

Cheryl Lambert

From: Cheryl Lambert
Sent: 03 January 2019 09:24
To: Cheryl Lambert
Subject: Fees

This is an EXTERNAL EMAIL. STOP. THINK before you CLICK links or OPEN attachments.

Good Morning Cheryl,

I have been asked by Walter O'Brien to forward letter for Sean Murphy.

To: Sean Murphy
Public Protection Manager
West Berkshire Council

Dear Sir,

Re: Proposed Increase in Licence Fees

I refer to the notice published in the Newbury Weekly News on 20/12/2018 and now wish to register our strong objections to the published increases.

The Individual Hackney Carriage increase is 75% whilst our 5 year Private Hire Operator's Licence reflects a jaw-dropping increase of 340%.

Whilst were not against an inflationary increase we feel these proposed increases are extortionate. The trade has not received a fare increase since 2013 and query how you can justify such an increase. What benefit will trade receive – will there be a substantial improvement to the virtually non-existent enforcement procedures? Or some other unknown benefit yet to be divulged?

Please consider this a formal objection on behalf of the 65 Hackney and Private Hire Vehicles operated by Cabco Ltd.

I trust you will acknowledge receipt of this objection.

Yours Faithfully

Walter O'Brien
Director

Cabco Limited

34A Kingfisher Court, Hambridge Road,
Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 5ST
www.cabco33333.co.uk

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Cheryl Lambert

From: Cheryl Lambert
Sent: 14 January 2019 09:44
To: Licensing
Subject: Objection to private Hire vehicle with dispensation proposed price increase

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Fao Sean Murphy

How on earth can you justify an increase from £207 to £328
I would like to see a justification for this!
An increase of 63.1% absolutely criminal!
Regards

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Cheryl Lambert

From: Cheryl Lambert
Sent: 16 January 2019 15:33
To: Licensing
Subject: Fees increase

This is an EXTERNAL EMAIL. STOP. THINK before you CLICK links or OPEN attachments.

I would like to oppose these fee increases as I believe they are outside of any percentage that is allowed. I am also still awaiting the outcome of an earlier meeting where the committee asked The licensing team to show figures on how these charges were founded as they were "pie in the sky" figures. I think that these need to be spoken about as I do not understand why we need to have the same fee structure as another council to which as I see it nothing to do with West Berkshire Taxis and private hire whatsoever.

Yours
KENIKABS TAXI SERVICE

Cheryl Lambert

From: <info@atobexecutivecars.com>
Sent: 16 January 2019 17:00
To: Licensing
Subject: Proposed Licence Fee Increases

This is an **EXTERNAL EMAIL**. STOP. THINK before you **CLICK** links or **OPEN** attachments.

Dear Cheryl & Sharon,

I write with regards to the proposed increases in fees of Private Hire Vehicles and Operators that were in the NWN. I'm a little surprised that letters or an email weren't sent out to us where we could write a response if we so wished, rather than being informed by someone else in the trade of such a proposal. Not everyone buys/reads the Newbury Weekly News so it leads me to suggest that although you were essentially putting this in the public domain, it was done in such a way that perhaps for many it may not have been seen and replies not given to you, thus leading to little objection and an easier route to get this motion passed.

I feel that the increases proposed are quite staggering. For the additional charges that are mentioned what extra do we gain from you as a council? I'm presuming the certificates and licence plates given to us will be on the same paper and plastics as before. I struggle to find how you can justify and these increases? In recent times we as a company had one of our corporate clients move out of Newbury to Reading and as a result we have suffered losses to our income, the increases could/will prove even harder to stomach and account for....who knows where that leaves us financially and as a company.

Over the past 10 years of my career in the industry we have seen increases before but not on this kind of scale, don't forget the increases we have had on fuel duty, insurances of vehicles, corporation taxes and so on. Let me say the combined prices of all this put together isn't for the faint hearted (you could say to cover it all I woke for free at least a month of the year) and this proposal adds another nail in the proverbial coffin.

I finish by saying I feel that should these proposals gather speed or get passed this will lead to the possibility of either of these outcomes – private hire drivers and operators look at being licenced through other councils that will provide licences at a cheaper fee, or that people won't be licenced at all and will continue to work regardless (there are these people out there already bypassing the rules and not being caught) I don't feel that such increases will be beneficial for the industry and so object to them wholeheartedly.

Kind Regards

A to B Executive Cars Ltd

e-mail : info@atobexecutivecars.com
www.atobexecutivecars.com

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AutolinkExecutive Cars
10.Hazel Grove, Thatcham, RG18 3NH
autolinkexeccars@gmail.comYour Name



16th January 2019

Sean Murphy
Public Protection Manager
West Berkshire Council, Market Place, Newbury. RG14 5LD

Dear Sean Murphy,

We were notified on the 14th January by a third party that an advertisement was placed in the Newbury Weekly News under the Public notice outlining proposals for an increase in fees to the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire operators. Ourselves and other operators do not buy the paper and therefore would not know of the said proposed increase in fares. Most if not all operators have email addresses for which we could have been notified in this way.

I have looked at other council prices and for a 5 year operators license the costs vary from £400.00 to £445.00.

