

HC Representatives Meeting Summary

22nd November 2017 – 10.30am start

1) Introductions / Welcome

Mohammad M Khan - Bradford Hackney Carriage Owners & Drivers Association
Shabbie Master - Bradford Hackney Carriage Owners & Drivers Association
Tahir Riaz - Bradford Hackney Carriage Owners & Drivers Association
Officers; Carol Stos; Dennis Rowe; Matthew Bibby; David James

2) Outstanding Actions from the August 2017 meeting

Action: Licensing Manager to contact Highways re: part time hackney carriage ranks.

Action: Service to contact Highways and seek clarification

The above two actions were completed. Highways Officers were contacted by the service and asked to ensure that provision is provided in reasonable time and notified to the trade regarding temp ranks during closure periods

Action: Enforcement Officers to look into this matter and update once this was done regarding out of area vehicles. An updated was provided. Operators are using out of area vehicles are compliant with conditions.

Action: Licensing service to look at the viability of this as a reminder but all drivers must complete the WAV practical training. This was considered but due to so many makes and models it would be difficult to produce an effective video on the subject. Training is essential and Proprietors should approach the service to be compliant and to ask for assistance if additional assistance is also needed.

Action: Licensing Manager to look at the possibility of 1 approved advert being displayed on multiple vehicles provided proprietors sign the agreement. The idea of this was approved.

3) History Review and requirements

At the start of the meeting officers handed the association, the 'Trade Association and Representative' Guidance and the 'Roles and Responsibility of Officers' information.

The Council engages with the trade on appropriate subjects and listen to its views. It is the Councils responsibility to set a local framework which includes consideration of licence applications, refusals and revocations, setting of vehicle standards, undertaking inspection and enforcement activities and the setting of fees. If during engagement, the trade and officers disagree this it is noted in the report which goes to Committee. Future dialogue between the trades and officers must always aim to be clear, concise and constructive. Questions can't continue to be asked and answered on the same subjects. Where this happens, questions asked previously will be directed to links that provide answers. There will not be discussions around them, unless there is some significant difference and evidence to a point. The process is that the association is required to put points forward on the agenda submission forms and make it clear what the point is; how it benefits the public. When such items are received ahead of meetings, answers can be sought and provided so that meeting time is not wasted discussing points from lots of angles.

4) Police Update – Update from Operator Business Meeting

Since last year there have been fewer missile attacks on Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicles. Police have been working in neighbourhood areas across district, especially in high risk places such as Homewood where incidents have been reported in past.

Key points:

- From 01/11/2016 until 31/10/2017 there were 145 incidents compared to 179 in the previous 12 months. A reduction of c19%
- Police take all reports seriously and will work with trades to reduce numbers further.
 - Gaining convictions is difficult as offenders are often carrying out attacks in the dark, hidden from view. 10 people were arrested in past 12 months, half of who were 15 or under and the remainder 25+ in age.
- There are no specific peak times throughout the year, other than around October and November (Halloween and Bonfire times) which is “normal” and during which police vehicles, ambulances, fire engines etc. are also targeted.
- Anyone with information regarding names of offenders please approach Neighbourhood Police Teams (NPT).
 - Operators are advised to think about routes that they send their drivers on as they have a duty of care to their drivers. If there is trouble in certain areas an Operator should consider avoiding them.
 - If a name is provided to the Police and a police officer says they can't do anything then a member of public may ask to speak to a more senior police officer (i.e. a sergeant or someone back at the police station for more details and explanation).
- There is also an appeal system by using www.westyorkshire.police.uk/report-it/victims-rightreview
- Operators asked for prosecution rates for the 145 but they could not be provided in detail at this time. They were reminded that offenders can be cautioned or convicted or have orders put on them for offences dependent on severity. Police look at all cases on merit.

5) Health and Well Being – Update from Operator Business Meeting

Officers spoke about this arising from the Peer Review report. Drivers are in sedentary jobs therefore the Service has asked Public Health if they could provide health and wellbeing advice. This is in hand and will be published via the website shortly. For drivers who are disabled then a lift to the Licensing Service office is available.

Action: Officers to circulate information via website

6) Ranks – Any general updates we may have as a standard agenda point. Unmet demand survey

The unmet demand survey is due in 2018. Initial contact has been made with interested parties. More information will be cascaded early in 2018.

7) Vehicle results

The October information for HC Vehicle annual inspections was provided. 71% of annual inspections passed first time and 60% of random Hackney 40.5% fail rate on random inspection.

