

Notice of Meeting



Licensing Committee

Monday, 21st January 2008 at 5.00pm

in the Committee Room 1, Council Offices,
Market Street, Newbury

Date of despatch of Agenda: 11th January 2008

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact David Baker, Policy Manager on (01635) 519083
e-mail: dbaker@westberks.gov.uk

Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at www.westberks.gov.uk

Agenda – Licensing Committee to be held on 21 January 2008 (continued)

To: Councillors Tony Linden (*Chairman*), Peter Argyle, Jeff Beck, Paul Bryant, Billy Drummond, Adrian Edwards, Geoff Findlay, Manohar Gopal, Owen Jeffery, Mollie Lock, Gwen Mason, Andrew Rowles, Quentin Webb, Keith Woodhams (*Vice Chairman*)

Agenda

Part I

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| 1. Apologies
<i>To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).</i> | |
| 2. Minutes
<i>To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 26 November 2007.</i> | 1 - 2 |
| 3. Declarations of Interest
<i>To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members.</i> | |
| 4. Private Hire Licensing
<i>Purpose: To advise Members as to a number of new options for Private Hire signage and licence plates</i> | 3 - 26 |
| 5. Hackney Carriage Tariff 2008/09
<i>Purpose: To set a maximum scale of fares for licensed hackney carriages operating in the district, for 2008/9</i> | 27 - 31 |

David Baker
Policy Manager

Note: Minutes indicated as **DRAFT** will remain so until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

LICENSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 November 2007

Councillors: Tony Linden (*Chairman*), Peter Argyle, Jeff Beck, Billy Drummond, Adrian Edwards, Manohar Gopal, Mollie Lock, Gwen Mason, Andrew Rowles, Quentin Webb, Keith Woodhams (*Vice Chairman*)

PART I

1. APOLOGIES.

Apologies for the inability to attend the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Owen Jeffrey, Paul Bryant and Geoff Findlay

2. MINUTES.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2007 was amended (Ref page 5 section 7 paragraph 5) and approved as true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

None.

Chairman's remarks – Councillor Tony Linden made the following statements.

There was a requirement to hold 2 meetings of the Licensing Committee during the first quarter of 2008. These meetings would address:

- A review of taxi signage on private hire vehicles offered for executive hire services
- Annual review of the Taxi Tariff and the Annual Reports from Responsible Authorities

4 LICENSING POLICY (Alcohol and Entertainment)

Brian Leahy (Senior Licensing Officer) reported to Members that a review of the Licensing Policy had been carried out by their working party and extensive consultation had been sought from the list of Organisations and Businesses referenced in appendix C. The number of responses received was restricted to 3 returns. The responses addressed minor wording changes or points of clarification. Overall, the Policy document was complimented for its clarity and it met Government guidelines.

For ease of understanding, appendix A showed the modifications made to the original Policy document and these were highlighted in red ink.

Cllr Keith Woodhams thanked both the Member working party and officers for their work and noted that use of highlighting the changes in red was very helpful to Members. The revised Policy document was a credit to the working party. He proposed that the revised Policy document should be approved.

Cllr Adrian Edwards raised a question in relation to Section 10.2. Since the introduction of non-smoking licensed premises – customers that still wanted to smoke tended to congregate outside licensed premises where access along the pedestrian footway was being obstructed. What was the Licensing Authority going to do about this problem? Brian Leahy clarified that this problem could not be addressed by the Licensing Authority as it was not covered by the 4 licensing objectives. The problem was being addressed by Thames Valley Police and was being treated as an obstruction of

the footway. The Licensing Authority would only become involved if representations were received from a Responsible Authority, or an Interested Party that called in the licence of a premise for review.

It was noted that the outcome of a review of a licensed premise cannot set a precedent for other licensed premises.

Cllr Gwen Mason confirmed that she had seen both PCSOs and the Town Centre sergeant addressing the obstruction problem.

Cllr Jeff Beck asked for clarification on a premise to understand what areas customers were entitled to consume alcohol and where smoking was permitted. Brian Leahy provided the details on the premise concerned.

Cllr Adrian Edwards raised a question in relation to Section 14.5. Had any action been taken by the Licensing Authority under the penalty scheme? Brian Leahy confirmed that no action had been taken. It would require extensive research and to date he was unaware of any other Local Authority taking such action. He was aware of examples of enforcement action being taken by Trading Standards and the Police. A Tesco Express store in Sidcup had been prosecuted for repeated underage sales and had lost its alcohol licence for 3 months.

It was noted that West Berkshire Council did operate a positive approach to this matter through a responsible retailer scheme.

Cllr Billy Drummond raised a question in relation to Section 4.8.3. Could licence hearings take place in the evening which was much more convenient for those Members who were in full daytime employment? Brian Leahy confirmed that both the trade and their legal representation had a strong preference for day time hearings. A few hearings had been held with a start time as late as 5.30p.m.

The chairman asked for a Member to second the motion to approve the revised Policy document.

Cllr Jeff Beck seconded that the revised Policy document should be approved.

RESOLVED that to approve the revised Licensing Policy.

Voting was unanimous.

The revised Licensing Policy would now be taken forward for approval at a full Council meeting on Tuesdays 11th December 2007.

Next meeting of the Licensing Committee will take place in early January, date to be agreed, to review taxi signage.

Date of the next meeting to be confirmed to Members in writing.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and closed at 7.05 p.m.)

Note: Members watched a presentation of a 20 minute DVD used to provide training to new taxi drivers on how to manage and communicate effectively with disabled passengers.

