

Minutes of: TRADE LIAISON MEETING

Date of Meeting: 8 April 2022, 11.00am, Council Chamber, Bury Town Hall

1 APOLOGIES

Michael Bridge, Licensing Unit Manager.

2 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Ben Thompson opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Introductions took place from all the below attendees.

Ben Thomson – Head of Public Protection – Chair
Councillor Walmsley - Chair of Licensing and Safety Committee
Councillor Morris - Executive Member for Culture and Economy
Laura Jones – Deputy Licensing Unit Manager
Laura Swann - Assistant Director Operations (Strategy)
PC Pete Eccleston - GMP
Matthew Freckleton – Uber
Nazmul Islam – Bury Engagement Officer
Sham Raja – NPHTA
David Lawrie – NPHTA
Charles Oakes – Hackney Carriage Drivers Association
Muhammed Warraich - Private Hire Drivers Association
Naveed Aijaz – Private Hire Drivers Association
Kirsty Wild – Magnum Whiteline
Ean Franks – Magnum Whiteline

**3 FORMAT/FREQUENCY/TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR FUTURE JOINT
GMP/TRADE/COUNCIL TRADE LIAISON MEETINGS**

Ben Thompson explained that we would be looking to hold joint meetings with the police and the Council going forward.

A discussion took place about the frequency of the meetings, and it was agreed they would take place every 2 months initially as there was a lot going on. This can then be reviewed in the future and moved to 3 monthly following prior agreement.

It was agreed the meetings would take place at 5pm on a Thursday and would alternate between in person meetings and a meeting on Microsoft Teams

Action: Set up the meetings for the remainder of the year

Ben Thompson agreed to circulate draft term of reference to the group for comment ahead of the next meeting with a view to agreeing a final copy at the next meeting.

Action: Circulate draft Terms of Reference ahead of the next meeting

4 ESTABLISH MEMBERSHIP (TRADE BODIES, ATTENDEE POSITIONS, NO. MEMBERS, OPERATORS, DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION TO MEMBERS)

Membership was discussed and it was agreed it was important to have representation from Operators, however it would not be possible to invite all operators as there are approximately 30.

It was agreed the best approach was to contact all operators and understand their thoughts regarding representation at this meeting.

A discussion also took place about contacting Hackney Carriage proprietors to understand if they are represented by the Hackney Carriage Association or any other trade representative.

Action: Council to contact all drivers and operators to ensure they are aware of the trade Liaison meetings and that all trade bodies are represented at the meetings

The representative from Uber asked if the GMB Rep for Uber could be invited to future meetings.

Action: GMB Rep from Uber to be invited to future meetings

It was agreed that everyone would be invited to submit agenda items 2 weeks before each meeting and the agenda would then be set.

Action: Agenda items to be requested 2 weeks ahead of each Trade Liaison Meeting

To understand the number of Hackney and Private Hire drivers being represented at the Trade Liaison meetings a list was circulated to understand membership numbers. To ensure those Hackney and PHV drivers that are not a member of a trade association are kept informed it was agreed that copies of the minutes should be made available to all drivers and operators after they have been ratified at the following Trade Liaison meeting.

Action: Copies of the minutes of the Trade Liaison meetings to be made available online following ratification at the following Trade Liaison Meeting.

5 SUNNYBANK SERVICE STATION - ADDITIONAL TESTING STATION (LICENSING)

Ben Thomson explained that the contract commenced 1 April 2022 and Sunnybank have started to receive applications to book in. It is a new contract and a lot of preparation work has taken place to ensure a smooth introduction. The standards will be the same as at Bradley Fold and they will use the same inspection manual.

The PHDA raised that they have big concerns that they are getting a compliance certificate and not an official MOT certificate.

Ben Thomson explained it is an independent testing station but will operate on the same basis as Bradley Fold in that the full compliance test will be carried out. Previously no compliance test certificate was issued, however after listening to the trade it was understood a compliance certificate was needed and therefore this has been built into the new arrangements and put in place at Bradley Fold from 1 April 2022.

