



Minutes of the meeting of the HACKNEY CARRIAGE CONSULTATIVE PANEL held on MONDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2007 at 1.00 PM

**Present:** Councillor Miles (Chair)  
Councillors Carruthers and Dransfield (substitute for Councillor Box)

**Officers:** R Comitti (Commercial Manager), T Shulver (Senior Enforcement Officer), D Mullins (Enforcement Officer), R Carleton (Taxi Licensing Clerk) and P Taylor (Committee Manager)

**Apology** Councillor Box

**Number of  
Public Present:** 6

## **9.0 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

RESOLVED

That Councillor Miles be elected Chair of the Hackney Carriage Consultative Panel for the Council Year 2006/07.

## **10.0 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Hackney Carriage Consultative Panel held on 27 November 2006 be approved as a correct record.

## **11.0 UPDATE ON SAFETY ASSESSMENTS OF LOCAL TAXI VEHICLES**

The Panel received an oral update on safety assessments of local taxi vehicles. Members commented that the number of vehicles failing the safety assessments remained high.

The Commercial Manager informed the Panel that a report on how other local authorities carried out safety assessments on taxi vehicles was being prepared for consideration by the Regulatory Committee.

Members requested that at future meetings of the Panel, the update on safety assessments of local taxi vehicles be received in written form and include a statistical breakdown of the pass/failure rates for

vehicles taking the safety assessments. Members of the Panel suggested that a similar statistical breakdown for vehicles that passed/failed safety assessment spot checks would also be useful.

Representatives of the trade suggested that the safety assessment statistics received by the Panel should include categories of failures, as drivers felt this information would give a more accurate picture of the overall safety of local taxi vehicles.

Representatives of the trade highlighted the financial cost of the safety assessments and suggested that the number of annual tests should be reduced for drivers who consistently passed. Members of the Panel suggested that a report on how other local authorities had attempted to recognize drivers who consistently maintained their taxi vehicles to the required safety standards be presented to Regulatory Committee to allow the Council to investigate the feasibility of introducing a more flexible testing policy. The Chairman of the Milton Keynes Hackney Carriage Association informed the Panel that the National Private Hire Association had produced a report which included recommendations on how to improve safety assessment policies (attached as Annex).

RESOLVED –

1. That the standing item, update on safety assessments of local taxi vehicles, be received by the Panel as a written Officers Report.
2. That a report be presented to the Regulatory Committee on measures taken by other local authorities to introduce a more flexible safety assessment testing policy.

## **12.0**

### **ENFORCEMENT OF TAXI LICENSING REGULATIONS**

Representatives of the trade expressed concern at private hire vehicles that were plying for hire in Milton Keynes, especially near the Xscape building.

The Panel was informed that officers were enforcing the licensing regulations and that a number of prosecutions against private hire drivers were currently being pursued. Officers informed the Panel that extra resources were needed to effectively enforce licensing regulations, particularly at night time which was when the majority of offences occurred. Members noted that prosecutions required a considerable amount of officer time and that any costs recovered from a successful prosecution were negligible.

Members of the Panel suggested that the Council Member on the Thames Valley Police Authority be made aware of the private hire drivers concern regarding the enforcing of taxi licensing regulations.

Members of the Panel suggested that representatives of the trade engage with the Council's budgetary process to try and secure greater funding for the enforcement of taxi licensing regulations.

**13.0**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED -

That the Hackney Carriage Consultative Panel be held on the following dates:

Monday 25 June 2007

Monday 3 September 2007

Monday 3 December 2007

All meetings to take place at 12:00 noon in the Council chamber.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 1.05 PM