

Hackney Carriage Association Meeting

Wednesday 21st August 2019

1. Introduction and Welcome

Carol Stos (Licensing Service Manager) opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. It was advised that future meetings will be chaired by the Enforcement or Licensing Manager.

Officers present:

Carol Stos (CS)	Licensing Service Manager
Yousaf Hussain (YH)	Licensing Manager
Sadiya Patel (SP)	Senior Licencing Officer
Jamie Brown (JB)	Enforcement Officer
Samantha Kaye (SK)	Licensing Officer (Service Support)
Tahir Riaz	Hackney Carriage Owners and Drivers Association
Shabbir Master	Hackney Carriage Owners and Drivers Association
Mohammed Khan	Hackney Carriage Owners and Drivers Association
Shabir Munir	Hackney Carriage Owners and Drivers Association

2. Actions from last meeting

Calendar meters

The Association representatives have spoken to the trade who have advised that they do not want to change to calendar meters as the tariff cannot be changed for out of district fares. This was agreed by the service at the meeting as it would not allow drivers to switch tariffs when fares cross over to out of district.

Rank requests

The service keeps a spreadsheet of all rank requests that we receive; this is currently being updated by the Enforcement Manager and a process being created. Once this is complete it will be sent out and we will also provide contact details for the engineers for each area so they can also be contacted directly.

For all new rank requests permission needs to be gained from the land owner before any changes can be made, which in most cases is Highways.

Out of Area Hackney Carriage Vehicles

Concerns have been raised that there has been 'Out of Area' Hackney Carriage Vehicles working in the Bradford District. This has been investigated and the service can report that there are no, none-compliant vehicles working in our District.

If anyone believes that there are, can you please provide full details by email to: taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk

Fare Increase

The Association have advised they would like the fare increase from November. The service advised that we will await a formal request in writing before we can begin the process. The email should include what the current fare card states and the new fares that are being requested.

Rank on Brook Street

The rank boundaries for Brook Street have been investigated and we can confirm that the rank is available 24 hours a day and there is space available for 2 Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

3. Enforcement Update

Vehicle failure appeals

The failure rate for serious defects is down to around 9% for all vehicles. If your vehicle fails its inspection and you would like a second opinion on the failure please alert the workshop staff immediately after your test. A second opinion will be given by a different tester at the time who will give an independent opinion.

All appeals are considered based on evidence of a vehicles maintenance history which should include servicing (appropriate to the make, model & mileage of the vehicle), safety checks, daily vehicle checks etc. Other good practices that would be taken into consideration are to use a reliable and reputable garage, have a procedure which establishes the mechanical standard of a vehicle (including hired vehicles) before it is used for taxi work.

Run flat tyres should only be used on cars that are fitted with a tyre pressure monitoring system (TPMS), as this system alerts the driver if they have a puncture and gives them chance to get the tyre fixed or changed. If run flat tyres are fitted to a vehicle that is not equipped with this safety component the vehicle will fail the vehicle safety inspection for safety reasons. The run flat tyres should also be those appropriate for that car.

Vehicle Specification

Since the vehicle specification was brought into effect in August 2013 there have been changes to vehicles available on the market, including the introduction of Ultra Low Emission and Electric Vehicles.

As a result the way vehicles are designed and built has changed to accommodate the battery and drive systems; this often reduces the available height and width within the vehicles.

The Licensing Service has received some requests to reconsider the vehicle specification, in particular relaxing or removing the requirements for access and egress. Following these requests the Licensing Service is reviewing the Vehicle Specification with the view to making some changes.

Any proposed changes would need to be approved by committee as it would be a change to policy. The Licensing Service will need to evidence any proposed changes and will be working with the trade and public to collect their views.

The Licensing Service will be advising shortly as to how Licensees can get involved with this engagement.

Plying for hire

The Licensing Service has recently advised all Operators of complaints that have been received in relation to Private Hire Drivers and Vehicles loitering outside pubs and clubs plying for hire.

Following the complaints the Enforcement Team, along with colleagues from Operation Steerside conducted a Plying for Hire operation throughout the district.

The operation resulted in a number of drivers picking up test purchase officers illegally.

The service has advised Private Hire Operators to put procedures in place to ensure that drivers cannot book an illegal pick up either by ringing their base or through their PDA; all bookings must be dispatched from the operator.

Not all Private Hire Vehicles that are parked up are plying for hire, sometimes they are waiting for a customer who has pre-booked or they may also be waiting for a job from the operator. Private Hire Operators have started placing cars around the district so that customers are not waiting as long for a vehicle. As long as they are not breaking parking regulations this is not illegal. Uber recently won a case against a council where a vehicle was parked up waiting for a job. Details of the case can be found by clicking here: [UBER win Reading appeal](#)

Private Hire Vehicles

The Association informed the service there are issues with Private Hire Vehicles parking in the loading bays on Drake Street. The Enforcement Team have carried out numerous checks and have not come across any Private Hire cars parked there illegally. The service asks that if there are continuing concerns about this that evidence is sent to taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk. Once received the Enforcement team will investigate further however the service cannot enforce parking issues. Any evidence that contravenes parking should be directed straight to parkingservices@bradford.gov.uk

The Association raised concerns about Private Hire Vehicles turning left out of the Interchange so they can get on to Drake Street. This is illegal as the road has no left turning other than for buses, cyclists and Hackney Carriage Vehicles. The service was informed there have been quite a few near misses where accidents could have occurred. All drivers have to obey the Highway Code and all obligatory signs. Any evidence which raise concerns should be directed straight to the Police.

National Register of Taxi and Private Hire Licence Revocations and Refusals (NR3)

The National register is set up by the Local Government Authority and the National Anti-Fraud Network to record details of Private Hire and Hackney Carriage licences that have been refused or revoked.

Bradford are developing NR3 policies and processes that will allow the Licensing Service to record the details of any licence holder that is refused or revoked.

The register will only hold high level information and cannot state the reasons for refusal or revocation.

If a local authority would like this information for the reasons behind a refusal or revocation then this would have to be requested through a DPA request. Bradford will be using this register when applicants are applying for a new or renewal licence.

If anyone would like to know more about the NR3 register you can find information on the following web page: [National Register](#).

Idling

The service has received 2 complaints from Ilkley residents regarding drivers leaving their Hackney Carriage Vehicles idling while they are waiting for fares. The Service advises that all drivers are mindful of the environment and support cleaner air in Bradford MDC.

4. Licensing Update

GDPR

We are very pleased to report that we now hold a registered email address for all licenced Hackney Carriage Drivers and Proprietors. Please remember to inform the service if any of your details or the drivers you represent change to ensure our system is kept up to date.

Plate Collection

The plate collection in the workshop is going well and the service is continuously receiving positive feedback from the drivers. Everyone attending Shearbridge is stating they prefer collecting their plates straight after their test.

There are two things that are not working so well which has resulted in the plates not being collected straight after test. There has been no insurance sent for new vehicles a minimum of 3 days before the vehicle inspection date and drivers arriving for test with no badge. Please can the Association emphasise to drivers it is a legal requirement for them to wear their badge at all times. The above two examples are things that can be avoided and will result in the driver not having to make an additional trip to Shearbridge.

Vehicle Proprietor Application Form

An email was sent 2nd August 2019 informing all licensed personnel that we now have a new on-line Vehicle Proprietor Application form. This positive step forward will allow the service to send a reminder to proprietors informing them their vehicle licence is due to expire; the reminder will be sent 6 weeks prior to the expiry date. This process went live on Monday 5th August 2019 and the first reminder emails were also successfully sent on this day.

You are only able to use this form to renew your existing Hackney Carriage Vehicle. If you are changing your vehicle which is called an Exchange, you must email the service on taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk ensuring that all the correct documents are attached e.g. logbook or new keeps slip and valid insurance or temporary cover note.

Concerns were raised by the Association that drivers are sometimes waiting 3 to 4 weeks for a response to emails. It was agreed that this would be looked into and further information would be given. This issue has now been looked into and the two cases this matter concerns have been rectified.

- ❖ Association Representative Question – Do you ignore emails when a driver has not supplied enough information?

Response – The service responds to every email regardless of the content of the email. Every effort is made to determine the basis of every email to ensure it is processed accordingly. It would be helpful if licensed personnel emailing into the service could email from their registered email address including their full name, badge/plate number, contact telephone number and a description of what service they require. If it is a process that requires documents, please also ensure these are attached. This helps the service process emails efficiently.

- ❖ Association Representative Question – Are there times where drivers are out of work due to mistakes made by the service?

Response – The service are not aware of any drivers being out of work due to a mistake of the service. If there ever was an instance that this happened the service would work hard to resolve the issue immediately.

If a plate is not collected at the workshop for any reason e.g. forgotten badge, no insurance minimum of 3 days before the test or any other reason please do not visit the office upstairs. An email will need to be sent to taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk and an appointment will be made. These emails are dealt with on a priority basis.

5. Customer Service Update

Digital Forms

The iApply suppliers have changed the name of the software and it is now called 'Digital Forms'. The application will still look and work the same.

'Digital Forms' is almost at the end of its development and testing. We are looking to make plans to come out to the district to offer training and support while giving

everyone a chance to see what the system looks like, how it works and to have a go yourselves. The sessions will include a chance to practice on the system so end users can see what the system looks like. There will be web pages set up to include trouble shooting guides to help if something goes wrong, system pictures for memory aides when accessing it away from training, and a list of Frequently Asked Questions.

The Customer Service Manager is planning as many sessions as possible across the district throughout October and November. No dates have yet been finalised but we will be holding the sessions at places such as Richard Dunns, the Leisure Centre at Keighley and other easily accessible places with plenty of parking.

The Digital Forms project plan is to have the system fully available to all applicants in January 2020, so we would like as many people as possible to attend the training sessions to make the process easier.

If anyone has any questions about the new process they can email taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk for the attention of Elisabeth Spencer.

Appointments

The appointment management software the service uses to book appointments at the counters is called Qmatic. This software is currently undergoing an upgrade to further enhance the potential of what it can do. With the new upgrade it is expected that customers will be able to book appointment times at their convenience.

6. Peer Review

There are 3 outstanding points from the peer review and they are all on-going longer term points such as updating the conditions book, devising flowcharts for customers so they can understand the processes better and the service is reviewing its approach to English comprehension and Literacy training.

You can find the updated peer review on the website [here](#)

7. Ranks

A list of the current rank information the service holds was given to the Representatives before the meeting. Thanks are given to the Association for the information and feedback this has been noted by Enforcement as part of the rank review they will be undertaking.

Senior Engineer Mark Gillingham from Highways will arrange a site visit to the rank on Morley Street with a Hackney Carriage Association Representative. The contact details of the representative have been passed with prior permission to help facilitate this.

The Association have advised that because the rank on Sackville Street is closed in the evening they need another rank, or they need the rank on Sackville Street to stay open so they have somewhere to park. CS advised them to write a business case for what they need, why they need it and the implications if the request is not

successful. This would then be sent to highways so they can review the request and process accordingly.

Action - Enforcement Manager – Send out an up to date process on how to send in rank requests along with the names for engineers in each district.

Action - Enforcement Manager – Update and distribute the list of current rank information the service holds.

8. Agenda Points

Agenda point 1 - last club closing on 17th of August 2019 Flares is closing its doors forever is council aware that 5 clubs have closed down bottom of Great Horton Rd in last 2 years and does council have any plans to boost work for taxi industry

The Hackney carriage trade is encouraged to look at new ways of working that could help them promote themselves. It may be an idea to see what Hackneys around the country are doing and liaising for any ideas.

Agenda Point 2 - Need update on Morley rank

Senior Engineer Mark Gillingham from Highways will arrange a site visit to the rank on Morley Street with a Hackney Carriage Association Representative. The contact details for the representative have been passed with prior permission to help facilitate this.

Agenda Point 3 - Need rank outside British Heart Foundation for weekend night time Westgate rank not working because of flagging

For the creation of a new rank a formal request along with the justification for the rank and the implications if the rank is not in place would need to be sent to the Service. This would then be sent to Highways to progress further.

Agenda Point 4 - Can you please provide up-date on enforcement data about any drivers taken of road keeping within data protection guidelines for flagging and how many covert operations were conducted by enforcement because along with driver and vehicle safety this is just as important because jobs taken without booking leave passengers at the mercy of rogue operators does council have plan for illegal plying for hire

Please see 'plying for hire' update in Enforcement Update. Communications have been sent to Private Hire Licensed Personnel regarding plying for hire. There have been pre-planned operations conducted. There are plans for future operations working alongside Operation Steerside. Private Hire Licensed Personnel have been informed on numerous occasions that plying for hire is illegal and may result in prosecution. Any drivers caught plying for hire could also face revocation and under the new suitability policy could also result in being unable to make further applications for 7 years.

9. AOB

CCTV

CCTV is not mandatory in licensed vehicles, however if any drivers would like to install CCTV or Dash Cams in their vehicles they must ensure they comply with the ICO Code of Practice. This can be found by clicking here: [ICO CCTV Code of Practice](#)

Card payments in vehicles

An Association representative mentioned that Hackney Carriage vehicles across the country have the facility for customers to be able to pay by credit/debit card for their fare. It was requested that the Service look at this for Bradford Hackney Carriage vehicles.

The ability to take card payments in vehicles is not set out as mandatory by the Service for any licensed vehicle, and there are no plans to make it a requirement. The decision to have the facility lies entirely with the proprietor.

Please note the meetings do not have Any Other Business points as it is a structured meeting with agenda points. The Association are requested to send agenda points before the meeting. The points can then be factored into and discussed within the meeting.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 20th November 2019.

This meeting will be held at Shearbridge Depot and will start promptly at 10:30am.