

INCOMING EMAIL

From: Steve Mabin [REDACTED]
To: Licensing <EX:/O=TORBAY COUNCIL/OU=CIVIC OFFICES
SERVER/CN=ENVIRONMENT/CN=ENVIRONMENTAL/CN=LICENSING>
Date: 18/10/2012 15:49:18
Subject: Re: HACKNEY CARRIAGE (TAXI) & PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING
POLICY

Having read through and given careful consideration to the proposals set out in the HACKNEY CARRIAGE(TAXI) & PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY I believe that the intention to make Private Hire drivers attach stick-on signs to their doors is discriminatory as it would almost certainly exclude them from doing any wedding or funeral work, should they wish to do so. These signs could not be removed, as would be the case for a similar Hackney Carriage driver who could remove the magnetic advertising signs (should there be any) and the taxi sign from the roof.

This does not seem fair or proper and could lead to a loss of work in these difficult times.

If there is a problem with drivers working without the magnet signs attached could this not be better dealt with by a system of fines and/or suspensions?

Kind regards

Steve Mabin

(Private Hire Driver)

Cox, Steve

Subject: FW: UNCLASSIFIED: RE: Policy Consultation

From: steve guttridge [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 December 2012 18:08
To: Rackley, Shaun; Noble, Craig
Subject: Policy Consultation

Hi Shaun & Craig,

I've managed to read though the policy and have only a few niggles, (No surprise there)

These are as follows:

Vehicle Age Changes & Specification changes.

- The age changes are generally positive and in some respects we win but in others we loose. WAV's are a good idea for extending the life as they really don't get used heavily enough to rack up the miles to make there life limited to 8 years.
- What will happen to the clause that prestige vehicles will be able to get extensions to there life if still in good order? This has been a major factor in my companies vehicle buying decisions. 1/2 of my vehicles are BMW's and are far from warn out & not in need of imminent replacement at 8 years, Will they still be subject to extended life's?
- 3 years is also a bit premature for the buying of new vehicles, most operators who buy used tend to go for ex lease or contract hire cars which tend to be 3 years and then sell on. Can this not be 3 years and 6 months to allow for transition time?
- For the majority of trips, luggage space is not an important factor and I can see the point in smaller vehicles and the savings in operating and purchasing, but just because a car has a smaller engine size does not mean it needs to have to carry less passengers. If it is fitted with 4 passenger seat belts then that's what it should be licensed for. As private hire operators it should be our discretion not to provide an unsuitable vehicle for the pre booked jobs we undertake. Modern cars have drastically improved power outputs and vehicles such as the Skoda's new Octavia and most VW & Ford offerings now have 1.275 ltr or 1.0 ltr engines.

E.G Ford Focus 1.0 Ecoboost Power output is 125 ps compared to a 1.6 ltr ford focus with 105 ps so why would it need to carry less passenger or luggage? Surely this is for the trade to decide upon?

- As its not in the policy I am presuming that rear loading WAV's will be able to be licensed as Hackney carriages is that the case?
- It is not clear but is it still right that PH vehicles don't need to have a meter or will they now need one?
- Are we saying that new vehicles under 3 years old will now need to be MOT'd?
- Most modern vehicles including all BMW's and Some new WAV's do NOT have spare tires jacks as they run on run flats. This needs amending.
- Colour of the vehicles would lead to problems if a non simple colour is chosen. Bristol I believe had huge problems with there choice of Bristol Blue as no cars are made in it. As an operator I would hope this never comes into use.

Signage.

This is my biggest issue with policy change proposals. My vehicles for example BMW 5 series & 3 Series are used for a variety of jobs. I feel that exemption's need to be given depending upon the type of work the vehicles are being used for. This needs to be managed by yourselves and each case should be judged by licensing officers. The placing of Adhesive stickers to the vehicles is,

A, Damaging to the vehicles paint work as they never come off easily.

B. Has no purpose other than to make the public think the vehicle is a Taxi something that policy is trying to make them understand that they are not. They don't read advanced bookings only, they think oh a Taxi! as they don't know the difference.

Stickers are not going to work for us as a company as we perform Wedding transport & Corporate transfers to & from Airports. If our clients wanted to turn up in a Minicab they could use 211611 and we would be out of a business,

I will happily display window decals or removable vinyl or Magnetic signage that can be affixed to the windows or doors and that can be peeled off when not required. But not signage that requires adhesive or could cause costly damage.

