

Minutes of Private Hire Meeting – 7th January 2016

Present

(GB)	Geoff Binnington	Principal Officer
(CS)	Carol Stos	Licensing Manager
(DR)	Dennis Rowe	Licensing Compliance and Development Officer
(MB)	Matthew Bibby	Licensing Support & Systems Officer (Note Taker)
(PB)	Philip Brook	Enforcement Officer
(SH)	Stuart Hastings	Keighley Private Hire Association
(NA)	Nadeem Ahmed	Independent Private Hire Association of Bradford
(NH)	Zarith Nasa Hussain	Independent Private Hire Association of Bradford

1. Introductions & Apologies

No apologies were received for the meeting

A representative was concerned he hadn't had some correspondence from the department regarding the meeting or some other communication regarding a complaint. The representative came to the office after the meeting and tested his email address out for apparent fault. No fault could be found as all emails sent were received.

2. Last Minutes

Highways officers are still in discussions regarding the 24 hour bus lane queries. A fuller response will be made available once it is possible to do so.

3. Trade Association / Minimum Requirement

Previous consultation took place in 2015, there were no unanimous agreements reached by the various associations. The Service has drawn from the consultation and put forward a document for Reps to comment on. A discussion regarding the requirements took place these are attached for comment.

Independent Private Hire Association of Bradford asked if there is a council policy in a document for licensing. It was explained that there is a conditions booklet and a vehicle specification. In the future the service is looking to make the conditions book electronic but that is a number of months ahead currently.

Action: Comments from trade to be emailed to taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk by Friday 29th January

4. Vehicle Inspection Results

Statistics for November show a decline in pass rate compared to 3 years ago. Officers reiterated they had spent a lot of time working with and educating Operators and the trade on the importance of vehicle safety so this was disappointing. The current failure rate is unacceptable, although it is recognised that HC trade are outperforming their PH counterparts.

Independent Private Hire Association of Bradford raised concerns about local garages doing work which proves to be unreliable or faulty. The council supports the sanctioning of such garages by VOSA and wouldn't prosecute drivers in such cases.

5. Licensing Update

Work is being undertaken on the HC Vehicle & Driver Application Forms, improving its visual look and ensuring the wording is clear for all applicants, especially regarding emphasis on declaring cautions and convictions and where proprietors intend to work. Once completed the form will be emailed out and updated on the HCPH service website.

The service has 40 appointments available per day, it was explained that drivers/proprietors and operators can make appointments for almost anything. As having an appointment reduces waiting time and allows the service to spread its workload. The trade are being encouraged to utilise the appointments rather than turning up without an appointment as this would be beneficial to all and reduce waiting in queues.

6. Enforcement Update / Complaints

In November enforcement examined 2% of the HC and PH trades during roadside patrols. 100% of HC vehicles passed these roadside checks. Well done.

The service is only dealing with a very small level of complaints and the majority are currently level one complaint's that are passed back to the Operators to deal with. Many Operators deal effectively with them

In the future complaints will be forming part of the grading system and the council will be publishing 'good' and 'bad' operators in a similar way that currently happens with restaurants.

7. Training Update

The service is pleased to offer drivers the opportunity of doing Driving Standard Agency (DSA) equivalent driving assessment with local approved suppliers which are significantly cheaper than using the DSA. It should also be quicker to use a local supplier. Any new or existing applicants who need to prove their driving standards can use either an approved supplier or go through DSA.

CSE seminars – the service have written to circa 2500 PH drivers to book in for CSE seminars in February 2016. HC drivers will be written to during January and they will be asked to attend sessions that will be arranged for March. Any driver who has attended taxi modular training at Shearbridge since January 2015 will **not** need to attend the CSE seminar providing they have proof of attendance via the training certificate.

As a result of the conditions change of August 2013, all licensed drivers must undergo taxi modular training. Any driver who has not attended must attend before the end of August 2016 or the likelihood is they will be suspended from work.

8. Communication Update

The new conditions came into effect on January 1st 2016 – the service will be communicating via email with all Operators and the HC Proprietors. All Proprietors and operators must have and use a valid email address. They must also visit the website, especially the 'what's new' page on www.bradford.gov.uk/taxiandprivatehire

9. Proposed Conditions Changes

The service is proposing 5 new conditions changes. These were discussed and are attached to the minutes and the trade representatives have been given a deadline of Friday January 22nd for replies / comments about the changes.

Independent Private Hire Association of Bradford initially raised concerns that officers can check out of area vehicles, however after further discussions understood that as it is being done in the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and other councils are doing it they realised there is no negative impact on the trade.

Actions: Matt to send out proposals via email to representatives. Comments to be received by January 22nd

10. Association Agenda Point Submissions

There were no specific agenda points raised.

11. Date of next meetings

The next joint HCPH meeting is on Wednesday 3rd February at City Hall

The next PH meeting is on Thursday 7th April at Shearbridge at 10.30am