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature:

Title of Report:	Private Hire Licensing	Item 4
Report to be considered by:	Licensing Committee	
Forward Plan Ref:		

Purpose of Report: To advise Members as to a number of new options for Private Hire signage and licence plates

Recommended Action:

- 1.To consider the report and agree to its contents (options) being consulted upon with the trade prior to any decisions being taken
- 2.To agree to place a moratorium on the issue of windscreen licence badges until a decision on future licence plate criteria has been agreed

Reason for decision to be taken: To ensure a level of consistency for licensing private hire vehicles and to regulate advertising signage

Key background documentation: None

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Plan Theme(s):
CPT1 - Safer Communities – reducing crime and anti-social behaviour

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Themes and Outcomes by:
ensuring that all private hire vehicles in West Berkshire are easily identifiable as such thus reducing any potential for bogus vehicles to operate within the District

Portfolio Member: Councillor Findley
Tel. No.: *
E-mail Address: *

Contact Officer Details

Name: Brian Leahy
Job Title: Senior Licensing Officer
Tel. No.: 01635 519209
E-mail Address: bleahy@westberks.gov.uk

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (referred to hereafter as the act) was introduced to regulate private hire activities outside London.
- 1.2 Section 48 of the Act allows for a District Council to grant a licence in respect of a private hire vehicle and under section 48 (2) a council may attach to the grant of a licence such conditions as they may consider reasonably necessary. One such condition can be the requiring or prohibition of the display of signs on or from the vehicle to which the licence applies.
- 1.3 West Berkshire Council have had, for some years, a system of treating each application for advertising signage on private hire vehicles on its merits. It has always been considered that signs cannot advertise anything of a sexual nature, advertise tobacco products or any product or service which may offend however, this has always been at the discretion of officers. Signs would normally be allowed to advertise the private hire company or sponsors.
- 1.4 Section 48 (5) of the Act requires that where the Council grants a licence in respect of a private hire vehicle they shall issue a plate or disc identifying that vehicle as a private hire vehicle in respect of which a vehicle licence has been granted.
- 1.5 The standard licence plate is approximately 24.5 cm by 17.5 cm, blue on white in colour and shows the vehicle details, the number of passengers allowed to be carried, the licence expiry date and the licence number of the vehicle. These plates are required to be securely fixed in a position on the rear exterior face of the vehicle. It is worthy of note that the plates are identical, other than in colour, to hackney carriage licence plates, which are green.
- 1.6 Some years ago, the then Head of Service, made a special dispensation for certain types of vehicles which carry out corporate/contract work for at least 95% of the time, to become exempt from displaying the standard plate. Instead they would display badges which show the details of the vehicle as they appear on the plate and which must be placed in the front and rear windscreens. The standard licence plate is provided and must be carried in the boot of the vehicle at all times.
- 1.7 Over the years a number of companies and individuals have applied for the dispensation and generally if the standard conditions are proven to be met, permission has been given. However there is some ambiguity in the wording of the condition in its reference to the type of vehicle. The current conditions state "Vehicles given this exemption will normally be limousines, executive type cars, such as top range Mercedes, BMW's etc. The Council reserve the right to determine exemption on a case by case basis".

- 1.8 Officers are getting more and more requests to issue a dispensation for a wide range of vehicles which are considered by the owners to be classed as executive. This presents a dilemma to officers, who are not vehicle specialists, when having to determine if a vehicle type meets the loose criteria set in the conditions.

2. Future Licensing Requirements

- 2.1 Under section 75 of the Act, certain uses of private hire vehicles have been exempt the full provisions of section 48 (the requirement to have a licence). The main one being section 75(1)(b) which allows for a vehicle which is used only for carrying passengers for hire or reward under a contract for the hire of the vehicle for a period of not less than seven days. Where such a contract exists there are no requirements for drivers of the vehicle to be licensed.
- 2.2 Section 75 (1)(b) of the Act is to be repealed on the 28th January 2008. This section states "Nothing in this part of the Act shall apply to a vehicle used only for carrying passengers for hire or reward under a contract for the hire of the vehicle for a period of not less than seven days". By virtue of its removal from statute all vehicles and consequently drivers used for private hire work regardless of contract use or not, will be required to be licensed by local authorities from 28th January 2008.
- 2.3 The repeal has been brought about by the Government on the grounds of public safety. Where drivers and vehicles were exempt licensing there were no powers afforded to licensing authorities to require criminal background checks on drivers, or mechanical checks on vehicles. This repeal will now bring all private hire vehicles and drivers under the same regime as that for hackney carriages and non contract private hire.

3. The Way Forward (licence plates)

- 3.1 With the repeal of section 75, officers believe that now is the right time to confirm members wishes with regard to licence plates/badges and signage for private hire vehicles.
- 3.2 In order to present members with a fair unbiased view of options, it was decided to contact all private hire operators and those non licensed operators known to the Council, operating under the section 75 exemption, giving them a selection of options, as a guide, to elicit their views on the proposals and to offer them the opportunity to give their opinion. A copy Letter to operators, and their responses are attached at Appendix A and Appendix B.
- 3.3 Members will see from the response letters that operators have varied views about the use of plates, windscreen badges and in some cases the permission to not display a licence plate at all. Officers have produced a number of options for Members to consider together with a wide range of licence plate types. These plates will be provided for Members to discuss at the meeting.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 Keep private hire vehicle licence plates as existing with a dispensation for those types of vehicles identified in the conditions. (Model licence plates to be shown at the meeting)
 - 4.2 Keep the private hire licence plates as existing and the dispensation but clarify the definition of "executive" and increase the contract/corporate use to 100%.
 - 4.3 Introduce new plates for private hire which are distinctly different to those used for hackney carriages. These plates to be identified at the meeting and to apply to all private hire vehicles whether used for contract/corporate work or not.
 - 4.4 All private hire vehicles which are used for private hire to display the new style or existing plate and those used for 100% contract/corporate work only, to display a new style windscreen badge both front and rear (to be shown at the meeting).
 - 4.5 All private hire vehicles to display window badges as at 5.4 regardless of contract/corporate work or not.
 - 4.6 Some Private Hire vehicles (to be identified) to be allowed to not display any identifying badge or plate as provided for in section 75(3) of the Act. This section allows for a private hire vehicle to be issued a notice in writing, given to the proprietor of the vehicle, to waive the requirement of section 48(6)(a) (the requirement to display a licence plate).
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5. The Way Forward (advertising signage)

- 5.1 The current Private Hire Vehicle Proprietors Condition 4 (3) which refers to advertising states "The Proprietor shall ensure that his/her vehicle does not display any advertising or promotional material unless the said material has been approved by the Council in writing, subject to the following exceptions:-
 - a) a sign displayed on or from a private hire vehicle which indicates membership of the AA, RAC or other similar motoring organisation.
 - b) A sign which requests passengers not to smoke
 - c) A "first aid kit carried" sticker
- 5.2 Officers believe that the above conditions a), b) and c) can be removed for the following reasons;

Condition 4 (3)(a) is one which has been attached to licences for many years and is a throw back to the days when mainly classic cars would routinely display their rights to membership of these organisations. Modern day motorists do not appear to display such badges and officers cannot recall any private hire vehicles which currently do so.

