

Meeting of the Advisory Committee on SPSVs

30th April 2026, 10.30 am.

NTA Office, Haymarket House, Smithfield, Dublin.

Present:

Interim Chairperson	Ms. Catherine Flanagan
<i>Representing</i>	
Small Public Service Vehicle and Driver Interests	Mr. Alan Cooley Mr. Francis Doheny Mr. Shajedul Chowdhury
Special Interest or Expertise in Matters Relating to the Functions of the Authority, the Advisory Committee or Related Matters	Mr. Harpreet Singh Ms. Christine O'Connor Mr. Der Calnan
The Interests of Business	Mr. Paul Nolan
The Interests of Local Authorities	Mr. Brendan O'Brien
The Interests of Persons with Disabilities	Mr. John Fulham
The Interests of Older Persons	Ms. Mai Quaid

Apologies:

The Interests of Consumers	Mr. Adrian Cummins
Small Public Service Vehicle and Driver Interests	Mr. Anthony Kelly
Special Interest or Expertise in Matters Relating to the Functions of the Authority, the Advisory Committee or Related Matters	Mr. Alan Fox

NTA Representatives in Attendance

Ms. Jen Moran, *Secretary to the Advisory Committee on SPSVs*

CCPC Representatives in Attendance

Mr. Geoffrey Gray

Mr. Simon Barry

1. Attendance, note apologies and any conflicts of interest. Approval of minutes for meetings on 26th February and 26th March 2026

Interim chair noted apologies and clarified if there were any conflicts of interest; none were raised. Both sets of minutes agreed to and confirmed.

2. Matters arising

Guidance for the use of dash cams

The guidance provided by the Data Protection Commission was discussed. A lack of clarity with propriety was raised by Members. Interim Chair suggested clarity needed for dash cams. A Member queried AGS requesting dashcam footage in the event of a crime or road traffic accident. Members agreed it's laid out in the document that the-onus is on the driver.

Action raised to request further clarification from DPC regarding rules laid out in the document.

3. Correspondence

Request for meeting – Taxis for Ireland Coalition

Interim Chair discussed the email sent by the Taxis for Ireland Coalition where they requested an opportunity to present to the Committee. A wide-ranging discussion followed. A Member stated their opinion is the Advisory Committee is not the right audience to seek discussion of a national taxi strategy, given the Committee's remit. A Member observed that the Coalition was financially supported by Uber, and had a significant lobbying track record to Government through Hanover Communications. Interim Chair noted that the Taxis for Ireland Coalition was made up of a number of members organisations.

A Member stated they feel the Coalition might not understand the role and responsibilities of the Advisory Committee, and felt unsure what would be achieved from the meeting.

Member mentioned how in Copenhagen there was a service to call a taxi that excluded Uber, asked if this service could be applied to Ireland. A Member explained in these cases large taxi companies buy up all other competition and exclude Uber. A Member highlighted how they previously had taxi regulation in Japan, then Uber carried out a lot of lobbying and now it has a ride-share similar system to the US. Member explained that there is now a screen for taxis available in hotels in Ireland. He mentioned how he does not think there is a shortage of taxis as there are constant queues of taxis waiting for passengers at hubs, such as train stations, the airport etc.

Another Member highlighted how fixed fares might be considered unfair as they do not include wait times, thus undermining the driver's opportunity to earn. A Member asked the Committee if they had made submissions to the recent NTA call for inputs; several members stated they had not.

Member discussed the Coalition's stated position on meeting specific needs of the hospitality sector while also seeking to make significant reform of the public service vehicle market. Interim Chair highlighted how the Coalition have discussed other issues, such as vehicle safety and clarity around metering, issues the Committee agrees with and therefore is a reason it would be worth meeting with them. It would also provide an opportunity to question the Coalition on their stance on WAVs.

Member pointed out that declining the request to meet might reflect negatively on the Committee's openness to alternative perspectives.

It was noted that the Coalition had previously presented to the Committee in Q4 2024, with minutes available for newer members of the Committee to read. It was also observed that the report from the consultation on Dispatch Operators was pending. It was also observed that dialogue with stakeholders is important in identifying points of agreement and difference. While seeking a consensus, the balance of the Committee were in favour of deferring an invitation to the Coalition.

Interim Chair informed the Members that she will communicate to the Coalition that the Committee will consider the meeting later on in the year.

4. Committee discussion

Interim Chair spoke with representatives from the Department of Transport recently and discussed the strategic work plan. She confirmed Kevin O'Brien from NTA will attend the May meeting to discuss this further.

Interim Chair asked if Members can agree to postpone the June meeting scheduled to take place on 25th June as she is unable to attend. Members agreed to combine June/July, extending the meeting to a longer duration.

In advance of their presentation, Interim Chair clarified to the Committee that the reason the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) were presenting was to report on their survey published in February 2026; to provide a context for the survey, and to explain its findings and recommendations. A Member stated to the Committee for total transparency how the IWS had already met with CCPC where their concerns were raised.

CCPC Representatives joined the meeting

11.15 am – 12.15pm – Advisory Committee and CCPC

5. Geoffrey Gray; Commission Member, and Simon Barry; Director of Research, Advocacy and International, CCPC to discuss the findings of the February 2026 report

Interim Chair asked the Members to introduce themselves to the CCPC Representatives. CCPC thanked the Committee for the invitation and outlined how important open dialogue is and to hear the Committee's perspective. Interim Chair asked CCPC what they do and their responsibilities, how often reports like the one they're presenting are done. CCPC stated that they are active in several markets and report on issues that consumers face across many sectors of the economy, presenting evidence-based recommendations.

