

**WASTE, RECYCLING, HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT POLICY
DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

MEETING, 22ND AUGUST, 2012

Present – Councillors Irving (Chairman), Chadwick, Darvesh, Donaghy, Kay
(as deputy for Councillor Sherrington) Peel, Radlett, A.S. Walsh and Wild.

Augmented by Members of the Licensing and Environmental Regulation
Committee for items 9 and 10 –

Councillors Burrows, M. Connell, Cunliffe, Evans, Mrs Fairclough, Greenhalgh,
Haslam, Kellett, Mrs. Swarbrick,

Officers

Mr. S Young	Assistant Director Highways and Business Development
Ms. S. Schofield	Assistant Director Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services
Mr. A. Morris	Lawyer
Mr. I.D Mulholland	Principal Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors Jones and Sherrington.

Councillor Irving in the Chair

8. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th July, 2012 were submitted and
signed as a correct record.

**9. LAW COMMISSION CONSULTATION – REFORMING THE LAW OF
TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE SERVICES**

The Director of Environmental Services submitted a report which set out
details of the Council's proposed response to the Law Commission
consultation on the reform of the law on taxi and private hire services.

By way of background information, the report explained that in July, 2011 the Law Commission agreed to undertake a law reform project on the law of taxis and private hire vehicles.

The report went on to summarise the full consultation paper which was split into three main sections, an outline of the key proposed changes, the case for reform and a brief discussion of the main themes and impact and a list of Bolton's provisional proposals and questions.

The report went onto highlight that the Law Commission consultation documents were only provisional so that they could form the basis of a discussion on consultation.

Members were advised that a response to the consultation had been agreed across the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) with local authorities. The proposed Bolton response was consistent with the responses agreed by AGMA.

Officers had also arranged a consultation meeting with the Bolton Hackney and Private Hire Trade representatives and a summary of responses from the trade was shown at appendid one to the report.

Members put forward the following comments / observations –

- matters around the possible removal of confusion by moving to a one tier system but that consideration would need to be given to the public safety aspects with the possible need for a uniform livery;
- that the fit and proper tests should apply to the driver and the vehicle;
- concerns regarding the proposal that Licensing authorities should no longer have the power to restrict taxi numbers and possible implications around ranking, bus lane enforcement and road traffic infrastructure problems;
- matters around the possibility of lower licensing fees for vehicles which met certain accessibility standards and concern that this would not be effective; and
- issues concerning a need to provide national standards training for drivers which would include customer care.

It was agreed to incorporate the views, as now expressed by Members, into the report being prepared for submission to the Executive Cabinet member for Environmental, regulatory Services and Skills.

10. FRAMEWORK CONTRACT FOR TAXI TESTING, 2013/14 AND 2015/16

The Director of Environmental Services submitted a report which set out details of the proposals for a Framework Contract for Taxi Testing 2013/14.

The report explained that it was proposed to establish a Framework Contract for Taxi Testing and the licence applicants would be liable for all testing costs, which needed to be directed to the garage carrying out the test.

The contract would be for two years with an option for the Council to extend it for up to a further two year period. The Framework would be procured in accordance with Standing Orders relating to Contracts.

The report went on to advise Members of matters concerning Category C Vehicles (accident damaged vehicles) particularly concerning their fitness for use on the road.

It was agreed that the Executive Cabinet Member for Environment, Regulatory Services and Skills be recommended to approve –

- (i) The procurement of a Framework Contract for Taxi Testing, 2013/14 with an option to extend for a further two years.
- (ii) The technical evaluation criteria and special requirements in relation to Category C Vehicles as set out in the report.

11. WINTER MAINTENANCE REVIEW

The Director of Environmental Services submitted a report and Stephen Young, Assistant Director Highways and Business Support gave a presentation which informed Members of the success of the 2011/12 Winter Gritting Service together with feedback on the collaborative working arrangements between Bolton and Bury.

The report also identified the proposed new operational arrangements for the winter season, 2012/13.

The report advised the meeting that on the whole the 2011/12 winter season was milder than in previous years which brought the challenge of assessing and making decisions in relation to marginal weather conditions and variable forecasts. The report went on to provide details in relation to salt stock levels, salt stock management, grit bins, improving communications within and beyond the Council, support given to schools and colleges and the vehicle fleet.

In terms of operational considerations for 2012/13, Members were advised that there were currently 25 gritter routes which needed nine drivers and nine vehicles.

The report went on to discuss matters around the proposed rationalisation of routes following a detailed study and the effect of this in terms of numbers of vehicles and drivers.

The report also highlighted the collaborative working with Bury in relation to the service.

Members in their discussions referred to –

- the learning from the harsh winter of 2009/10;
- the use of grit bins in the Borough;
- the plans for the Johnson Fold Estate; and
- assistance from the Waste Service staff should they be unable to do their job in harsh weather conditions.

It was agreed that the Executive Cabinet Member for Environment, Regulatory Services and Skills be recommended to approve the proposals as set out in the report for the winter season of 2012/13.

(The meeting started at 4.30pm. and finished at 5.34 pm.)