



# ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

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**Thursday 16 January 2014**

**Attended:** Cllr Bob Backhouse, Sally Balcon, David Barnett, Lorna Blackmore, Stephen Bowser, June Bridgeman, David Bushell (sub), Cllr Mrs Barbara Cobbold, Adrian Cory, John Cunningham, Michael Doyle, John Forster, Alex Green, Michaela van Halewyn, Tim Harper, Dorothea Holman, Michael Holman, Bill Kern, Kyrios Kyriacou, George Lawson (sub), Katharina Mahler-Bech, Chris Morris, Cllr David Neve, Cllr James Scholes, Cllr David Scott, Peter Taylor, Alastair Tod, David Wakefield (Chairman), Mary Wardrop, Margaret Watts, Cllr Mrs Lynne Weatherly, Victor Webb, Philip Whitbourn (sub) and Cllr Chris Woodward

**TWBC officers present:** Adam Chalmers (Democratic and Community Engagement Manager), Holly Goring (Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager), Gary Stevenson (Head of Environment and Street Scene) and Mike McGeary (Democratic Services Officer)

**Also present:** Léonie Harrington and Cllr Paul Barrington-King (Portfolio-holder for Sustainability)

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were reported from: Jane Fenwick, Sue Kaner, Jim Kedge, Angela Phillips, Chris Wigley and Cllrs Mrs Catherine Mayhew, Trevor Poile and Frank Williams.

### **2. MEMBERSHIP CHANGES**

Mike McGeary, TWBC's Democratic Services Officer, reported the following: (a) that the Chairman had approved an application to join the Town Forum from the Number One Community Trust; their representative, Adrian Cory, was welcomed to his first meeting; and (b) that Maggie Fraser had stood down as representative for the Tunbridge Wells Over 50s Forum and had been replaced by David Morris, with Cllr Mrs Barbara Cobbold as the substitute member.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED –** That the minutes of the meetings (including the Annual General Meeting) held on 28 November 2013 be agreed.

### **4. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

28 November 2013

4 Evidence of formal appointment to the Town Forum

*MMcG Representatives to submit evidence of their formal appointment to the Town Forum.*

The Democratic Services Officer advised that 21 out of the 35 active representative organisations had now submitted evidence of their formal appointment to the Town

Forum. The Chairman reiterated once more the importance of submitting this information, in the interests of good governance.

## 5. TWBC'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2014/15 – DRAFT LIST OF COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Holly Goring, TWBC's Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager, introduced the draft list of community projects, which formed a key part of the proposed Strategic Plan for the Borough Council for 2014/15. She explained how the projects linked to the authority's political and strategic priorities, both for the financial year ahead and longer term.

Miss Goring added that the list of community projects had been the subject of a formal consultation process on the Council's website, the closing date for responses being the following day.

David Wakefield, Chairman of the Finance and Other Issues Working Group, reported that his group had made the following observations on the draft list of projects; he sought the Town Forum's approval to the submission of the following:

- Generally, they welcomed the list of projects and considered items 2 (Making the best use of land and property assets for the benefit of all residents) and 7 (Developing the concept of a 'cultural and learning hub' in the centre of Royal Tunbridge Wells) to be of paramount importance. (A prosperous Borough)
- Under item 11 (Commence works to enhance the appearance and facilities at Grosvenor & Hilbert Park), they welcomed the successful bid for HLF funding. They were also particularly supportive of item 12 (Working in partnership to roll out an ECO-funded housing retrofit project within the Borough, supporting the residents to improve the energy efficiency of their homes and reduce their energy consumption). (A green Borough)
- Under 13 (Working with our parish and town councils to develop community facilities and help them take control of local services), they asked if the Town Forum could be a formal part of that process. (A confident Borough)

In approving the above response, Town Forum members were keen to see more detail added in due course on how the specific projects would be developed and delivered, including at what point the necessary funding would be agreed. They accepted the point that, once the list had been formally approved by the full Council, specific milestones – against which the stage-by-stage progress of each project could be judged – would form part of the performance management process.

**RESOLVED** – That the draft response of the Finance and Other Issues Working Group be approved and submitted to the Borough Council.

