**Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Consultative Forum**

**Terms of Reference**

**1. Purpose of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Consultative Forum (“the Forum”)**

1.1 The Forum will enable representatives of the trade to meet regularly with Council Officers to consider and make recommendations on behalf of the trade on hackney carriage and private hire licensing matters to further the objectives stated in the Council’s Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (“the Policy”).

1.2 Where appropriate, the Forum will be responsible for the completion of items on the Forum Work Plan, utilising smaller working sub-groups as necessary.

1.3 Individual grievances are not issues for the Forum and should be raised with Council Officers in the normal manner.

1.4 The Forum will act as a representative body for the whole hackney carriage and private hire trade, facilitating consultation with all licence holders to enable the Council to make fully informed decisions.

**2. Membership of the Forum**

2.1 Membership of the Forum is open to all North Hertfordshire hackney carriage and private hire licence holders however membership is subject to a formal application process.

2.2 Applications for membership should be made in writing to the Licensing Manager stating why membership is requested and what the potential member believes they can contribute to the Forum.

2.3 Members of the Forum are expected to attend regularly in order to maintain membership.

2.4 Members that fail to attend without good reason for three (3) consecutive meetings will forfeit their place on the Forum.

2.5 The Forum can co-opt members from outside bodies, such as the police, as deemed appropriate by the Licensing Manager.

2.6 With the consent of the Licensing Manager, members can send a nominated representative in their absence.

**3. Role of Members**

3.1 To assist with representing the views of the trade as a whole and report back to them with any progress on issues raised.

3.2 To assist with disseminating information back to the trade to ensure that all licence holders are fully informed of latest policy, legislation and procedure updates and/or amendments.

**4. Forum Chair**

4.1 The Forum will be chaired by the Licensing Manager or a nominated deputy.

4.2 The Chair will ensure that all views are heard and recorded in an accurate manner.

4.3 The Chair will ensure that the recommendations of the Forum are forwarded to the Service Director and to the Executive Member responsible for licensing.

4.4 The Chair will determine applications for membership and be responsible for withdrawing membership where appropriate.

**5. Frequency of Meetings**

5.1 The Forum will ordinarily meet at least four (4) times per calendar year and at shorter intervals as deemed necessary by the chair.

**6. Secretarial Support**

6.1 Forum meetings will ordinarily be held at the Council Offices in Letchworth Garden City however alternative venues may be chosen at the discretion of the Chair provided that suitable notice is given to members.

6.2 Minutes of the previous meeting and the agenda for the next meeting will ordinarily be published on the Council’s website no later than two (2) weeks prior to the next Forum meeting.

6.3 The Council will produce basic minutes of Forum meetings.

**7. Working Sub-Groups**

7.1 Small working sub-groups can be appointed to consider specific Work Plan issues in detail.

7.2 Sub-groups must report their findings back to the Forum for final consideration.

7.3 Working sub-groups can appoint their own chairperson, who must be a member of the Forum, and who will be responsible for reporting back to the Forum.

7.4 Working sub-groups will be responsible for secretarial support to their meetings.

7.5 Working sub-groups may co-opt members who are particularly relevant to the sub-group’s area of investigation.

**8. Reporting Mechanisms**

8.1 Once an issue on the Work Plan has been completed, the Forum may make a recommendation on behalf of the trade for the Council to consider.

8.2 Where appropriate, the recommendation will be accompanied by a full report of the issues considered and the reasons for the recommendation. This should also include details of the consultation undertaken with the trade as a whole.

8.3 Once the Council has considered a recommendation, a response will be presented to the Forum in the first instance for dissemination to the trade.

**9. Work Plan**

9.1 The Work Plan will consist of issues that the Forum considers necessary for wider consultation and will include timescales for completion.

9.2 Issues may include policy amendments or procedural changes, but may equally consider any national consultations to respond on behalf of the trade in North Hertfordshire.

**10. Transparency**

10.1 The Forum is a public body and its minutes will be public documents.

10.2 The Forum is expected to be open, transparent and accountable.

10.3 The Forum should ensure that all interests have a voice and that hard to reach groups are engaged and represented.