

Minutes of the Advisory Committee on SPSVs Meeting
Hybrid Meeting, Thursday, 26th May 2022

Present:

Chairperson	Mr. Cornelius O'Donohue
Representing SPSV and driver interests	Mr. Kevin Finn, Mr. John Murphy, Mr. Shajedul Chowdhury, Mr. Francis Doheny
Consumers	Ms Michelle Reid
Representing the interests of persons with disabilities	Ms. Joan Carthy
Representing the interests of Business	Ms. Ann Campbell
Local Authorities	Ms. Mary Henchy
Special interest or expertise	Mr. Noel Ebbs, Mr. James O'Brien,

Apologies:

Consumers	Mr. James Cawley
Representing the interests of older persons	Mr. Peter Fleming
Representing the interests of tourism	Mr. Al Ryan
An Garda Síochána	Superintendent Tom Murphy
Special interest or expertise	Ms. Fiona Brady

NTA Staff in Attendance:

Mr. Eddie Fullerton (Compliance Manager, Taxi Regulation)
Ms. Wendy Thompson (Director of Transport Regulation)
Ms. Jackie Mullen (Secretary)

1. Minutes and Matters Arising.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28th April were approved without amendment.

2. NTA Update

All statistics were updated to the 26th May 2022.

NTA confirmed that the statistic of 4.4 drivers per thousand population in the UK does include private hire/uber.

NTA will shortly be running a driver recruitment campaign to encourage more drivers into the industry.

WAV22 opened on 1st January 2022. A target of 300 new licences (WAV) has been set. 254 applications have been received to date. 169 applications are at 'provisional grant offer' stage. 70 grants have been issued as part of WAV Grant 2022 - 55 new vehicles added to the fleet and 15 vehicles replacing existing vehicles. Supply of vehicles is causing some issues.

The eSPSV grant has been paused for the moment and is expected to re-open later this year. A total of €15 has been allocated for 2022.

3. Proposed national maximum taxi fares review public consultation update

The national maximum taxi fare review consultation closes on the 27th May. A total of 557 submissions have been received to date, with 78% indicating their support for the increase. The recommended 5% increase includes 1% for cashless payment facilities. The increase will be weighted more toward night time hours to incentivise drivers to operate during peak night time hours.

4. Proposed small public service vehicle cashless payment facilities public consultation update

92% of drivers already have cashless payment facilities. Only 3% of drivers are unwilling to provide this facility.

If approved drivers will be required to have a cashless payment device in their cars which is compliant with all EU rules and regulations. Fines will be imposed where devices are not operational. A list of cashless terminals is available on the public consultation website.

NTA requested that the Committee submit a view in writing for each of the consultations (max. fare and cashless payment facilities)

5. AOB

A review of the fixed penalty notices is taking place with specific focus on vulnerable users, with new proposals to increase the maximum permissible fines for infringements in relation to wheelchair uses and carriage of guide dogs. Any proposed changes will come into effect early next year. A public consultation will take place later in the year.

The Committee had previously raised concerns about the failure to meet the demand for wheelchair accessible taxis.

NTA informed the Committee that a number of measures are in place/being put in place to tackle this issue.

- Increase in the level of fines for infringements
- Increase compliance – including both covert and overt operations
- New training for all drivers regardless of whether they are operating a WAV. Drivers will be required to take this training on renewal of their license (at least once every 5 years).

The Advisory Committee agreed that it supports the proposals in relation to maximum fares and cashless payments and the Chair will formally notify NTA.

Kevin Finn informed the Committee that this was his last meeting. He expressed his thanks to Wendy Thompson and her team for all the supports during his time on the Committee and he also extended his thanks to the Chair.

The Chair thanked Kevin for his valued contribution to the work of the Committee during his time as a member of the Committee.

Date of next meeting – Thursday 30th June 2022 at 10.30am (Hybrid meeting)

Signed: _____ **Dated** _____