From what I understand is that from the last increase in 2018 the increase would vary in % up to 90% and from the 4 years since we renewed our license it has almost doubled.

After reducing your staff members and amalgamating with Wokingham Council to reduce costs where is the justification for such a high increase.

I have spoken with other private hire operators and they have said they know nothing of the proposals.

The price increase that is proposed by ~~the~~ Council is way above current inflation and with Brexit on the horizon business is getting very hard to find especially when companies are cutting back on travel due to uncertainty.



Sincerely,

Your Name

Excel Executive Chauffeurs Ltd

11 Sutton Road, Speen, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 1UW

Telephone & Fax: 01635 45964

Mobile Phone:

E-Mail: info@excelexecutivechauffeurs.co.uk Website: www.excelexecutivechauffeurs.co.uk

Mr S Murphy

Public Protection Manager

West Berkshire Council

Market Street

Newbury

16th Jan 2019

Dear Mr Murphy

I read with interest and disgust at your intention to impose what can only be described as another extortionate increase to licence fees for both Hackney carriages and Private Hire.

Allow me to put this into context:

You imposed unjustified substantial increases in June 2018. These increases were based on inaccurate figures, as pointed out by the Licensing Committee and the Department was asked to provide accurate ones. I believe that these are still outstanding.

Those increases consisted of:

- A 3% increase to the cost of a private hire vehicle licence.
- A 40% increase to exempted vehicles
- A 3.25% increase in operator licence fees.

The increase for exempted vehicle was supposedly because the licensing team needs to carry out more checks on these vehicles. I'm sorry, but the additional information required is provided by the owner to confirm that he qualifies. It should take the department no more than 10 minutes to look at that information, despite the council's claim that this takes an hour. I wish I could claim £55 an hour.

Let's now look at the new revised prices:

- Vehicle Licence £282 - an additional increase of 85.5% (yes 85.5%) or 90.5% since May
- Vehicle with Exemption £328 - an additional increase 58.5% or 122% since May.

Interestingly, where the council originally claimed the additional cost needed to be £55 it now thinks that it only needs to be £46. I assume that all operator's that have paid the previous figure will be given a refund of the difference as it was quite obviously based on guesswork.

- 5-year operator's licence £545 an additional increase of 2.5% or 6% since May

I note with interest that other local Authorities around us do not feel the need to charge these exorbitant fee's and I am still waiting to see West Berkshire's justification.

According to National statistics the annual rate of inflation to November was 2.2%. I can only assume that you know something that the rest of us do not.

Yours,

Mr S Murphy
Public Protection Manager
West Berkshire Council
Market Street
Newbury
RG14 5LD

Tuesday, 8th January 2019

Dear Mr Murphy

Public Notice December 20th 2018 with regards to the varying of fees.

I wish to object to the fees as advert, dated December 20th 2018, with regards to the financial year April 2019 to March 2020.

Although LG(MP)Act 1976, s53 contains no requirement for consultation, a local authority would be ill-advised not to embark upon some element of consultation, with those persons who would be affected by an increase in fees (eg, the drivers of both Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles).

Although it is not a statutory requirement, it would seem sensible a Local Authority to follow the same procedure, as contained in LG(MP)Act 1976, s70 for increases in fees under s53, so as to provide the consultation, which is required and to demonstrate that they are approaching the matter in a reasonable fashion.

I objected to the increase in fees, back in May 9th 2018, the Licensing Committee held its meeting 26th June 2018, and to this day, questions raised with regards to finances within the council have not been answered. Members asked management to be more transparent, and we see no results other than another increase.

Please refer to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees Consultation Responses Minutes of the below meeting.

*Meeting of Licensing Committee, Monday, 25th June, 2018 5.00 pm (Item 5.)
RESOLVED that the fees be set, without modification and implemented on the 26 June 2018. The increases to be monitored and reported back on to ensure they were justified. No justification given to objectors.*

Please use the best practice approach in dealing with the trade on fees. Going forward, please find time to have discussions' with the trade. In the past good communications have seen a smooth transition with policy's, looking back, recent objections after objections costing all time and money, just what you don't have, trying to recoup with one fee being 121.6% increase since 25th June 2018,

Please see the statement below:

*Laura Driscoll in introducing the item noted that the last time the fees had been increased was in April 2016. The fees had not been increased during the 2017 Council fee setting process. The proposed increase represented a circa 3% increase across the Board. In addition the Council was also proposing the introduction of a fee for 'dispensation vehicles' which were vehicles used to carry out contract work and which were therefore exempt from the requirement to **display the plate**.*

Play on words, The Plate MUST be displayed at all times, in the boot area of the vehicle, just not externally and two badges both displayed front and back windscreens.

Its money for nothing, as other costs, such as Temporary Vehicle Licence are well under-priced for the time taken, but you (The Council) don't listen?

Hackney Carriage New verses Renewal same price why?

To conclude I object to the fees of:

Hackney Carriage Licence! What is this Vehicle or Operators?

Private Hire Vehicle Licence

Temporary Vehicle Licence

Private Hire Dispensation

Regards