

Business Operator Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 13 February 2019 – 10:30am

1. Introductions / Welcome

Councillor Ferriby opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

Officers present:

Sarah Ferriby	Councillor
Geoff Binnington	Principal Officer
Carol Stos	Service Manager
Steven Knighton	Enforcement Manager
Yousaf Hussain	Licensing Manager
Sadiya Patel	Senior Licensing Officer
Clare Wild	Licensing Officer (Service Support)
Elisabeth Spencer	Customer Service Manager
Jamie Brown	Enforcement Officer
Matthew Taylor	Enforcement Officer
Sergeant Adrian Wright	West Yorkshire Police
PC Jamie Wilkinson	West Yorkshire Police
Sally Jones	Pollution Control Officer
Simon Carnell	Innovation and Propositions Manager

2. Minutes from the last meeting

One action outstanding from November 2018 meeting – Wheelchair symbol on driver badges when WAV trained.

Outcome - Drivers who have done their wheelchair training are now able to get the symbol on their badge at renewal.

3. Agenda Points Raised by any Operators

No agenda points raised by any Operators.

4. Police Update

PS Adrian Wright introduced PS Jamie Wilkinson who took over from him just after the New Year. They are looking at Anti-Social behaviour in communities. They are looking at cars and bikes without tax and also any other issues that may arise. If you spot any Anti-Social behaviour of bikes or cars, let the police know by email.

The email address for the police team to report any concerns and sending dash-cam footage of anything ASB driving related is bd.steerside@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk

❖ **Question:** Have you caught any taxi drivers?

Answer - No, but some warnings have been given out. An Enforcement Officer stated that 5 suspensions were also issued.

❖ **Question:** Will you be covering the Keighley Area?

Answer - Yes we are covering the Keighley Area; we cover the whole of the West Yorkshire area.

5. **Sally Jones from Public Health (Air Quality)**

There are parts of Bradford that are exceeding air pollution limits. There is currently a business plan being devised and should be prepared by the 31st October 2019. This plan will look at reducing the amount of air pollution in the city. Any changes that will affect Private Hire or Hackney Carriage drivers will be communicated in advance.

❖ **Question:** What's the idea of it? How does it affect taxi drivers?

Answer - There is a cost of £2 billion a year to the health services due to air pollution. Air pollution affects everyone. Health checks are on-going with drivers. An Officer advised that the taxi trade may be affected as there is the potential for change, i.e. requiring cleaner (low emission) vehicles. We are providing you with this information at the earliest opportunity so that you may start to plan accordingly.

By 2021 Bradford Council may not be able to issue a licence to vehicles which are not low or ultra-low emission. 3 years advance notice is being provided to operators the time to plan for such changes.

Sally can be contacted at sally.jones@bradford.gov.uk

6. **Simon Carnell – Engie**

Engie have been commissioned to install electrical charging point across West Yorkshire. To date Engie have installed 20 across Bradford.

One of the visions for the future is for drivers to have electric cars. The market is still small, but it is slowly growing. The running costs of an electric/hybrid car are lower; 3/4p per mile, as opposed to 20p per mile for a diesel car.

Rapid charging points will be in place for drivers. A vehicle will take 20 – 45 minutes to charge, this will be free for the first 3 years as an incentive to move to electric cars.

❖ **Question:** What mileage can you do in the electric cars?

Answer - You can do 70 to 80 miles on a full charge in an old vehicle and you can do over 200 miles in a new electric car. In hybrid cars you can get about 30 miles on electric mode. This is variable dependant on make/model.

- ❖ **Question:** Have locations been determined for the charging points?
Answer - Site surveys are being conducted and this is still to be confirmed.
- ❖ **Question:** Is it better to drive up and down hill or on the flat in an electric car?
Answer - It is more economical to drive up and down hills than on flat.
- ❖ **Question:** Is hybrid economical?
Answer - Hybrid is economical; a Volkswagen Golf is currently being tested.

The future is cleaner emissions; operators need to think about cleaner air and what their business model is and how this can be improved.

- ❖ **Question:** Is there any funding to install your own charging point?
Answer - Yes, you can get a £500 grant, you can go on the website and type in 'Low emission cars' and look what is available to you. Operators can get a charger for business or at home. All the information is on the website. You need to have a driveway to have a charging point.

Operators are to give questions to Simon at Engie email address simon.carnall@engie.com in readiness for the focus groups happening next week.

- ❖ **Question:** What are home chargers?
Answer - They are small boxes that attach to the side of your house and you must have a driveway to charge your car. They are looking into further solutions for people who do not have driveways, one suggestion was to use street lights as a charging point.

7. Enforcement Update

Planned vehicle inspections Nov 18 – Jan 19:

967 scheduled vehicle tests, 274 failures (28%), 87 (8%) of those were major fails (previous ¼ 13%),

Random vehicle inspections:

53 Random Tests, 11 Fails (21%), 4 (7%) major (previous ¼ 25%)

The Enforcement team have compared these results to the national MOT's figures and found that the first time failure rate on Private Hire Cars is 32%. We know that many people don't like the £100 retest fee but these figures demonstrate that this deterrent is working and now only effects 8% of the trade. This is an excellent result and we hope that this continues.