## 6. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY

In the absence of the Acting Chairman of the Transport Strategy Working Group Chairman (Jane Fenwick), Lorna Blackmore had convened a meeting of the group. She reported on the key findings, in response to this formal consultation issue.

The issue on which TWBC was seeking the public's views followed an independent survey into whether there was an unmet demand for additional taxi services. The working group's proposed response covered four main areas of study, namely: town centre taxi ranks; accessible vehicles; the number of licensed hackney carriages; and the number of hours worked v. income received.

Gary Stevenson, TWBC's Head of Environment and Street Scene, who was responsible for the management of the Council's Licensing team, thanked Mrs Blackmore and her group for the proposed response which, he added, would be reported back to the Council's Licensing Committee the following month.

He clarified a number of points of detail which had been raised, in order to help with a wider understanding of the key issues.

The Chairman then sought members' views on the proposed response.

- June Bridgeman reminded the Forum that the Soroptimists organisation had undertaken a review of taxi services in the town, some years ago; she felt that some of the conclusions and recommendations made at that stage remained relevant. She suggested that the pertinent aspects from that earlier study could very usefully be annexed to this latest response;
- John Forster responded to the comment about the taxi 'feeder' area, opposite the station at the entrance to Calverley Grounds. He advised that he had witnessed drivers racing from the feeder area to collect a fare and, on occasions, had viewed taxi drivers jumping red lights. He suggested that 'chevron' type parking at the front of the station might provide a better solution, which could cater for more vehicles in that prime spot;
- Cllr David Scott voiced concerns about the poor provision of taxis and hackney carriages with access for disabled people. He felt that there should be an ambition of achieving 100% accessible vehicles over a set period of time;
- Tim Harper enquired how many licences had actually been withdrawn in recent years, as a result of holders failing to meet the associated conditions.

In response to the questions raised, Cllr Mrs Barbara Cobbold, Chairman of the Licensing Committee, stated that there were certain codes of conduct which drivers were required to follow, so that any observed breaches should be reported to the Licensing team at the Town Hall.

Gary Stevenson, in response to the accessibility of vehicles, which was also raised by Cllr David Neve, advised that if a new licence plate were being sought, the vehicle was required to be accessible; in the case of the renewal of a licence, the policy was not so strict, although he added that there was nothing to prevent a review of that aspect of the Licensing Policy.

Finally, Mr Stevenson advised that, in recent years, there had been a number of hearings into alleged breaches of a driver's licensing conditions. Whilst none of these had led to the revocation of a licence, there had been cases where penalty points had been applied, under which a driver might suffer a sufficient number leading to the suspension of a licence, Mr Stevenson added.

**RESOLVED –** That the Traffic Strategy Working Group's proposed response to the current consultation issue, as set out in the appendix to these minutes, be approved and submitted to the Borough Council.

## 7. FIVE WAYS SHARED PUBLIC REALM PROPOSALS

Further to the discussion on this issue at the September 2013 meeting, Cllr Paul Barrington-King reported on progress with this proposed public realm improvement for the town centre.

Cllr Barrington-King began with a related 'good news' issue, namely the progress being made with Network Rail, in efforts to repair and re-paint the two bridges, at the foot of Mount Pleasant. The Cabinet Portfolio-holder also placed on record his grateful thanks to Alastair Tod and to the town's MP for their unstinting support with this initiative.

With Five Ways, Cllr Barrington-King advised that the public consultation stage over the concept and possible surface materials had been very supportive. He added that discussions with KCC and with their civil engineering contractor for highway design services – AMEY – had been very positive. On the surface materials, Cllr Barrington-King added that while Purbeck stone might have been the most attractive, visually, it was acknowledged that it would not be sufficiently strong to take public transport vehicles. As a very good alternative, he added, discussions had been held with Marshalls, who were able to supply reinforced flag paving, which could be manufactured in bespoke colours. Cllr Barrington-King suggested that he would like members of the small working group to view a design presentation by Marshalls, either at their base near Halifax or, preferably, in Tunbridge Wells.

Gary Stevenson advised that he was keen to have two representatives of the Town Forum on the working group, adding that the Council would next be looking to work up the detailed design of the scheme and obtain costings for the project.