I am proud of my fleet of vehicles and if I wanted them to look like an average cab firm I would not of spent so much money on them.

Other than that its generally a vast improvement, but some points need addressing before final policy can be put in place.

Regards

Steve Guttridge

Brixham Minibus Taxis, Premier Cars & Torbay Wedding Cars
[REDACTED]

www.torbayweddingcars.com
[REDACTED]

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Cox, Steve

Subject: FW: UNCLASSIFIED: RE: changes to PH conditions

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 December 2012 02:46
To: Rackley, Shaun
Subject: changes to PH conditions

Dear Shaun,

I hope you had a good Xmas.

I would like to make an informal representation over the changes.

The magnetic plates are far from perfect. However they have a big plus- security.

It is possible to reduce the profile of the vehicle as a Cab by removing them. If the aerial is placed in the boot at the same time opportunistic car theft is reduced so thought needs to be given to this change in relation to security.

regards

Simon Hutchings

Cox, Steve

Subject: FW: UNCLASSIFIED: FW: REF; the draft Policy its statutory 12 week public consultation

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2012 20:20
To: Cox, Steve
Subject: REF; the draft Policy its statutory 12 week public consultation

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE CONSULTATION

REF; the draft Policy its statutory 12 week public consultation

DEAR SIRS I would ask you review the following proposals

- 1) The introduction of Driver Standard Assessments for all new applicant And those who obtain 6 or more penalty points in a licensed year

Time on the road for taxi drivers is excessive and i consider 7 or more penalty points as a minimum for existing drivers. Please consider the possibility of any person including yourselves getting fined for two speeding offences one morning and then find your future is in jeopardy. Can you justify operating above the law and further inflicting punishment on a taxi driver who has already been punished by the courts

- 2) The amendment of the age of vehicles to include new vehicles being no Older than three years and extending the life of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles to 10 years, but with two additional MOT tests

The existing rule allows us to put 3yr old vehicles on as taxis to reduce this to a 2yr old vehicle will put an extra burden on existing drivers and i believe will reduce the standard of existing vehicles as older vehicles will remain in use and new vehicles will be of a lower calibre as is seen to be happening now as a result of the diminishing business

- 3) The Licensing Authority is committed to encouraging the professional image of the trade and it considers that drivers should conform to a minimum standard of dress,

I fully endorse Dress code but feel that enforcement cannot be done by the existing council and as were unable to maintain the existing rules why bother introducing more unless you can assure the consul tees that this can be achieved within your remit. Shorts, hoodies and specific headwear if deemed unsuitable should be banned completely, for example shorts worn recently on Paignton rail might have been tailored five years ago when they were purchased but now are an embarrassment to the trade and those like myself who consider themselves to be ambassadors to tourism in the bay

- 4) Licence Plate: The small identification card must be securely fixed to the inside of the vehicle in a conspicuous position.

Has the Taxi association been made aware of this additional instruction size information or text?

Yours faithfully

Martin Phillips
Plate 23

53 IDENTICAL REPRESENTATIONS

Licensing Section,
C/O Town Hall
Castle Circus,
Torquay.
TQ1 3DR

14th December 2012.

Dear Sirs,

Re; (Draft) Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy.

I write to as a licensed hackney carriage driver of Torbay. In my opinion, the majority of your draft document appears to promote a sound foundation for my trade whilst also reducing several outdated and inappropriate conditions.

There are however some points which I would like to draw to your attention, as these in themselves could cause severe hardship and unnecessary additional expense in an already difficult financial period.

1) 5.10

I totally accept that licensed drivers have a duty to transport their passengers in a safe and responsible manner and this is something I do at all times. However, penalising a driver for receiving 6 penalty points within a twelve month period does seem excessive. Bearing in mind, that this could be the result of two very minor traffic offences. I can at busy periods, average five hundred miles a week. That accumulates to nearly thirty thousand miles a year. Not your average household usage. There is a need for circumstances to be taken into account. Could this not be amended to 'receiving more than 6 penalty points'

2) 11.1

Appendix 1 indicates certain items of clothing that will be unacceptable. I myself maintain a very good standard of dress code whilst I am working. However, I note that your draft recommends no headwear at all. Many taxi drivers work very unsociable hours, right through the night and during winter months some form of headgear becomes a very sensible and necessary form of winter clothing. Would it be possible to allow tailor caps to be worn. Additionally you recommend that 'hoodies' can be worn provided the hood is down. I feel this will be very difficult for the Licensing Officers to police and would it not be more effective simply to ban hoodies.

