

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TAXI MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2010 AT 7.30pm IN THE RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL TOWN HALL

In attendance: Councillor J Alcock (Chairman)
Councillor P Ainsworth
Councillor S Brunskill
Councillor R Croasdale
Councillor J Holgate
Councillor S Hore
Councillor C Punchard
Councillor M Thomas
Councillor N Walsh
Legal Services Manager
Environmental Health Manager
Electoral Licensing Officer
Taxi Enforcement Officer

Also in attendance: Martin Nugent – Lancashire County Council, Sergeant Mick Dixon,
Chris Tattersall – Opening Doors.

Licence Holders: Andy Bolton.

WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all present to the Annual Taxi/Private Hire Meeting and introduced the various people present.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

No comments were made in relation to the minutes of the last meeting and these were approved as circulated.

HACKNEY CARRIAGE RANKS

The Legal Services Manager reported that there had been the creation of a new hackney association who had asked for improved signage and additional rank spaces. Martin Nugent of the Lancashire County Council had therefore considered various sites. He reminded the meeting that in 2007 locations on Wellgate/King Street for shared use spaces to be used in the evenings had been consulted upon, and the County Council received a number of objections because of the residential nature of the area and possible noise nuisance, therefore these had not been taken forward.

Possible sites that were now being considered away from residential areas included

- The bus bay in Market Place
- Outside the Platform Gallery
- The top of King Street near Barclays Bank
- Castle Street
- Moor Lane

- Lowergate (this may be affected by a proposed school crossing)

He felt that these sites had potential and was happy to take them forward for local consultation. The Taxi Enforcement Officer was happy with these sites and suggested that perhaps Church Brow and York Street might also be considered. In order to progress these suggestions, Mr Nugent would require a contact from the Hackney Association to be able to take forward the consultation exercise. The Electoral/Licensing Officer informed him that as many additional spaces as possible were required as there were 54 licensed hackney carriages. Sergeant Dixon was happy with the suggested sites as they were all largely covered by CCTV.

The absence of a rank in Whalley was raised and the fact that the hackneys currently unofficially line up on Accrington Road. Sergeant Dixon informed the meeting that it would be extremely difficult to site a rank in the centre of Whalley but perhaps there could be a pick-up/drop-off point outside Rios with a rank placed further up Accrington Road. Mr Nugent said he would look at sites in Whalley at the same time as considering the proposed sites for Clitheroe.

Sergeant Dixon also requested that from a disorder point of view, it might be an idea to try and move people up to the town centre to get a hackney on leaving KeyStreet rather than allowing hackneys to gather on the Lowergate car park. This would improve residential issues and also have the advantage of CCTV coverage. He also highlighted a problem outside the Dog in Wellgate where hackneys often stop on double yellow lines and cause an obstruction on the 'blue light run'. He informed the meeting that Police cannot enforce double yellow lines as it is a Lancashire County Council function. The Legal Services Manager informed the meeting that she would write to all operators to remind them not to park here and Mr Nugent said he would ask if some enforcement could be carried out in this area.

OPENING DOORS

The Chairman welcomed Mr Tattersall, a representative from the Opening Doors group to the meeting and asked for his observations. Mr Tattersall reported that although he personally did not have problems with finding taxis that would take his guide dog, he was aware of some people who did. He informed the meeting that it used to be practical to carry a guide dog between the legs in the front seat of a taxi, but that since the introduction of air bags this was discouraged and that it had been found the use of estate cars where the dog could travel in the back was far more practical. The Legal Services Manager reported that there are no estate cars licensed in the Ribble Valley but there are several other suitable vehicles that could. The Electoral Licensing Officer would provide Mr Tattersall with a list that he could then circulate to his colleagues.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman asked Mr Bolton if he had any comments he would like to make as no other licence holders had attended the meeting. She felt it inappropriate to consider the rest of the suggested agenda. Mr Bolton had no issues to raise; the Chairman therefore closed the meeting at 8.17pm.