

## LICENSING LIAISON PANEL – 27 March 2006

**PRESENT** Councillor Snape, Councillor Mrs Iddon, Howard Bee, Janet Brereton, Keith Ogden, Yaqoob Illahi, Ann Clitheroe, Julie and Antony Price, Brian Crompton, Mohammed Siddique

### 1 MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING:

CCTV Coverage – Janet Brereton reported that the times of the CCTV coverage would not change following the decision of the Council. However, the matter would be kept under review and monitored.

Enforcement Provisions – Janet Brereton informed everyone that the report for the Road Traffic Order has been finalised and will be going to the next available committee. Janet Brereton agreed to continue to chase this matter.

### 2 REPORT BACK FROM HACKNEY CARRIAGE RANK MEETING HELD ON 20 FEBRUARY 2006 - Janet Brereton informed everyone that the following had been agreed:

A 24-hour rank be re-appointed in High Street for an open-ended period.

The evening rank in Cleveland Street remain in place for now as it would be premature to de-appoint it.

Railings be erected in High Street to reduce disorder

Legal Officer to submit report to relevant committee and begin consultation process.

### 3 ADDITIONAL HACKNEY CARRIAGE PLATES UPDATE – Howard Bee explained that the Licensing and Safety Committee was to meet on 5 April 2006 to decide on the criteria under which the additional plates would be issued. All feedback and responses from the trade would be considered. The Licensing Unit would write to everyone following the meeting setting out the criteria.

### 4 IMPROVEMENTS TO LICENSING BEFORE EXPIRY OF LICENCE – Howard Bee said that the position of licensees renewing before their licence expired had vastly improved and thanked everyone. There had only been two drivers this year who had let their licence lapse and this was due to illness. Yaqoob Illahi asked for clarification and it was explained that any driver letting their licence expire would have the chance to put in a letter of explanation as to why their licence had expired. In any case, another CRB check would be required. There was some discussion as to the length of time the explanation letter would be allowed for. Howard Bee agreed to discuss this with Claire Hallwood.

- 5 APPOINTMENT SYSTEM FEEDBACK AND UPDATE ON LICENSING SECTION** – The appointment system has been up and running for one month and the Licensing Unit asked for feedback. There was a general complaints regarding the amount of time it took to renew a licence in the One Stop Shop, but Howard Bee explained that the officers had been given additional training which should address this. In addition, Howard Bee informed everyone that the Licensing Unit would now be staying in the Civic Offices at Union Street and not be returning to the Town Hall. This meant that there would usually be a member of the Licensing Section available to assist if there were any queries arising. Keith Ogden warned everyone that the parking regulations had changed outside the Civic Offices and that parking was only allowed before 10am and after 4pm.
- 6 FEES AND CHARGES** – Keith Ogden explained that a report detailing an increase in fees and charges would be taken to the next Licensing and Safety Committee (5 April 2006). The increases were in line with inflation, however, there was a slightly higher fee for a new vehicle licence as opposed to a vehicle renewal. This had been discussed and agreed at a previous meeting of the Licensing Liaison Panel. The surcharge for the Unmet Demand Survey would still be charged. Brian Crompton pointed out that the additional 7 plates meant extra income and Yaqoob Illahi asked where would the additional money be going. Howard Bee explained that there have been additional costs such as mailshots, meetings etc. It was agreed that this would be looked at again for the 2007/08 financial year when the additional plates were issued.
- 7 SURCHARGE OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE PROPRIETORS FOR UNMET DEMAND** – Janet Brereton informed everyone that invoices would be sent out to hackney carriage proprietors in April 2006 for the amount of £77.
- 8 PROBATIONARY LICENCES FOR NEW DRIVERS** – Howard Bee asked for the panel's views on having a probationary period for a new driver. A six-month period was suggested and Yellow Cabs said that they would be in favour of a probationary period of 3 months. Keith Ogden pointed out that Committee uses a probationary period at the moment as a tool. Yaqoob Illahi said that licences could be suspended or revoked at the moment. It was agreed to defer this item and asked for panel members to consider the pros and cons which would be discussed at a future meeting.
- 9 TRAINING OF DRIVERS** - Keith Ogden said that Preston City Council's business plan included measures to improve standards and the Licensing Section was looking into making training a requirement for all new drivers. He went on to say that the Government was pushing for it and it may well become compulsory in the future. Keith Ogden requested feedback and discussion followed regarding who would pay for the training, whether it would be designed to include customer care and whether it should be new or existing drivers.
- 10 EXPIRY DATE ON HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE PLATES** – Keith Ogden explained that the Licensing Section was moving towards

having expiry dates on vehicle plates. The members of the panel agreed that it should be included, but were concerned that the costs would have to be met by the trade. Brian Crompton suggested a disc in the window, which was more visible to the travelling public, was another possible solution. Keith Ogden agreed to look into this.

**11 SOME PROPRIETORS FAILING TO DISPLAY PLATES ON VEHICLES**

– Keith Ogden warned that he would be clamping down on any licensed vehicles that did not display a plate.

**12 TAXI MARSHALL SCHEME** – Keith Ogden explained that this scheme had been put forward by the police at the meeting to consider the Rank. It was agreed that it was a good idea, but that cost would need to be looked into. There was a discussion regarding the High Street rank and all agreed that the first step was to get the railings in place which had been mentioned previously, then speak to the officer who suggested the scheme with a view to including representatives from the local public houses.

**13 HOAX TAXIS – COMPLAINT RECEIVED** – Janet Brereton asked if anyone was aware of hoax taxi being sent to the complainant. All those present said that the address in question was not one that they recognised.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS** – Yaqoob Illahi raised a question regarding medical. This has been looked at before, but the Licensing Section would be prepared to take the matter to Committee if a doctor's practice was willing to carry out all the taxi medical.

There was still a problem with a private hire firm, however, it was agreed that this matter was still ongoing and as such would not be discussed at this panel

Number of vehicles operating from one base – Keith Ogden clarified that the number of vehicles operating from one base was dependent on Planning Services and each case was considered on its merits.

Brian Crompton raised concerns with the signage at Cleveland Street/Union Street and Keith Ogden agreed to email Paul Dunne.

The next meeting will take place on 15 May 2006 at 10.30am in the Committee Room, Town Hall, Chorley.