



Bridgend County Borough Taxi Forum

Terms of Reference

Version 1: January 2013

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1. Purpose of the Taxi Forum

- 1.1 The Forum shall enable representatives of the trade to meet regularly with Council representatives and other agencies to consider hackney carriage and private hire licensing matters and to further the objectives stated in the Council's hackney carriage and private hire licensing policy. This will include:
- Identifying opportunities for meaningful collaborative working
 - Building a common understanding to create a balance between encouraging the trade to thrive in Bridgend County Borough whilst ensuring the Council's statutory responsibilities relating to the trade are met.
- 1.2 Individual grievances are not issues for the Forum and should be raised with the Council, through officers, on an individual basis.
- 1.3 The Forum will act as a representative body for the whole hackney carriage and private hire trade, thus ensuring consultation with all licence holders to enable the Council to make fully informed decisions.

2. Membership

- 2.1 Membership of the forum is open to all Bridgend County Borough Council hackney carriage and private hire driver and operator licence holders. Forum membership will be reviewed annually.
- 2.2 The Council will be represented on the group by members of the Public Protection Department, one of whom will initially chair meetings of the Forum. Arrangements for chairing meetings will be reviewed after the Forum has been established for twelve months.
- 2.3 Guest speakers will be invited to attend meetings of the Forum as appropriate to the agenda.
- 2.4 Attendance at the meeting is by membership only; with the exception of those presenting at the request of the Forum.

3. Role of Forum Members

- 3.1 To assist in representing the views of the trade as a whole
- 3.2 To assist in consultations relating to the taxi trade
- 3.2 To assist in disseminating information to the trade and to update other licence holders on the work of the Forum.
- 3.3 The Forum will have no formal powers of decision, but will act as an information gathering and lobbying body, and shall act in the capacity of key stakeholder to inform delivery of the Council's statutory licensing objectives in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles

4. Chairperson

- 4.1 The Forum will be chaired initially by the Service Manager Trading Standards or a nominated deputy.
- 4.2 The chair will ensure that all views are heard and recorded in an accurate manner.
- 4.3 Chairmanship of the Forum will be reviewed every 12 months

5 Frequency of Meetings

- 5.1 The Forum will meet once every two months and meetings will take place in the morning unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

6. Secretarial Support

- 6.1 Bridgend County Borough Council will host meetings of the Forum at the Civic Offices or at an alternative venue as necessary.
- 6.2 Bridgend County Borough Council will take responsibility for taking the minutes of each meeting of the Forum and for circulation to members for agreement at the subsequent meeting.

- 6.3 Once agreed by the Forum, the minutes of previous meetings will be posted on the Council website

7. Work Programme

- 7.1 After careful prioritisation, the Forum will agree a Work Programme for the year detailing issues for consideration / consultation and dates for completion.

8. Reporting Mechanisms

- 8.1 On conclusion of an area of work on the work programme, the Forum will make a recommendation for consideration by officers of the authority or by the Licensing Committee as appropriate to the circumstances.
- 8.2 The recommendation will include a report of the issue considered and the reasons for the recommendation. This may involve details of consultation undertaken with the trade as a whole.
- 8.3 A recommendation as to a change to policy will require the approval of the Licensing Committee. Decisions on other matters, for example those that are purely administrative, may be taken outside of the Committee or legislative framework.
- 8.4 In either event, a response will normally be delivered at the next scheduled Forum meeting and disseminated to the trade accordingly.
- 8.5 Any resulting amendments to policy or procedures will also be posted on the Council's website.

9. Transparency

- 9.1 The Forum is a public body and the minutes of its meetings will be public documents.
- 9.2 The Forum is expected to be open, transparent and accountable. It should ensure that all interests have a voice where necessary and that any hard to reach groups are engaged and represented.

10. Review

- 10.1 These terms of reference will be reviewed annually to ensure that they remain current and relevant to the work of the Forum.