

Babbacombe Cars
21 Petitor Road
Torquay
Devon
TQ1 4QD

With reference to the recent proposed policy changes regarding diesel, petrol, hybrid, and electric vehicles I wish to make the following statement.

Babbacombe Cars has been providing Executive, Chauffeur Driven transportation to business and account customers for over 30 years (in my ownership) this involves airport, seaport, business trips and special occasions covering the whole of the United Kingdom, it is not unusual to cover 500 miles in one journey and sometime nearly twice this distance.

For these reasons we have a fleet of luxury Mercedes vehicles all diesel engine to provide a reliable cost-effective service to our client base.

We have investigated electric and hybrid alternatives over the last couple of years and been unable to find anything which will provide the specification required to use in our business.

Our current vehicles will cover between 700 and 1000 miles between refuelling, and when we do refuel this takes only a matter of minutes before we are safely back on the road with a full range again.

Electric vehicles have a range between 150 and 250 mile (some of the more expensive Tesla's now claim 350 miles, but that would probably be more like 280 miles in real life use) this would mean recharging after a relatively short journey, charging could take between 1 and 13+ hours (depending on which type of charger used, assuming availability) which could increase journey time by several hours.

Hybrid vehicles generally have a better range as you have a diesel or petrol engine to provide propulsion alongside the electric system, these however have the hybrid system located in the boot which means there is no luggage space (or greatly reduced!) meaning you can take passengers as long as they don't have much luggage (not helpful if you are heading to the airport!). the fuel consumption is generally very poor (in real life use), my diesel vehicles average between 35 and 55 MPG, a hybrid vehicle between 20 and 40 MPG, if the battery isn't fully charged the consumption drops even further as the vehicle is heavier than an equivalent petrol or diesel model.

The charging infrastructure is not currently suitable for electric vehicles in Torbay, how many publicly accessible charging points are there in Torbay? I run 3 vehicles which can all be out on the same day, does this mean I will need 3 charging points at my office to ensure all vehicles would be ready for use at any time (this must be a 24hr service).

Electric and Hybrid vehicles are more expensive to purchase and maintain, most local garages are unable to service electric/hybrid vehicles due to the complicated nature of the drive systems, therefore main dealer service would be required at much greater cost and questionably poorer maintenance.

Included in the proposal was the option to extend the life of the license for Electric and Hybrid vehicles from 10 to 15 years (which would be required to offset the initial cost of purchase), we currently cover around 30-40,000 mile per vehicle each year, this would mean at end of life between 450-600,00 miles will have been covered, and a very old and tired looking vehicle.

I will be looking to replace vehicles shortly; under this proposal my cost could go from £30K to around £60K to purchase an equivalent hybrid system vehicle (Electric will not work for our business!)

I know Petrol and Diesel vehicle will need to be replaced with electric/hybrid within the taxi/private hire industry but forcing businesses to invest in this technology before a suitable infrastructure is in place is unfair.

By the council own admission there are fewer licensed drivers in Torbay and this policy if implemented without due consideration will only make this situation worse.

I can see drivers and businesses moving to neighbouring local authorities who currently do not have these policies proposed.

I would ask you to watch the following program with particular attention to the John O Groats element!
<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/guy-martin-the-worlds-fastest-electric-car/on-demand/72569-001>

Kindest regards

Stuart Mark James
Babbacombe Cars
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