

Rackley, Shaun

From: Julian Lawrence-Ball
Sent: 26 December 2020 20:15
To: Rackley, Shaun
Subject: Committee meeting

Re upcoming committee meeting

Dear Shaun

Season greetings. I hope you had as good a Christmas as is possible this year. Please use the contents of this email as a brief explanation as to the current number of points on my drivers licence.

I don't under any circumstance dispute the 6 points accrued by two local fixed cameras. I would just say in my defence that the first offence occurred on an extremely foggy night combined with my concern for the welfare for my female passenger who I felt was very venerable. This led to a drop in concentration not on my driving but my speed as my focus was on the road and my passenger. At the point of the offence I was on an empty road and my speed still did not exceed 40mph on a downhill stretch of road.

The 2nd offence occurred in similar circumstances. Late at night and on a downhill Stretch of road. On this occasion because of the government lockdown at the time I was very often the only car on the road in Torbay. The problem I found was that with zero traffic on the road I was again spending long periods of time looking not at the road but at my speedometer. The hilly nature of Torbay means that it's very difficult to maintain a constant speed. To decrease the amount of time I spent looking at the speedometer and not the road I started to use a feature of the car I had not used before. Namely the maximum speed setting which issues an audible alert when the set speed is passed. At the time of the offence I again was coming downhill, as I approached the camera I went to re engage the maximum speed setting and comically engaged the cruise control instead. As I was in 3rd gear and heading downhill the car immediately accelerated for a brief moment. Annoyingly this moment was as I passed the camera. By the time I had worked out what was happening and why, my speed had triggered the offence. Although I do not dispute offences I would just like to say that I pass both these cameras multiple times on a daily basis. I estimate that I have passed through the Torbay road camera over 15,000 times since I became a taxi driver and the same or more for all the other cameras in the Torbay area, often as the only vehicle late at night. I have never been stopped by the police for any reason since becoming a taxi driver and have never been flashed by a fixed camera any where else apart from these two occasions two years apart in my local area.

The other 3 points I was completely unaware of until contacted by the council. I have zero reason to not give my details to the authorities. I carry my drivers licence and my council licence at all times. My vehicle is insured and properly licensed and I work for the Bays largest firm who will have a record of where I was and why available at all times. What I would like to say to the committee is that whilst I do not deny I didn't give my details when

asked to by the authorities, this was not because I was attempting a deception, but because when the original paper work came to me asking for those details my father was in the very late stages of his life and was to pass away soon after from lung cancer. This was as you can understand a sad and difficult period in the weeks leading to his death, especially as government COVID restrictions had meant I was unable to visit him in his last days. Tragically my mental health was to suffer another blow, when less than a week after my fathers passing, a very close friend to who's daughter I was godfather, tragically took his own life. These two events combined meant that I did not pay the proper attention that was required to the traffic offence. And with two funerals in the same week some weeks later, by the time my grief had subsided and my mental health improved to a degree I could start to refocus, I thought that no further action was required and that I would be issued with a standard 3 points. Obviously this was not the case and a further 3 points were issued for not producing my details when asked. I would ask the committee to allow me to make a case to the courts to have these 3 points rescinded by the courts for all of the reasons I have mentioned above before making any further decisions themselves re my suitability as a driver.

In closing I would just like to say that this is my only means of income and I take my professional behaviour very seriously and work very hard to provide a safe service to the people of Torbay and our visitors.

Kind Regards
Julian Lawrence-Ball