

Your Ref. 18046

28/11/2018

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| COUNCIL UNDER-LYME | |
| BOROUGH DIRECTORATE | |
| DATE RECEIVED | |
| 30 NOV 2018 | |
| REPLY NEEDED YES/NO | DATE OF REPLY |
| DEALT WITH | FILE REF: |

Sir,

With Regard to Consultation Licensing Policy 2019-2021

- 1) When a taxi driver first starts in this new job, there is a huge financial outlay. I found that coming from a self employed fleet policy of approx. £1,000 to approx. £3,250 for just one vehicle due to the nature of the job financially difficult. The other big outlay was for a vehicle. Last year I spent £6,500 on a 4 year old vehicle. Your proposals to insist that every new vehicle when first registered must be no less that 3 years old e.g. an outlay of £8,000, would prohibit many hard working folks, who would make excellent taxi drivers, from even contemplating this type of work, unless the rates for taxi customers were increased dramatically. This would have a knock on effect in that older people would think twice about coming into Newcastle. This would mean more shop closures, less market stalls and less money for the Council.
- 2) The Council proposes an English test for taxi drivers. Seeing that all drivers have to pass an N.V.Q. and a B.T.E.C. surely this should be sufficient unless the purpose of the Council is to screw even more money out of the taxi drivers registered with the Borough. Perhaps the Council should look at its own employees with regard to the standard of English e.g. two recent examples. In the swimming baths typed on a notice was the word 'are' instead of 'our'. When I pointed this out the notice was taken down immediately. Secondly the use of the word counsellor in e-mails when referring to elected members, as I pointed out 'I do not require counselling from the Councillors!'
- 3) Your requirement for transporting dogs Animals No. 35 is not practicable. All guide dogs have to get in the front passenger footwell as their blind owners sit there with them. The passenger foot-

well enables the driver to contain unruly dogs by making sure that the owner keeps them under control. Twice when I first started taxi driving I have had to stop my vehicle and demand that the passengers with unruly dogs get into the front passenger seat so that the dog is contained in that space. Once, when carrying a Neapolitan Mastiff with a protruding penis etc, it was the only possible way to carry it to the vets in that emergency! There was no room in the back with its owner to relieve its pain, only by getting in the front, the lady owner putting her belt on, then putting the dogs front paws on her shoulders with the rest of the dog in the foot -well was I able to transport this animal. A man with an Alsation got in the front with the dog in the foot-well, three well dressed ladies got in the back. The dog could not go in the back with them, hairs on the evening dresses! Imagine the outcry ensuing if I suggested having a long haired dog across them. Small dogs are some of the worst to transport, but by putting them in the passenger foot-well, they cannot run about yapping along the back seat. Why lay down this rule when no one in the licensing department perhaps has ever carried passengers with loose dogs. Dogs in cages are carried on the back seat, but many dogs with owners need firm handling which their owners are unable to give. This is why very few taxi drivers will carry dogs. If the Council insist on Rule 35, I for one, will refuse to carry dogs, like the majority of taxi drivers. As the Highway Code states: dogs can be carried in a car as long as they are suitably restrained. Why are Newcastle Borough Council making it more difficult for their residents to transport their animals?

4) Appendix L Penalty Points Scheme:

No. 6 This is a problem in Merrial Street sometimes, the only way a passenger can be dropped off safely is by using the taxi rank. No other parking space is available.

No.11 After having my vehicle washed etc. two hours later I ended up driving down a dirt track to a farm. The vehicle became covered in farm manure which would fulfill your conditions of unsatisfactory exterior condition of vehicle, but it was not my fault just part of the job we do. Would this gain penalty points?

No. 29 The odd passenger will carry fag ends attached to his feet into the car. Will this count?

No. 30 Passengers do leave odd bottles, paper etc. in your car which you are unaware of, why blame the taxi driver when it is the passenger's rubbish?

No 37 Who is to say that the driver is dressed inappropriately?

Yours faithfully,