Condition 4 (3)(b) is now irrelevant as the Health Act 2006 requires all vehicles which convey passengers for business purposes to display a no smoking sign in each compartment of the vehicle.

Condition 4 (3)(c) is also irrelevant as condition 1 (2)(b) of the same document requires that all private hire vehicles carry a first aid kit.

6. Proposals

- 6.1 Officers consider that the condition referred to in item 4.1 of this report should be changed to read:-

"The Proprietor shall ensure that his/her vehicle does not display any advertising or promotional material unless the said material has been approved by the Council in writing. Only signage which advertises the private hire company or a sponsor/s shall be permitted and such signage shall be no smaller in size than 15 inches by 6 inches and no greater than 22 inches by 9 inches. Advertising of a sexual nature, smoking product/s or other offensive material shall not be permitted. A full size copy of the material/sign must be provided with the application prior to consent being considered".

7. Initial Consultation Responses (shown at appendix B)

ADC Executive Cars
A to B Shuttle Services
Autolink Executive Cars
Carrie Meissner
Corporate Travel Connections
D4 Executive Cars
Excel Executive Chauffeurs Ltd
Graham Reeves
Premier Cars
R Morrison of Pangbourne
Z Cars

Appendices

Appendix A – Copy letter to Private Hire Proprietors/Operators
Appendix B – Copies of consultation responses

Policy:	It is the Council's policy to maintain and update its licensing conditions as and when necessary, or as seen appropriate.
Financial:	There may be a financial implication if the type of licence plate is changed. As a guide the greater extent of any financial increase would be in the range of £2500 over the next financial year however this will be offset by taking into consideration current costs associated with existing plates, badges, fixings etc. Subject to consultation with the trade, it may be acceptable to recoup some of the expenditure from an increase in private hire operators fees which are currently amongst the lowest in the country, standing at £47.
Personnel:	None
Legal:	The Council have a duty to licence private hire vehicles. The type and design of any licence plate is a matter for the Council to determine.
Environmental:	None
Equalities:	None
Property:	None
Risk Management:	None
Community Safety:	All private hire vehicles would be easily recognisable as such.
Local Stakeholders:	West Berkshire Hackney Carriage & Private hire Operators Association and independent private hire owners
Officers Consulted:	John Priest
Trade Union:	None

9 November 2007

**Countryside & Environment
Environmental Health & Licensing**
West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Faraday Road Newbury
Berkshire RG14 2AF

Our Ref: PH/LC/prop
Please ask for: Licensing Team
Direct Line: 01635 519209
Fax: 01635 519172
e-mail: bleahy@westberks.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

Licensing of Private Hire Vehicles

This letter could have important implications for your business, please do not disregard.

You may be aware of a change in legislation which will affect some private hire/contract hire companies effective from January 2008.

The Road Safety Act 2006 Section 53 Abolition of “contract exemption” states;

This section affects vehicles which provide a private hire service in England and Wales (outside London, and not in Plymouth) and which are currently exempt from licensing by virtue of section 75(1)(b) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

Section 75 (1)(b) exempts from licensing any vehicle which is used only for carrying passengers for hire and reward under a contract for the hire of the vehicle for a period of not less than seven days. Accordingly, the driver of the vehicle and the operator (who arranges the hirings) are also exempt.

This section (section 53) repeals section 75 (1)(b) of the 76 Act. Unless other exemptions apply, vehicles which fall within the definition of “private hire vehicle” in section 80 of the 1976 Act will have to be licensed regardless of whether they are used for one-off hirings or hired on a longer term contract basis.

Why Was This Section Repealed

In the interests of public safety, enabling local authorities to conduct checks on both drivers and vehicles and ensure that any public hire service is as safe as possible.

What Does This Mean To Me

If you are a licensed private hire operator, driver or vehicle proprietor – you have nothing to worry about. Please be aware that each vehicle must have a separate licence.

If you currently operate any vehicle under the section 75 exemption you should contact the Licensing Team to enquire about the licensing process and to make sure that your operation is legal by the operative date.

What Kind of Vehicles/Services will be affected

The list is not absolute but will include; executive hire, chauffeur services, park and ride, private ambulance services (currently under review) and stretch limousines.

West Berkshire Licence Plates

In view of the 2008 changes to legislation on safety grounds, we have decided to re-consider the exemption from displaying a standard licence plate for contract hire vehicles. Officers have been concerned for some time at the number of requests we receive for an exemption to display the standard rear mounted licensing plate in favour of a smaller sized licence badge, sited in both the rear and front windscreens. Although the conditions specifically require at least 95% of work to be corporate **and** for the vehicle to be limousines, executive type cars, such as top range Mercedes, BMW's etc, we still have owners wishing to exempt cars of a specification which does not fit with the original intention of exempting only executive type cars. We do however appreciate that one persons interpretation of executive will differ from another.

Notwithstanding safety issues, I believe that it is now time to ask the Members of the Licensing Committee to give a definitive decision on licence plates.

This matter will be presented to the Licensing Committee early in 2008 with a view to offering members a choice in deciding which conditions they wish to adopt. This is your opportunity to put your views forward for inclusion in the committee report. Until this paper is presented to Members no further small badges will be issued other than renewals.

In order that there is no subterfuge in the lead up to the report, I have the following proposals to consider.

Proposal 1

All private hire vehicles will display a rear plate affixed to the external rear of the vehicle as required for hackney carriages (size and design to be determined following comments from the trade)

Proposal 2

All private hire vehicles will display a front and rear plate affixed above or below the vehicle licence plates (size and design to be determined following comments from the trade).

Proposal 3

All private hire vehicles to display front passenger and driver's door stickers which will include licence details as required by the Act.

Proposal 4

Smaller badges/discs, other than plates to be continued subject to criteria being set by the Committee.

