

**NOTE OF A TAXI LICENSING TASK AND FINISH GROUP MEETING
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL
ON TUESDAY 11TH JULY, 2023**

PRESENT –

Councillor F. Ahmad – In the Chair

Councillors

*K. McGladdery
M. Strickland*

Trade Representatives

*Mr. Akram
Mr. Ilyas
Mr. Oakes*

Officers present

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| <i>Neil Watson</i> | <i>Assistant Director, Planning, Building Control and Regulatory Services</i> |
| <i>Imtiaz Ahmed</i> | <i>Taxi Enforcement Officer</i> |
| <i>Lynne Rowland</i> | <i>Committee Administrator</i> |



1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded of the legal requirements concerning the declaration of interests.

The meeting was Chaired by the Chair of the Taxi Licensing Committee.

2. PROPOSALS FROM THE TRADE

The Task and Finish Group had been set up to look at improvements to taxi safety following a request from the Council's Policy and Resources Committee.

The Group was advised that the level of vehicle failures on spot checks had been high for several years. Discussions with the trade had resulted in changes to the licensing requirements for vehicles with a view to the changes leading to better mechanical safety standards however, recent taxi tests showed that standards had not improved, with the last test being the worst that had been conducted, with 93% of vehicles failing.

Suggested changes to the taxi policy had been put out to consultation and the results had been reported back to the Taxi Licensing Committee. The Committee recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee approve changes to the taxi policy as follows –

- (1) Increase the number of tests per year from 2 to 3, one of which to include an MOT.
- (2) Failure of 50% of tested vehicles of an operator over a 1 year period – operator to have their licence reviewed by the Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager.

- (3) 8 points to be issued to a driver of any vehicle that fails a spot check – A driver that exceeds 15 points to be brought before Taxi Licensing Committee to have their licence reviewed.
- (4) That an App be introduced to record daily vehicle checks. This would monitor that each vehicle had been checked before the driver started their shift – it would be part of the taxi policy that the App. was used. Failure to use it would result in review of a licence by the Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager.
- (5) 8 penalty points for any driver failing to have a record on the App. to confirm that before the start of their shift they had checked the condition of their vehicle. The vehicle must comply with what was recorded on the App. – A driver that exceeded 15 points would be brought before Taxi Licensing Committee to have their licence reviewed.
- (6) Lying/being untruthful on the vehicle check record – Driver to have their licence reviewed by the Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager.
- (7) Failure to immediately attend a spot check – Driver to have their licence reviewed by the Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager.
- (8) A vehicle fails two spot checks – Vehicle to have its licence reviewed.

In advance of this meeting, the taxi trade had been asked to submit, in writing, the ideas/thoughts of the trade, taking into account the above proposals and to submit any proposals of their own, for consideration at this meeting. No proposals had been received.

The Chair therefore asked those members of the trade present for their views on what could be done to improve the significant failure rates of taxis and to bring the standard of safety for the public to an acceptable level.

There was a general acceptance to increase the number of taxi tests per year from 2 to 3, although the trade felt that all tests should be Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) MOT tests rather than the current compliance test. It was commented that other things could be put in place as a last resort, but no new proposals were put forward.

The trade was opposed to the introduction of an App to record daily vehicle checks and an invitation to carry out a trial of the App was declined.

The Chair advised that he had made arrangements to meet with the trade in a few weeks' time and suggested that the members of this Group join the meeting and use it as an opportunity for the trade to submit further proposals.

AGREED

That members of the trade be given a further opportunity to submit, in writing, their proposals for improving taxi safety, for discussion at the upcoming meeting arranged by the Chair. The written proposals had to be submitted within three weeks of the date of this Group meeting.

In the meantime, a meeting of the Taxi Licensing Committee be scheduled to take place towards the end of August/beginning of September to consider any such proposals. Should no written proposals be received, the Taxi Licensing Committee be recommended to request Council to approve changes to the taxi policy as follows –

- (1) Increase the number of tests per year from 2 to 3, one of which to include an MOT.

- (2) Failure of 50% of tested vehicles of an operator over a 1 year period – operator to have their licence reviewed by the Assistant Director, Planning, Building Control and Regulatory Services.
- (3) 8 points to be issued to a driver of any vehicle that fails a spot check – A driver that exceeds 15 points to be brought before Taxi Licensing Committee to have their licence reviewed.
- (4) That an App be introduced to record daily vehicle checks. This would monitor that each vehicle had been checked before the driver started their shift – it would be part of the taxi policy that the App. was used. Failure to use it would result in review of a licence by the Assistant Director, Planning, Building Control and Regulatory Services.
- (5) 8 penalty points for any driver failing to have a record on the App. to confirm that before the start of their shift they had checked the condition of their vehicle. The vehicle must comply with what was recorded on the App. – A driver that exceeded 15 points would be brought before Taxi Licensing Committee to have their licence reviewed.
- (6) Lying/being untruthful on the vehicle check record – Driver to have their licence reviewed by the Assistant Director, Planning, Building Control and Regulatory Services.
- (7) Failure to immediately attend a spot check – Driver to have their licence reviewed by the Assistant Director, Planning, Building Control and Regulatory Services.
- (8) A vehicle fails two spot checks – Vehicle to have its licence reviewed.

3. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED

That no further meeting of the Task and Finish Group was required.

CHAIRMAN _____