3) 14.4

I totally accept the need for age restraints to be implemented concerning the age of licensed vehicles. However, the new recommendation of a maximum age for initial application vehicle being set at 3 years will cause an immense financial penalty on what is already a very expensive commitment. The wording of a maximum of 3 years in effect means a vehicle of 2 years 11 months.

At present I re-new my vehicle on a regular basis as required under the present system. And I always purchase a good, clean, low mileage vehicles which are usually 3 years old. At this age many lease cars, ex-demonstrators and mobility vehicles appear on the open market. The new ruling would eliminate these vast ranges of vehicle from the licensing trade. I would therefore strongly request that the age limit for initial licensed vehicles be amended to less than 4 years of age.

4) 2.1

I totally accept your views on overcharging and I believe there should be a policy of zero tolerance from the local authority. The taxi/private hire business is tarnished worldwide with the reputation of overcharging and this is something I feel the Licensing Committee must clamp down on and eradicate Torbay's residents and visitors of any such worries.

Unfortunately over-charging is not always a case of dishonesty, it is more often a case of lack of general knowledge of the areas topography. An amazing number of taxi and private hire drivers have no knowledge of the shortest route between two points and simply keep to the main road and this problems lies very much at the authority's door for a far too simplified and insignificant knowledge test. I feel that all new applicants and in some cases, existing licence holders, need to undertake a more intensive knowledge test in an effort to ensure they do know where they are going and at the same time ensuring the customer receives the best service and value for money. Reports of overcharging have been made to the authority in the past but no significant outcome has ever arisen.

CH Granger

[Redacted signature block]

Cox, Steve

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 January 2013 17:17
To: licensingconsultation
Subject: F.A.O Mr Steve Cox, ref licensing consultation

Dear Steve,

Happy new year!

I am writing to you on behalf of Torbay Taxis Limited with the views of our company on the proposed changes in licensing policy.

Item 5.13. In principle the aspiration to have all drivers trained to BTEC Level 2 in Passenger Transport is an excellent idea, it increases the drivers awareness of current legislation in a number of areas and is also very good in providing training in good working practises which helps to increases the professionalism of the drivers leading to a better customer experience.

You may be aware that for the past three years we have successfully implemented our own policy, that any driver employed by Torbay Taxis Ltd must attain this qualification. Initially we used a training company (PDM training and consultancy) to provide the training, this training was fully funded by the government with no cost to the driver. We were then approached by 'The Value Cars Group', a taxi company from Salisbury who are fully accredited with Edexcel to deliver the qualification, they subsequently trained one of our own drivers so we then had the ability to deliver the training in-house whilst working under their teaching umbrella, again this qualification was delivered with no cost to the driver. This arrangement has worked very well and we have been successful in training numerous drivers to the standards required to gain the Btec qualification.

Recently however the funding that was being provided has been withdrawn and we have now been informed that for a driver to be trained they would have to make a contribution to the training costs, the figure we have been quoted is approximately £500.

As I stated before, in principle it is an excellent idea for all Private hire and Hackney drivers to attain the Btec qualification, but I would urge the council to ascertain exactly how much it would cost the drivers before considering making the qualification mandatory. If the cost is to high it could have a negative impact in the number of new driver applications being made and I know from my own experience that we are already struggling to attract new drivers due to the costs involved in joining the trade, Insurance, vehicle purchase, licenses etc.

Item 14.14. The question's I would ask is why 20% ? Has there been a survey carried out to establish how many vehicles are needed? Has the cost of purchasing these vehicles been researched?

I honestly do not believe that there is the demand locally that would require the council to have that number of wheelchair accessible vehicles available. If the council were intent on achieving 20% WAV by 2018, I think the only way this could be achieved would be to offer a subsidy to all drivers to encourage them to purchase a wheelchair accessible vehicle, but would the funding be available? Or perhaps the council could approach a vehicle supplier and try and secure some discount for the purchase of these vehicles that could be offered to the drivers.

But is there a demand for more wheelchair accessible vehicles in the first place?

