

Minutes of Private Hire Meeting – 25th February 2015

Present

Carol Stos	Licensing Manager
Geoff Binnington	Principal Officer, Fleet and Transport Services
Matthew Bibby	Licensing Support Officer (Minute Taker)
Sara Poulter	Enforcement Officer
Pervez Naik	Keighley Private Hire Association
Khurram Shehzad	Bradford Private Hire Liaison Service
Sakawat Hussain	Bradford Private Hire Liaison Service

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was opened at 10.15am by Officers.

They were apologies from:

Stuart Hastings	Keighley Private Hire Association
Steve Carter	Keighley Private Hire Association
Nadeem Ahmed	Independent Private Hire Association of Bradford

Condition changes

Already agreed and have been sent out via email, letter to all licence holders and placed on website

Poor SNAP take up – only 62 received, 4 were void

Following requests from the trades for the service to consult with more drivers, the survey was the first attempt to engage actively with 3000+ people. The take up was very disappointing with less than 2% returns. Officers asked representatives to encourage drivers to put points forward.

Data retention – Reminder to all drivers of the use of data

All PH Operators must have data retention policy in place. There must be care about misusing data. Everyone should read and be familiar with the data protection act.

PH complaining about HC

There has been a complaint about HC drivers approaching PH drivers asking for proof of bookings. HC drivers have no jurisdiction though and are advised this is not good practice. Any concerns should be sent with specific details to HC/PH service for investigation. HC reps said that PH drivers block them at Bradford Interchange and park on give way areas at Omar's. Again, officers asked for specific details to be provided.

We recently issued 2 weeks suspensions – not carrying Assistance dogs

2 PH drivers were suspended for refusing to take an assistance dog. All drivers when approached to carry an assistance dog must comply with the law and take them.

Driver Training – discussion

Refresher training began last year for the 3000+ current drivers. The first 1000 have been trained in the first year and priority was given to those who do contract work. A further 1000 need to be trained in each of the next 2 years. The training is really important as it educates drivers and gives them more awareness and understanding.

It was thought by representatives that the best way is to write to all drivers and explain they need training and for them to contact the service. A reminder to all drivers, anyone not trained at the end of the 3 years will be suspended from working.

Bus Lane explanation

The practice of only allowing London taxis but not private hire vehicles to use bus lanes in London does not amount to the conferring of a selective economic advantage, the Court of Justice of the European Union has ruled.

The judgement, in the case of Eventech (Judgment) [2015] EUECJ C-518/13, the EU court said that

London taxis and private hire vehicles were “in factual and legal situations which are sufficiently distinct to permit the view that they are not comparable and that the bus lanes policy therefore does not confer a selective economic advantage on black cabs”.

The court also ruled that “only black cabs can ply for hire; they are subject to the rule of ‘compellability’; they must be recognisable and capable of conveying persons in wheelchairs, and their drivers must set the fares for their services by means of a taxi meter and have a particularly thorough knowledge of the city of London”.

The challenge to Transport for London’s policy had been brought by Eventech, a subsidiary of minicabs operator Addison Lee.

Commenting on the ruling, TfL Managing Director of Surface Transport, Leon Daniels, said: “Our policy on bus lanes was upheld by the High Court. We welcome the opinion from the Advocate General and now the European Court of Justice, but ultimately await the decision of the Court of Appeal. As this process continues we are maintaining our well-understood and effective policy that helps to keep London moving in the interest of everyone.”

Cabshield Insurance

Some bases and drivers have been approached by people who are smartly dressed offering cheap insurance. These individuals are keeping some of the premiums and not giving the drivers the insurance they believe they are buying. ‘If a deal seems too good to be true, then it is a bad deal’ BEWARE and do not get conned out of insurance.

People First presentation 29 May

There is a presentation from this group on May 29th. ‘Equitable Law’ are currently looking at fares for wheelchair users.

Rossendale update

Enforcement Officers will be working with colleagues from Rossendale and tackling the problems of ‘out of district’ vehicles/drivers.

Ambassador update

There has been research done on getting support from tourist venues in the district. Some further ambassador courses will run, likely to be sometime in May and the service will pass on dates once we have them. The 2 courses that were run in November 2014 were pilots. There has been some work for drivers as a result and the more people who train and the more marketi9ng that is then done, the better the chance for increased work.

Workshops Open Days - Format update (WAV/IVA/LOLER)

These were run throughout the end of 2014 but had no interest, perhaps due to the afternoon time slot. After discussions, the HC representatives felt that Wednesday mornings 10.30am – 11.30am would be a good time for future sessions.

The aim of the drop in sessions is for operators and drivers to discuss any queries regarding vehicle specification and mechanical information.