

HCPH Trade Representative Meeting Summary

Shearbridge Depot, Wednesday 3rd August 2016

10.15am registration for a 10.30am start.

1) **Introductions & Apologies**

Cllr Sarah Ferriby (Portfolio Holder) gave apologies as did Carol Stos, Pervaiz Naik and Stuart Hastings from the PH association.

2) **Previous Minutes**

No actions from the last meeting so the minutes were agreed as being correct.

Trade Agenda Submission Points

None specifically received for this meeting. 5 x Agenda points which relate to a HC meeting were considered and discussed (see attached document) based on the meeting being attended by HC representatives only. Please note that this would not normally be acceptable.

The only additional comments on the day to the agenda points were that one association felt that training should be free and a once in a lifetime occurrence, whilst the other believed it should be shortened from the current half day.

Officers replied saying that the course was reduced from £40 to £30 and is excellent value for a half days training. Officers are not against looking at the content and possible shortening the course in the future. A DVD is being produced which will remove the vehicle check training and thereby shorten sessions later in the year. Officers need to see evidence that the trade are working to a high standard in all areas though before making a final decision on shortening or changing training.

The concerns regarding the 3pm vehicle test slot are avoidable if drivers book early. Some drivers who choose to leave it to the last minute to book in do want the 3pm slot and are always made aware of the fact that they will be unable to collect plates on the same day.

The service will ensure that all officers deliver that message to drivers prior to booking vehicles in to the 3pm slots.

Service Agenda Submission Points

3) **Purpose of meeting**

The original request for this meeting followed trade generic concerns which have not proven accurate. Officers explained that the portfolio holder meets with Operators at periodic meetings and that this agenda is identical to theirs. As such the PH association representatives had chosen not to attend this meeting as they have already attended the Operator meeting.

The Service also holds quarterly meetings with the trade at Shearbridge separately. As such Officers proposed that this meeting no longer take place and that the portfolio holder attends a periodic HC meeting at Shearbridge. One association agreed that and the other association had no comments to make.

Officers explained that they proposed to stop quarterly PH trade meetings as there is only one currently recognised association whose representatives attend the Operator business meeting.

4) **Ultra Low Emission Vehicles**

A hand out was issued.

Officers explained that the government is promoting low emission vehicle and are looking to provide grants where people wish to purchase etc. The grants are quite generous and the vehicles once purchased cost about half as much to drive and maintain as a petrol driven vehicle. The vehicles help reduce greenhouse gases.

Officers explained they are not driving the initiative but they have a duty to bring such schemes to the wider audience. They are encouraging the trade to feedback to the people who run the scheme in order to have a voice that will in turn help shape future requirements. Officers explained that they fully understand the points the trade are making as they are currently running a ULEVs. However by the trade having a voice and explaining its points it can help shape the future nationally.

Work with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is likely, in the future, to see an emissions policy whereby greener cars will be essential. Leeds for example is looking at green air zones and possible charges for vehicles that don't meet the desired criteria.

5) **Conditions Proposals / Points of interest**

Proposal one:

The proposal is to look at a way of ensuring the proprietor/operator has measures in place for recruiting staff who are not licensed by the service, e.g. radio / telephone operators, but who have access to sensitive and privileged information.

Proprietors/Operators have a duty of care for such staff and to ensure consistency a minimum criterion is needed. Ideas so far include: reference requests, declaration of criminal convictions, training programmes including data protection and shift rotas to be formally established.

Action: Officers to send out 4/5 points for comment.

Proposal two:

There is a proposal to increase the level of English language requirement to a higher minimum standard. The service has already recognised the need for clear communication and revised its communication test in 2015 for all new applicants.

In the future as there is work within West Yorkshire Combined Authority which may result in a push for ESOL level 3, which is of significant standard. It may also be applied retrospectively which means anyone who does not have sufficient

English skills will have to work over a period of time to improve their English language in order to reach the required minimum standard and therefore continue in the trade.

Proposal three:

Issuing of a 5 year Operator's Licence – This is an option which can be delivered and the service is working up the details and costs of the change.

Proposal four:

Equality act – A private member's bill is expected to receive its second hearing in November 2016 which is aimed at drivers of WAV vehicles being **required** to assist passengers in wheelchairs.

6) Training Update

Modular Driver training – 3 years ago, in August 2013, a condition was introduced which requires all drivers to be trained by 31st August 2016. Those drivers who had not attended training by this date would be suspended. In the 3 years, this requirement has been communicated through newsletters, meetings, website updates, email and postal methods etc. to all licensed members. It is evident that many operators did not act in the first year or even two years and are now trying to get drivers trained at the last minute – which is unacceptable.

As a goodwill gesture, officers have been given permission to put the deadline back to December 2016 and will provide extra course dates between now and then. Any driver who has not attended training by December will be revoked and action taken against their Operator/Proprietor. The deadline will not be extended again. Notwithstanding above, Officers do wish to reiterate their thanks to the proprietors who were organised and booked their drivers on early and have met the requirements.

CSE Training – This has been a great success, with circa 95% of drivers having already attended sessions. Around 200 drivers have not yet acknowledged or attended and the service is taking action to deal with these remaining individuals. The service wishes to express thanks to you and your drivers who attended these sessions promptly.

A representative stated that Proprietors shouldn't receive letters about CSE and shouldn't do training. He was reminded that this was licenced "driver" training and as a representative should be aware of this and his responsibility to ensure that he understood the facts and to also cascade the information to his members.

It was reiterated to the associations that proprietors are responsible for all drivers who drive their vehicles.

Reminder: Training must be booked by Operator/Proprietor only via PTS (not via HCPH Service).

7) Vehicle Test Results

An update was given on the figures for the first quarter of financial year; circa 1000 vehicles have been tested with a first time pass rate of 60% and circa 200 vehicles (20%) have failed and had to pay increased fees.

HC vehicles show circa 70% pass rate for the same first quarter period. The majority of failures incurred a cost which shows they had major defects.

The service has worked for 4 years educating operators on vehicle safety and results have not improved. Therefore follow up action is being taken.

Where a vehicle fails with a charge, the proprietor of the HC will be written to. The proprietor is responsible for ensuring vehicle safety.

One representative asked who sets the retest fees and asked again that there should be no fee. Officers reiterated their point from earlier in the meeting that the representative should be aware of the facts as he has been told on multi previous occasions and that such documents are available on Bradford Council website.

An additional point was brought to the table in respect of HC fare cards. Officers have worked on these and produced a draft version. The trade were happy with content but agreed with officers that colour changes were done on the document in question. This would make the document more readable for the public.

One representative had an idea to display a smaller version of the driver badge in the fare card corner.

Action: Officers to consider request for smaller photo and then feedback prior to issuing the fare card to the trade.

A representative also requested that the larger vehicles have two fare cards in them for ease of the public has access to view them.

Action: Officers agree this is a good idea and to issue two fare cards to all vehicles when the final version is agreed and produced.