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## Members Meeting

Tuesday 14 June 2022 at 10:30 - Via ZOOM

### Present

|                     |                                    |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Kevin Wilde         | UKCOA Chairman                     |
| Amy Baker-McCormack | Leoline Travel                     |
| Richard Bamber      | Anthony's Travel                   |
| Peter Bibby         | Bibbys of Ingleton                 |
| Ian Bishop          | Alfa Travel                        |
| David Blake         | Blakes Coaches                     |
| Peter Bradley       | Managing Director – UKCOA          |
| Judy Dale           | Royale European                    |
| James Deville       | Curtis Gabriel                     |
| Veeran Dhillon      | Olympia Transport                  |
| Jonathan Ede        | Roselyn Coaches                    |
| Peter Evans         | MET                                |
| Paul Flisher        | Ready Tours Ltd                    |
| Steve Griffiths     | South Mimms Travel                 |
| Nathan Hadley       | Prospect Coaches                   |
| Del Haggerty        | D H Team Ltd                       |
| Tina Hailstone      | Hailstone Travel                   |
| Paul Harnden        | Chauffer Hire Coaches              |
| Ilir Hoxha          | Big Ben Coaches                    |
| David Hull          | Wrightsure                         |
| Laura Li            | UKCOA Membership and Admin Officer |
| Lennox Mackie       | Mackie's Coaches                   |
| Anthony Marett      | Marett's Chariots                  |
| Kevin Mayne         | Mayne Coaches                      |
| Terry McIntyre      | Golden Boy Coaches                 |
| Rachael Noble       | Gallagher Insurance                |
| Gareth Owen         | Llew Jones                         |
| Andy Palmer         | A Palmer Associates                |
| Mark Peace          | Cheney Coaches                     |
| Marc Preston        | SBC Coaches                        |
| Peter Rice          | Southgate and Finchley Coaches     |
| Andrew Scott        | Stanley Travel                     |
| Elaine Scrivens     | Southgate and Finchley Coaches     |

|               |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|
| Ivan Shears   | Chalfont Travel     |
| Ivan Thomas   | Edward Thomas & Son |
| Robert Whelan | Corbel of London    |

## 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

**Kevin Wilde** welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Apologies were received from:

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Stephen Telling    | UKCOA President    |
| Mark Ballam        | Alexander Dennis   |
| Jamie Brown        | Princess Coaches   |
| Pete Brown         | Princess Coaches   |
| Clive Edwards      | Taf Valley Coaches |
| Tom James          | York Pullman       |
| Richard Matthews   | Princess Coaches   |
| Chris Mobbs        | Dawson Group       |
| Val Sheppard-Evans | Longmynd Travel    |

## 2. Presentation

**Kevin Wilde** introduced **James Deville**, Sales Director from Curtis Gabriel. James explained how SEO can help with driver recruitment and talked through a number of case studies. James is happy to be contacted by members who would like further information: [james@curtisgabriel.com](mailto:james@curtisgabriel.com) or M. 07593 439381. Kevin Wilde thanked James for his presentation.

## 3. Minutes of last meeting 5 April 2022, and any Matters Arising

Minutes agreed with no amendments. **Peter Bradley** apologised for two outstanding items from the minutes. He will draft the letter to schools about fuel prices this week. Peter will also get in contact with NCP at Gatwick Airport to arrange a meeting.

## 4. PSVAR – Update

**Kevin Wilde** reported that all is quiet now. **Peter Bradley** reported that DPTAC (the organisation that advises the DfT on accessibility and was leading the review of PSVAR) are currently recruiting a new chair. The UKCOA will make contact and build relationships with the new person when they are in place.

**Peter Bradley** commented that all exemptions should now be registered. If any member has missed the deadline, they should contact Peter who may be able to help.

## 5. Fuel Prices

**Peter Bradley** reported that the BBC have been in touch looking for a good news story about what coaches are doing to help during the rail strike. Members were invited to contact Peter if they could assist. Peter mentioned that if operators can provide stories when asked the UKCOA will be able to build a relationship with the media and it will be in a position to share its view on how the coach industry generally and in particular how it was treated throughout the pandemic.

There was general discussion around the difficulties member are still facing with increased fuel prices. **Kevin Wilde** mentioned that he had been accused of profiteering by a customer because he had put prices up to cover increased operating costs. The attitude from some schools seems to be that coach companies should absorb additional costs because their children can't go out on trips if it's too expensive. Kevin also said there could be some work for the UKCOA to do around educating schools and local authorities about their responsibilities and how they could reduce costs, by booking journeys in advance, for example.

## 6. UKCOA Sub -Groups

**Kevin Wilde** explained that work is continuing in all of the sub-groups, but there has not been much progress lately, as operators are experiencing a busy time. There is no update for most groups at this time.

### Driver Academy – Mark Anderson

**Andy Palmer** (in **Mark Anderson's** absence) reported that he had been to an initial meeting with Croydon and Sutton London Borough Councils and they are really keen to get involved. They have a large number of people from middle management on their books who lost their jobs during Covid. These job seekers are looking for a career change and could be a good fit for the coach industry.

**Andy** and **Mark Anderson** then met with Croydon and Sutton to take things further. Both councils use the National Driving School and wondered if they could be used for the training as they are already set up on their systems. Next week Andy and Mark have a meeting with the National Driving School to discuss how long it takes to get trainees through the PSV test.

Andy clarified that trainees would remain in receipt of benefits throughout their training. The DWP can amalgamate all boroughs across the south-east and roll a programme out in a way that they could pilot something that could work nationally.

**Del Haggerty** mentioned the importance of members contacting **Carl Widdowson** at the DWP to get the recruitment process started.

## 7. New Members and Membership Drive

**Peter Bradley** welcomed new member Safeguard Coaches. Personal recommendation is always the best method of recruitment and members were encouraged to reach out to people they know. Peter stressed the benefits of having a larger membership are that the UKCOA can spend more on marketing and can put more resources into working on the issues that members raise.

## 8. Managing Director Roundup

**Peter Bradley** reported:

- He is trying to make the newsletter more regional. He asked for members to send in any news from outside of London. Peter also invited comments about what the UKCOA is doing and on the information that members receive.
- The meeting on 5 July will not have a formal agenda. It will be comments and

feedback from members lasting one hour. There will be a break over the summer and meetings will resume on 13 September.

- Peter is working on the speaker programme for the rest of the year. The Senior Traffic Commissioner will be invited to speak. A couple of vehicle manufacturers and possibly the DVSA will also come and speak. Members were asked to contact Peter with any ideas and suggestions for things they would like to feature in future meetings.

## 9. AOB

**Peter Evans** commented that he has recruited 4 new drivers but the funding is not yet in place. Kevin Wilde suggested he contact the Driver Training Academy sub-group for help.

**Peter Bibby** raised the topic of driver hours, which he thinks is even more important than the fuel issue and asked if the UKCOA could push the DfT for some change. The DfT doesn't understand the industry: coach drivers are categorised with HGV drivers, rather than bus drivers, which doesn't make sense. It doesn't need major change, just some flexibility would be good. There was agreement from other members.

**Andy Palmer** stated if there was a time to do this it is definitely now, after Brexit. **Kevin Wilde** agreed that the UKCOA would start a sub group to take this forward. **Mark Peace** volunteered to be in the group. **Peter Bibby** agreed to send some notes to **Peter Bradley** who will put together a paper to send to the DfT. He will also see if someone from the DfT will come and speak at a members meeting.

## 10. Date of Next Meeting

**Tuesday 5 July 2022 at 10.30** – No speaker; roundup and feedback from members.