

Margaret James
Taxi Licensing
Central Bedfordshire council
High Street North
Bedfordshire
LU6 1LF

Mr Enamur Rahman
15 Bell Alley
Leighton Buzzard
Beds
LU7 1DG

Date: 25.03.2011

Dear, Margaret James.

This letter is in relation to the recent proposal made by the licensing authority in relation to the licensing of private and hackney carriage vehicles. It is understood by us that there is on going consideration being made to allow drivers of private hire vehicles to be allowed to carry a hackney carriage license.

We as hackney carriage drivers are very concerned about this and believe that it will have a negative effect on the trade which in the current financial climate is proving to be very difficult.

Drivers have expressed many concerns about this, which we would like to discuss with the council before any decision has been made. In particular many drivers have raised the following issues:

- All hackney carriage vehicles are currently required by the council to be purpose built taxis which carry a M1 certified certificate. The purchase values of these vehicles are far greater than a normal passenger vehicle, as well as the general maintenance and running costs. Many drivers have invested a lot of money into these vehicles to meet the council requirements. Some have taken out loans or financed for these vehicles. With the change in policy we as drivers believe that it is unfair that we have had made this huge investment, when in the short future it may no longer be required. This will also reduce the value and demand of the hackney vehicles putting us at further loss.
- With the current financial situation of the country, the general trade is very slow and quite. Together with the rise of fuel prices, drivers are struggling make a wage. Taxi ranks are over populated with taxis making it difficult to find a space. In particular town's locals are complaining that there are too many taxis. By granting this proposal it will allow more vehicles to use the ranks which are already in a struggling situation.
- We and many customers believe that these purpose built taxis carry advantages over a normal vehicle. Customers on wheelchairs can easily board the taxi without have to come out of the wheelchair. Elderly customers who have back problems or difficulty moving can access more easily due to the high roof and side step. In general the ease of access makes these vehicles more practical in an environment where it is busy with a lot of traffic.
- Could licensing authority consider bringing back the three years license, as this would be more cost affective at these time.

We understand that the law has recently changed regarding licensing of taxis, however we ask the council to look at this situation from a fair point of view. We ask the council consider in particular the impact this will have on the trade and drivers.

Enclosed with this letter is a list of names, contacts signatures of all who are objecting this proposal. We would be grateful if the council will contact us to discuss this matter further.

Your Sincerely,

Rec'd 29/3/11
M James