

Minutes of Private Hire Meeting – 20th May 2014

Present

Carol Stos	Licensing Manager
Geoff Binnington	Principal Officer, Fleet and Transport Services
Matthew Bibby	Licensing Support Officer (Minute Taker)
Steven Knighton	Licensing Inspector
Saj Akbar	Bradford Private Hire Liaison Service
Khurram Shehzad	Bradford Private Hire Liaison Service
Stuart Hastings	Keighley Private Hire Association
Steve Carter	Keighley Private Hire Association
Pervez Naik	Keighley Private Hire Association
Asif Shah	Girlington Driver's Association

1) Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

Officers opened and welcomed everyone to the meeting. There was a specific welcome to the new association, Keighley Private Hire Association.

No apologies were received but a late apology was subsequently given from:

Nadeem Ahmed Independent Private Hire Association of Bradford

2) Conduct and Expectations of representatives

Officers outlined the mutual standards expected, these included:

1. Being polite and respectful
2. Accurate representation of fact
3. Proportionate representation
4. Producing and maintaining accurate membership lists
5. 75% minimum level of attendance at meetings (maintain subject knowledge)
6. Effective communication to members / trades

Officers clarified they were pleased to listen to representative views subject to above. They also clarified that Representative had no formal authority other than as a voice for their members

3) Previous meeting summary

There were no comments on the previous minutes other than to state there had been no comments from the associations regarding publication of future minutes. It was agreed that future minutes will be published on the HCPH website as per the case with HC.

4) Membership Lists

Thanks were conveyed to representatives for submitting their association membership lists. These are now being sample audited to ensure validity.

5) Proposals for conditions changes

The service is constantly evolving and reviewing conditions. Part of the conditions review is gathering ideas and listening to the views of the trades and the public. The service would like to invite association representatives to provide in writing any proposed change suggestions that they have by **Friday June 20th**.

A sheet is attached with these minutes for the proposals. These may be emailed to taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk or dropped off at the counter whilst visiting Shearbridge. Proposals will not be accepted unless submitted as required.

6) Operator Training

Operator training has been finalised and the service is looking to run the 1st session in the next couple of weeks. The service will invite a number of Operators to the 1st session to provide constructive feedback on the course content and delivery. This training is very different to the training drivers receive as it focuses on the Operator and their responsibilities.

The service recognises that many Operators have key personnel who run their business in their absence. The training invite will therefore be extended to those key managers/personnel to attend the training with the operator subject to receiving written confirmation of delegated authority.

7) HC/PH Survey

Beginning this week, the service will be handing out customer surveys to the visitors who come to the counters for any kind of transaction. These surveys are a short set of 6 questions and will be returned via a box at the counter. The service will analyse and share the results.

8) Statistics

Knowledge Test – Since the computerised test began in December 2012, there is a 52% pass rate and 48% fail rate. The level of passing is low considering work has been done to make some questions easier and given the pass mark is only 50%. Officers will review this.

Counter Visits – The service has seen a circa 20% increase in number of visitors since September 2013. There are about 400 more visits per month (Jan – April 2014) compared to the same period last year. This has coincided with a small number of long term staff absences which has slightly increased waiting times. The service apologises for this and is doing what it can to minimise the problem.

Vehicle figures – Discussions were had regarding PH safety inspection pass rates. Officers commented that HC vehicles had progressed well but further improvement was required from PH. Officers will consider the matter.

9) People's 1st – Keighley

A member of the Keighley People's 1st group has requested to attend the next HC and PH meetings. Officers have agreed for this to take place.

10) Bradford Private Hire Liaison

- Terms of reference for association representatives

Officers listen to the views of representatives because the representatives have a constitution and are the elected people chosen to speak on behalf of a percentage of the trade. Association representatives do not have any legal status or standing and their views do not have to be acted upon. Where there is common ground then the service is happy to work with the Associations for mutual benefit.

- Staffing levels

Due to long term sickness and increased visitor numbers, waiting times have increased. Officers do not believe however that increasing the numbers of licensing officers will be productive and that in the longer term, once the new computer systems are in, efficiencies will be increased and time saved. It was deemed acceptable to review the staffing levels again in future months.

- Productivity of the 2 extra enforcement officers

There has been no increase in the numbers of enforcement officers to date.

- New computer system, what implications on the trade

HCPH Service Closure - The service will have to close the counter services in the first 2 weeks of September (dates Monday 1st – Friday 12th September, **to be confirmed**) for the introduction of the new APP licensing software. The service will manage all the routine day to day appointments

in such a way that licensed people will attend before or after the closure period. The closure will be advertised by email to Operators and in future newsletters. In the longer term the impacts will be positive as it will enable online bookings and online payments. It will also mean that more appointments can be pre booked and that will save time for visitors.

- Knowledge tests

The statistics to date were covered earlier in the meeting. The knowledge test will continue in its current set up for now. The service is looking at delivering it in a slightly different way in the future

- Booking car renewals

HPI are currently done on new vehicles and vehicles that have been in accident. Representatives asked whether HPI can or will be done on renewal too. There is a cost implication this. A free one off check was offered by HPI last year for all vehicles. That was done. This matter can be considered more but no recommendations made at this stage.

Summary of actions:

Officers to send out blank template form for proposed conditions changes with the minutes

Representatives to ensure any completed forms are returned to officers by June 20th 2014