In their presentation, CCPC reported their finding that SPSV numbers have dropped by 40%, illustrating a major change in the market supply. A Member highlighted how an increase in car ownership possibly led to less need for SPSVs; another Member asked why the start point was 2008 being the pre-crash peak, and CCPC confirmed because it was a high point and represented a change in how the market operated; how the market didn't recover after the recession.

Interim Chair questioned why the peak was not included and highlighted why the peak happened. A Member listed reasons being it was prior to the recession, licences were €3, branding not required

etc. How following the Taxi Regulation Act in 2013, licences increased from €3 to €250. Interim Chair highlighted how the peak should have some context, asked CCPC if data from earlier years could be presented to be considered for inclusion to illustrate a longitudinal trend, to which they agreed.

Interim Chair asked CCPC to clarify their fieldwork; was everyone asked a consumer themselves, was each person's various responses included. Up to 5 mins was included on the presentation as nature of difficulty, Interim Chair questioned if 5 minutes wait is a particular difficulty and CCPC clarified in general it is not, but it was self-reported by the consumer as one.

A Member inquired if there is a built-in bias that a person is more likely to be negative when asked about regulations and government areas.

CCPC clarified that the term 'ride hailing' to them is ride hailing seen in other countries; using regulated private hire type vehicles.

Interim Chair asked if the original research question of the survey was 'are there enough taxis to meet consumer needs?' but the CCPC clarified that the research was to establish if there was a gap in the market that ride-sharing could fill.

A Member asked CCPC if they had considered the changes in salary for a driver before and after these recommended changes; they confirmed they had not as the survey was predominantly looking at the consumer.

A Member asked CCPC if they considered the repercussions of their ride-share recommendation, that it would undermine the work done by NTA e.g: increase in EVs within the fleet, that there would be no regulation or vetting. CCPC confirmed they discussed this with regulators and every authority across other countries.

CCPC stated that the Dispatch Operator review was a consideration as to why the survey was carried out at that time and confirmed they submitted to the Call for Inputs. Interim Chair observed that the Coalition for Taxi Reform, at the JOC on Transport in 2025, recommended that such a survey be carried out. CCPC stated it is their statutory objective to do so.

Interim Chair questioned how the competition would work with the fixed pricing currently present in regulation, i.e. that a maximum fare framework applies. CCPC discussed the apps and how their transparency is positive for the consumer. A Member asked if same questions are going to be asked during an off-peak time, thinks there should be a balanced approach and that there are flaws with the current survey. CCPC agreed and pointed out that they included quieter months Jan/Feb as well as Dec.

A Member pointed out that there a lot more nuances involved than CCPC considered, how Ireland is acknowledged on an international scale as progressive regarding its services for people with disabilities. CCPC question why there is a WAV requirement when it does not provide its stated objective, how there is no guarantee WAVs will be used for those that need them. A Member pointed out that removing the WAV requirement would mean there would be no WAVs anymore.

A Member discussed how one issue was highlighted in the report, instead of considering barriers to entry, i.e. looking at the reason more people are not entering the industry; CCPC jumped to the conclusion of suggesting an entirely new operating model.

The Committee observed that some of the recommendations made by the CCPC in their report did not appear to be grounded in the survey questions and answers.

Interim Chair asked CCPC what happens next after the survey has been released and the recommendation made, if they are expecting a policy change to occur as a result. They confirmed they expect to discuss with NTA and the Minister, especially with the Dispatch Operator review underway. CCPC repeated that they appreciate offers of data and that they would look at that.

A Member brought up how Uber are spending so much money in various countries. CCPC confirmed they never met with Uber and outlined how they are independent. That CCPC is an agency, not a third party. Interim Chair highlighted that the starting point for the report was not made clear in its press release, and was not the point where it perhaps should have started. Interim Chair also underlined that the data received was from official sources (e.g: CSO) who are committed to high quality work, pointing out how Government agencies work, and how the data they use informs policy decisions.

CCPC pointed out they felt the questions being asked about the survey so far had been asked by Members with specific interests. Chair clarified that the Committee was made up of many different voices, industry and none, as appointed by the Minister.

A Member repeated that they are disappointed with the WAV recommendation, and how it remains unchanged despite feedback provided. CCPC confirmed they are fully supportive of a taxi system that supports the needs of people with disabilities; rather just looking to the international system and how they deal with it.

CCPC Representatives left the meeting

Members discussed the WAV recommendation outlined in the CCPC presentation, what removing all these regulations would mean. A Member stated that the press coverage seems disingenuous now the starting point has been confirmed. Interim Chair confirms she will thank them for coming, will ask if there are any call for actions and if there is any information they would like provided to them. Interim Chair points out how state agencies can only use state statistics (e.g: CSO) to inform decisions, and that some shortcomings or variances may exist. If CCPC do confirm they want qualitative information, questions what would be done with this.

It was noted that the Coalition for Taxi Reform was seeking a change in policy, and had recommended the research action by the CCPC; the CCPC research question appeared to be anchored in the need for market reform. For example, a Member pointed out how, for a consumer-based survey, consumer-based questions were not asked (e.g: prices etc.) Also there were no questions pertaining to consumer appetite for ride-sharing, yet ride-sharing was the lead recommendation.

6. AOB and agreed actions

A Member discussed someone they know based in Germany comes to work as a driver in Ireland for five weeks and goes back as he cannot make a living as a driver in Germany.

The meeting concluded at 12.30pm.

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 28th May at the NTA offices.