Proposal 5

Certain vehicles should be considered for exemption from displaying plates or badges as allowed for in section 75 (3) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

The above proposals are for all private hire vehicles regardless of age, design or make or whether they are used for contract work, executive hire, short haul bookings, or not.

This is your opportunity to give your views prior to the report being written. If you wish to comment please let me have your written observations by 30th November 2007. All letters of interest will be attached to the report whether they are considered as viable options or not. The final decision will be taken by Members after having considered all proposals from both officers and the trade.

Yours faithfully

Brian Leahy

Brian Leahy
Senior Licensing Officer

APPENDIX B

Brian Leahy

From: Dave Roach [info@adcexecutivecars.co.uk]
Sent: 21 November 2007 14:20
To: Brian Leahy
Subject: Taxi & Private Hire owners association

Hi Brian

Having had the chairperson of the above association working in my office for a short while I can't help feeling that this association does not represent our section of the trade.

Would it be agreeable with your department if there was a separate association representing the Executive Private Hire trade?

I know that said person feels that we are just taxis and therefore should have the same plates and even signs that the taxis use. This of course is absolutely ridiculous as the cars could then easily be mistaken for taxis.

If we stick to what was discussed when the new plates first appeared I cannot see that there is a problem. As I understood it the agreement was that the cars had to be EXECUTIVE vehicles from manufactures such as BMW, Audi or Mercedes, the work had to be 95% corporate and the cars were not to be used for Taxi work. We as a company have stuck rigidly to this and have improved and increased the size of our fleet at great expense with cars like BMW 7 series, Mercedes E & S Class and a Volkswagen Phaeton. Our customers use us because we are not Taxis and therefore we would not want large plates, stickers or signs on the cars.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Dave
ADC Executive Cars

65 Sandford Lane
Abbots Grove
Thatcham
Berkshire
RG19 8XQ

29 November 2007

Dear Mr Leahy

Thank you for your letter regarding Private Hire Licensing dated 9th November 2007.

My view on this matter as we have been permitted to use the small badges for the last few years I am very keen to continue in the same or signage even less conspicuous for executive work.

I feel the issue of licensing a Private Hire vehicle certain criteria must be met as you suggest, type of vehicle, type of work, will the vehicle be used locally with only a few jobs outside of this area. All of the above and possibly more have to be considered.

I also suggest that you may want to set up a working party who reflect in the outside trade as to what we think of a company or driver and would we use him/her.

It may be a consideration that three different types of plate need to be issued Taxi, Private Hire and Executive Hire

My client base is made up of corporate or professional people, I receive a fax / e-mail or may get a phone call from another private hire company if they do not have enough resources of their own but need a client taken somewhere so they request a car, but we are executive hire company's and the need to network from time to time will occur, I know the executive private hire company's like myself know who to call if this situation arises, we work to a high standard and have a duty of care to our clients / customers.

From the customer point of view after explaining the benefits of being licensed they are more than happy that we are, and have no complaints, because our vehicles do not look like taxis with the larger signs on our vehicles.

I would be interested to attend the Licensing committee meeting if possible as writing them down sometimes overlooks some relative points which may come up in discussion.

Regards,

Bob Stacey
Proprietor
A to B Shuttle Services



Corporate & Limousine Services

46 Greeham Rd,
Newbury, Berks.
RG14 7HX

Tel & Fax: 01635 552 466
Mob: 07949295654
autolinkexecutivecars@fsmail.net

28th November 2007.

Dear Mr. Leahy,

Thank you for your letter dated 9th November 2007 with regard to the Licensing of Private Hire Vehicles. It certainly makes interesting reading. I am pleased that you are able to let not only my company but others that are in the same business put our points of view over, although we are not certain that we will be taken serious enough with our views.

Let's start with why the section was repealed.

Like everybody else we all have to go through a Criminal Records check that we have all passed. This enough should satisfy the local authority as to the way that we conduct ourselves with regard to the general public and also to the safety of those who we do work for. I have been in the private hire sector for many years and one can certainly notice the difference between a private hire driver and a taxi driver. If you think there is no difference then I certainly would like to have your points on this.

With regard to the proposals I would like to now air my views.

1) All our private hire vehicles have the issued plate on the rear of the vehicles which we affix next to the no: plate. This is done so that when the lights are on at night the vehicle is automatically seen to be a licensed vehicle. If the local licensing authority was to look into all Private Hire Vehicles have front and rear window plates the same as the currant front plates. With smaller plates the general public will be able to differentiate between a Taxi and private hire.

2) From other companies that I have spoken too the displaying of front and rear plates beside number plates would involve more cost and degrades the vehicle as a private hire vehicle. There are only a few authorities that have this system.

3). This proposal 3 in many members view would affect their businesses and are the local authority willing to recompense for loss of clients. A lot of my clients certainly would not want to use my service. I am not sure how the other operators conduct their service as my company tends to be more private than the others. Some of my clients who I am unable to name due to security reasons and who are connected to noble persons, would cease using my service if this was to be put into affect and I certainly would loose thousands of pounds in the process. You might feel that I am trying to pull a fast one here but I can assure you that I would not say the things that I am saying if I did not have such clientele. I have built up a good clientele base due to hard work and the clients only use us because of our business structure and the security that we provide them with.

We feel that with the door stickers we would look more like a taxi, We have already seen a number of taxi's at the airport without their top knots on affixed to the roof of the car, It would only encourage those taxi company's to flout the rules even more.

4). This would be the second time in asking for a smaller disc for our vehicles, the first letter mysteriously got lost in your offices. It would seem to us that our name does not mean anything and that we are being penalised when other operators are able to get the smaller plates even when they have only just started in business.