The PHDA outlined the reason an MOT test certificate is also needed and should be simple to do as the compliance test is the MOT plus more measures. The reasons for the MOT certificate requirement were cited as:

- On the police database it shows no valid MOT for the vehicle
- Breakdown recovery companies will not come out / recover as shows the taxi has no valid MOT
- Cannot tax online as no valid MOT
- Difficult when come to sell as no valid MOT

It was agreed this message had previously not been understood and the compliance test certificate had been introduced to address the trades concerns. The Council agreed to look into the provision of an MOT certificate and update at the next Trade Liaison meeting

The Hackney carriage association agreed this was needed and should be easy to provide but acknowledged there may be a charge to the trade.

Action: Council to confirm if other authorities in GM and more widely provide an MOT certificate and to look at the implications / cost of provision.

Ben Thomson asked that the trade are reminded to book vehicles in early, up to 8 weeks in advance to ensure they can get the required test at the garage of their choice.

The trade agreed that it is a good idea to ensure applications are done 6 weeks in advance, however they raised concerns there were issues with drivers making applications early but not being contacted.

Action: Council to look into the processing of applications in light of this information to ensure they are being dealt with in a timely manner.

Trade raised issue that when drivers are working they cannot answer their phone. Trade asked to remind drivers to leave a message on Licensing voicemail and they will receive a call back. They can indicate a time that is convenient for the call back.

Work is underway on an online booking calendar for MOTs but this will take time to develop and implement as it requires changes to IT infrastructure.

A discussion took place about applications being treated as new applications now and the fact this information is not on the web site.

Action: To cross check the information is correct on the web site and states that if a license lapses it will be treated as a new application- update web site if needed.

Driver Safety

Ben Thomson explained the Council is looking to run an initiative to improve driver safety. He explained the Council and the Police were looking to produce a joint educational video around driver safety and Nazmul Islam will be in touch with the trade for input and to understand their thoughts on how driver safety could be improved.

Consideration was also being given to notices similar to those seen on buses to detail that abuse will not be tolerated. Again, views and ideas on design will be sort from the trade.

Discussion took place around the use of CCTV which was part of MLS but received push back from the trade and was deferred due to cost element for drivers and concerns about privacy.

The NPHA raised that funding may be available for CCTV and details could be sent to the council to explore.

Action: NPHA to send email with details of possible CCTV funding opportunities

Action: Licensing Engagement officer to engage with the trade and explore funding opportunities and feedback to the next Trade Liaison meeting

6 MINIMUM LICENSING STANDARDS/CLEAN AIR ZONE (LICENSING)

Trade is grateful for parts of MLS that have been modified like policy around colour and window tints.

The main concern now raised by the PHDA is about funding. It was explained that the Clean Air Zone is currently under review and funding would be part of this. Any comments or concerns around funding should be fed into the Clean Air review. We will be engaging with the trade in relation to this in May and the Engagement officer will support this process to ensure everyone has a voice.

Action: Email update to be circulated to all drivers and operators to update in relation to Clean Air.

Policy on written off vehicles has been amended and communicated to trade.

7 GMP - UPDATES ON INCIDENTS AGAINST DRIVERS (PROJECTILES)

PC Pete Eccleston attended the meeting to provide an update in the absence of Seargent Andy Vernon. He explained he was not aware of any cases against drivers that are open at the moment.

He asked if drivers are reporting things as this is really important to monitor the number of issues. He understood that drivers lose faith if they have reported things

previously and nothing has been done. However important to keep reporting so more resources can be put into certain areas. It was discussed how drivers often don't report as they think the police are not interested.

PC Eccleston explained he knows there are issues with the computer system which do not help. There are 373 crimes recorded with the word taxi in the record, but they could be about anything and they cannot go through all of them to find those relating to drivers.

It was asked if a keyword could be added into the online form so it would be much simpler to report on. PC Eccleston explained he would need to see what was possible

The trade reported 37 open incidents (but not all were in Bury), but no action taken.

Action: To bring crime reference numbers to next meeting to be able to give to the police so they can look into it and then they can find it and see detail. The crime reference numbers should also be sent to the GMP Taxi What's App Group.

8 AOB

None

9 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Next meeting to be held on 16th June 5pm-7pm on Microsoft Teams

Action: Set up next meeting via Teams on 16 June from 5pm till 7pm