- Michael Holman sought clarification on whether the detailed design would include provision for a water feature and also what plans there were for the future of the Millennium Clock, either its retention or relocation. Cllr Barrington-King advised that the Leader of the Council would like to make provision for a water feature as part of this project, adding that this would be discussed with the design engineers, to assess the feasibility and costs;
- Tim Harper enquired whether the shared space scheme would allow only public transport (buses and taxis) to operate along its length. Mr Stevenson advised that, originally, the concept had been for pedestrian use only but that it had become clear that there was a strong case for allowing public transport to use this route. He advised, therefore, that there were discussions taking place on what types of access would be the most appropriate;
- Sally Balcon asked whether Sundays might be kept as a day when not even public transport was permitted; Mr Stevenson advised that this was part of the current consideration of the detail of the scheme.

The Chairman of the Forum thanked the presenters for their positive update on this scheme and asked whether Alistair Tod and John Forster would be willing to serve on the small working group examining the detailed design of the project; both agreed to act in this capacity. David Wakefield asked that a further update be provided in a few months' time.

### **RESOLVED –**

- (1) That Alistair Tod and John Forster be appointed to serve on the working group which would be examining the detailed design of the shared space scheme; and

- (2) That Cllr Barrington-King and Gary Stevenson provide a further update report at either the May or July meeting of the Town Forum.

## 8. UPDATE REPORT FROM TWBC'S CABINET

In the absence of the Leader of the Council, Cllr Paul Barrington-King, Cabinet Portfolio-holder for Sustainability, provided a summary of some of the key issues which had been considered by the Cabinet since the last Town Forum meeting. These included:

- (a) Budget – where Cllr Barrington-King referred to the significant challenge the Council faced, against a backdrop of a reduction of government funding of over £700k, compared with just four years ago. He advised that, despite that, TWBC aimed to deliver a ‘balanced’ budget in 2014/15, where no use would be made of its reserves. This would be achieved in part, he added, through reducing staffing and making other efficiencies, totalling £604k, without any impact on frontline services;
- (b) Vision – Cllr Barrington-King advised that the Leader of the Council, with Cabinet support, had prepared a draft ‘vision’, which set out the Council’s ambitions over the next five years. This, he advised, would be considered by the Cabinet on 6 February, at which point it would be going out for public consultation;
- (c) Cinema site – Cllr Barrington-King reported on three elements under this heading:
  - (i) detailed discussions were continuing between the owners of the cinema site and a major supermarket chain; (ii) two separate public petitions had received much support, urging the owners to act; and (iii) the authority was still pursuing the owners for unpaid business rates, with a magistrates’ court hearing beginning on 21 May;
- (d) Grosvenor and Hilbert Park – Cllr Barrington-King thanked all those who had been involved in the successful bid for Heritage Lottery Fund money, particularly the Friends of Grosvenor and Hilbert Park;
- (e) Energy Deal – Cllr Barrington-King advised that the next stage of the energy switch campaign was taking place. He urged those interested in seeing whether they could make savings on their energy costs to register at the following address (linked to the TWBC website), to obtain a ‘no obligation’ quote, before 17 February: [www.energydealswitch.com](http://www.energydealswitch.com)
- (f) Christmas – Finally, Cllr Barrington-King reported on the success of the ice rink in Calverley Grounds and the Santa train, both of which had been extremely well-used and supported, he added, with approximately 28,000 skaters and 11,000 passengers on the train.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr James Scholes, provided further background on the budgetary situation, advising that it was expected that, by 2020/21, this authority would no longer be in receipt of government grant funding, due to the programme of year-on-year reductions. He added that there was therefore a keen focus on income generating initiatives. Cllr Scholes also reported on the successful ‘annual (external) audit’ which once more had delivered an unconditional endorsement of the authority’s accounts and governance.

In response, the Chairman thanked the Cabinet members for the report and for the successful pre-Christmas initiatives.

There were no action points arising from this report.

## 9. WORKING GROUPS

Update reports were made from the working groups as follows:

**Water in the Wells Working Group** – The Chairman, Michael Holman, thanked Cllr Barrington-King for his encouraging progress report on the Five Ways initiative and welcomed the ‘Five Ways final consultation report’, which showed that a large majority of respondents favoured the installation of a water feature at this location.