5). Only a few years ago the Volvo's were classified as an executive car. Many high tech companies use the Volvo range not only for their reliability but also for their comfort, better than the Mercedes in some cases and their safety facture. This is why we use this type of vehicle. What I think you are saying is that there are only a few executive vehicles that you feel are executive enough i.e.: BMW, MERCEDES, AUDI A8, JAGUAR and possibly the LEXUS. I am sure that there are vehicle manufacturers that would be surprised at those vehicles that you now only classify as executive cars. I remember you possibly saying that no 4x4 vehicles were aloud to be licensed but I have been told that at least one vehicle an Audi A8 Quattro had been plated by yourselves. This vehicle as far as I am aware is 4 wheel drive. Does this mean that any company that wants to operate say a Volvo XC90 will not be aloud? This vehicle is in fact all wheel drive so therefore is not only a 2 wheel drive but also 4 wheel drive when in conditions that it is needed. On one last point there are certain people who feel that the taxi and private hire federation are not working for the benefit of all members when we have never been invited to a meeting, and that it is possible that a separate independent private hire federation should be set up. If this is the case, is that federation going to have their case heard?

We spend a lot of capital to get these licenses through you and our capital outlay is the same if not more than the taxi companies of Newbury. Were penalised through not being able to get into the market place even if we have an important client on board who requires visiting the Town Hall.

We look forward to your comments and reply.

Yours truly

K.A.Jenn



RECEIVED
27 NOV 07
PUBLIC INFORMATION

117, Kingsley Close
Shaw
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 2EB

25th November 07

Dear Sir,

I am writing in response to a recently received letter from yourself regarding ;

- A) The Road Safety Act 2006 Section 53 Abolition of 'contract exemption'
- B) West Berkshire Licence Plates

With regard to 'A' I have no comment being a licensed taxi driver, with a licensed private hire vehicle.

However with regards to the Licence Plates.... I would like to comment on the forthcoming Proposals. I have recently been granted a 'small plate' and was very pleased and happy with this.

I would like to say that I feel that the present system of 'applying for and being either granted or otherwise the privilege of the small plate' is an excellent one providing the decision is carefully made. The trend in car transportation for business seems to me to be definitely leaning more towards the private hire market, and as the name 'Private hire' suggests... this should be available for the business man/woman in a private unmarked executive vehicle.

The small plate is discreet but guarantees the necessary safety of a licensed, insured vehicle and driver. I myself invested £22,000 to purchase an Audi A6 with full leather interior, and furthermore had the paint protected from stone chips to preserve the outer façade of the vehicle and also had the leather scotch guarded in case of some unfortunate spillage. This (I felt) was a more than reasonable contribution to my personal business and the reputation of the council licensing board.

I have been told however that there have been cases of private hire vehicles plying for trade at the station and that it had been necessary for certain taxi drivers to point out to them that this was not legal. The company in question was A2B, although I myself was not present during this altercation so cannot definitely attest to the accuracy of this.

I therefore would like to suggest that the council (in the case of non-executive private hire cars) insist on some type of door logo or message, to convey to the public that 'walk-up' fares are not permissible. I feel that this motion would be fairly easy to instigate and police, without taking away the privilege of the small sticker from those truly executive cars that only perform contract work for the business sector.

I thank you in advance for taking my views into consideration

Yours faithfully



Carrie Meissner Licence no 255

Robert Russell
Corporate Travel Connections
64, Chandos Road
Newbury
Berks
RG14 7EF
28th November 2007

Brian Leahy
Senior Licensing Officer
West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Faraday Road
Newbury
Berks
RG14 2AF

Your ref. PH/LC/prop.

Dear Mr Leahy

Thank you for your letter of 9th November, which I have read and re-read but am not entirely clear as to your intentions.

I can see the need to ensure that both vehicles and drivers should be licensed for public safety and I am sure that it would be reassuring to holders of current licences that everybody is being brought together under the same umbrella. Then the anomaly of having various private hire operators conducting their business, whilst not having to follow the same rules as ourselves, would be reassuring. I, in common with my colleagues, have the overall impression that either there are a considerable number of people with exemptions, carrying on business in the area, or they are not licensed and nothing is being done to catch them.

The main part of the proposal is found under the heading West Berkshire Licence Plates. Safety grounds (In view of the 2008 changes to legislation on safety grounds) is then cast aside by the next paragraph beginning (Notwithstanding safety issues) so that is not really the issue here.

Worryingly the next small paragraph mentions 'no subterfuge', a Freudian slip perhaps. I hope not.

The real agenda would appear to be the desire to withdraw all smaller sized licence badges, the actual reason is not made clear. I am from the (If it isn't broke don't fix it) persuasion and cannot see any advantage in making everybody the same, when we don't fulfil the same functions.

I take it that the proposals being considered by yourself emanate from your department and are not part of a review requested by Members of the Licensing Committee.

My comments on the various proposals are as follows :-

Proposal 1

I fail to see the benefits from displaying a full size rear plate 'as required for hackney carriages' as the differences between the jobs done by a hackney carriage and a private hire vehicle is so apparent. The thought of having to drill four holes in the bumper of a new Merc, BMW or Jag strikes me as unnecessary.

Proposal 2

Why does the proposal suggest limiting the plates to above and below the number plates, when a smaller sized badge would be easier to fit alongside the plates. Surely it is much easier, however, to read a licence badge which is in the front windscreen and rear window for both the passenger and your officers when they are checking the vehicle.

Proposal 3

You don't actually specify whether door stickers are proposed for the inside or the outside of private hire vehicles. If for the inside, then an even smaller badge than the current one would be appropriate, but then this would amount to a 'belt and braces' philosophy and hardly in keeping with a Cleaner Greener West Berkshire. If for the outside, then what would be the point if the license details are already displayed at the front and rear.

Proposal 4

Smaller badges to be continued, but is there any need to change the criteria? Surely if a private hire operator cannot meet the criteria already in place then he or she should not be issued with the smaller badges.

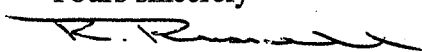
In an earlier paragraph you state that your officers are concerned that more requests for badges are being received, but isn't it part of their job to deal with these enquiries and if the criteria cannot be met, then the request should be refused.

Proposal 5

That certain vehicles could be exempt within the terms of the section 75(3) of the 1976 Act would be acceptable, but current private hire operators should be advised of these exceptions as they may be applicable to their own vehicles.

In conclusion, I have tried not to be too negative and I realise that your department is trying to up-date and condense your records in respect of operators. Hence the recent, very useful, visit from Mr Ellerington with advice on booking procedures. I do feel, however, that it is more important to ensure that all taxi and private hire businesses are complying with the rules and when this is achieved then the jobs of both your officers and ourselves would be much easier.

