

Minutes of Private Hire Meeting – 7th April 2016

Present

(CS)	Carol Stos	Licensing Manager
(DR)	Dennis Rowe	Licensing Compliance and Development Officer
(MB)	Matthew Bibby	Licensing Support & Systems Officer (Note Taker)
(SH)	Stuart Hastings	Keighley Private Hire Association
(PN)	Pervaiz Naik	Keighley Private Hire Association

1. Introductions & Apologies

(NA) Nadeem Ahmed Independent Private Hire Association of Bradford

2. Meeting Attendance and Last Minutes

Officers reminded representatives that the meeting attendance was part of the requirements of an association and association representative. Names are recorded to ensure attendance is at the required level and representatives are up to date with the 'current position' on topics.

The service had provided timeframes to the trade representatives in January for comment on the conditions changes and for comment on the trade association requirements following from the January meeting. No comments were received from any association.

Action: The trade association requirements will be circulated via newsletter and placed on the website under the association details page.

3. Vehicle Inspection Results

The pass rates for all vehicles are extremely disappointing for the January and February period in 2016. The service has worked very hard in the past 3 years to educate the trade to ensure vehicle safety. The results have had some, but limited success. The service will now take a more direct approach. Every case will be judged on its own merits and the service will look at service history and other factors before making judgement.

4. Licensing Update

Officers handed out and explained the new application pre registration form, explaining that the form tackles the issue the service has with missed appointments currently and with the fact that around 50% of appointments are cancelled as applicants turn up with wrong information. This will save officers a great deal of time and make the process more efficient for the applicants too. Applicants who fail to turn up with the right documentation will be rebooked a minimum of 6 weeks later on.

At this point representatives moved on to contracting issues. There is a perceived problem with contracting in that their standards are poor and inappropriate cars are being used for inappropriate jobs. There were also allegations that some companies are declaring more vehicles than they have to get contracting work. Officers explained that contracting is dealt with by Michelle's team and advised the representatives to contact Michelle Pickles.

5. Enforcement Update

Since January, 15 patrols have been conducted in addition to 2 joint Police patrols and a patrol with Rossendale Enforcement Officers. Around 180 vehicles have been checked in total with around 30% of vehicles checked being suspended for failing to meet conditions. The majority of those suspensions were decal related.

In the coming weeks officers will be visiting bases to check on training records and also check that bases are compliant with conditions surrounding operation of out of area vehicles.

6. Training Update

As a result of the conditions change of August 2013, all licensed drivers must undergo taxi modular training. Any driver who has not attended must attend before the end of August 2016 or the likelihood is they will be suspended from work.

Enforcement Officers will be out visiting all PH bases checking on training certificates and reminding all Operators of the deadline of 31st August 2016.

PH Operators have been sent an email dated 11/04/2016 asking them to contact the training department on 01274 437967 about booking their drivers on to taxi modular training.

7. Communication Update

All PH Proprietors have provided email contact addresses as required.

The website will be changing in the coming weeks as part of a change to the website across all of Bradford Council. Once done officers will invite representatives in for a short session on how to use it effectively.

Action: Officers to contact representatives re web training session once new style website goes live

8. Proposed Conditions Changes

There are no current proposals

9. Joint Meeting

Officers and Cllr Slater / Cllr Mallinson have all expressed apologies for having to cancel the next planned joint representative meeting that was planned for 3rd May. This is due to the proximity of the date to the local elections.

As it had been at the HC representative meeting a day earlier it was also agreed by all parties present that there is to be no rescheduling of the meeting and that the next joint meeting will be 7th August in City Hall.

10. Ultra Low Emission Vehicles

This was added to the agenda at the meeting. The service has communicated over past months with the trade regarding the low volume emission vehicles. Some members of the trade have also completed a survey on the subject.

There is money available to fund the project and the aim is to see a reduction in air pollution across the district. There are some issues still surrounding the capabilities of the distance on charge and the costs despite the grants available.

In the coming years technology will be improving and electric cars will become more prominent in all likelihood.

Officers added that in the future, in efforts to reduce air pollution it will possibly look at vehicles meeting certain low emission levels before licences are granted for those vehicles.

Representatives know some people who have ordered such vehicles and agree that in the future these options may become more viable.

11. Association Agenda Point Submissions

Officers asked for clarification on both agenda points that had been raised by IPHAB.

Agenda point one – Intended Use Policy

We believe the intended use policy put in place by Bradford Council is illegal and contrary to the de – regulation bill of 2015

Officer response

We don't understand the relevance of this point as the intended use policy applies to HC trade not PH trade. The intended use policy has been challenged 3 times at Shropshire Council and each time to Council won the case.

Agenda point two – The deregulation bill of 2015 stipulates 3 years badges as standard

Our association IPHAB would like to see Bradford Council adopt 3 year badges as standard

Officer response

3 year badges have been in place since June 2012. To allow flexibility for the trade in a difficult economic period we offer a 1 year badge as the cost is substantially less than the cost of a 3 year badge. More than 50% of drivers prefer the one year option.

12. Date of next meetings

The next PH meeting is on Thursday 7th July at Shearbridge at 10.30am