

Recommendations of Licensing Committee for improvement of services for taxi and private hire passengers

	RECOMMENDATION	PROJECT LEAD	COMMENCEMENT DATE	PROPOSED COMPLETION DATE	PROGRESS UPDATE
IMMEDIATE ACTIONS	Include a business unit to emphasise better customer service leads to increased business	JM	01.03.2016	Completed	Business unit included in new driver training day commenced 15.12.2015. Pass rate of drivers at 85%
	At annual fare review explore fare structure - ensure not discriminating – Equalities impact Assessment to be undertaken.	JM and RB	01.06.16	Complete	<p>Initial EIA undertaken and shows need for survey in to travelling habits.</p> <p>Questions drafted for survey concerning impact of fare.</p> <p>Survey launched for four week consultation to close on 1st July</p> <p>The results of the Equalities Impact Survey shows the following:</p> <p>The survey shows that disabled passengers do not use taxis from ranks (hailed) very often.</p> <p>The survey has shown that the majority of journeys taken are between 1 and 3 miles where the tariff has already passed the initial short-distance increase. Therefore the impact is equal</p>

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS					<p>upon all travellers.</p> <p>The survey has high-lighted a general impression that the tariff is expensive. However, the impact of this is equal for all travellers.</p> <p>The detrimental impact on disabled travellers only is therefore likely to be very low.</p> <p>It is proposed that no change is made to the tariff for this year.</p> <p>Consultation closed and results integrated in decision on tariff for 2016-2017.</p> <p>No further representations on tariff.</p> <p>Decision is no change for this year.</p>
	The council to request Midland Trains carry out an Equalities Impact Assessment and to explore legal options if they fail to do so adequately	KB - pass to RB	01.03.2016	01.08.2016 Revised date 1.12.2016	<p>Kris Beuret has commenced this and is currently chasing. To pass over to WBC.</p> <p>Now have contact with new manager, Steve Helfet and have emailed to begin conversation on his return from holiday.</p>

					<p>Met with Steve Helfet who was very helpful in explaining what LM had done in terms of accessibility. There is an EIA in place for the station although this is general and not focused on taxi provision.</p> <p>Further discussion planned about general improvements in next two months.</p>
	Work with the NHS to ensure that plans for redevelopment reflect the needs of disabled users	JM	01.03.2016	01.04.2017	<p>Contacted planning, hospital and developers to arrange meeting to discuss. Project lead for Watford, Neil Farnsworth assisting. Have agreed new drop off and pick up at hospital to be discussed between the hospital and DW</p> <p>Leigh Hutchings to contact hospital to finalise. Leigh aware. Chased Leigh who was advised that should he get no response within ten days of 4th may to get back to me.</p> <p>Have chased Leigh who has still not heard from Tim Duggleby who made initial offer of drop off area. See next objective for further information.</p>

	Work with Watford General Hospital to check that companies providing licensed vehicles via courtesy line have sufficient accessible vehicles	JM	01.03.2016	Complete	<p>Contacted estates management, Wendy Docherty to discuss contract arrangements and provision.</p> <p>Alternative provision currently made by allowing other businesses to leave cards in the reception area.</p> <p>Have left multiple message for Wendy Docherty to call but again, no response as yet.</p> <p>Still no response but will visit in person.</p> <p>Email response received from Wendy Docherty stating that no changes are possible at this time. No further contact regarding freephone. Response sent highlighting importance of issue and copied in to a number of hospital staff. None have responded. Concerns have been raised and requested for further consideration when possible.</p>
	Conduct walkaround with BID Chief Executive to consider position of ranks in town centre	JM AS	01.04.2016	Completed	<p>Maria Manion ready to meet but BID formally begins 01.04.2016</p> <p>Conducted walkaround on 03.05.2016</p>

					Maria Manion to contact INTU to discuss possibility of taxi and private hire using the INTU car parks for pick up and drop off.
	To include hackney and PHV customer needs in current parking review. To determine new working protocols taking consideration of agreed locations known to be important for elderly and disabled passengers	AS	01.03.2016	01.03.2017	Included in parking review. Strategy signed off and involves a 5 year program.
	To continue dialogue with parking enforcement to allow for grace period of 10 minutes when dropping off or picking up especially at locations known to be important for elderly and disabled passengers	JM JB	01.04.2016	01.04.2017	Initial email sent to Parking Services Manager to discuss Follow up email sent and response received explaining that there could be no change to current enforcement but that CEO's were advised to act reasonably. To continue to discuss if issues arise.
	Planning and highways officers to attend quarterly	JM	01.07.2016	Completed	Next drop in session scheduled for July. Officers will be invited to attend.