Yours sincerely


Robert Russell

West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Faraday Road
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 2AF

29th November 2007

Dear Brian

I am writing to give some of my thoughts regarding your letter about possible changes to the Private Hire licensing regulations and the display of signage on vehicles.

I feel that the current Licensing regulations don't take into account the broad market which is being catered to by the various companies operating in the area. The current Private Hire regulations are to my mind aimed at "mini cab" type operators who deal mainly with the general public. I think that a third tier of licensing could be proposed; this would be Executive Private Hire and be aimed at the operators who deal with high end corporate clients such as Vodafone, Bayer, Quantel etc. These operators would have to prove that the majority of their business (90%) is with corporate clients and the vehicles used would have to be late model top of the range Mercedes, BMW, Audi and the like. These vehicles would be given the option of not having to display external signage, large license boards etc but display the small licence card as some of us currently have permission to. I am sure you can understand why the type of client who uses this type of vehicle would rather be "unmarked".

I feel that I have to bring up the subject of enforcement; I know the majority of the operators in Newbury are pretty good at complying with the regulations; however I am very concerned with the number of apparently unlicensed and out of area vehicles which seem to be operating in West Berks with impunity. At some time most days I come across vehicles which are not displaying any form of license picking up or dropping off from local businesses. Do you have a recommendation as to the best way to deal with this situation?

Yours truly,

Paul Winter

Brian Leahy

From: Graham Reeves [GREEVES1@sky.com]

Sent: 20 November 2007 12:09

To: Brian Leahy

Subject: PH/LC/prop

Hi,

I would like to see proposal 1 (assuming number plate fixing will continue to be acceptable) and proposal 4 adopted

Thanks

Graham Reeves

Operator 23/018739

Driver 144

Vehicle 152

Excel Executive Chauffeurs Ltd

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

Telephone & Fax: 01635 45964

Mobile Phone: 07774 665544

Mr B Leahy
Licensing Officer
Environmental Health & Licensing
West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Faraday Road
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 2AF

26th Nov 2007

Dear Mr Leahy

I write in response to your letter dated 9th November.

As you know I am fully in favour of the change which will close the licensing loophole regarding Contract hire. We have spoken on several occasions regarding the issue of Private Hire vehicles claiming that they were on contract hire.

With regards to the proposals regarding licensing plates I would like to take this opportunity to express my views regarding this issue. As you know I was part of the group involved with the current agreement to display small plates both in the front and rear Windows.

As was pointed out at that time there are realistically three licensing categories:

1/ Hackney Carriages – As currently recognised, serving a purpose that will always be there.

2/ Private Hire Vehicles – This group consists of vehicles similar in model to that used as hackney Carriages & frequently used for local journeys to ease the load on the taxi trade by covering pre-booked work.

3/ Executive Chauffeur Vehicles – This group is made up of top of the range vehicles such as Mercedes, BMW, Jaguar's etc. Generally used by companies to transfer there

staff & V.I.P. visitors on longer journeys in a significantly different manner. These companies require discreet transportation, not vehicles that look like hackney carriages.

As for the proposals themselves I have the following points that I would like to make:

Proposal 1/ This will ensure that all licensed vehicles will appear as taxi's and I would be concerned about the public trying to hail Private hire vehicles thinking that they are taxi's. I have had a sample of this some years ago & this can be quite unpleasant for both the driver and the public as the general public do not normally understand the difference between Taxi's & Private Hire.

Proposal 2/ this will have exactly the same effect as proposal 1.

Proposal 3/ this proposal would be even worse than the previous 2. If this were the requirement then all vehicles might as well be taxis.

Should any of these three proposals be adopted, this will ruin the appearance of the top of the range vehicles that are generally used for the executive work. Our passengers expect to receive quality vehicles along with a quality service when attending events at the top London venues. Adopting proposals 1, 2 or 3 will effectively remove the executive Chauffeur work from local Companies to Competitors from out of district that are already canvassing customers within the district. These out of district companies will not have the same licensing restraints.

Proposal 4/ this being the current system as set up in March 2004. This system was specifically allowed as there was an agreed need for this type of vehicle to provide a discreet service to local companies. The system of small plates/badges/discs displayed in front & rear windows is quite obviously workable as it is exactly the same system used by the Public Carriage Office in London, which is the largest licensing authority in the UK at this time.

As far as I am aware the only reason that there has been a problem with this system is that the allowable vehicle types have not been specific enough.

The executive chauffeur market does require a discreet system of display as these vehicles by the very nature of their work do not operate locally, By this I mean that whilst they will collect & deliver passengers to & from Newbury they will then either be leaving the district to go elsewhere or will have come from outside the district.

If the Proposal to be accepted is to cover all P.H. Vehicles then the consideration should be for Proposal 4 as this will give visible id for vehicles operating locally & will also allow some discretion for the executive market.

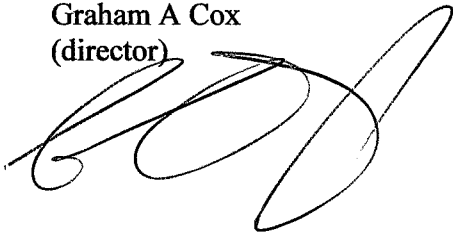
Proposal 5/ Whilst this proposal would be highly desirable to the Executive Chauffeur market, by stating that the proposal is to cover all vehicles this option would mean that

the vehicles operating on local work would be doing so without any form of ID on the vehicle.

However, should proposal 5 be considered for the Executive market alone then a specific criteria should be set, maybe by stating specific makes or models i.e., Mercedes E or S class, BMW 7 Series, Jaguar XJ8, Audi A8, VW Phaeton & Chrysler 300C, or perhaps an option based on the "on the road" price as new, the drawback of the latter scheme could see older vehicles claiming this exemption.

As I have stated earlier there is & has always been a specific requirement for executive Chauffeur Vehicles that cannot be covered by the normal saloons generally used as Taxi's & private hire vehicles. I have been involved in this market for the last 15 years on both sides of the fence and am fully aware that if Companies cannot get the type of service they require locally they will take there business elsewhere, they do not have a loyalty to West Berkshire, there loyalty is to themselves. They are the customer and will purchase the service they want from where they can get it.

