

# Drivers and Operators Forum

Chair: Lorna Hudson

Correspondence: Regulatory Section (Licensing), Riverside House, Milverton Hill, Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5HZ

Minutes: Meeting – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at Riverside House

		Action
1.	<p>ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES.</p> <p>Present: Lorna Hudson, Rachael Russell, Phil Court, Alan Lewis, Ahmed Rafiq, PC Jasper, Amrit Sidhu, Majid Ali, Simon Brook, Paul Tunney, Chand Mubarak.</p> <p>Apologies: Berni Allen, Afsin Ozeker, PC Lund</p>	
2.	<p>PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES</p> <p>Agreed</p>	
3.	<p>UBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Forum shown short video clip of solicitor James Button talking about Uber, can be found on YouTube.</li><li>• Drivers were concerned that Uber vehicles licenced with other LA's were working in the WDC area. Advised that the De-regulation act in 2015 meant it is not illegal as long as not plying for hire.</li><li>• Concern that other LA's had lower standards for drivers and vehicles and that will mean public safety could be compromised.</li><li>• AL stated that work was needed with local MP's and elected members to change legislation.</li><li>• RR asked that any details of vehicles are passed onto Licensing department who can speak with the relevant LA. Licensing will continue to be out on Enforcement and will speak to any Uber vehicle should they see one.</li></ul>	
4.	<p>KNOWLEDGE TEST UPDATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RR is hopeful of this being in within the next month. Need to produce an example paper for the website. SB stated that a new driver had presumably downloaded the new application pack and that the old landmark list was still attached. RR to check website in the meantime.</li></ul>	RR

5.	<p><b>UNMET DEMAND SURVEY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LH asked who had read the survey (which is available on the Council website), the majority indicated they had reviewed it.</li> <li>• A report went to the Licensing &amp; Regulatory Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017 requesting that a six week consultation period be approved in order to get feedback from stakeholders.</li> <li>• LH asked the forum what would be the best way to engage with the Hackney Carriage owners. The forum believed that a questionnaire would be the best way. LH reiterated how important it was for the trade to engage and the more feedback received the more information the Councillors will have to make an informed decision.</li> <li>• LH asked the forum to bear in mind if a limit was introduced a survey would need to be carried out every three yrs. This is so that the position would be defensible in legal terms. The costs to be met by the trade.</li> <li>• PC raised the idea of retaining HC plates for a 'retaining fee' similar to what DVLA do.</li> <li>• Several members of the forum asked for clarification of fees, exactly what are drivers/operators/vehicle owners being charged for and how are the hackney carriage vehicle limit consultation costs being apportioned. LH advised fees are reviewed every year as a result will go up and down accordingly. Costs for unmet demand survey is being spread across three yrs, this is the second yr. The current fees - two proposals were submitted to members - one which included a deficit from previous yrs. and one that didn't. Members opted to recover deficit. Where a surplus is identified this would be passed back (see 2017 Street Trading fees as an example of when this has occurred).</li> <li>• Discussion around the 6 month vehicle license and fees. LH is in the process of reviewing full costs as part of the 2018 fee review. A full time &amp; motion review to be carried out for this element.</li> </ul>	
6.	<p><b>DISABILITY AWARENESS COURSE AND CSE AWARENESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six drivers failed to undertake CSE in requested time frame. Three had their licenced revoked, one suspended until course had been completed and two drivers had final warnings to undertake course.</li> <li>• All licenced drivers have now undertaken CSE course. Licensing will now look at ensuring all call handlers are adhering to the Operator conditions and have undertaken some CSE training.</li> <li>• Discussion undertaken regarding the possibility of drivers undertaking disability awareness refresher training as part of their renewal process. Forum thought this was a good idea.</li> <li>• LH asked the forum for views on electric wheelchairs in vehicles. PT stated there is a difference between standard wheelchairs and specialist wheelchairs. Some wheelchairs require a specialist vehicle. Some older vehicles also have two ramps that run parallel alongside each other as opposed to one ramp which makes it impossible to get some newer wheelchairs in vehicles.</li> </ul>	

7.	<p><b>LARGE DRIVER BADGES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Still waiting sign off, as soon as these are available will be sent to the forum to trial.</li> </ul>	
8.	<p><b>FLEET DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RR believes CCTV will eventually be a mandatory requirement. AR believes that the cost deters drivers having CCTV installed in their vehicles.</li> </ul>	
9.	<p><b>RESULTS OF FLEET INSPECTIONS AND ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fleet inspection to be carried out on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at Morrison's Car Park.</li> <li>• Licensing out on enforcement in December. Under the LHCS points were issued for not wearing drivers badge, dangerous parking and one driver was caught driving whilst using mobile phone.</li> <li>• RR stated that she had asked other LA's how they manage P/T taxi ranks and private vehicles parking in these. One idea is to produce a warning sticker to place on vehicles. These could then be used whilst out on enforcement.</li> </ul>	
10.	<p><b>LEGAL UPDATE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality Act 2010 – S165 comes into force in April. This places duties on drivers of listed (under S167) accessible taxis to transport disabled people in safety.</li> <li>• Tourism Action plan – proposal to deregulate an element of private hire licensing. LH advised the IOL are lobbying against it and have written to the Home Secretary.</li> </ul>	
11.	<p><b>COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WDC driver made front page of Leamington Courier in January regarding his actions after witnessing a robbery. Driver followed suspect whilst informing the Police.</li> <li>• Rise in complaints about dangerous driving recently.</li> </ul>	
12	<p><b>HATE CRIME ISSUES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing to report</li> </ul>	
13	<p><b>TAXI MARSHALLS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No issues to report last few months.</li> </ul>	
14	<p><b>UNIVERSITY DROP OFF</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LH had invited member of student union (Chloe Wynne) to attend meeting but unfortunately she had to cancel. LH to speak to meet with her prior to next meeting.</li> </ul>	LH
15	<p><b>REFRESHER DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING FOR DRIVERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the forum thought it would be a good idea for drivers to have a refresher disability awareness course every three years.</li> </ul>	
16	<p><b>AOB FOR NEXT MEETING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University Drop off</li> <li>• Taxi ranks</li> </ul>	