	driver drop in sessions and to actively seek new parking and ranking opportunities in developments	JC, AS			July drop in cancelled due to consultation event. Next drop in scheduled for November.
	Engage with community leaders to help promote equalities especially in relation to discriminatory interpretation of religion	JM	01.03.2016	01.9.2016 Revised date 30.1.2017	Work with Kathryn Robson Preliminary enquiries made as to how this may work in practice.
	Carry out further mystery shopping survey	JM RB	01.09.2016	01.09.2017	Tender in 16/17 for 2017 delivery. Growth bid to be submitted. Meeting with Louise Jenkins of Guide Dogs UK who are introducing a test purchase scheme. Initial dates discussed for testing in Watford Initial date now set for 5 th October.
	Conduct regular programme of plying for hire/disability awareness testing using trained investigators to allow for formal	JM	01.03.2016	Completed	Operation scheduled for 24 th March 2016 Agree number of operations/annum. Next plying op scheduled for June 2016

	enforcement where necessary				Both operations successful in terms of detecting or proving no offence. Next op scheduled for 9 th September 2016 Ongoing Drivers invited to take part in operations
	Offer free training and advice to customer groups to help them to enforce their rights where the council cannot take legal action	JM	01.03.2016	31.03.2017	Disability Watford asked to provide list of centres, groups to approach to provide training to. ALO to support delivery of training. Also discussed with Guide Dogs UK who have expressed interest in this service.
	Review new driver training	JM	01.06.2016	01.12.2016	Review underway
	Refresh disability and equality awareness training for operators and make attendance a compulsory requirement prior to licence or re-licence	JM	01.08.2016	01.01.2017	Training written and ready to present. Awaiting confirmation of powers to make changes to licensing conditions. Legal advice being sought on contentious issues Conditions can be changed and approved by AG. Need to consult on any changes. Legal advice begin prepared by Jason McKenzie

					Specialist advice sought from Catherine Casserly of Cloisters Barristers, leading expert on Equalities Act 2010 Awaiting response
	Prepare guidance for customer including disabled people on best use of taxis and what to expect and what cannot be provided	JM	01.03.2016	01.07.2016 Revised date 01.10.2016 to coincide with introduction of use of Braille on drivers badges	Guidance drafted and complete. Sent to Comms for opinion and design on 18.04.2106 Example text attached to report.
ACTIONS REQUIRING TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT	WBC to work with the trade and HCC to publicise and support contract applications	JM	01.05.2016	31.03.2017	HHC preparing to update framework imminently. Awaiting go ahead of dates to publicise to trade Have checked in with HCC and no change yet. Adrian Hardy advised by email Adrian Hardy now left and replaced by Trudie German. No change to procurement now planned

ACTIONS REQUIRING TECHNICAL DEVELOPME NT					until 2018 at earliest. Disappointing.
	WBC to work with HCC to simplify and make the contract process more applicant friendly	JM HH	01.09.2016	01.09.2017	Framework is a set process. However, may be possible to assist drivers in completing applications. Training and support proposal to be developed.
	Retain a mixed fleet but work towards a far higher proportion of purpose built HC and PHV with an aspirational target and clear timescale of 50% within three years. Conduct an audit of current wheelchair accessible vehicle provision. Update progress	AY	01.07.2016	01.07.2019	Consideration of some options informally discussed with AY
	Publicise the advantages of such vehicles and specialist features such as swivel seats, grab handles.	AY	01.07.2016	01.07.2019	No action to date
	Increase specification for saloon vehicles to include lower sill height, swivel seats and minimum rear	AY	01.07.2016	01.07.2019	No action to date

ACTIONS REQUIRING TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT	space				
	Include Braille overlays to go inside the vehicle to provide plate details	JM/LH	01.04.2016	01.09.2016 Revised date 01.10.2016	Email sent to DW to ask for assistance in design of cards. Blank cards delivered to DW for them to test Braille machine. 22.04.2016 Successful test. Have ordered Braille tape machine to test further options Machine ordered and trials to begin Machine ready to use. Agreed to implement on 1 st October 2016
	Stipulate improved security systems to include CCTV at ranks and in vehicles. Work with trade to identify bulk purchasing options	JM/AY policy change	01.07.2016	01.07.2019	Identified local supplier (Watford based) who can provide CCTV in line with recommendations of the ICO To seek funding to complement driver CSE training and to see if this can go some way to part funding camera for those who attended training and support attempts to report suspicious activity Funding secured. Technical aspects of CCTV systems being explored. Will likely be implemented this financial year well ahead of initial estimate.

ACTIONS REQUIRING TECHNICAL DEVELOPME NT	Revisit the vehicle licensing conditions to consider introduction of better vehicle identification	AY	01.07.2016	01.07.2019	No action to date
	Investigate the cost and requirement for the use of talking meters by tariff review of June 2017	JM	01.06.2016	01.06.2017	Prices of single UK manufacturer obtained. To consult with trade at start of 2016 tariff review Funding allocated to trial three talking meters between 2016 and 2017
	Set up a whistle-blowing scheme distinct from formal complaint scheme	JM	01.04.2016	Completed	Website suitability confirmed. Draft form designed. Scheme live as of 3 rd August 2016.
	Revisit the formal complaints scheme to make it more user friendly	JM	01.04.2016	Completed	To undertake through website. Form live as of 3 rd August 2016.
	Use the whistle-blowing scheme to identify problems and introduce testing against those found to be discriminating	JM	01.04.2016	Completed	This is already in our general processes as part of standard enforcement.

	Explore introduction of 'Gold Driver' awards	JM	01.04.2016	Completed	<p>Emailed Chair of Hackney Carriage Association who is happy to work on such a scheme.</p> <p>Spoken to comms to plan scheme. Seeking sponsorship from trade bodies for prizes.</p> <p>WO to support as they do Best Bar None?</p> <p>Pubwatch have agreed sponsorship of passenger prizes. To seek support of private hire firms.</p> <p>Timescale of April 2017 to run scheme.</p>
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