

Taxi and Private Hire Policies:

Petition and Follow Up Petition on behalf of members of the trade in the BCP Council area

Petition Originator - Mr Paul Sondheim

From: Chris

Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2020 1:49:37 PM

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Subject: Hackney carriage vehicle policy response from the trade

This response has been sent to all councillors and officers dealing with the Licensing Board meeting 10th December 2020

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Policy Response from the Trade

The following is a response from the trade having considered the current proposals to change the vehicle conditions for Taxis and Private Hire vehicles in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area BCP.

The trade fully understands that following the recent formation of one unitary authority responsible for the three towns there now needs to be some alignment and cost savings. The trade also understands the need to comply with the requirements of Euro 6 emission standards.

This response is ever mindful of the overriding need to protect the public and this is at forefront of our suggestions to the licensing board.

However, we would like you to firstly reflect on the state of the trade prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The trade and in particular the night trade had already seen a dramatic down turn due to members of Facebook lifts groups operating at will throughout the conurbation, but also out of town Uber cars also working unchallenged mainly in Bournemouth.

The Facebook lifts problem was highlighted on a BBC documentary programme and the then Chairman of licensing Andrew Morgan promised to address the problem as a matter of urgency. Sadly this has not been dealt with and hundreds of our residents and visitors the very people this proposal seeks to protect are travelling uninsured and by unlicensed drivers in vehicles that are not checked as safe and suitable for transporting the public.

Similarly Uber drivers from other towns descend every day especially at night mainly they are from licensed vehicles from New Forest, Fareham, Gosport and Eastleigh and work the BCP area unchallenged. In other towns particularly Liverpool where they have employed a police officer to act as enforcement officer approaching these drivers and if they do not have an appropriate booking they are made to leave the area.

In short there is mayhem happening under our noses and unchallenged and it appears to the trade that rules and conditions are vigorously enforced on vehicles licensed in the BCP area, but there is precious little protection from being robbed blind by out of town vehicles. How are the trade supposed to keep their vehicles in tip top order when the money even before Covid-19 was extremely tight?

Moving onto the current proposals it is being proposed that all Hackney vehicles should be white in colour. This flies in the face of the main aim of protecting the public. The Bournemouth council some 35 plus years ago took the step of insisting all Hackneys are sprayed Jamaica yellow they did this ironically against a counter proposal from a local Taxi company that proposed white cars. There were several reasons that they did this but without doubt the number one concern at the time was the protection of the public. The council then wanted the public to be in no doubt that they were actually getting into a licensed vehicle and the tracing of that vehicle could be as easy as possible if there was ever an incident of concern. The benefit of this was highlighted when the police were investigating the murder of Sandra Court her friends reported to the police that Sandra was last seen getting into a yellow vehicle. The police quickly tracked down the relevant Taxi and interviewed the driver who was quickly eliminated from their enquiries allowing the police to get on with the search for her murderer. Sadly the murder sadly still remains unresolved. We now have more unlicensed vehicles than ever floating around our town, is it really protecting the public to take away this ease of identification.

Almost all vehicle models are produced with white being a colour option thus making it quite easy for unscrupulous and unlicensed drivers to obtain a vehicle that when located near pub and club hotspots at night to appear to be a licensed Taxi this is made even easier now as the new BCP logo on the sides of all Hackney vehicles is now much more easier to reproduce. The consequences of this policy of negligence is obvious and the trade respectfully ask you to consider this with grave concern. Currently there are no vehicle models that can be bought in Jamaica Yellow and very few in any other shade of yellow, and whilst spraying vehicles has an obvious cost to the trade it something we are prepared and proud to bear in order to protect the public.

There are other obvious reasons for the choice of yellow firstly it is recognized throughout many cities across the world most noteworthy being New York.

Another obvious reason for yellow is safety in a report commissioned by the compare the market website, yellow and strangely orange were the most visible and involved in the least accidents pro rata to the colour distribution. The worst colours for accidents were white and silver. There are reasons that emergency and AA vehicles are yellow.

If all towns are made to have white vehicles it will be inevitable that some drivers will be tempted to pick up off the street when driving through a neighbouring town this policy encourages unlicensed and therefore uninsured journeys.

Finally on the changing of colour yellow is in line with the main bus company and the public see this as the local colour of public and safe transport. Recently West Suffolk licensing authority agreed to cancel plans for a fleet colour change following consultation with the trade on the grounds of safety the trade implores you to follow suit and reject this proposal.

Moving onto to the proposal to de-restrict the number of licensed hackney vehicles. This would have a devastating effect on the trade. The Hackney license is a business on wheels and is recognised as such by HMRC the value of this business would be extinguished.

The trade asks one simple question why?

A survey as recent as January 2020 costing an estimated £24,000 came to the conclusion that there was no unmet demand for Taxis in any of the three towns. Since then we have had the Covid-19 pandemic which has decimated the trade with daytime Hackney work down by a further 50 % on an already depleted market and with the night time work virtually disappeared.

Currently Hackney vehicle levels are as follows:

Bournemouth 250, Poole 89 both restricted Christchurch unrestricted 150

These figures clearly show that de-restriction does not work. Anyone with a basic understanding of local business levels can see that Christchurch has far too many Taxis for the needs of the town and this is why so many of them are seen in the centre of Bournemouth. Please remember every time there is an illegal pick up in Bournemouth by any out of town vehicle it's a member of the public that is being conveyed whilst not being properly insured. The aims of the proposal is to protect the general public.

The de-regulation would also lead to the majority of the vehicles congregating into Bournemouth the busiest of the towns leading to congestion and excess emissions. There are not enough ranks to accommodate the current fleets in each town this is especially apparent in Bournemouth. De-regulating vehicle numbers would lead to mayhem .

There is a proposal to add 15 extra Hackney vehicles in Bournemouth and Poole but not Christchurch on the proviso that they are WAVs. In light of the survey showing no unmet demand as recently as January it does beg the question where does this figure come from? The three towns are of different sizes and have different needs but the same figure appears to have been plucked out of this air. Also in a policy designed to bring the towns in line why is Christchurch being treated differently?

Current WAV drivers would like to bring to your attention that it is virtually unheard of for a wheelchair bound customer to take a Taxi off the rank or to hail one in the street. However, It is a regular occurrence for elderly or infirm customers to approach a WAV and explain that they can't get in a WAV and sorry do you mind if I take the next Taxi.

By way of information at the time of the last survey 49 of the 250 Bournemouth Hackney Carriages were WAV and there were only 14 Bournemouth WAV Private Hire vehicles.

In short the policy of 15 extra WAV's across BCP every year is the equivalent of taking a sledge hammer and failing to crack a nut.

The proposal also addresses the need for all vehicles to meet the Euro 6 emission standards this something that the trade accepts is a reasonable response to the need to reduce emissions in an ever more congested conurbation.

We would however, ask you to give due consideration to delaying the introduction of this policy for 6 years. The reason for this urgent request is the finances of the Taxi drivers at present. As outlined earlier we are going through the most financially traumatic time ever known not only to the trade but to the economy in general. The estimated tsunami of job losses and inevitable ensuing recession which leading financial experts have estimated will last at least 5 years, is already causing great hardship to many drivers and some are using foodbanks to survive. To meet the requirements of Euro 6 would involve purchasing a vehicle with a value in the region of £20,000 and would involve a bank loan. The banks would require proof of earnings over the past couple of years and in the light of Facebook lifts , out of town Uber and the Covid-19 situation the earnings record would not sufficient for the loan to be granted.

This proposal involves Taxi drivers having to spend thousand of pounds at a time of crisis and the policy of any vehicle replacements having to meet the new criteria as soon as 2021 would leave to drivers being unable to continue in the trade if a vehicle was involved in an accident or had come to the end of it's life. Again we urgently request a delay to the introduction of this policy.later

The current proposal would mean that any vehicle that is over 10 years old (15 for WAV's) would have to be replaced on the annual license renewal. This is despite the fact the vehicle is subject to a vigorous annual vehicle inspection by the council another VOSA Mot six months later and also being readily available for police and council spot checks. Is this really fair and appropriate in the current economical climate?

The timing of these proposals are at best insensitive and quite frankly verging on being cruel in light of the current climate. The trade unanimously implore you to reject the aforementioned policies in order to protect the safety of the public and to save the livelihoods of the drivers.

We therefore suggest that these proposals are delayed for 6 years this will give us all a chance to hopefully recover from the Covid-19 situation deal with the Facebook lifts and out of town Uber problems, but also the trade feels that vehicle technology regarding electric vehicles will have progressed and a better solution could be at hand to deal with emissions.

In closing the trade urges the board to let them know the outcome of this meeting as soon as possible the potential ramifications are so frightening they need to make plans as a matter of urgency to protect their families and their livelihoods.

Also attached are signature sheets from PRC and represent hackneys and private hire.

Kind Regards,



Peter Vass
United Taxis Ltd

[illegible]

PRC

CP

Name	Hackney Driver Number	Plate No	Plate Holder Yes/No	Signature
S. M. ELMES				
FERENC KOVACS				
Farid Boroomandfar				
Mahmoud Seyrawi				
Farid Boroomandfar				
AMAR ALKAYATT.				
CHASH LIDDIN				
PETER LEWIS				
LIES OATIS				
N. BENTOLAJA				
L.M. GRAMON				
B. Mustafa				
SAM MEDLIN				
IONUT DRAGOS VISAN				
SAMI HASSAN				
L-SAN				
ORCUN KARADUMAN				
KEPKI BELOJIAN				
CSABA FERENCZ				
GOGU RC				
AHAD MIAH				
Raymond Nyakagaba				
Juliana Haisa				
Casper Kuntapli				
Thomas Augustine				
SOFIENE DJOUD				
L. CHAN				
Salman Yildirim				
JAYA RAM DAHAL				
Yusuf Hecibayda				
Tim Sparks				
Rana Narkhute				
SEZGEM AHMEDOV				
ISMAIL RASOL				
Feras Jazieh				
Fokys				
STEFAN GRAMON				
Marian Maratu				
Xavier Joseph				
KALIJAN DENEV				

CHURCH

Name	Hackney Driver Number	Plate No	Plate Holder Yes/No	Signature
James P. Brown				
Robert J. Brown				
Michael J. King				
John J. King				
John J. King				

Name	Harbney Driver Number	Plate No	Plate Holder Yes/No	Signature
Blaine Brown				

Name	Machine Driver Number	Plate No	Plate Holder Yes/No	Signature
DEAN WILLIAMS				
STUART STEWART				
SAMIRAN SAKHIA				
DANIEL JONES				
R. H. H. H. H.				
JAMES H. H.				
JAMES C. C.				
S. H. H. H.				

Name	Hackney Driver Number	Plate No	Plate Holder Yes/No	Signature
DAVID WILLIAMS				
PAUL STEPHENSON				
JOHN SPARROW				
PAUL BAKER				
JOHN SMITH				
JOHN SMITH				

From: Chris <

Sent: 03 November 2020 13:26

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Cc: Nananka Randle <nananka.randle@bcpcouncil.gov.uk>;

Subject: Hackney carriage and private hire vehicle policy response from the trade

In relation to our petition sent to all licensing councillors on Wednesday 28th October 2020,

We the undersigned fully agree with the petition already submitted. We all signed the same original petition which attracted support from over 200 members of the trade. We were subsequently informed by Jill Holyoake of democratic services that we had not submitted the original petition in the correct format, and therefore it could not be considered at your meeting of 10th December 2020. We have therefore added the missing details to this petition in order to satisfy the requirements as detailed by Jill Holyoake. In short we had not stated the supporters addresses or their connection with the council area. We can assure you that all the original supporters were either Licensed Vehicle proprietors or Licensed drivers in the BCP area. We can further assure you that all the original supporters have their addresses held by the BCP licensing authority. This petition is in full accordance with the original petition.

Petition originator **Mr Paul Sondheim**

Kind Regards,



Peter Vass
United Taxis Ltd

NAME (print)	ADDRESS (print)	BADGE NUMBER	CONNECTION To COUNCIL (print)	PHONE No OR EMAIL	SIGNATURE
TAYA RHIMAN			TAXI DRIVER		
BILL BUCKLEY			TAXI DRIVER		
DAVID WONG			Taxi Driver		
ANDY POTCOFF			TAXI DRIVER		
DERAL MELTAGE			Taxi Driver		
M. AMIN			TAXI DRIVER		
PAUL SONDHEIM			TAXI DRIVER		

NAME (print)	ADDRESS (print)	BADGE NUMBER	CONNECTION To COUNCIL (print)	PHONE No OR EMAIL	SIGNATURE
KEITH REYNOLDS			TAXI DRIVER		
TERRY SMITH			TAXI DRIVER		
ARTUR			TAXI DRIVER		
S. Ameur			Taxi Driver		
DJAMEL TOUILER			TAXI DRIVER		
MALEK BENACHOUR			TAXI DRIVER		
PETER COTTAM			TAXI DRIVER		

NAME (print)	ADDRESS (print)	BADGE NUMBER	CONNECTION To COUNCIL (print)	PHONE No OR EMAIL	SIGNATURE
P DIMENT			TAXI DRIVER		
DAVID GRAHAM BUDD			TAXI DRIVER		
PETER JASS			TAXI DRIVER		
JOHN SHAVE			TAXI DRIVER		
Chaher Iskandarani			TAXI DRIVER		
MATTHEW WEBB			TAXI DRIVER		
Phil Zamora			TAXI DRIVER		

NAME (print)	ADDRESS (print)	BADGE NUMBER	CONNECTION To COUNCIL (print)	PHONE No OR EMAIL	SIGNATURE
DAVID MCGOWAN			Taxi Driver		
Kevin Conroy			TAXI DRIVER		
LOOKMAN HUSSAIN			TAXI DRIVER		
ABDUL HANNAN			TAXI DRIVER		
MOHAMMED MIAT			DRIVER		
SURFURAJ Khatun			Taxi DRIVER		
ABDUL MUTALIB			TAXI DRIVER		