Regards
Graham A Cox
(director)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Graham A Cox', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned to the right of the typed name and title.



Mr Brian Leahy
Environmental Health & Licensing
West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Faraday Road, Newbury
RG14 2AF

PREMIER CARS

26 NOV 2007

PUBLIC RELATIONS SECTION

Dear Sir

20/11/07

Ref Your Letter 9th November (Licensing of Private Hire Vehicles)

Thank you for asking for comments on the above. This company is of the view that in the interest of public safety, all vehicles and drivers used for private hire work should be licensed and CRB checked as a matter of routine, the displaying of licensing plates or badge/discs should also fit with in those criteria.

Your letter lists 5 proposals' our comments on each are listed.

Proposal 1

Appears logical, all licensed cars would be clearly defined for enforcement procedures. The design and size of the plate should not be overly large but be able to display the relevant information. Consideration should be taken into account for executive type vehicles as per Proposal 4.

Proposal 2

The fixing of a front mounted plate needs careful consideration. It has been well publicised in the national and motoring press about fittings (bull bars, spotlights, car emblems etc) to the front of vehicles and the damage inflicted upon pedestrians and cyclists in the event of an accident. Should such a circumstance arise, who would be held liable, the driver, operator or the Council if a front mounted plate had to be fitted as a requirement? On these grounds alone we would dismiss this proposal.

Proposal 3

The attachment of door stickers is not welcomed by any drivers currently operated by this company. They are of the opinion that a permanent sticker will mark paintwork and bring unwelcome attention by thieves to a vehicle when left parked and unattended. We would like to add that if it is this council's view that they need to make the public aware of what is a taxi and what a private hire vehicle is, then the inclusion of a door panel sticker will confuse the general public even more. If there is perceived to be a problem with private hire drivers illegally plying for hire, then a door sticker will only exasperate that problem. The more a private hire vehicle is made to look like a taxi (even with the words private hire only displayed in large letters) then the more chances that the public will think it is a taxi. If illegally plying for hire is a problem, no amount of signage will stop it, strict enforcement will! Signage on a packet of cigarettes states "smoking kills", people still purchase them.

Cont.

Proposal 4

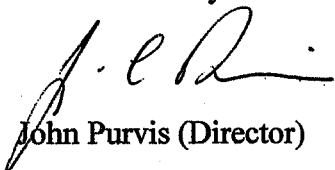
Is a logical solution for the executive car/chauffeur trade that will show that a vehicle is licensed and thus properly insured. As you state in your letter, one persons interpretation of executive vehicle will differ from another, then criteria will have to be set by the Council, to enable selected vehicles to have front and rear windscreen discs/badges instead of a body mounted plate. If used in conjunction with Proposal 1 all aspects of the trade are be covered.

Proposal 5

We can not see any reason not to display a licence in or on a vehicle. If there is any pecuniary reward of any kind for transporting passengers, then those vehicles should be appropriately licensed for the safety and well being of the passengers travelling in them. We are of the opinion that it should also include the like off wedding and funeral cars, hospital cars and volunteer drivers paid by a mileage allowance. A windscreen licence disc/badge is no more intrusive than a road fund licence that cars currently display. The licence details could also be printed on the internal face of such discs so as to be read by anyone travelling within the vehicle.

In conclusion, this company suggests that Proposal 1 alongside Proposal 4 (criteria to be determined) is the sensible and logical approach. You state that this matter will be presented to the Licensing Committee early in 2008. I am happy to attend any Licensing Committee meetings to give the members a chance to put any questions they may have to me with regard to Private Hire operations.

Yours faithfully



John Purvis (Director)

**R. Morrison of Pangbourne
Private Hire
5 Meadow Lane
Pangbourne
Berkshire, RG8 7ND
Tel : 01189845051
Mob : 07714751486**

RECEIVED
27 NOV 2007
PUBLIC RELATIONS SECTION

**TO: Senior licensing Officer
FROM: R. Morrison
SUBJECT: Private Hire Plates
DATE: 26th Nov 2007**

Dear Sir,

With reference to Proposal 3 that Private Hire vehicles should display licence stickers on the driver's and front passenger door I wish to raise an objection.

You have to ask yourself "what is the point?" This information is unnecessary to the man in the street because private hire vehicles cannot, by law, pick up passengers from the kerb side and must be booked in advance from a fully licensed company. The customer will already know that the vehicle picking him up by prior arrangement is a properly licensed vehicle. Thus there is no need to display this information in the street.

Furthermore I consider that these stickers pose a *danger* to the general public because someone wanting a taxi will see these stickers from afar and will step into the road in the mistaken belief that a taxi is approaching only to be confronted by a vehicle that has no right or intention of stopping. This is potentially very dangerous especially if the person has been drinking and wants to get home.

Proposal 3 is unnecessary and dangerous and a waste of money.

Yours faithfully


Richard Morrison

Z Cars

8 Ilchester Court
Link Road
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 7LN
+44 (0) 7909914723
www.z-cars.co.uk
Email: enquiries@z-cars.co.uk

West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Faraday Road
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 2AF

28/11/2007

Re: Licensing of Private Hire Vehicles

Dear Mr Leahy,

In response to your letter dated the 9th November 2007 regarding the licensing of private hire vehicles please find our feedback on the matter.

Z-Cars would prefer proposal five to be considered by the Members as we believe that many corporate clients of private hire companies within Newbury prefer the vehicles to not have plates displayed for aesthetic and prestige reasons.

This proposal is also desirable as many private hire companies do not own their vehicles but lease or hire purchase them making the secure attachment of licence plates difficult without causing damage to extremely valuable executive vehicles.


We would of course hope should this proposal be accepted that it is applied in a consistent manner across all private hire companies within the area to ensure consistency and to ensure that no one company gains an advantage through an exemption that another has failed to receive.

Should the Members decide that plates should be affixed to the rear of all private hire vehicles we would ask the Members, when considering size and design, the impact of these plates on the aesthetics of an executive vehicle. Ideally if we should continue to have plates affixed to the rear of our vehicles, we would prefer small, subtle sized plates that would not overly interfere with the look of the vehicles.