Mr Holman advised that the Water in the Wells group was concentrating on publicity planning and website design, with a focus on publicising the aims and importance of Tunbridge Wells promoting its water- and health-based heritage. He added that the intention was to raise funds to support water-based projects, which in part would rely upon the Council agreeing an overall vision for public realm development that included water features.

Mr Holman next summarised where the group felt that water features could be best placed: (i) **Five Ways** – where specific details of the Council’s plans for a water feature were eagerly awaited; (ii) **Royal Wells Park (Berkeley Homes)** – where the group sought reassurance that the water feature proposals were adhered to; (iii) **Brighton Lake** – costed proposals (to be put to the Commons Conservators) were awaiting information on electricity supply details; (iv) **BUPA care home, Southborough** – a main road entrance to the Borough, where it was hoped that a forecourt water feature might be installed; (v) **Sussex Mews, Pantiles** – where the group was investigating the possibility of a water feature linked to the Grombrook, to help attract more footfall; and (vi) **Grosvenor and Hilbert Park** – where Mr Holman added his own congratulations for the HLF bid outcome, adding that the group was encouraging the addition of some smaller water features in the Park, as well as hoping to build on the success of the HLF process, and see such features implemented in other parks, over time.

In conclusion, Mr Holman observed how much the interests of the different working groups tended to overlap, adding that the common issue was to find partnerships that would help make the town a more pleasant place to live in and to visit and help to generate income for the town.

**RESOLVED** – That the progress report be accepted.

**Leisure, Culture and Tourism Working Group** – June Bridgeman, Chairman of this working group, focused on three, related, reports which had been published by TWBC in recent months, which can be accessed from the following links. All, she added, had linked in with the focus of her working group.

- (i) the draft Destination Management Plan (item 6)  
<http://democracy.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/documents/g2876/Public%20reports%20pack%2018th-Dec-2013%2018.30%20Communities%20Cabinet%20Advisory%20Board.pdf?T=10>
- (ii) the Cultural Strategy (item 7)  
<http://democracy.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/documents/g2875/Public%20reports%20pack%2013th-Nov-2013%2018.00%20Communities%20Cabinet%20Advisory%20Board.pdf?T=10>

- (iii) the consultant's report on the cultural hub (item 6)  
<http://democracy.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/documents/g3031/Public%20reports%20pack%2021st-Nov-2013%2009.30%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

Mrs Bridgeman advised that, with the Destination Management Plan, TWBC had decided that a steering group should be formed, with the intention of involving partners in implementing the Plan's recommendations; she hoped that the Town Forum would be represented in that process.

Mrs Bridgeman added that there were still some concerns as to how the specific detail set out in the cultural hub proposals would work, i.e. how the different functions of the civic centre would link and operate. She felt that a working group should be established to examine this aspect. As part of that process, Mrs Bridgeman suggested it would be helpful for the Town Forum to agree what it felt the priorities were for the town and how the Forum could feed those ideas, and practical actions, in to the Borough Council, to help it achieve those objectives.

In the meantime, Mrs Bridgeman added, her working group would be looking at how other towns approached tourism initiatives, with a view to finding out about best practice, from which Tunbridge Wells might learn. As part of that process, Mrs Bridgeman believed that establishing a proper planning brief for the development of the town was essential.

Cllr David Scott made the following plea in respect of the issues falling within the remit of this working group: (a) he felt there was a need to co-ordinate and promote the 'Sounds of the Wells' initiative more effectively, with which the Town Forum could help; (b) he also believed that the Town Forum had an important role to play in identifying more facilities in the town for younger people and encouraging them to participate. This, he added, was of particular importance with music-based entertainment and participation, but was not limited to that aspect alone, he stressed.

Mrs Bridgeman accepted the point raised by Cllr Scott. She advised that her group had spoken to Cllr Caroline Derrick, who had been central in the 'Sounds of the Wells' initiative, as part of their work. Mrs Bridgeman was keen to learn what the current position was with KCC and their plans for a youth centre in the town. She also referred to an outcome from the survey work carried out amongst young people last year, which had identified swimming facilities in the town centre as something which were in high demand.

