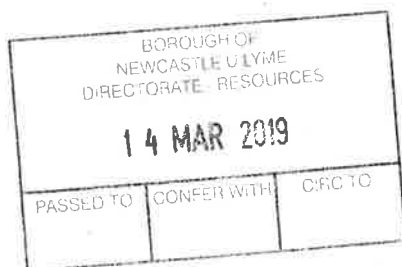


Licensing Services
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10/03/2019

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Dear sir,

I am writing this letter in response to the proposed changes to the taxi policy that Newcastle under Lyme Council are considering making in the near future.

Concerns for how the policy will affect the drivers;

1. Vehicle age policy is not acceptable and has no justifiable reason to reduce the current age limit on vehicles. As the government states vehicles are built better and last longer, also to give a longer lifespan to an electric car than a regular motor vehicle when percentage fail quotes from the garage are not fails on the engine but on other parts of the vehicle which are identical.
2. Medicals are proposed to be issued every badge (3 Years), this is not justifiable and comes at a great expense to the drivers.
3. Points system. Although I agree that a system needs to be in place whereby drivers should be held accountable for misdemeanors, I can not see how some of these points can be lawfully policed i.e. dressed inappropriately, evidence of smoke in vehicle, evidence of food or drink waste in vehicle, failure to attend punctually etc. etc. Also, the points system is excessive and also the operator is held accountable with equal points when they are innocent of any misconduct. It is true that other boroughs have installed this system and it has been repealed.
4. Drivers already complete a BTEC, medical, knowledge test, safeguarding course and an enhanced DBS check all at a cost in excess of £950. To add another test at even more expense and be unable to explain what the test will be and what it will be for. I agree that should there

be a problem with a drivers knowledge, understanding of English/ speaking of English then that driver should be tested if a complaint is made.

Concerns that will affect the operator:

1. Why/how can an operator keep a service check on all vehicles, not owned by the operator this should be kept by the owner only which should be their responsibility.
2. Vehicles that are not owned by the operator are given a license conditions of that license that are checked are that the vehicle is insured. Why should the operator be expected to check on something that council has already checked? Although I agree that visual checks should be made a record made by the operator.
3. Points system should not be as is but cautions system should be in place.
4. How can an operator be responsible for a driver dress code if no uniform policy is In place for our self employed drivers? An operator cannot be responsible for an owner driver for 24/7 it is the drivers/ owner's responsibility.
5. We have a complaints book in operation at Sids Private hire, but we should have the responsibility of making the decision which we class as a complaint serious enough to be recorded and one that can be dealt with at the time. I.e. my taxi late is not a serious complaint.
6. Mission statement, the service supplied by licensing at present it is not acceptable. Under previous regime, appointments were made within a week 2 at most for vehicle and personal. You are currently operating at an 8 week wait for an appointment, this means that to plate a vehicle it can take up to 10 weeks, which we feel is not in keeping with the mission statement. Also the production of plates once the vehicle is tested which is taking up to 5 working days, when previously they were printed within 2 hours.

We also feel we have been treated with total disregard, as the policy has taken over 2 years to produce with no consultation with the trade until 6 weeks before the original end date. This was a 2 hour meeting of which a lot of this time was spent by the council discussing its electric points bid and not the actual policy. Due to intervention of our local MP we were granted 2 more 2 hour consultation periods, we feel these were not taken seriously as the council panel did not even have a copy of the 90 page policy between them. Also Matt Burton could not remember exact parts and points which we were discussing. We have requested further talks, but these have been refused without reasonable reason.

Yours Sincerely

