

Drivers and Operators Forum

Chair: Kathleen Rose

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

Minutes: Meeting – 15th November 2018 at Riverside House

		Action
1.	<p>ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES.</p> <p>Present: Kathleen Rose, Tayyibah Daud, Paul Tunney, Ahmed Rafiq, Phil Court, Majid Ali, Simon Brook, Alan Lewis.</p> <p>Apologies: PCSO Mansell, Amrit Sidhu, Pritpal Bains, Afsin Ozeker, Chand Mubarak.</p>	
2.	<p>PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES AND TAXI TIMES NEWSLETTER</p> <p>Previous minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.</p> <p>The November edition of the newsletter was distributed and is available on the web site. Members we asked to tell drivers about it and encourage them to read it.</p>	
3.	<p>UBER UPDATE</p> <p>KR informed members that we are not getting the support we feel we should be from Wolverhampton City Council where complaint investigation is concerned. WDC will continue to push for better response time and action from WCC.</p> <p>Members expressed their own concerns and frustrations with the current situation.</p>	
4.	<p>ENFORCEMENT UPDATE</p> <p>KR informed members that a decision made in regards to unsuitable candidate who was not licensed by WDC has been upheld by the Magistrates.</p> <p>A driver attended the licensing panel where his hackney carriage and private hire driver's licence was revoked at committee.</p> <p>A serious complaint is currently being investigated with County Council.</p> <p>A previously revoked driver has now been granted a hackney carriage and private hire driver's licence. There is no definitive statement in</p>	

	<p>regards to previous revocations, only that each case will be determined on its own merits.</p> <p>Wolverhampton Enforcement Officers came out with WDC officers on in October which was a very useful operation. Various vehicles were pulled up for noncompliance. Wolverhampton stated they wanted to come out and work with us again in the near future.</p>	
5.	<p>MANDATES</p> <p>KR informed members that as of January 2019 we will no longer be using the paid for Mandate service to check DVLA driver licence status; we will be using the free of charge DVLA Check Code service instead.</p> <p>KR advised members that this will be much easier and quicker, and will no longer require information to be shared with a third party.</p>	
6.	<p>IMPORTANCE OF DECLARATIONS</p> <p>KR stressed the importance of declarations and stated that it was essential that applicants are aware of what they are signing. KR informed members that a number of recent applications had been received where applicants had not clearly declared previous offences/convictions. These applications were significantly delayed, as drivers had to wait to be seen by the Licensing and Regulatory Committee for approval.</p> <p>Where a 'false declaration' is received we are required to send the applicant to a licensing panel. KR stressed that there is a zero tolerance approach for applicants who have not declared such offences such as driving points.</p>	
7.	<p>HANDBOOK AND AGE POLICY REVIEW.</p> <p>KR advised that Warwick District Council must review their taxi handbook policy by June 2019. KR stated that she felt a lot of it was outdated and that some parts of the policy no longer applies. KR asked all members to have a look at the policy and forward her any recommendations.</p> <p>KR informed members that a review of the Age Policy/Vehicle Standards in relation to private hire and hackney carriage vehicles was now being looked at. KMR asked members of various questions (attached bellow as was sent in an email) and informed members that she would like to have their views and opinions over the course of the next few weeks.</p>	<p>Receive responses from members</p>
8.	<p>AOB FOR NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Taxi handbook review and vehicle age policy review.</p>	

Email Sent to members on Friday 16/11/2018

Thank you to everyone that attended yesterday's DOF Meeting. As discussed I have detailed below some of the options that were mentioned around the updating of our Age Policy. As discussed this is a significant part of the overall review of the Taxi Handbook.

Our current restrictions:

Hackney Carriage:

New Licence must be side loading wheelchair access vehicle. Brand New (delivery mileage only).

Transfer Licence must be not more than 5 years old

Private Hire:

New Licence must be not more than 5 years old.

Transfer Licence must be not more than 5 years old.

Areas for consideration:

When compared to our neighbouring local authorities we are the only one that has a double standard. All of the other local authorities have one age policy that covers both HC and PH vehicles. **Should we be moving to one system for all vehicles?**

What should be the maximum age of a vehicle for first registration? Our neighbours require not older than 18 months, not older than 3 years, not older than 8 years for London Cabs and not older than 5 years for other vehicle types. **Is it reasonable for us to demand a Brand New vehicle for a HC and Under 5 for a PH? If so, explain why.**

What should be the maximum age of a transfer vehicle? Our neighbours require not older than 8 years for London Cabs and not older than 5 years for other vehicle types. **Would an 8 year old limit be more reasonable for WAVs in the District? Could this be linked to a mileage restriction as well?**

Should there be a maximum mileage limit on New or Transfer vehicle? One of our neighbours only accepts vehicles that have not exceeded their limits on mileage. They allow a 'Purpose Built Wheelchair Accessible Taxi' to add 20,000 miles per year to its clock and other vehicles to add 12,000 miles per year. They calculate on first or transfer licence how many miles the vehicle should have driven and refuse to licence anything with excessive mileage for its age (for example a 3 year old WAV must not have more than 60,000 miles on the clock, and a 4 year old saloon must not have more than 48,000 miles. A 4 year old saloon with 60,000 miles on the clock would be refused for a licence.) **If we were to change our policy, what would we replace it with? An upper age limit? An upper mileage limit? A combination of upper age limit and a mileage limit?**

It is recognised that there are some air quality issues in and around the town centres within the District. Whilst every vehicle on the road is a contributor, service vehicles like Hackney Carriages and Private Hire's that undertake more journeys than a 'standard' car and add more miles to their vehicles over the course of a year are conceivably contributing more than the average. We do not currently have an upper age limit. Should we consider introducing one? If so, should we be concentrating on the Age of a vehicle, the Maintenance standards of a vehicle or the Emission Standards that they met when built (EU ratings)? **What would you recommend: Age or EU number? What would it be: 10/12/15 years or EU4, EU5, EU6? Should any of the above considerations be different for Petrol or Diesel Vehicles? Should there be a different standard for Electric Cars or LPG vehicles?**

The DfT Guidance accepts that it is perfectly possible for an older vehicle to be in good condition and that the setting of an age limit beyond which they will not licence vehicles could be arbitrary and disproportionate. It is, however, accepted that a greater frequency of testing is appropriate for older

vehicles. **Should vehicles over 5 be MOT tested every 6 months? Should vehicles over 10 be tested more often?**

Can I thank you in advance for taking this discussion out to colleagues. Can I ask that you let me have your feedback (and a brief indication of how many people have contributed to your responses) by 16th December.

Kind regards

Kathleen Rose
Licensing Team Leader