

Operator Business Meeting Summary

Wednesday 16th May 2018 – 10.30am

1. Introductions / Welcome

Cllr Ferriby opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. She then handed over to officers:

Key officers present: Adam Chadwick – Enforcement Officer; Samantha Kaye – Licensing Officer; Martin Bisby – Licensing Officer; Nicola Thompson – Technical and Support Officer – Workshop; Carol Stos – HCPH Manager; Geoff Binnington – Principal Officer; Adrian Walker (WYP).

2. Minutes from the last meeting

There were 4 outstanding actions from the February meeting. Officers updated as below:

From the last minutes:

- The service responsible for arranging the Health and Well Being event at Grange interlink have not yet been able to arrange anything. Also, there has been no further interest from the trade (the last event was poorly attended). If you have any driver's interested please let the Licencing Service know.
- Officers have updated the Service website with details about the court case where an Operator was found liable for the death of a passenger (RTC) involving a driver who was working for the company.
- Officers have updated the Peer Review Action points on the Service website.
- Enforcement Officers have offered help and guidance for setting up email accounts for drivers / operators; this is also on the website and will also be covered in operator refresher training. The new annual base check has been updated with the relevant changes and will be emailed to operators before the annual visit so you can be compliant and prepared before the EO attend to ensure Operators are communicating effectively with their drivers and checking documentation in line with the online processes.

3. Police Update

The process for reporting anything to the police was explained. The best option to report is by the online reporting mechanism the police have. The link below is the home page

<https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/>

Click on the link, then click on **Report it**, it will take you to the next page which all you need to do is then click on the title that is relevant to you and complete the form. You will need to provide details but the form is confidential and your details will not be disclosed. You can also select your preferred method of contact.

Up to date contact details for the new NPT's that started at the end of March are below:

- **Bradford East NPT** bradfordeastnt@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk
- Inspector Di Collins
- **Bradford South NPT** <mailto:bradfordsouthnt@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk>
- Inspector Shelley Slarke
- **Bradford West NPT** <mailto:Bradfordwestnt@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk>
- Inspector Tom Casey
- **Keighley NPT** <mailto:keighleynt@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk>
- Inspector Khalid Khan
- **Shipley NPT** <mailto:shipleynt@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk>
- Inspector Julie Deacon
- **City NPT** <mailto:bradfordcitynt@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk>
- Inspector Beth Pagnillo

Rachel Hird and Daniel Livesley, (CSE safeguarding unit); work with social care with girls and boys under 18 years of age who are vulnerable and at risk of CSE exploitation. They work closely with HCPH Services and may contact operators for information about missing children, booking of pick up and drop off times, contact numbers etc. If you are contacted by the police they will give you details of their name, number and station and to confirm this is a legitimate call you can ring them back to clarify. Please assist the police with enquires.

Cllr Ferriby commented that drivers had provided good information to the police in the past and this helps vulnerable people.

4. **Agenda Points Raised**

No agenda points had been sent and none were raised at the meeting.

5. **Enforcement Review Update**

Operator Training

Following on from the Peer Review, Operator Refresher Training has started with multi-fleet Operators. 17 have attended out of 61 with feedback being very good. Only 1 said they had not learnt anything and ironically they had the lowest score. Training will continue throughout May / June and possibly July. Attendance is mandatory; it is a condition of your licence. Training is from 10 -12 on a Thursday and is interactive - you can work together, engage with each and ask questions.

Court Information

A summary was provided about a Plying for hire operation in August 2017 where 4 drivers were stopped.

1 case concluded - £320 fine, £32 VS £622 Council court costs £1,244, the driver received 8 points on his DL IN10 Driving without insurance.

1 result was no further action.

2 other cases are currently still on-going.

Please reiterate to your drivers the consequences of flagging as this will also affect you as an operator and be recorded against your Licence.

Operators are required to declare all Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV).

Changes to the Equality Act 2010 mean that the Local Authority is now required to collate and retain these figures. All operators will be asked to provide these figures to the Licensing Service. Further information will follow by email.

Attendance at Business Operator Meetings

Large Operators - It is a condition of your licence that you are required to attend at least one or four meetings per year. You can use your formally designated representative (if approved by the Service) to attend the others. This condition was introduced in Nov 2015.

Small Operators - It is a condition of your licence that you are required to attend one meeting per year. You can attend others if you wish.