Summary for enforcement road side checks

377 vehicle stop checks, (24% (94)) of those vehicles were issued with a Suspension, 18 vehicles had wheel nuts missing!

What's the message? Drivers should complete their daily checks thoroughly and Operators should have procedures which confirm this.

Operator Rating – 5 Star

The enforcement team have been working with a group of Operators who volunteered to look at the base audit and scoring and how this can be implemented. For a long time we have talked about RAG rating, but now a 5 star method similar to food establishments has been proposed. This provides an opportunity for you to promote your company, aids in increasing the public's positive perception of the licensed trade in Bradford. The foundation of the new audit is based on the current base check but will also cover:

- Company's vehicle test results from the previous 12 months
- Companies /Operator Compliance
- Good customer service & Equality

There will be more emphasis on evidencing the key elements.

The Enforcement Manager asked Operators what they thought a 5 Star Operator looked like. He asked if Operators could email in with any feedback they had in relation to this and whether anything should be added to the base check.

The enforcement team updated Operators about the Designated Representative (Reps) process. New authorised designated Reps will have yellow badges; if you have a representative you would like to propose, you will need to email taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk for a Designated Rep application form, complete the form and then email this back to the Licensing Service. The enforcement team will call the Designated Rep in for an interview. A badge will be issued when the process has been completed successfully. Only Licenced Operators and Designated Reps with yellow badges are able to attend meetings. This is a security measure put in place as these meetings are closed meetings and not public access meetings.

8. Licencing Update

Yousaf Hussain (Licensing Manager) and Clare Wild (Licensing Officer (Service Support)) are the newest members of the Licensing team at Shearbridge Depot, Bradford.

There is now no delay when you have a pre-booked appointment. Walk-in appointments are for emergencies only. For example putting plates on hold, lost plate/badge, road traffic accidents are all emergencies. Forgetting to renew is not an

emergency, if your licence is due to renew, emailing us 6 weeks before will help to start the process in good time, with no loss of work.

We are trying to improve the process for drivers. As such we are currently emailing drivers around 6 weeks prior to their badge renewal so they get the process started in advance. This email only applies to those drivers we have email addresses for.

The trade have asked if they can collect their plates (and licence) when their vehicle has passed its safety inspection/test in the workshop. The Licensing Service is working towards this but requires a change in the order we do things. We now check tax and MOT before we book a vehicle in and are also requesting that the Registration Document and Vehicle Insurance are sent in, in advance to the service so that they can be checked at the start of the process. Once we have trialled and tested this and have a workable process we are moving closer to facilitating the collection of plates immediately after a vehicle passes its vehicle safety inspection.

This has the positive advantage of the proprietor/driver not having to make a separate appointment for plate collection at reception. This will not be possible for vehicles where a re-test fee is applicable.

The [Department of Transport consultation](#) went live yesterday. This consultation looks at protecting users of Private Hire and Taxi vehicles. There are quite a few points to the consultation, some of them are mandating CCTV in all vehicles, having a national data base for all licenced personal, complaint handling, language skills, safeguarding, to name a few.

9. Driver Suitability Policy Update

The [driver suitability policy](#) has been approved by the Regulatory and Appeals Committee and will be effective from 1st March 2019.

- ❖ **Question:** How many people came back who was against the policy?
Answer - 697 took part, 410 were from the public, 75% of people thought that Bradford should bring in a new policy.
- ❖ **Question:** Not happy with the conditions of the policy, a lot of complaints?
Answer - The Council wrote to 4,500 licensed drivers and only 287 took part.
- ❖ **Question:** What driver safety measures are in place, as teenagers have been bricking cars on Harrogate Road, near the Leisure Centre?
Answer - This is a police matter and should have been raised whilst the police were present. Police complaints are not something that the Council has any

jurisdiction over. Enforcement officers can submit bodycam evidence to the police, but do not have the powers to prosecute etc.

❖ **Question:** Is any good news given to the media by the Council?

Answer – The council **never** releases news stories to the media. The media request information through Freedom of Information (FOI) requests which the council is legally obliged to respond to. The media then take the FOI information and turn it into a news story. Operators and drivers are encouraged to submit positive news stories to the media.

10. Peer Review Update

The updated [peer review](#) is published on the website.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 18th June 2019 at 10.30am – 12noon with registration from 10am -10:30am.

Afternote: The Enforcement team have followed up with Power Cars following concerns about antisocial behaviour. Enforcement Officers asked for evidence to help facilitate communication with the Police. No evidence has been provided however when there is evidence available the Enforcement team will help facilitate contact with the police. Operators are reminded if they have any dashcam / footage of anti-social behaviour they can email the police at bd.steerside@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk