

Minutes of Private Hire Meeting – 27th May 2015

Present

Carol Stos	Licensing Manager
Geoff Binnington	Principal Officer, Fleet and Transport Services
Matthew Bibby	Licensing Support Officer (Minute Taker)
Steve Knighton	Enforcement Officer
Pervez Naik	Keighley Private Hire Association
Stuart Hastings	Keighley Private Hire Association
Saj Akbar	Bradford Private Hire Liaison Service
Khurram Shehzad	Bradford Private Hire Liaison Service
Sakawat Hussain	Bradford Private Hire Liaison Service
Nadeem Ahmed	Independent Private Hire Association of Bradford

Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

The meeting was opened at 11.00am by Officers.

There were apologies from:

Asif Shah Girlington Driver's Association

Working Together

The Service has reviewed past minutes and progress made with Associations over the past 12 months. It is evident that the same historical issues are being brought up multiple times, these are items that have been asked and answered previously and are therefore detrimental to positive working together.

The service will always support Associations putting forward ideas that are mutually beneficial and help improve and protect the public. The service has tried to promote positive initiatives such as CAB and the setting up of an Operator Association but both have had poor responses - with limited exception. The point was made that constantly complaining wouldn't change anything; positive actions were needed by the Trades.

Proposed Conditions Changes

Proposals were handed out and a further copy is attached to these minutes. Representatives were asked to take the changes to their members and provide written responses to the Service by Friday 19th June 2015.

Equality

The Service is dealing, again, with concerns over overcharging wheelchair users. In 2012 all the trade were issued with a letter regarding pricing and equalities. This issue will be summarised again and resent out to the trade. It is a serious issue and there must not be different charges or discrimination against anyone.

Action: Service to resend out letters regarding equality

OLEV – Low Vehicle Emissions scheme

A handout was given to representatives and will also be emailed round.

Action: Email OLEV documentation to reps

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a serious issue brought to light by failings within Rotherham Council. A CSE poster and information will be sent to all Operators and Proprietors. Operators and Proprietors are required to print the information and issue it drivers and also retain a dated copy of their driver's name and signature to evidence the driver has received, read and understands the information.

Action: CSE info to be sent out by service

Trade Agenda Items

Staffing Issues

The Service is recruiting a person to fill a 2 day (Thursday & Friday) post to fill a full time vacancy (the remaining 3 days are already filled).

The Service has a couple of temporary staff currently assisting with a backlog of work caused by the change of IT systems.

A lot of work has been done formalising processes and work methods and this is having a positive impact in helping to reduce waiting times – although there is still some way to go to before waiting times will be as low as preferred.

Ticket Machine Not Working

There was a breakdown with the new Tensator ticket machine but that has now been resolved and has been fully functional for the past 3 weeks. The system is an easy to use touch screen display. Those people who have pre booked appointments enter date of birth in the format **dd/mm/yy** i.e. **15/12/66** on the check in section.

Other visitors simply touch the other option and await their ticket number being called on the big screen before going to the counter.

On-line Booking/Services Not Working (Yet)

Factors outside of the Services control have led to a very long delay on this option. Bradford Council's IT department are working closely with the provider of the software in order to push the project to completion. It is believed that a resolution is close; within the next 2 months and that therefore the online bookings will be ready by later in the summer. (Around July / August).

Before the service opens up the online option for all trade to use, officers will visit bases to show Operators and key personnel how to use the systems. Bases could then book their driver's in for appointments as necessary.

HPI Renewal

All vehicles are now being HPI checked on renewal, as well as new vehicles. Currently the service is unable to get exact number details and numbers but in the future this information will be available (once IT issues are resolved).

Steps are being taken to look at the possibility of a local garage being able to offer "Cat D" vehicle inspections. This option is around circa 18 months away and will require consideration by Elected Members.

Enforcement Officer Attitudes

Despite allegations by a minority of drivers, there has been no instance of "poor attitude" by EOs. Body worn CCTV is in use by EOs and this evidences consistency in communication between EOs and Trade members. CCTV evidence is used to investigate any allegation as necessary.

Vehicle Seating and Vehicle Access/Egress

Any concerns regarding vehicle seating should be discussed with workshop staff in the first instance. Workshop staff will then communicate the decision to Licensing Officers.

New Driver Training Proposal

Representatives put forward a proposal for mechanics to be introduced to drivers at training and do a short vehicle training session with them. Representatives also had further ideas about training content and the Service agreed to review and comment on both proposals.

Action: The service will look at putting together a FAQ pack of top 10 asked questions or something similar.