

## **LICENSING LIAISON PANEL – 7 July 2008**

**PRESENT** Councillor Iris Smith, Councillor Edward Smith, Councillor Pat Haughton, Councillor Judith Boothman, Chris Moister, Stephen Culleton, Janet Brereton, Bob Beeston, Conrad Heald, PC Herbert, Antony and Julie Price, Andrew Price, Paul and Ann Clitheroe, Yaqoob Illahi, Brian Crompton, Phil Cooper, Shak Ahmed, Hifzul Mala, Mohammed Sajid, Clyde and Sandra Crowther, Mazaffar Hussain, John and Debbie Grey, Rashid Sohail, Lee Williams, Peter Verhaege and David Hamer.

**1 APOLOGIES:** There were no apologies for absence.

### **2 MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING**

**2.1 Violent Crime in Chorley Town Centre** – following on from the last Licensing Liaison Panel, Steve Culleton reported that he had met with the Ward Sister at the Accident and Emergency Department at Chorley Hospital with a view to linking any drunk/disorderly behaviour by persons attending the hospital with the Pub Watch scheme.

**3 INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL SERVICES MANAGER – CHRIS MOISTER** – Councillor Iris Smith introduced Chris Moister to the panel.

**4 PUB WATCH ITEMS** - The representative for Pub Watch said that he had no specific items, however, he pointed out that the town centre remained quiet. He added that the longer licensing hours had been successful for some but not for everyone. He would be happy to participate in ways to instil life in the town centre. Councillor Iris Smith asked for an update on the Best Bar None award and the representative said that some pubs had now received the award and the next set of assessments were about to commence.

**5 POLICE ITEMS** - The Town Centre Community Beat Manager reported that there were no problems at present within the town centre. There were no questions raised from panel members.

**6 TOWN CENTRE ITEMS/TOWN CENTRE SURVEY** - Conrad Heald informed everyone that there was a presentation on the Town Centre Design Audit taking place on Monday 14 July 2008 and there were invitations for people to take away with them. He said that the Audit identified 10 priorities and one of the top priorities is Market Street. He explained that there will be public consultation of the audit between 9 July and 9 August 2008, following which an Action Plan would be produced. Conrad Heald was currently working on the findings of a business questionnaire he had sent out and looking at a loyalty card scheme. One of the panel members said that the rise in rents/rates was an issue. The Town Centre Manager explained how the rents/rates system works.

### **7 TAXI/PRIVATE HIRE ITEMS**

**7.1 Parking on Rank** – It was confirmed that Parkwise were now enforcing parking on the Rank on High Street.

**7.2 Rank on High Street/Bus Station** – Bob Beeston explained that with the enforcement carried out by Parkwise, hackney carriages were being moved on when parked outside the Tut 'n' Shive. Hackney carriages were now trying to use the rank at the bus station, however, this land is private land and there is an agreement in place to allow a rank to be there. As the bus station rank had not been used for some time the Bus Station Manager had allowed bus station staff to park there. It would appear that some drivers of

licensed vehicles have been using it as a parking area, leaving their vehicles unattended. The Bus Station Manager had said that he would make the space available for rank purposes for one month and monitor the situation. The Bus Station Manager had said that if the hackney carriage proprietors approached him, he would provide a list of times when coaches/buses arrived from destinations further afield so that the proprietors would know the best times to rank up.

**7.3 New Livery update** – Steve Culleton reported that the launch in the town centre had gone well and that two private hire companies had been involved. A questionnaire had been carried out at the time of the launch to engage with the public and it had received favourable press. A panel member asked whether the cost of the first set of livery could be met by the Council, but Steve Culleton explained that there was no provision in the budget to allow for this to take place. A general discussion took place and the following points were raised:

Position of the livery on vehicles already displaying company signage. Steve Culleton said that there had to be consistency of the vehicles displaying the livery.

Magnetic signs for licensed vehicles which were also used for chauffeuring/weddings. Steve Culleton agreed to look into this.

**Costs of the livery** – the costs would be as follows (all subject to VAT) – Rear plate £9, Door signs £16.50, Internal Sign £7.

There was a general view from the panel representatives that there had been a lack of consultation on this matter.