8) Queue Management information

The new system working well over 6 week period pre the Council-wide fault which occurred and took the system off line for a week. The service apologised on behalf of the Council and explained the issue was outside of Service control. The fault has now been fixed. Data shows an average of c120 customer visits per day to the Service. Many of these were ‘drop in’ visits which make it impossible to meet/manage customer expectation as demand levels are unknown in advance. The service has written to 5000+ licensed members to advertise and look at new ways of working to increase appointments and enable the management of customer expectations (see below).

9) **New ways of working**

Key points discussed:

- A 'Drop and Collect' / 'Click and Collect' service was sent along with a letter to trade week commencing 30th October and is also on the service website under 'contact service page and referenced under 'latest news'. The process had previously been advertised in October.
- The trade can renew 1 month ahead of licence expiry without losing any licensing time or money.
- Making appointments reduces/removes waiting time.
- Transactions like Plate Renewals can be completed in the back office and drivers can then attend to collect items once ready rather than wait.
- The above would reduce the number of visits to Shearbridge.
- Emails are being answered in line with the reply message, 5 to 10 days. Many are answered much quicker.
- Drivers need to check their licence expiry dates and Operators can help them to become more organised (i.e. Operators are unable to use drivers if they are not licenced). All licenced personnel should start renewal applications via email at least 3 – 4 weeks ahead of expiry to ensure any glitches can be resolved before the licence expires. This would also reduce/remove the need to queue.
- Operators raised concern that online bookings has not materialised after several years of conversation around this subject. Officers explained that they had written to licenced personnel to explain this. In brief, the Service has had three different IT systems in 4 years and of which two could ultimately not meet the functionality required. These were not identifiable in advance and were outside of Service control. There is no standard IT licensing system, each is bought as a database and then developed to provide the functionality required. The current system is progressing well and should be developed to a large extent by early 2018 and the Council's ICT department are working closely with the Service to this end.
- When systems go down relating to Queue management the service uses raffle tickets to manage the queue as a contingency plan.
- Concerns over unanswered phone calls were raised. This is historic and answered in more detail in section 9.
- Officers confirmed that when they call a customer they make several calls to book them in and take payments. Voice messages are left by officers where there is a facility to do so.
- Online payments – officers encouraged the trade to trial this aspect. Some operators are currently trialling online payments with regards the training department. It is working well.

10) **Peer review feedback**

Officers clarified that the Peer Review was requested by Elected Members. It was carried out by an independent subject specialist. The general principle of the Review was that the areas covered

should be benchmarked against best practice and Leeds Council. The Department of Transport (DoT) Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licencing Best Practice Guidance has been used for benchmarking purposes, which is recognised at best practice throughout the licencing community. The Officer clarified that the Council does not own and could not influence the Review and as such it can't be changed, whether or not anyone agrees or disagrees with it. Action: Officers to set a date to discuss the Review. After-note: So as not to use up time on the next Operator Meeting a separate date will be identified.

11) Agenda points raised

Parking enforcement – issues of public vehicles on ranks

Response:

This issue has been raised previously and parking services are responsible for this. The trade should continue to approach parking services officers and where necessary register a formal complaint if they are unhappy with the service.

Document Checks – asking for EO's not to check the first vehicle on rank as it looks bad to customers.

It is not reasonable for an office to refrain from this check just because it is the first in the queue. If a need arises then the vehicle might be asked to temporarily move to the back of the rank whilst checks take place before returning to the front of the queue afterwards.

Fees – why are there different fees for over and under 6 years of age?

Response:

Vehicles over 6 years of age are subject to extra work of officers. It is also a way to encourage newer vehicles to be put on a licence which is better from an emissions perspective.

Booking System - Needs emergency booking in case of accident people have to wait over week for test? New vehicle booking can't drive without plates so needs plates as the vehicle pass the test. Why needs to present Log book each time if the same vehicle in use.

Response:

The management of this process is currently being looked at.

Click and collect

When we can collect the plates after passing because those drivers who already been they said plates are not ready after 1 week and although they sent all documents but was told there is no record.

Response:

Longer term there is a plan to have plates handed out at the workshop. This is usually within 2 days currently, not a week.

Random Checks

When the vehicle is due for random test some case the try to call the person who just had test and sometime vehicle is due for test in few days' time.

Response:

Random vehicles are selected at random by the nature of the work. It is always important to establish that

12) Engagement on next round of conditions proposals

There are proposals to engage via snap survey on line and also to engage by holding a couple of drop in sessions. One session will be for Operators / Proprietors; the other session for drivers. More information will follow in the coming weeks / months on this.

13) Dates for 2018 – To be circulated after the meeting

Wednesday 21st February 2018

Tuesday 22nd May 2018

Wednesday 15th August 2018

Wednesday 21st November 2018