

Interview with Karl Dooley. 10th February 10:00 Am.

Present: JC – Jay Clark. School Transport Manager, Torbay Council

KD – Karl Dooley, Torbay taxi driver.

DL – [REDACTED]

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**JC:** Completed introductions.

**JC:** Can you please confirm your name?

**KD:** Karl Dooley (confirmed as correct by DL)

**JC:** Thank you for attending today's meeting. We are here to discuss a concerning report relating to you collecting a member of the public who had not been authorised to travel whilst you undertook a school contract driving a vulnerable 11-year boy to their education setting. The incident occurred on Tuesday 8th of February 2022.

**JC:** During this meeting I would like to gather information from you which will then be used to determine whether you have ongoing authorisation to operate Torbay Council school contracts.

**JC:** All Torbay School contracts are awarded to operators who have agreed to the terms of the 'Passenger transport standard conditions of contract'. Within these terms we hold the right, as a local authority to require the contractor to remove any employee or contract from the provision of service.

**JC:** Also, within these conditions of contract clause 5.5 states - The Contractor must not convey any Unauthorised Passengers except where the Contract is registered as a local bus service.

**JC:** I have spoken to our licencing department regarding this report, as we do share information between departments. There will not be an outcome at today's meeting. I am here to gather information from you, this will allow me to work with other teams within the council to decide on any possible sanctions. The report is a safeguarding concern and will be treated accordingly.

**JC: Firstly, can you confirm it is correct that you collected an unauthorised passenger whilst operating a Torbay Council school route on Tuesday 8th of February?**

**KD:** Confirmed

**JC: Can you talk me through the journey and give the details of why you collected the passenger?**

**KD:** I was on my way to pick up CHILD A there was an accident on the dual carriageway, I was running late. I arrived to collect him about 20 mins late. After collecting CHILD A I received a call from a customer. The customer was running late for work, and asked if I could collect, it was a silly decision, but I didn't want to let anyone down. The passenger travelled in the back and CHILD A was in the front. I continued to drop CHILD A at Winner Street, Paignton before dropping the customer off.

**JC: Can you confirm where you collected the customer from. The report stated it was PGL in Barton?**

**KD:** No, I collected him from outside Lidl – Newton Road. Phone call came through whilst we were passing PGL.

**JC: Is he a Regular customer?**

**KD:** Yes, I have picked him up before he is a mate, not a mate a customer. He travels between Torquay and Paignton a lot, he uses lots of companies.

**JC: Do you know his name?**

**KD:** No, I am not aware of name

**JC: Where did you take him to?**

**KD:** KFC at Tweenaway. No, actually Costa Coffee at Tweenaway.

**JC: The report commented that the passenger collected smelt strongly of drugs?**

**KD:** I guarantee that there was no smell of drugs. On the person or in the car, I keep my car clean. I would not know what drugs even smelt like, but there was nothing unusual.

**JC: Have you done this before?**

**KD:** Never done this before. I have worked for [REDACTED] for many years, and I have never done this before.

JC Explained then explained Safeguarding and why the report was concerning.

**JC: What do you understand is your responsibility in regard to safeguarding?**

I do understand. I have a duty to collect child and get him child from A to B safely. I didn't even think about it at the time, I was silly. I am gutted really as I get on well with CHILD A.

JC – Spoke of implications student / how KD should not have have put a vulnerable 11-year-old in this position.

**JC: It has also been reported that you have previously stopped whilst transporting this child to drop off / collect something from a pub – leaving the child in the car.**

Never left CHILD A in car on own. Driving past Prince of Orange in Barton which is en-route to drop CHILD A home. Stopped at the pub, friend passed jacket through the window, jacket was placed on front seat of taxi.

**JC:** explained no further questions. That I would now work with internal teams to investigate this. Explained it would be flagged to LADO. Explained role of LADO. Explained possible sanctions from a school transport perspective – ranging from permanent ban to a written warning. Detailed that suspension from school contracts would remain whilst the investigation is being completed.

**KD:** Questioned timeframes

**JC:** Explained that it could be anything from days to months.

**KD:** Questioned if this will impact on taxi badge.

**JC:** Explained that this will be reported through to licencing, it will be for them to decide if they wish to take it further. JC explained that his authority is school contracts and he is not involved with licencing decisions.

**JC:** Thanked KD for his time. Informed that he would be updated. Checked if KD wanted update via [REDACTED] – KD confirmed this was fine.