

## ECM PRIVATE HIRE/HACKNEY CARRIAGE TRADE REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

### MINUTES – 23<sup>rd</sup> April (11:00 – 12:30) AT BOLTON TOWN HALL

Cllr Hamid Khurram (HK) (Chair) Executive Cabinet Member  
Andrew Bolan (AB) Head of Regulatory Services  
Patricia Clyne (PC) Licensing Manager  
Lisa Timmins (LT) Principal Licensing Officer  
Benjamin Brookfield (BB) GMP  
Joe Fox (JF) Highway Network Management Manager  
Charles Oakes (CO) BBHA  
Mahmood Akhtar (MA) BPHA  
Sabir Hussain (SH) BHA  
Yasif Khan (YK) BPHA

#### **Apologies:**

Cllr Andrea Taylor-Burke (ATB) Vice Chair LERC  
Garry Parker (GP) Assistant Director

#### 1. Apologies – **LT**

As above.

#### 2. Introductions – **All**

#### 3. Minutes from last meeting - **HK**

Minutes agreed by all present.

#### 4. Trade Representative items – PHA: **MA/YK**

##### 4.1 Medicals

MA outlined drivers are experiencing lots of issues with the new medical form. They are being rejected for errors. Bolton requires doctors who complete the forms to be GP registered. Preston, Oldam, Bury and Rochdale all accept any doctor, only Bolton requests the doctor is a GP. Doctors who complete medicals for Manchester and Salford won't be accepted by Bolton.

MA also queried the question on the D4 form regarding 'has doctor checked medical records'. He feels they should only need to see recent details, not full medical history from birth. MA advised on the NHS app it shows last 5 years information and doctors completing the medical say its fine for them, but the form says checked full medical records.

PC advised the D4 form is not a council form it is a DfT form, and no amendments can be made by the licensing team. The team contacted the DVLA and shared their

response with MA in February. Read out in the meeting and duplicated below for the purpose of the minutes.

**From:** medadviser <[Medadviser@dvla.gov.uk](mailto:Medadviser@dvla.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 26 February 2025 16:20

*Thank you for your email regarding D4 medicals.*

*I can direct you to the following information leaflet produced by DVLA: [INF4D](#)*

*This gives information specific to the D4 medical examination report.*

*For DVLA requirements the doctor completing the examination is required to indicate on the D4 medical form if they had access to the applicant's full medical record for completion of the examination of the report.*

*As the full medical record is specified on the form this is what DVLA is expecting to would be used.*

*I hope this information and the signposted leaflet are of help.*

*DVLA Doctor*

PC explained that the licensing team are following the guidelines from DVLA regarding required medical records for completion of the D4 form. The requirement for a GP to complete the D4 and declaration enables LA to fulfill its legislative requirements in ensuring an applicant is a fit and proper person. GP's have the appropriate knowledge and expertise to complete the medical assessment. Doctors who are not GP's may not have the necessary skill set or knowledge to make this assessment, for example doctors who have specialised in a particular area such as psychiatrists or dentists.

MA question why other towns accept any doctor but not bolton?

PC advised Bolton cannot comment on other towns and how they operate, however Bolton contacted DVLA for advice and that is the advice we are following. PC confirmed she will share with the other 9 GM authorities.

HK clarified the process has changed to now include any GP to complete the form rather than drivers having one option previously and seconded PC comments in relation to GP experience and generic doctors not having the same knowledge.

MA stated that GPs say they cannot tick the question re full medical record as not seen history.

PC advised information can be accessed via the NHS app or printed out free of charge (two-week turnover) from GP. A test was done with local surgery.

MA disagreed advising GP's charge £40/£45 for full medical record and drivers have to wait 28 days.

PC suggested drivers need to challenge GP's as they are not allowed to charge for personal info. Subject Data Request can be requested.

**Action:**

**PC/LT to look at full medical access/history.**

*Update – Information available on NHS website [View your GP health record - NHS](#)*

4.2 Train Station Parking

MA advised the issues at the train station have not improved, regarding managing the rank and exiting the car park. Currently the trade is using cones to try and manage the rank but are still having issues as people move the cones. Private hire vehicles using the designated bay are unable to get out as vehicles queuing to leave block them in.

Suggestion was given to install a yellow box at the exit point as no one gives way to let vehicles exit. MA explained the hackney carriage vehicles have meters and time ticks whilst waiting to exit and there should be a clear way.

JF explained we tabled a proposal about putting flexible wands in bolted to the floor but when the trade were asked the wands were rejected.

HK requested a site visit to be able to understand the issues.

**Action:**

**JF to arrange site visit for HK to attend site with trade.**

*Update – Site visit completed on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025.*

4.3 Door Stickers

PC confirmed LT had shared document containing examples of other GM authorities door stickers following trades request Bolton removed door stickers as other GM authorities didn't have them.

MA acknowledged the document and requested Bolton alter the door sticker to be slimmer.

PC explained the importance of livery and purpose of public safety.

MA advised the safety of drivers is an issue as they are targeted because of the livery. PC outlined the support that was put in place by GMP (Taxi Watch' WhatsApp Group) but had received minimal reports of incidents or support from the trade.

CO asked how many incidents have been reported to GMP and licensing?

HK confirmed the removal of door stickers is not an option but would consider looking into reducing the size.

CO voiced concerns over removal of livery.

