarified that if you currently have 7 or more points on your licence then you are not suitable to be a driver whilst they are active. Once you have less than 7 points then you may apply again.</li> <li>• Comparison with other local authorities showed a similar enforcement level regarding points on licence.</li> <li>• DOF asked for clarification regarding current driver's that will fall outside the new policy when it is implemented.</li> <li>• Officers stated that this issue was still being discussed. Current drivers with 7 or more points may go to Committee or they may be issued with a written warning advising that if they incur any more points then they will go to committee.</li> <li>• Suggestion made that drivers who have more than 6 points be made to do an advanced driving course.</li> <li>• The Forum felt the penalty for Careless driving was overly harsh. MR explained that her officers need a framework to work to and that upon an application the circumstances of a conviction are not described.</li> <li>• It was recognised that there are different levels of Careless Driving but this is not specified on paperwork. Therefore the DOF agreed that on the face of it is someone convicted of careless driving is not a fit and proper person.</li> <li>• Officers clarified the process of assessing the application.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a driver opts to have their case heard at a Committee hearing. The case will be based on its individual merits and it will be for the Committee to decide if the policy should be deviated from based upon knowledge of those circumstances.</li> <li>• DOF agreed not a fit and proper person if drive without insurance. No matter the circumstances.</li> <li>• DOF requested that the process of applying and being refused is made easier to understand.</li> <li>• DOF recognised that the process was described in the draft policy.</li> <li>• DOF requested that existing drivers have an implementation period in order for points on their license to be removed before the policy applies to them.</li> <li>• Officers stated that if drivers tell us they have points and go over 6 immediately then this can mean that they can go to committee whilst still being allowed to drive. If we are not told until renewal then drivers could potentially have to stop driving until the matter is resolved as a renewal badge will not be issued.</li> <li>• A suggestion was made that the selection on drink driving does not take into account the Magistrates decision. Sometimes Magistrates are more lenient if they drive for a living. The policy does not take this into account.</li> <li>• DOF were concerned about the selection relating to the wearing of badges.</li> <li>• Officers clarified that a prosecution for failing to wear a badge, a condition of a driver's license will only occur when usual enforcement procedures have failed.</li> <li>• A badge is a clear indication to the public that they are being driven by a licensed driver.</li> <li>• It was suggested that something larger than the badge with the drivers' picture could be placed in the vehicle similar to what is done in America. Rather than a neck badge which raises some health and safety concerns.</li> <li>• Draft policy likely to be sent to Licensing and Regulatory Committee in October.</li> </ul>	WDC
6.	<p><b>CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY REVIEW</b> Wheelchair accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officers stated that they were struggling to get any official response from organisations regarding their thoughts side loading and rear loading vehicles.</li> <li>• Forum members stated that they believe that rear loading vehicles should not be re-introduced.</li> <li>• They believed that the types of vehicles themselves were not as</li> </ul>	

	<p>reliable as the side loading ones and that with newer side loading accessible vehicles it was very easy to get wheelchairs in and out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOF agreed that rear loading required more space at the ranks, a person must get into the road to enter the vehicle and the vehicle would need to move out of the rank further into the road to allow access.</li> <li>• It was noted that side loading vehicles are more expensive than rear loading.</li> <li>• DOF was keen that saloon vehicles were kept as these are more accessible to people with disabilities other than being in a wheelchair.</li> <li>• It was suggested that those with rear loading vehicles at the moment be allowed to change to saloon cars/ zero emissions cars.</li> <li>• Officers stated this would not be fair on those that had purchased side loading vehicles.</li> <li>• Suggestion that M1 certificate be introduced so potentially a wider range of side loading vehicles be used. Forum agreed.</li> </ul>	WDC
7.	<p><b>DUAL LICENSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOF are happy that in principle these are correct as they give both drivers and employers flexibility.</li> </ul>	
8.	<p><b>KNOWLEDGE TEST AND APPLICATION PROCESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General consensus that this needs to be updated as is currently not fit for purpose.</li> <li>• A representative stated that they have exemption certificates as they do chauffeuring work. They are not allowed to do standard PH work yet their drivers have to pass the knowledge test.</li> <li>• Suggestion that airports, supermarkets, hospitals to be included as landmarks.</li> <li>• Suggestion of a 6 month apprentice driver in order for a person to learn the area.</li> <li>• Questions raised about potential for different tests for different purposes but issues raised over the future management of that driver who left one employer for other work.</li> <li>• Decided that a subcommittee to be formed to bring work on creating a new knowledge test.</li> <li>• Officers advised that DOF members who wished to sit current knowledge test could do so at the next forum meeting so a more informed discussion could be held.</li> </ul>	WDC  WDC/SB /PB/AR
9.	<p><b>MOT GARAGES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are currently 2 in Warwick, 1 in Leamington.</li> <li>• Suggestions for an increased number, specifically a garage in</li> </ul>	WDC

	<p>Kenilworth and Coventry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officers stated unlikely that it would be agreed to use a garage outside of WDC boundary.</li> <li>• A representative stated he struggled to get an appointment.</li> <li>• No other complaints regarding inability to get appointment. DOF agreed renewals are always sent out in plenty of time.</li> <li>• Meters should be included in the vehicle inspections.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
10.	<p>NUMBER OF TAXIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern was raised over the number of taxis operating in the district. DOF members are concerned that the ranks are not large enough and there are too many in the evenings.</li> <li>• Officer's stated that the cost do to a survey would need to be met by the driver's. This could be done by the drivers organising this themselves or the survey cost being added and split between the costs of licences.</li> <li>• The Operators did not believe that this was not fair on them as limit would not affect them.</li> <li>• Officers agreed and stated the licence fees for private hire and hackney would need to be reviewed if the decision was to include this in the license fee.</li> <li>• Officers asked forum to go back to drivers and ask their thoughts, would need at least 75% of them to agree to survey and the method of payment.</li> <li>• Survey would then need to be done every 3 years to ensure demand was being met sufficiently.</li> <li>• Representatives agree to obtain quotes for the survey to be done.</li> </ul>	<p>DOF</p> <p>AL/PB</p>
11.	<p>HACKNEY CARRIAGE RANKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was agreed that there was a need for more part time/ full time ranks in Warwick and Leamington.</li> <li>• Officers asked forum to canvas for ideas and we would present a case to WCC Highways who decide where ranks can go.</li> <li>• Number of suggested rank locations included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Moo</li> <li>○ Shire hall, Warwick</li> <li>○ Assembly/Neon</li> <li>○ Priory Street</li> <li>○ High street/kelsey's</li> <li>○ Bedford Street</li> <li>○ Extending the rank outside smack &amp; making street completely one way.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>ALL</p>

7.	<p><b>AOB ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warwick Street/Tavistock Street Junction</li> <li>• Ranks</li> <li>• Knowledge test</li> <li>• Refusing fares</li> <li>• Fees and Charges - Particularly Operators Licenses</li> <li>• Survey of Taxi Numbers</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>NEXT MEETING</b>  - 1st December 2014 at 2pm Location to be confirmed  Knowledge test at 1pm</p>	