**7.4 New badges/photographs update** – Janet Brereton informed everyone that the new badges were now being issued. There was a question regarding the wording on the badges which stated that ‘it is an offence under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 to refuse to take a fare.’ The panel representative said that there had been certain instances of refusing to take a fare such as when safety would have been an issue or a fare could not be paid up front. Steve Culleton said that this was a legal matter and agreed to look into it.

Another panel member asked about a licence to drive private hire vehicles which had lapsed and which the Council had not granted. Steve Culleton pointed out that if a licence expires there was nothing to renew and that the application becomes a grant of a licence with the additional information such as CRB and medical required. Steve Culleton agreed to look into this matter, but said that it would require the conditions which are already in place to be changed.

Fare sheets – a panel member raised a question regarding fare sheets and Steve Culleton confirmed that the fare sheets would be available free of charge.

**7.5 Website for Licensing Liaison Panel Minutes** – Janet Brereton said that future minutes of the Licensing Liaison Panel would be available on the Council’s website for anyone to view. To find them, visit [www.chorley.gov.uk](http://www.chorley.gov.uk) and click on Business (left hand side), then Licensing and scroll down to Licensing Liaison Panel. Free website access is available at libraries and the Council’s one stop shop.

**7.6 Information sheets** – Steve Culleton asked for feedback on the information sheet which had recently been sent out as a means to inform the licensed trade of changes within the licensing system. Whilst there were some concerns regarding the costs, it was generally accepted that all proprietors should receive a copy of the information sheet no more than quarterly.

**7.7 Re-issue of Hackney Carriage Plate 9** - Steve Culleton informed everyone that all possibilities of a legal challenge had now been exhausted and that he would be looking to issue the plate in the near future.

**7.8 Vehicle Testing Arrangements** – Following the representations made by the trade and their legal representative, the Licensing Section worked at addressing the concerns of the proposed new vehicle testing arrangements. Another working party has been arranged for August to discuss the changes made. Once the conditions are finalised, they will be put on the Council's website to enable any representations to be made. There was a discussion concerning a previous working party which did not go ahead as there were no representatives available from the trade. One panel member raised concerns at the number of meetings he was being asked to attend. Councillor Iris Smith asked that anyone trying to contact her by telephone should leave a name and telephone number for her to return the call and deal with the matter.

**8 UPDATE ON UMET DEMAND SURVEY** - Out of the 5 invites which had been sent out only 2 proposals had been returned. Steve Culleton said that the costs were higher than he had anticipated and he was waiting to have a meeting with the Council's Corporate Director of Governance, Andy Docherty, to progress the matter. Discussion followed regarding how the information would be obtained and the Licensing Manager agreed that some information should be obtained by the surveyors coming on to the streets. The use of the CCTV camera was discussed to show unmet demand, but it was pointed out that the cameras were there to cover crime and there were legal implications for using them for other purposes. The Guidelines from the Office of Fair Trading were discussed and the view that a decision could be made by the Chief Executive regarding unmet demand, but the survey needed to be independent. It was agreed that the railway station should be included in the survey and someone raised an issue regarding fares booked with an operator being picked up by a hackney carriage. Bob Beeston said he would deal with such cases individually. A panel member asked for the minutes to record that the Licensing Section noted and accepted that the date on the letter regarding the survey was November 2007 when the letters were actually sent out in February 2008.

**9 GUIDELINES ON CONVICTIONS** – Steve Culleton said that the report giving guidelines to applicants relating to their convictions had now been passed by the relevant Committee.

**10 PLANNING PERMISSION RELATING TO PRIVATE HIRE OPERATORS LICENCES** - Steve Culleton said that he was currently looking at planning issues and working with the Council's Planning Section to ensure that the correct planning permission is in place. A letter will be sent to all operators reminding them of their obligations with regard to planning permission. A panel member asked for the opportunity to discuss planning issues with Bob Beeston and he agreed to do so.

**11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS –**

**11.1 Costs re livery** – There was a discussion concerning the cost of the livery.

**11.2 Tariff increase** – Representatives from the taxi trade handed a letter to the Council requesting a tariff increase due to the rising costs of fuel.

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING** – the next meeting has been arranged for Monday 1 September 2008 at 10.30am in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Chorley.