



TAXI AND GENERAL COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE DIGITAL MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY,
21ST SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 10.00 AM**

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs D. Price - Acting Chair
Councillor J. Simmonds - Vice-Chair

Councillors:

M.A. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, D. Cushing, W. David, Ms J. Gale, J.E. Roberts

Together with:

L. Morgan (Licensing Manager), T. Rawson (Solicitor), R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

Also Present:

Mr G. Edwards (Caerphilly County Borough Taxi Drivers Association)

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS.

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed and would be available following the meeting via the Council's website – [Click Here to View.](#)

It was arranged for voting during this meeting to be carried out by way of roll call.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND CHAIRING ARRANGEMENTS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, D. Cushing, W. David, D. Harse, D.W.R. Preece (Chair), Mrs D. Price and W. Williams.

It was explained that Councillor D. Price had been asked to Chair the meeting, as Councillor J. Simmonds (Vice-Chair) had originally given apologies for the meeting, but he was subsequently able to attend. It was agreed by the Committee that Councillor Price continue as Acting Chair for the duration of the meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting

3 REVISION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE STANDARD / CONDITIONS OF LICENCE

Prior to the presentation of the report, the Legal Advisor to the Committee explained that Mr George Edwards from the CCBTDA had submitted 3 questions ahead of the meeting in relation to matters unrelated to the agenda item, and gave assurances that Licensing Officers would make contact with Mr Edwards following the meeting to respond to his queries.

The Licensing Manager presented the report, which proposed that the specification and conditions applicable to window tinting / light transmission in the rear windows of Hackney Carriage (Taxi) and Private Hire Vehicles be reviewed, following representation from the Caerphilly County Borough Taxi Drivers Association.

Members were reminded that in April 2018, the Council amended its requirement in relation to vehicle rear window tint or light transmission from 70% to 30%. This was amended to allow the trade greater flexibility in relation to the number of vehicles that would meet the Council's vehicle specification given the more standardised use by vehicle manufacturers of tinted glass.

However, the report acknowledged that the amended policy continues to place limitations on the trade in view of the standardised nature of tinted glass used by manufacturers and the cost of replacing windows after purchasing a new vehicle. It was noted that many local authorities in Wales are transitioning towards Welsh Government's aspirations for zero-emission vehicles, and that work is being undertaken towards a set of national standards for licensed vehicles, which could both conflict with Caerphilly's existing position in respect of window tint requirements. Cardiff Council has already relaxed its policy in relation to rear window tint.

It was explained that the Caerphilly County Borough Taxi Drivers Association have made representations for the window tint position to be revisited. A consultation exercise was therefore undertaken with the trade on proposed changes to window tint requirements which received 96 favourable responses and 4 respondents who wished for the existing position to be retained. The views of Social Services and Integrated Transport Unit were also sought on the proposed changes and no adverse comments were received.

The latest report therefore recommended an amendment to the Authority's position in respect of rear window tint or light transmission and sought the Committee's approval to amend the Council's specification and conditions applicable to window tinting / light transmission in the rear windows of Hackney Carriage (Taxi) and Private Hire Vehicles to '*Windscreen & Windows*' - '*To be in a good clean condition and free from damage. All windows must comply with relevant legislation in respect of light transmission*'.

Mr George Edwards of the CCBTDA was then invited to address the Taxi and General Committee. Mr Edwards outlined the challenges faced by the trade as a result of the current position in respect of window tinting and asked the Committee to support the proposed change.

The Committee discussed the report and in response to Members' queries, the Licensing Manager provided clarification on the legislative requirements in respect of visibility within the vehicle and those requirements which are set locally by each authority, and also elaborated on the existing requirements in respect of vehicle standards. Members expressed their support for the proposal and recognised the need for the change to be introduced.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the following recommendation be approved. By way of roll call (and in noting there were 8 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Council's specification and conditions applicable to window

tinting/light transmission in the rear windows of Hackney Carriage (Taxi) and Private Hire Vehicles be amended to '*Windscreen & Windows*' - '*To be in a good clean condition and free from damage. All windows must comply with relevant legislation in respect of light transmission. Only original vehicle manufactured tints are permitted on the rear windows.*'

The Chair thanked all those in attendance and the meeting closed at 10.30 am