If you have more than 5 vehicles, 75% attendance (attend 3 out of 4 meetings) is required. A full Attendance list is on the website. We have not been stringently monitored attendance in the past but will be doing so moving forward.

Red Diesel

HMRC asked for assistance from BMDC in this operation. 8 vehicles were stopped at random and 4 had red diesel in them. The drivers were fined over £500 each. If a driver is caught again there are increased fines and penalties for secondary offences (including prosecution).

Please make your drivers are aware of the repercussions to them and to you as an operator (your reputation). More joint operations will follow.

6. General Licencing Information

Members of the Licensing team discussed specific points that have been issued by post and on email to the licensed trade.

All these were discussed and explained in depth and the letter sent 11 May 2018. Please click on the below link for lots more information.

Several questions were asked by different operators and these have been recorded below:

A question was asked as to whether the online form should be printed out or completed online. The Service response was that the form is an electronic form which is completed online and emailed back to the service.

It was asked about emails taking 10 days or longer for reply when urgent matters and drivers off road. The service response was that urgent cases are dealt with as soon as possible whereas non urgent ones will be answered within 10 days.

The potential benefits of emails being separated into different groups was raised i.e. Enforcement, Badge, Vehicle, and Operator. The service response was that this would be considered.

It was reminded that all operators had been written to previously and it was also discussed at the last meeting that the service was moving to more online and pre booked appointments. This is working well for those dealing with requirements in advance and booking appointments. Those who turn up with no appointment cannot be guaranteed to be seen that day.

For urgent cases like RTA / Lost badge these will be dealt with by EO and LO to ensure that drivers are back on the road as soon as possible.

Officers were asked how many RTA / lost badge they dealt with per day on average. The answer was circa 2 or 3 which means that urgent cases account of less than 1% of issues. The service would continue to look for improvements in this area.

Vehicle tests are currently booking approximately 10 days ahead. We do try to put on extra testing when available to help with the increase in vehicle demand.

The cost of CCTV / Dash Cams was asked. The service was unable to answer as it was in the middle of discussions with other WY Authorities regarding the future use of CCTV. What does matter now is that the cost is not the primary factor, compliance with the code of practice is what matters and this information has been published on the website. The Service website also has links to other websites to assist Operators and a letter has been sent out to notify you of this. **PLEASE NOTE:** Any Operator despatching a vehicle with CCTV / dash cam which is recording video / voice footage must ensure they are compliant.

It was asked why Bradford Council did not provide any incentive for drivers for Hybrid / Electric vehicles to help with the reduction of emissions. The service responded that incentives are available and are produced by the Government who are driving the air quality agenda. It is not a matter being driven by individual councils.

7. Vehicle Safety Inspections

Good news, the pass rate is steadily improving and has now reached 73%/ 74% for annual tests. Further work is still needed but it is going in the right direction. However, random test results are showing that c60% fail and this is a grave concern. A significant percentage of these also have major defects. The enforcement team have been asked to review random tests results and notify Operators accordingly.

Key failure points include: Brakes; Steering; Suspension; Tyres ABS / Engine Management lights. An Operator said that this is due to drivers working longer hours to make up wages with fares being so low and could fares not be set like in HC. A discussion took place which clarified that fares were not, and could not, be set by the Council/Licensing Service. Fares were set by Operators. After some discussion it was recognised that Operators may need to have their own discussions regarding the setting of fares and working closer together.

Vehicle safety is critical when carrying passengers. Licencing fees have not increased for many years, they have actually reduced. The high failures rates are due to vehicles not being maintained in accordance with requirements. This is something that drivers and operators need to address. The Service will continue to enforce correct standards.

8. Peer Review Update

The latest progress on this can be found on the below link:

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/media/4700/recommendations-and-progress-update.pdf>

9. AOB

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Meet & Greet service at Shearbridge will not be available for the next few weeks. If anyone arrives without an appointment and it is urgent i.e. RTA, Lost Badge they should take a ticket and they will be dealt with as and when an officer is available. Non urgent cases will not be seen and they will be advised to email the service to book an appointment.

Please advise your drivers to be organised so when attending any appointment they bring all correct documentation. A letter has been sent with all the changes and the website is also updated so please keep checking and advise your drivers to for up to date news.

Please visit the 'latest news' page on the website for the latest updates. There is a link below for your convenience.

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/hackney-carriages-and-private-hire/latest-news-and-updates/>

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next Operator Business meeting will be held on Wednesday 8th August 2018. Registration will be at 10 am and the meeting will start at 10.30 am.