

**Licensing Team
Southampton and Eastleigh Licensing Partnership**



Southampton City Council
Civic Centre,
Southampton

Direct dial: 023 8083 3002
Our ref:

E-mail: licensing@southampton.gov.uk
Please ask for: Mr. Bates

21st July 2022

Taxi trades consultation process

After discussions with trade representatives, licensing committee councillors, others with an interest in taxi licensing, we are proposing a new system to consult with the trade and interested parties.

Attached to this documentation is a proposed consultation scheme. Please read through this and if you wish to provide any comments or feedback please email licensing.consultations@southampton.gov.uk or write to the licensing team at the above address no later than Sunday 21st August 2022. Please mark all correspondence clearly 'Consultation process'.

The responses will be considered, after which a report proposing a new consultation process will be submitted to the licensing committee.

Yours faithfully,

Phil Bates
Licensing Manager

SOUTHAMPTON HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE CONSULTATION FORUM

The purpose of the consultation is defined as:

- A two-way exchange of information, dialogue and discussion
- To hear views, comments and concerns of the trade
- To receive information, comments, and concerns of the Licensing Team, Members and the Council as a whole.
- Not a decision making forum
- Where matters are of a particular concern and with the approval of the Chair, matters raised can be referred to the Licensing Committee where a formal decision can be made.

It should be borne in mind that consultation does not necessarily mean agreement with and that consultation meetings cannot be decision making meetings.

The forum is attended by

- Licensing Councillors,
- Council officers,
- reps elected by the trade
- reps representing groups of the taxi trade that meet the criteria below.
- Relevant guests of the chair.

The criteria a group need to demonstrate is as follows

1. The Group is identifiable (named)
2. Provide contact details of the group (email at least)
3. Have a minimum of 30 members
4. Provide an adequate group constitution or rule book
5. Have a process to communicate effectively with their membership
6. Hold at least two meetings per year
7. Hold notes/minutes of all meetings
8. Have a process to elect the representative to attend the consultation meetings, including a substitute.
9. Have a process for the group to agree items to be proposed for the consultation meetings

Additionally operators who represent more than 3 companies with a combined total of drivers that exceeds 100 drivers will be accepted. They will need to demonstrate how they will communicate with the other operators and their drivers and proprietors, as well as demonstrate how they agree who will represent them at the meeting.

These checks for groups will be completed at least two weeks prior to the first meeting under this regime and two weeks before any new member is considered and annually from the anniversary date of the first meeting under this regime.

Groups wishing to take part are to submit evidence demonstrating all of the above to the Licensing Team who will approve the application, any they consider that do not meet the criteria will be brought to the attention of the Chair/Licensing Committee who will decide.

There will be two elected trade reps, one who holds a current private hire licence, whether it is as an operator, proprietor or driver and one who currently holds a hackney carriage licence, whether it is a vehicle or driver licence. To maintain impartiality and transparency the election will be conducted by a company selected by the council's procurement process. These costs will be split between the five taxi budgets in proportion to the amount of time recorded against each area.

The licensing team will prepare brief notes of the meeting, amounting to the topic discussed, the key bullet points discussed and any actions. We are not provided with meeting support so cannot commit to full minutes.

The following is an example of notes from part of the August 2021 meeting

Race Hate Crime

- Helal Ali is Hate Crime Training & Engagement Co-ordinator, H&IOW Victim Support.
- Is there to support marginalised communities
- Encourages use of Victim support charities
- Reporting to police does not automatically result in support

New Hackney Plate Allocation policy

- Consulting on policy
- Not issuing new additional licences but in cases where a current licence lapses.
- Unable to require PHs in same way we can HCs to be wheelchair accessible
- Unmet demand survey likely to be carried out in 2022 at a cost of around £15,000
- Wheelchair users experience difficulty booking taxis
- Fees cannot be used to encourage wheelchair accessible vehicles, any financial support is required to come from tax payers

Euro 5 WAVs

- Currently consulting on WAVs with Euro 5 Diesel to remain on fleet until end of 2024 as long as they comply with 12 yr age limit

Driver Badges

- Licensing will be enforcing the wearing of badges
- Will consider arm band wearing, 2 badges and other options

Future of consultation group

- Current system will continue until June 2022
- Proposals to be brought before next meeting

DfT Standards

- Large Response to consultation
- Before committee 8th September

Increase in hackney table of fares

- Last increase 2014
- Need to agree in time to do change for BHs in 2022
- SCC cannot regulate PH charges (Uber surge pricing)
- Agreement will be needed from trade