Cllr Chris Woodward, TWBC's 'Youth Champion' responded. He advised that KCC had acknowledged the importance of establishing a youth hub, but that they could only provide funds of up to £10k per annum to rent suitable accommodation. He added that he had visited the hub which KCC had established in Tonbridge & Malling, which was based in the Adult Education Centre, which might provide a model for what could be provided in Tunbridge Wells. In summary, Cllr Woodward advised that he would maintain the pressure on KCC to provide a proper facility for young people in the town which, he added, might have to take the form of short term rented accommodation.

Cllr Woodward also reported on the re-launch of the local Youth Advisory Group, which would provide another opportunity for direct dialogue between young people in the town and KCC, he advised.

**RESOLVED** – That the update report be noted.

**Traffic Strategy Working Group** – The Acting Chairman, Jane Fenwick, had submitted an update report with the agenda, which covered the main areas of activity since the last Town Forum meeting.

It was noted that the working group had been active at both the Joint Transportation Board (TWBC and KCC members) and at the Public Transport Forum meetings. They had also submitted a response on behalf of the Town Forum to TWBC's public consultation process on proposed changes to the parking fees and charges structure in the town centre, taking account of the results of the survey questionnaire submitted to all Town Forum members last November.

**RESOLVED –** That the progress report be accepted.

**Planning and Development Strategy** – Michael Doyle, Chairman of this working group, advised that his main concern in recent months had been the government's 'edicts' related to changes in planning rules, through the National Planning Policy Framework. This, he added, was also leading to the loss of business rates, as former office-use buildings were converted into residential units.

Mr Doyle added that his working group now awaited the outcome of TWBC's Planning Policy Working Group's deliberations into the responses the Council received on its Site Allocations Development Planning Document (DPD) consultation document; this was expected in the late spring, he advised.

Michael Holman asked if the timetable of the Borough Council's Planning Policy Working Group, indicating their programme of when they would be considering the individual town centre sites, could be made available to the Town Forum.

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the progress report be accepted; and
- (2) That the timetable of TWBC's Planning Policy Working Group, indicating their consideration of individual sites in the town centre, be made available to the Town Forum.

**Finance and Other Issues** – David Wakefield, Chairman of this working group, advised that the group had prepared a draft response to TWBC's consultation on its budget for 2014/15. A copy of the recommended response had been tabled, on which the Chairman invited comments.

Mr Webb responded to the Chairman's call that successful candidates in this May's TWBC elections should consider waiving their rights to receive a basic allowance for their work. He indicated that this was unrealistic, if the Council wished to attract the appropriate calibre of person to stand for election. Cllr Mrs Barbara Cobbold added that the basic allowance (currently £5,500 per annum) was significant in helping to meet the costs associated with being an active ward councillor.

Dorothea Holman felt that increasing car parking charges was not the best option; she believed that restricting the large number of free town centre parking spaces, including those in adjacent residential streets, was preferable, in order to encourage more use of the car parks. This view was supported by Margaret Watts, who added that the existing free spaces should be protected for residents.

Michael Holman advised that, while he agreed with the tabled recommended response to the formal consultation on TWBC's budget, he could not support any of the suggestions put forward concerning members' allowances which had been discussed.

Adam Chalmers, TWBC's Democratic and Community Engagement Manager, advised that he had noted the comments about car parking charges, which he would forward as part of another public consultation process taking place.

**RESOLVED –** That the draft response to TWBC's consultation on its budget proposals for 2014/15 be agreed and submitted.

#### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Customer metering programme –** The Chairman, David Wakefield, advised that South East Water would be starting its programme of installing customer meters in 28,000 properties in Tunbridge Wells later this year. He added that they had invited Town Forum representatives to attend a 'breakfast briefing' in February, at which further details would be provided. Mike McGeary undertook to circulate details of the date/time/location of the briefing, and invite those wishing to attend to confirm their interest, which he would collate and forward on to South East Water.

It was suggested that this event might provide an opportunity to invite South East Water to sponsor a water feature, as part of the Town Forum's current initiative.

**Action:** Mike McGeary to contact Town Forum members with details of South East Water's briefing on the customer metering programme, inviting members to attend.

#### **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 20 March 2014 at 6.30pm

Subsequent meetings:

- **29 May** (NB – This is a change from the earlier published dates, due to Town Hall accommodation not being available on the original date, 8 May.)
- 10 July
- 25 September
- 27 November (including the AGM)

The meeting concluded at 8.40pm.