Appendix F, Private hire vehicle door signs. I have noted that there is to be a change in policy that door signs must now be adhesive only and magnetic door signs will no longer be permitted. Although I am in

favour of this new policy, the one concern I have is that there will no longer be any way for customers, members of the public and other taxi drivers to discern whether or not the vehicle is actually working or just on private day to day business this could lead to confusion with customers attempting to get into vehicles that are not working for example outside schools, supermarkets etc. At the moment it is relatively easy to recognise whether a vehicle is working or not depending on whether the door signs are displayed or not. Perhaps there could be some other method for displaying whether a vehicle is on shift, I would suggest an illuminated magnetic roof sign with 'Advanced Booking Only' that could be lit when the vehicle is working and turned off when not working, this would also be a benefit to customers at night when it can be difficult to see the door signs due to the location being low down on the vehicle, for example on a dimly lit street with parked cars obscuring the signs.

Advertising. Could I take this opportunity to ask the committee to review the policy of not allowing any advertising either within or on the bodywork of private hire vehicles. If we were permitted to display some form of advertising inside our vehicles and also on the bodywork, with the size and location regulated by yourselves, then this would be an excellent way of securing some much needed additional revenue during this recession. I have noted taxis from the Teignbridge licensing area driving throughout Torbay with advertising on the side of their vehicles. Teignbridge Taxis (33 33 33) for example, clearly have 'Palm Fm' displayed on the bodywork of their vehicles, yet work within our licensing area.

If I can be of any help during your consultation period please feel free to contact me.

Kind Regards,
Paul Le Huray.

Paul Le Huray
Director
Torbay Taxis Ltd

Office: 01803 211611

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Fax: 01803 393892

E-mail: [REDACTED]



Torbay Taxis Ltd, 55 Belgrave road, Torquay, Devon, TQ2 5HZ
WWW.torbaytaxis.co.uk

Cox, Steve

Subject: FW: RESTRICTED: FW: Draft Taxi/Private Hire Proposal

Importance: High

From: Babbacombe Cars [mailto: [REDACTED]]

Sent: 04 January 2013 08:11

To: Cox, Steve

Subject: Draft Taxi/Private Hire Proposal

Importance: High



www.babbacombecars

Dear Mr Cox

I write to you with reference to the Draft Hackney Carriage (Taxi) & Private Hire Licensing Policy.

Just for a quick background of me and my company, I have held a Private Hire License with Torbay Council from the age of 21 (currently 24 years), I have qualifications with The Institute of Advanced Motorist, The British Chauffeurs Guild (London) and of course an NVQ level 2 in passenger transportation not to mention Drive and Survive and Skid Pan Qualification with Devon County Council and more and I believe Babbacombe Cars through various owners is currently the oldest licensed company in Torbay (over 50 years) My Family and I have spent the last 25 years building a High Class Executive Service to not only local residents and the Local Business Community but to Global Organisations as well as Celebrity Clients who visit the area regularly.

All drivers wear a Suit for day work and Full Chauffeurs Uniform if required by the Client. Our vehicles do not have Two Way Radios or Taxi Meters as over 90% of our work is on a contract basis. Therefore we pride ourselves on having a Fleet of Vehicles and suitably dressed Chauffeurs to reflect the Quality and Style of Service expected in this sector of the transportation market.

Having read through the Draft Proposal there are a few items which I would like to comment on: Appendix F / Private Hire Vehicles / Private Hire Vehicles must display two identical signs on the outside front doors. So as not to cause confusion with Hackney Carriages such door signs shall be limited to the words "Private Hire Vehicle", "Advanced Booking Only"

These signs must be adhesive signs and Magnetic signs WILL NOT be permitted.

As previously stated our business plan is to provide a High Class Executive Service and these door signs would have a detrimental effect on our ability to provide this :((would you like your Daughter to arrive at her Wedding in a vehicle adorned with these proposed signs?) We have never felt the need to display identification on our vehicles as we do not wish to be waved down by members of the public (sometimes even outside our authority area).

I have also noticed under APPEDIX D / License Plate / The small identification card must be securely fixed to the inside of the vehicle in a conspicuous position. Is this a new piece of legislation as I have never heard of this before!

I hope I have not taken too much of your time with this correspondence, but as you can see it has a huge effect on the level of service we are able to provide.

