

## **Business Operator Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> Nov 2018 – 10.30am**

### **Introductions/Welcome**

Cllr Ferriby opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

Officers present:

Carol Stos	Licensing Service Manager
Elisabeth Spencer	Customer Service Manager
Sadiya Patel	Senior Licensing Officer
Matthew Taylor	Enforcement Officer
Chris Scurrah	Enforcement Officer
Samantha Kaye	Licensing Officer Service Support
Geoff Binnington	Principal Officer
Inspector Nick Haigh	West Yorkshire Police
Sergeant Adrian Wright	West Yorkshire Police

### **1. Minutes/Actions from the last meeting**

No outstanding actions from the last meeting to discuss.

### **2. Operator Agenda Points**

- ❖ Can wheelchair symbols be put on PH driver badges as well as vehicle plates?  
Licensing Service will look to introduce this in Jan 19 for drivers who have completed wheelchair training.

### **3. Police Update**

The police provided an enforcement update covering PH and HC vehicles. They confirmed there had been no unusual spike in anti-social behaviours.

### **4. Enforcement Update**

Chris Scurrah is the newest Enforcement Officer (EO) to join the Service; his previous role was at Leeds City Council within the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Service. There are now 7x EOs in Bradford working to deliver stronger education and enforcement as requested.

### **Vehicle test results at Shearbridge – AUG, SEPT, OCT**

Planned Inspections: 1036 vehicles inspected, 72% passed first time  
294 Vehicles failed (28%), of these 12% were major

Random Inspections - 60 vehicles inspected, 65% (39) passed with no defects  
21 vehicles failed (35%), of these 15 (25%) were major

### **Enforcement Activity – July 2018 – OCT 2018**

#### **Operation Steerside (Multi-agency working with Police, VOSA and HM Customs):**

- ❖ 308 Private Hire Vehicles checked, 72% (222) passed with no issues, 52 (16%) failures with serious defects
- ❖ 28% (86) vehicles were suspended / advised for various defects

#### **Routine spot checks Aug – Nov 2018**

- ❖ 223 Private Hire Vehicles 78% passed no issues, of these 22% (51) vehicles were suspended

#### **Summary for enforcement spot checks**

531 Private Hire Vehicles stop checked  
137 Suspension notices issued to Private Hire Vehicles (25%)  
43 advisory notices issued to Private Hire Vehicles (8%)

= 67% Pass rate

Monthly vehicle failure reports to be sent to Operators from December 2018. New Operator RAG rating system to be introduced; trial runs planned between Jan and Mar 19 for introduction in April. If any operators would like to help trial the process and reduce the number of vehicle failures please express interest by emailing [taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk). All trial results will be confidential and deleted 01 April 19. After note – 2 Operators so far have volunteered to take part in the trial.

Clean Air Zones (CAZ) are being introduced and Bradford is looking to adopt these by 2020. Drivers should start thinking now about cleaner vehicles. You can go to <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/docs/Clean%20Air%20Charging%20Zone%20FAQs.pdf> for more information.

The Service would like to thank those Operators who have attended meetings and provided feedback throughout the year. The Service welcomes constructive engagement. The Service will be contacting Operators who have not attended meetings.

Room opened to comments:

- ❖ Why is there no Any Other Business (AOB) on the agenda? These are structured meetings with agenda points and reasons submitted in advance, there is no need for AOB.

- ❖ Can the decal policy be reviewed for drivers working for more than one operator? Drivers must display decals and appropriate windscreen stickers for whichever Operator they are working for. This is to ensure the public have full visibility which firm the driver is working for. Advised to speak to officers after the meeting for further guidance.

## **5. Licensing Update**

Carol Stos updated everyone on the new Licensing Service structure. The current Customer Service Manager on secondment is Elisabeth Spencer. Sadiya Patel has joined the team as a Senior Licensing Officer and will manage the service support team. The Service Support team will monitor the [taxi.tesing@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:taxi.tesing@bradford.gov.uk) inbox as well as provide a quality control function for the Service.

The first point of contact with the Service should be via email to [taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:taxi.testing@bradford.gov.uk). The service is currently receiving on average over 2000 emails a month, excluding online badge renewals. These emails are being answered within a couple of days, excluding some 'out of the ordinary' ones.

In Jan 18 c2500 customers attended Shearbridge Depot, 61% had pre-booked appointments. Now almost 97% of customers attending have a pre-booked appointment and the average waiting time for pre-booked appointments is over 3 minutes. We would like to thank you for embracing the new way of interacting with the service and the feedback received on the appointment system has been very positive.

The Service is currently doing some data gathering to establish how and why customers are contacting the service. This will help us look at better communications. The Service is always aiming to provide an excellent service.

Room opened to any comments:

- ❖ Parking at Shearbridge - Can drivers not use vacant spaces on depot? No. The depot has increased the parking spaces from four to seven. Shearbridge Depot is one of the busiest depots at Bradford Council, with various vehicles coming through the yard. Due to health and safety risks the seven allocated parking spaces will be the maximum available to mitigate potential risks.

## **6. West Yorkshire Combined Authority Update**

A copy of the proposed policy *Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees as drivers in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing* has been delivered by post to all drivers. The information is also available to view on the service website.

The proposed policy can be found at:

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/media/5060/policy.pdf>

The survey can be found by clicking on the below:

<https://surveys.bradford.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=154169832117>

The proposed policy is a result of national best practise guidance set by the Institute of Licensing (IOL) and Local Government Association (LGA). The proposed policy is not to penalise existing drivers. Any driver at renewal that will be affected by the proposed policy will have the totality of their licence reviewed. The proposed policy is looking to be implemented across West Yorkshire authorities as well as York.

Room opened to any comments:

- ❖ 21 day appeal process to magistrates court? The Service confirmed this is correct. This process has no effect on the decision made by the Service as courts do not have the authority to override policy conditions. The courts will assess whether the Service has justifiably come to the decision and if it is found not to have done so, the court will advise the Service to review the decision.
- ❖ Vehicle failures - how are all operators treated the same when some have more drivers than others? Operators are assessed on an individual basis. The Service will ensure all Operators are treated fairly regardless of driver numbers. The failure will be reviewed if the matter was something that could have been picked up (daily vehicle checks, service) or if the failure was due to something mechanical which the driver would not necessarily know about. The RAG rating will include vehicle failures.
- ❖ An Operator stated they proved evidence (x 3) that a vehicle was suitable after failing inspection. The Service officers were not aware of this particular case; however the Service is happy to look into this.
- ❖ Insurance - Bradford has higher vehicle insurance premiums. The Council does not have any influence over insurance premiums. Drivers can look into things such as telematics to lower their insurance premium.

## **7. Peer Review Update**

The updated peer review is published on the website. You can find the updated peer review by following the link: <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/media/4700/peer-review-update-nov-18.pdf>

## **8. Date of Next Meeting**

Cllr Ferriby wished everyone a brilliant festive period and advised that the next meetings will be held in the New Year and the dates will be cascaded to all operators in due course.

As a last point an operator requested to know why two people had been refused entry into the meeting. The Principal Officer advised that the meeting is for Operators and Designated Representatives only.

After note - The date for the next meeting will be Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 10:30am -12pm with registration from 10am -10:30am. Further dates will be sent out shortly.