**APPENDIX****Transport Strategy Working Group of the Town Forum**

Hackney Carriage comments from this group

Having had sight of the CTS Hackney Carriage report we would wish to comment as follows and have based our comments simply on the town centre of this Borough.

The areas we looked at were concerned with:

1. Town centre taxi ranks
2. Accessible vehicles
3. Numbers of licensed hackney carriages
4. Numbers of hours worked versus income received

**Town centre taxi ranks**

1. Looking at the first matter of taxi ranks, based at Iceland, Camden Road and the Millennium Clock /Five Ways. Some people, whilst they were aware of these ranks, neither the public nor some of the taxi drivers were using these on a regular basis.
2. The most used taxi ranks were at both sides of the Railway Station, a station which has an annual footfall of approx 3.5 million. The Morrison's side, the front of the Station, has parking for 5 cars only; the Hooper's side is the rear of the Station. A snapshot of taxi usage on a specific Friday was of 507 passengers and 621 on a Saturday.
3. Our main area of concern is the rear of the station (Hooper's side). This is a taxi rank for 10 cars. As you will see from the photographs being passed round there are more than 10 cars nearly all of the time, and chaos prevails. The cause of this chaos, it is understood, is due to this Council deregulating the taxis. This in effect means that once a licence has been issued the taxi driver can ply for their trade at anywhere in the Borough area. Consequently taxi drivers from Paddock Wood are coming and standing at the railway station. Most of the public are also unaware that there is in fact a disabled pick up space at this side to tie in with the lift which was installed on platform 2 a couple of years ago. The Police in the report we have seen are most concerned about the taxis parked facing down towards the High Street (again this is shown in the photographs) and are suggesting that the 10 taxis are parked to face upwards on Mount Pleasant Road. This Town Forum Transport Strategy Working Group would fully support the changing of the direction for the parking of these cars. I understand Network Rail would also be content with this.
4. We were also made aware by the public that they felt the fares were extremely high at £4.00 a mile; an example of this is from the Station to Carr's Corner is £4.00, or to the Tunbridge Wells Golf Club being £8.00. Bearing in mind that, when you enter a London taxi, the start fare is £2.10p - a great deal different.

**Accessible vehicles**

5. Option 2 recommended by the report is supported by this working group. This group would endorse this incentive relating to WAV provided correct marking of vehicles is

provided at the relevant ranks so that people with various disabilities are able to access these ranks easily.

### **Numbers of licensed hackney carriages**

6. The number of licences for hackney carriage taxi rank drivers is currently 107 with two new licences being issued last year as prior to that there were 105. The number of private hire vehicles with a licence is 134.
7. The main concern for this group is the level of local knowledge those drivers of the hackney carriage have and this is borne out by the comments of the Police and the fact there have been disturbances amongst drivers aiming for various routes. On talking in general with railway staff they are also concerned there has been on occasions a high degree of tension that has arisen due to ethnic differences of drivers.

### **Numbers of hours worked verses income received**

8. On reading the report produced by CTS there is concern about the number of hours worked by drivers which varied from 53 to 72 hours per week. Comments varied from the safety implications of both the drivers and more importantly the travelling public. Bearing in mind that PSV drivers are restricted to the number of hours they can work, this group felt there should also a restriction on the number of hours worked by our local drivers. From observations it has been noted that some drivers are working up to 20 hours at a stretch.
9. Conversely, our local drivers stated that on some days they only took approximately £52.00 whilst others stated they earned up to £120.00. However the average seemed to be £60.00.
10. Therefore in conclusion this group felt that greater use would be used of taxis (1) if they were priced the same as London taxis, (2) that the general public felt safe based on the drivers' attitude and ability and (3) accessibility of vehicles - this being both for disabled people but also where they are hailed from.
11. In previous years there was a 'red flashing light' just on the Station wall to hail a taxi and this could be seen from the opposite side of the road and then the taxi would draw up to collect the fare. In speaking to Network Rail they have confirmed they would be happy for this to be re-introduced. Another suggestion perhaps is a help point or similar to those provided at railway stations which are un-manned. A suggestion would be to position this say on the wall near the Prêt-a-Manger. This could be linked to the flashing light and could have a number to signify which rank needed a taxi. Bearing in mind the modern technology we feel sure that a technological solution as to how this could work could be found.