

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

LICENSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
MONDAY 4TH JUNE 2007

Wyre Forest Taxi Liaison Group Meeting Monday 1st May 2007

OPEN	
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Planning Health and Environment
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APPENDICES	Appendix 1 - Minutes of the Taxi Liaison Group Meeting 1 st May 2007

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To receive a report on the Wyre Forest Taxi Liaison Group Meeting which took place on Monday 1st May 2007

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to DECIDE:

- 2.1 **The Minutes of the Wyre Forest Taxi Liaison Group Meeting held on 1st May 2007 be noted.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Wyre Forest Taxi Liaison Group met at 2.00 p.m. on Monday 1st May 2007, with Members, and Officers of the Council, to discuss various items on an agenda of mutual concern.

- 3.2 Key topics discussed related to:

Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance

- 3.3 Officers reminded taxi operators of the need to respond, by 15th June 2007, to the Consultation Document on the "Department for Transport's Best Practice Guidance", previously circulated to all drivers and taxi operators..

4.0 DRIVER TRAINING

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4.1 Officers reported to taxi operators that regular local weekly training sessions have commenced, but the take up of the drivers is very low, with only half of the expected number (15 out of a possible 30) drivers having already undertaken the course. The trade were asked to remind drivers that it is a requirement of their licence to undertake training. It was pointed out that, if they do not take up this option, they will incur extra costs in paying for and travelling further afield for training, in order to comply with any future enforcement after the scheduled 24 weekly sessions have finished.

5.0 DEREGULATION PLAN

5.1 Taxi operators were still concerned over various aspects of the Wyre Forest Hackney Carriage Deregulation Plan.

5.2 The meeting discussed how taxi users in towns/cities were catered for in this respect and the possibility that people requiring a saloon car had no choice but to call a private hire vehicle rather than a hackney carriage.

5.3 The statistics on wheelchair accessible vehicles achieved to date were confirmed as being approximately 25%, i.e. out of a fleet of 98, 24 are currently wheelchair accessible vehicles, with 5 new licences (of which to date only 2 are paid for) allocated at the last Licensing and Environmental Committee meeting. The figure is targeted to be 100% by 2013.

5.4 The Trade agreed to provide a written reply (including evidence) detailing any changes they proposed ,such as:

- Their preferred alternative to the colour red for the private hire fleet
- Provision of a mixed fleet and compliance with national guidance and accessibility for disabled people
- The possibility of making operators/driving licences co-terminus

Local/national disabled groups, plus others, would then be consulted on any proposals before any recommendations are put before members.

6.0 INCREASED TAXI RANK SPACE

6.1 With the increased number/size of taxis operating within the district, Officers informed the Trade that it is necessary to consider more hackney carriage ranking space.

6.2 The Trade agreed to provide the Council with details of proposed locations and their agreement that the ranks will be used .

6.3 Officers could then commence negotiations with private landowners for locations, such as, Weavers Wharf.

7.0 OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

7.1 Other Agenda Items are recorded in the Minutes at **Appendix 1**.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 The Meeting was overall productive, with some positive comment by the taxi trade.

15.5.07