

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY/DISTRICT COUNCILS

**AT A MEETING OF THE TAXI LIAISON GROUP HELD AT
WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
MONDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2008**

Present: Councillor S Khan (Chair)

Councillors M Bolt	-	WYPTA
C Greaves	-	WYPTA
K Rhodes	-	WYPTA
M Walker	-	WYPTA
S Akhtar	-	Bradford MC
G Horsfall	-	Calderdale MBC
A Murphy	-	Kirklees MC

Officers in attendance:	C Travesse	-	Kirklees MC
	D Broster	-	Leeds CC
	C Page	-	Leeds CC
	M Deplacido	-	Leeds CC
	P Roberts	-	Metro
	R Chaplin	-	WYPTA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Iredale (Kirklees).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no personal or prejudicial interests declared by members at the meeting.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Liaison Group held on 17 September 2007 be approved.

4. TAXI TOOLKIT

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided information on a taxi management toolkit that had been developed by Merseytravel and the North West Centre of Excellence.

It was reported that the project was a valuable source of information about the overall business of taxi management. Summaries of part one (procurement issues) and part two (skills and training) were attached to the submitted report and the full taxi toolkit could be viewed at:

www.nwiep.or.uk/transport/taxi-toolkit.php.

It was noted that the toolkit would inform ongoing initiatives in West Yorkshire and could provide helpful information to licensing authorities, local authority departments and Metro. Members were asked to encourage their authorities to disseminate the information as widely as possible.

Members welcomed the initiative and discussed the training aspects of the project. Following a request from members, officers from Leeds City Council agreed to investigate the possibility of amending driver ID passes to demonstrate to passengers that their driver had been trained.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the Liaison Group endorse the content of the toolkit.
- (b) That members encourage their authorities to disseminate the information provided in the toolkit.
- (c) That officers from Leeds City Council investigate the potential for driver identification cards to record that training had been received.

5. SAFETY AND SECURITY UPDATE

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided an update on activities to promote safety and security for taxi drivers and passengers in West Yorkshire.

It was noted that Calderdale were to consult with the taxi trade about the issues and opportunities in relation to the greater use of safety equipment in taxis. A report would be prepared for Calderdale's Licensing Committee to be held in November 2008 which could lead to a Driver Safety Policy being introduced in the District.

It was reported that a taxi marshalling scheme in Kirklees had been very successful and a report would be prepared for the next meeting of the Liaison Group. Kirklees had also produced a publicity leaflet aimed at the taxi trade entitled "Staying Safe" which could be adapted for use across other districts. A copy of the leaflet was attached to the submitted report.

The Liaison Group were updated on Leeds' activities. These included the roll out of their pilot of in-cab CCTV and security screens, proposals for a safety exhibition at Elland Road in 2009 and the use of personal CCTV for enforcement officers to monitor and record incidents.

It was noted that Metro organised regular safety co-ordination meetings which were attended by representatives from the District Councils, Police, GoSkills and VOSA. At a recent meeting the progress regarding the roll out of in-cab CCTV had been reviewed. It was reported that there was unfortunately a reluctance by some members of the trade to install in-cab CCTV although this could point to the use of security screens as a more effective security measure. Members expressed their disappointment at the low uptake of installing in-cab CCTV despite the 50% funding contribution available from the District Councils.

The Liaison Group considered how to promote the use of in-cab CCTV to the taxi trade. It was suggested that insurance companies be contacted to see if any incentives could be offered to drivers/companies who installed in-cab CCTV. Members discussed how the public could be made aware of which vehicles provided in-cab CCTV and it was suggested that adverts could be put on the outside of the vehicles and officers were asked to investigate this possibility. It was also requested that a report be prepared on the legalities and safety issues regarding in-cab radios and the use of hands free systems.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That a report be prepared for the next meeting on the Kirklees Taxi Marshalling Scheme.
- (b) That a report be prepared for the next meeting on in-cab radio systems.
- (c) That insurance companies be contacted regarding discounts for taxi drivers who have in-cab CCTV systems installed.
- (d) That investigations be made into promoting and advertising safety measures on the outside of taxis.

6. TAXI SHELTERS

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive updating the Group on the use of bus stops by taxis.

Members had previously considered the issues around the use of bus stops by taxis, particularly at night, outside normal bus operating hours. It was reported that the Department of Transport had advised that, at present, there was no legal basis to allow for the joint use of bus stops by taxis and buses.

It was reported that Leeds City Council had asked Metro for assistance in developing a pilot scheme where standard design Metro bus shelters could be installed and used as taxi only shelters for the benefit of passengers waiting for taxis. Following a review of taxi ranks in Leeds City Centre, four locations had been identified on Merrion Street, Wade Lane, the Headrow and Lower Briggate.

The Liaison Group were advised that discussions regarding the final details were ongoing and the potential for including advertising panels was being investigated. Members expressed the view that they could not support the proposal in its current format.

Leeds City Council reported that external funding would be sought for the scheme and there would be no cost implications for Metro. It was requested that a letter be sent to the Chair of the Leeds Licensing Panel expressing the Liaison Group's views.

It was noted that once the pilot had been evaluated a further report would be prepared for a future meeting of the Liaison Group. The evaluation would include a review of maintenance/cleaning requirements, usage and passenger satisfaction.

RESOLVED -

- (a)** That further discussions take place with Leeds City Council in order to try and progress the matter further in the context of a formal contractual relationship.
- (b)** That a letter be sent to the Chair of the Leeds Licensing Panel expressing the Liaison Group's views.
- (c)** That a report be prepared for a future meeting following the evaluation of the pilot scheme.