**Action:**

**BB to obtain figures of incidents reported to GMP.**

**LT to obtain figures of incidents reported to licensing.** *Update - 0 reports.*

**PC/LT to look into alternative options of door stickers.**

#### 4.4 Fees

YK requested a review and reduction of the licensing fees, he advised he was under the impression that when the service moved online this would bring the fees down. PC explained at the end of every year that the council has a year end and calculations show each area of licensing and how much it costs to cover the service in each area. The officers complete timesheets showing how much time is spent on each licensing activity. Since going online and the removal of the One Stop Shop the officer time spent on PH/HC business has tripled and this is due to the number of incorrect and incomplete applications submitted. There is no decrease in the level of support therefore we're not in a position to reduce fees. The only increase applied is the cost of living rise.

MA stated drivers are choosing to get licensed at Wolverhampton due to the costs. PC advised we have drivers who are licensed by both authorities and the reason they are so cheap is due to the number of drivers.

CO agreed fees are a problem, which is why Wolverhampton are getting so many applicants. Cross border issues mean work is being stolen from Bolton licence drivers. CO acknowledged that the council has to cover the running cost of the service.

PC explained this is affecting every licensing authority across the country and the problem is not specific to Bolton due to other LA's lower level entry and fees. The Deregulation Act 2015 needs to be amended, or new legislation implemented.

HK explained the council are not making a profit but will look at areas where we can save money.

PC advised we're looking at livery and the possibility of removing the date from the front plate completely and replacing the date of the rear plate with a holographic sticker.

HK advised trade reps need to lobby government, arrange meeting with all 3 MP's and HK will attend to address the cross-border issues.

YK advised he has tried to speak to MP's and got nothing back. PC suggested following the GM Mayors round table last week, there is an open door to start the conversations. A consultation is coming and now is the time to act.

MA requested HK to arrange the meeting on their behalf.

**Action – PC/LT to look into livery alternatives.**

**Action – PC/LT to speak to MPs to advise trade reps want a meeting.**

#### 5. Trade Representative items – BHA: SH

##### 5.1 Train station rank signage

SH stated the signage sizes at the train station are too small.

JF confirmed they are standard size for enforcement reasons and are regulation plates not for public information.

HK requested to be covered at site visit as per 4.2

## 5.2 Le Man's Crescent rank

SH advised the hackney rank on Le Mans Crescent starts at the back of parking bays and people can't see the hackneys waiting for jobs.

JF confirmed there is additional signage that directs customers to the rank and the rank is outside our offices and its very rarely used.

SH stated it is used but not very visible and they want to move forward to the two parking spaces.

**Action – JF to look into usage and options in swapping the spaces.**

## 6. Emissions/Clean Air Plan update – PC

PC spoke in relation to the round table with the GM Mayor and trade representatives and asked for an update from attendees. MA/YK/SH did not attend. CO attended.

CO advised more chiefs than Indians in attendance GM Council Licensing Manager Danielle Doyle, Trafford Council Chief Executive Sarah Tood, Leader of Bury Council and Clean Air lead for GM, Cllr Eamonn O'Brien. The devolution white paper is going to reduce the amount of power councils have over licensing.

PC explained the white paper is about giving powers back to local areas and talks about taxi licensing falling within the Transport Authority.

The roundtable outlined three stages:

- National action on out of area licensing
- Engagement on how to make GM licensing more attractive
- How to support the trade now.

There will be a 12 week engagement on behalf of GMCA and TFGM to engage with trade working groups and members start in May running until July.

Key engagement points:

- Hackney Owners: Views on the proposal to allocate the £8 million Clean Air funding on a first-come, first-served basis, using the existing per vehicle funding of grants of up to £12,560, with views sought on alternative proposals.
- PHV Owners: Proposal to offer financial assistance using GM funding in the form of either a £1,000 grant or a £5,000 0% interest rate loan repayable over five years to enable PHV owners to upgrade their vehicles to a compliant standard.
- Integration with the Bee Network: Views on GM establishing an 'Industry Working Group' as a trade body to advise on how taxis can better align with the ambitions of

the Bee Network.

- Making GM licensing more attractive: Views of, and suggestions as to how taxi licensing in GM could be administered more effectively and made more attractive.
- Incentives: Views of, and suggestions for incentives GM could offer to make licensing, in the city-region more attractive.

In relation to the current emission standard, nothing has been progressed and Bolton will need to consider the current policy, and any amendments to the implementation date of December 2025, with a suggested move to December 2026, and as we don't have an age policy on PHV, would we need to consider the proposed emission compliant date of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2030.

## 7. AOB - All

### Suspensions

MA questioned why a driver was suspended by the licensing committee for a traffic offence when the DVLA allows drivers to continue to drive.

PC explained members are considering if the driver is fit and proper and make decisions based on the facts provided on the day and in the report. It is at their discretion to apply sanctions to licences.

MA asked if he was suspended for 12 weeks for not being fit and proper, after the 12 week suspension is he then fit and proper.?

PC explained the purpose of suspension is to warn and discourage poor behaviour. The legislation allows us to issue warnings and sanctions to allow individuals to adjust their unacceptable behaviour.

HK added if the option to suspend was removed the only sanction available would be revocation.

MA asked if the driver appeals at court and wins case then is he fit and proper?

HK confirmed the appeals process is available and decisions can be overturned. It is the committee's job to look at convictions and behaviour make appropriate decisions.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TBC**