Could you please advise me as to when the meeting will take place to discuss these proposals as I would like to attend and if possible make a representation.

Kindest regards

Stuart Mark James



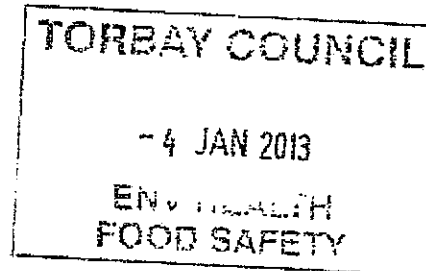
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Fax: 01803 213524

MAJ 005 261



Licensing Section,
C/O Town Hall
Castle Circus,
Torquay,
TQ1 3DR

7th December 2012.

Dear Sirs,

Re: (Draft) Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy.

With reference to the above I write to you on behalf of the Torbay Cab Society Ltd, Torquay largest and longest established Hackney Carriage Company. We are a not for profit organisation and comprise of approximately 50 partners who own an equal share within the society.

In our opinion, the majority of the draft document appears to promote a sound foundation for our trade whilst also reducing several outdated and inappropriate conditions.

There are however some points which we would like to draw to your attention, as these in themselves could cause severe hardship and unnecessary additional expense in an already difficult financial period.

1) 5.10

We totally accept that licensed drivers have a duty to transport their passengers in a safe and responsible manner and this is something we promote within our company. However, penalising a driver for receiving 6 penalty points within a twelve month period does seem excessive. Bearing in mind, that this could be the result of two very minor traffic offences. Many of our drivers average five hundred miles a week. That accumulates to nearly thirty thousand miles a year. Not your average household usage. There is a need for circumstances to be taken into account. Could this not be amended to 'receiving more than 6 penalty points'?

2) 11.1

Appendix I indicates certain items of clothing that will be unacceptable. We as a society maintain a very, very high standard of dress code and ensure that all drivers adhere to these at all times. However, we note that your draft recommends no headwear at all. Many driver work very unsociable hours, right through the night and during winter months some form of headgear becomes a very sensible and necessary form of winter clothing. Would it be possible to allow tailor caps to be worn. Additionally you recommend that 'hoodies' can be worn provided the hood is down. This we feel will be very difficult for the Licensing Officers to police and would it not be more effective simply to ban hoodies.

3) 14.4

We totally accept the need for age restraints to be implemented concerning the age of licensed vehicles. However, the new recommendation of a maximum age for initial application vehicle being set at 3 years will cause an immense financial penalty on what is already a very expensive commitment. The wording of a maximum of 3 years in effect means a vehicle of 2 years 11 months.

At present the majority of our partners re-new their vehicles as required and purchase good, clean, low mileage vehicles which are usually 3 years old. At this age many lease cars, ex-demonstrators and mobility vehicles appear on the open market. The new ruling would eliminate these vast ranges of vehicle from the licensing trade. We would therefore strongly request that the age limit for initial licensed vehicles be amended to less than 4 years of age.

b) 2.1

Our Society stance on dishonesty is one of zero tolerance and we believe this should be the same with the local authority. The taxi/private hire business is tarnished worldwide with the reputation of overcharging and this is something we feel the Licensing Committee must clamp down on and eradicate Torbay's residents and visitors of any such worries.

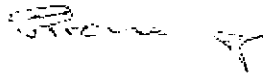
Unfortunately over-charging is not always a case of dishonesty, it is more often a case of lack of general knowledge of the areas topography. An amazing number of taxi and private hire drivers have no knowledge of the shortest route between two points and simply keep to the main road and this problem lies very much at the authority's door for a far too simplified and insignificant knowledge test. We feel that all new applicants and in some cases, existing licence holders, need to undertake a more intensive knowledge test in an effort to ensure they do know where they are going and at the same time ensuring the customer receives the best service and value for money. Reports

of overcharging have been made to the authority in the past but no significant outcome has ever arisen.

5) **APENDIX B**

We are slightly confused by item 33. This states 'Do not accept immediate hirings for private hire'. Our Society operates a strictly Hackney Carriage fleet, but has also been informed by the authority that any telephone pre-booking becomes classified as a private hire booking as soon as it is made. Could the authority please verify the situation regarding this?

Yours sincerely,



Mr J Cree
Chairman