

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
TAXI LICENSING COMMITTEE
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL AT 7.00 P.M.
ON 26TH FEBRUARY 2025**

PRESENT –

Councillor B. Newman (In the Chair)

Councillors

F. Ahmad
M. Iqbal
K. Salter
M. Stone
M. Strickland

Also in attendance

Councillor Y. Iqbal

Officers present

Neil Watson	Assistant Director, Planning, Building Control and Regulatory Services
Jackie Allen	Taxi Licensing Manager
Emma Barker	Legal Services Manager
Imtiaz Ahmed	Taxi Enforcement Officer
Lynne Rowland	Committee Administrator



The following person attended the meeting and spoke on the item indicated –

Zaheer Ahmed Taxi Safety

Minute No.37

34. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members were reminded of the requirements of the Member Code of Conduct concerning the declaration of interests.

35. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- A question was asked about why taxi MOT tests could not be carried out on Saturdays, Sundays or after 4.00 p.m. Officers agreed to come back to them with a response.
- A number of comments were made in relation to the knowledge test. There was concern that the requirement for drivers to pass a knowledge test to be licensed in Pendle was leading to drivers obtaining a license at other authorities, where a knowledge test was not required, then carrying out their trade in Pendle. A question was asked about why the knowledge test was needed when drivers could use Sat Nav for directions. A further question referred to an individual who had been required to retake the knowledge test after their licence had expired whilst out of the country, and why this was necessary.

Officers explained that the knowledge test covered issues such as licence conditions, standards, highway safety etc. and was not solely about the geographical area. There was no requirement to retake the test within 3 months of the licence expiring. If over 3 months, the test had to be taken again.

- In a follow up question, a request was made for the topographical element of the knowledge test to be dropped. It was agreed that this could be looked into.
- Reference was made to the process by which an operator was notified if one of their drivers had been suspended. The Committee/officers were asked what safeguards were in place to prevent a suspended driver approaching a different company for employment and was suggested that all operators be notified of any driver suspensions.

It was explained that the responsibility lay with the suspended driver, as they would be breaking the law if they continued to work as a taxi driver whilst suspended. However, before taking on a driver, an operator should check that the driver was fully licensed. It was thought that to notify all operators of any driver suspensions could lead to a potential data breach, but it was a matter that could be looked into further.

36. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13th February 2025 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

37. TAXI SAFETY

In response to an issue over the mechanical standards in taxis, in March 2024 a decision was taken by Council to change the Taxi Licensing Policy to require that all taxis be inspected each day and that this be administered via an online app. At the Full Council meeting on 19th December 2024, a decision was taken to suspend the implementation of the app. in order that meaningful discussion takes place with the taxi trade on vehicle safety.

The Assistant Director, Planning, Building Control and Regulatory Services submitted a report which advised that, over the last eight years there had been a series of consultations, meetings and discussions with interested parties about how to improve safety and provided information on the various factors that had prevented progress being made.

The purpose of this meeting was to agree what would constitute meaningful discussion with the taxi trade. Proposals for consultation were submitted for consideration which included terms of reference for a proposed working group, along with a draft action plan. It was noted that the timescales for action would need to be adjusted.

Prior to the Committee debating the proposals, Mr Z. Ahmed presented a report from the taxi trade. He explained that, following several meetings, the trade had come up with a number of proposals, the details of which were presented in the report. He confirmed that the proposals were supported by the trade as a whole.

The Committee thanked the trade for working together and presenting proposals for Members to

consider.

In view of this information, it was felt that the first step in the draft action plan, to consult with the wider trade by way of a questionnaire, was no longer necessary.

RESOLVED

- (1) That a working group be established with agreed terms of reference as detailed at appendix 1 to these minutes.
- (2) That Councillors M. Iqbal, K. Salter and M Strickland be appointed to the working group.
- (3) That the draft action plan be agreed, subject to the removal of the first step of consulting with the wider trade by way of a questionnaire, and the adjustment of timescales by one month if required.
- (4) That it be agreed that the above process constitutes meaningful discussion with the taxi trade.

REASON

To ensure that adequate measures are implemented to improve vehicle safety standards in Pendle.

CHAIR _____