

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Taxi Advisory Committee held on Thursday,**

**10<sup>th</sup> December 2015**

### **Attendees;**

Mr. Pat Byrne	Chairman
Mr. David McGuinness	TTnH
Mr. Declan Wallace	Dublin City Council
Mr. Shane Hogan	National Disability Authority
Mr. Gerard Macken	Ordinary Member
Mr. Joe Herron	Taxi Federation
Mr. Michael Kilcoyne	The Consumer Association of Ireland
Mr. Martin Plummer	N.C.D.A.
Mr. Bobby Lynch	Allied Cork Taxi Council
Mr. Al Ryan	Irish Hotels Federation Association
Mr. Stephen Cluskey	Ordinary Member

### **Apologies;**

Ms. Mairead Hayes	Ordinary Member
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#### **1. Minutes of meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015**

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Mr. Michael Kilcoyne and seconded by Mr Martin Plummer.

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the newly appointed Taxi Advisory Committee. There are still 3 appointments outstanding which are currently being filled through the Public Appointments Service.

Monthly meetings of the committee will take place on the last Thursday of each month at 10.30am in the NTA offices. Other meetings will be arranged on a needs basis outside of the regular monthly meeting.

Mr. Hugh Creegan and Ms. Wendy Thompson then joined the meeting.

## **2. NTA Updates**

### ***WAV Grant Scheme.***

The aim of the grant scheme is to get more accessible vehicles into the fleet. There have been 3 previous schemes 2011, 2012 and 2014. Smaller vehicles are now permitted to apply for the grant which has helped increase the number of WAV's in the fleet. The 2015 scheme was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> July and was closed for application on 30<sup>th</sup> October. Wendy Thompson gave a brief update on the 2015 scheme.

A total of 361 applications were received under the 2015 scheme, with 153 grants issued (approximately 42%) 182 applications were withdrawn and 51 were rejected having not met the requirements of the scheme. 83 grants were issued in the Dublin area and the rest distributed countrywide. A total of €871,000 was paid out under the 2015 scheme.

134 new licences were added to the fleet

16 change/upgrade vehicles

3 Exchange to WAT

43 new drivers

Enforcement of the conditions of the grant and regular monitoring are essential to ensure that the vehicle is being operated as a WAV. If there are any breaches of the conditions of the grant the grant monies should be recouped.

There was a brief discussion on ways to make the industry more accessible. How do we get the service to the people who really need it? Increasing the number of accessible vehicles in the fleet, regular monitoring and enforcement, penalties for noncompliance, highlight the complaints procedures. It was agreed to keep this item on the agenda for the coming year.

### ***Update on Consultations***

Wendy Thompson informed the committee that over 5,000 responses were received on the recent roof signs consultation. A report will be prepared for the next meeting.

A similar number of responses were received on the mandatory SPSV driver safety equipment consultation and a report will be prepared for the next meeting.

### ***Immigrant Council report***

The Immigrant Council have prepared a report on violence, harassment and discrimination in the taxi industry which is due for publication shortly. There may be some recommendations that we may need to pick up on.

### ***Draft Transport Strategy***

The Draft Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016 – 2035 contains the following measures:

- Provision of additional taxi ranks;
- Better integration with other public transport;
- 10% of fleet wheelchair accessible by 2020;
- Fully wheelchair accessible fleet by 2035;

### ***Dispatch Operators issue***

Dispatch Operators have been experiencing difficulties recruiting drivers – request to:

- Lower pass rate for SPSV Entry Test;
- Introduce a training course, possibly with FETAC accreditation;
- Consider a one-year probationary period where new drivers are aligned with a dispatch operator for that period;
- Consider an apprenticeship approach to the industry; and
- Consider Garda vetting in parallel with SPSV Entry Test instead of subsequently

Some committee members expressed the view that the difficulties experienced in recruiting drivers were down to the high costs/fees charged by the dispatch operators

### **3. AOB**

**The next meeting of the committee will take place on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January at 10.30 in the NTA offices**