I hope this feedback is useful and can be included in your considerations.

Best regards,

Zoë Williams



Director
Z Cars Chauffeurs Limited
44 (0) 7940705192

Title of Report:	Hackney Carriage Tariff 2008/9	Item 5
Report to be considered by:	Licensing Committee	
Forward Plan Ref:	C13191	

Purpose of Report: To set a maximum scale of fares for licensed hackney carriages operating in the district, for 2008/9

Recommended Action: To approve the recommended tariff.

Reason for decision to be taken: To maintain consistency with existing procedures

Key background documentation: Office of Fair trading Report: The Regulation of Licensed Taxis and Private Hire Vehicle services in the UK

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Plan Theme(s):
CPT1 - Safer Communities – reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
CPO2 – Thriving Town Centres

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Themes and Outcomes by:
 Maintaining a set tariff for taxis in West Berkshire thus preventing members of the public being unfairly charged and the trade being subject to undue pressure through unfair competition

Portfolio Member:	Councillor Findley
Tel. No.:	*
E-mail Address:	*

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Brian Leahy
Job Title:	Senior Licensing Officer
Tel. No.:	01635 519209
E-mail Address:	bleahy@westberks.gov.uk

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Councils are not obliged to set a maximum taxi fare for their area but may do so if they wish. In the past, West Berkshire Council and its predecessor have set a maximum taxi fare structure. It is usually reviewed annually to commence as soon as possible at the start of the new financial year.
- 1.2 Although not a recommended action, Members have the option to not set a tariff at all, relying instead on market forces to establish the going rate and at the same time promoting competition. The taxi trade, through the West Berkshire Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Operators Association, are opposed to such a proposal citing potential threats from the public as the main reason, along with the possibility of unscrupulous drivers charging unreasonable fares. The local police are also not in favour of such a move for similar reasons.
- 1.3 The taxi trade representatives have also said in the past that having a maximum tariff set by the Council helps to deflect criticism of apparently high fares. Currently, the fare regime for the district is staged at 74 in a national council league table of 378 authorities. The national average Flag Fall (item 1, on the 2007 tariff card attached as appendix 1) is currently £2.32, with West Berkshire standing at £2.00.
- 1.4 Officers meet annually with the trade to discuss the tariff and the trade's formal response is attached as appendix 2. Members may wish to suspend standing orders and invite trade representatives to address the committee.

2. The Office of Fair Trading Report

The report does not recommend that Councils remove pricing restrictions for taxis. It recognises that whilst there are some good reasons for deregulating fares, on balance, those for applying controls are stronger. Overall, the OFT believes that fare deregulation will lead to higher charges. The report makes clear that when setting fares the Council should make it clear that the fare set, is the maximum that can be charged. This statement is shown on the tariff card issued to all vehicle proprietors.

- 2.1 A copy of the OFT report is available at the OFT web site at, <http://www.of.gov/Market+Studies.taxis.htmnts>

3. Taxi Fares for 2008/9

- 3.1 The current taxi fares set by this authority are shown at appendix A to this report. The taxi trade, through the West Berkshire Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Operators Association have set out a proposed increase to these rates by letter, shown as appendix B. The proposed increase equates to roughly 2.5%.

4. Proposals

4.1 To set a maximum taxi tariff as indicated in the letter attached as Appendix B.

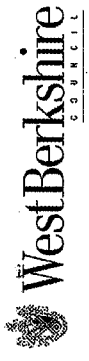
Appendices

Appendix A –2007/8 tariff

Appendix B –Letter from the trade association requesting an increase in fares

Policy:	There is no established policy on this subject except that the Council has opted in the past to set a maximum tariff. Legally it is not obliged to do so.
Financial:	None directly to the Council
Personnel:	None
Legal:	Any proposed changes in the tariff must be published in a local newspaper by the Council. There is an appeal mechanism through the Magistrate's Court for objections.
Environmental:	Licensed taxis are a valuable contribution to the provision of public transport.
Equalities:	None
Property:	None
Risk Management:	None
Community Safety:	By setting a tariff, the Council are reducing the potential for crime and disorder against taxi drivers.
Local Stakeholders:	West Berkshire Hackney Carriage & Private hire Operators Association and independent private hire owners
Officers Consulted:	John Priest
Trade Union:	None

Hackney Carriages - Table of Fares effective from 1st April 2007



In accordance with Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, this notice sets out a variation in fares. A copy of this notice is available for inspection at the Council Offices at the address given below for a period of 14 days from the date of this notice.

1. Mileage	
<i>Initial distance not exceeding 490 meters or part thereof</i>	£2.00
<i>Initial waiting time 120 seconds or a combination of time and distance</i>	10p
<i>For each subsequent 88 meters completed or part thereof</i>	
2. Waiting Time	
<i>For every period of 20 seconds or part thereof</i>	10p
<i>The meter may be engaged in the hired time mode at the agreed booking time Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act. 1976 sec 67</i>	
3. Extra Charges (only one of the following may be added to any fare)	
a) <i>For any journey with 5 or more passengers taking place between 06:00hrs and 22:00hrs</i>	50% of the above rate of fare
b) <i>For any hiring when the journey commences between 22:00hrs and 06:00hrs the next day</i>	50% of the above rate of fare
c) <i>All day Sunday</i>	50% of the above rate of fare
d) <i>For any hiring when the journey commences on Christmas Day until 06:00hrs Boxing Day</i>	100% of the above rate of fare
e) <i>For any hiring when the journey commences on a Bank or Public Holiday other than Christmas Day</i>	50% of the above rate of fare
f) <i>For any hiring when the journey commences between 19.00hrs and midnight on Christmas Eve or New Years Eve</i>	50% of the above rate of fare
4. Booking fee <i>By prior arrangement</i>	

If a Hackney Carriage is booked by phone a booking fee may be charged but only by prior arrangement. Customers should be aware that these charges are the maximum to be charged and any lesser fare negotiated must be prior to the commencement of the journey.

- 5. Fouling will be charged for.**
- 6. London Congestion charge will be applied for journeys within the charge zone**

Vehicle Plate No.

Any complaints should be made to:
West Berkshire District Council, Council Offices, Faraday Road, Newbury, Berks, RG14 2AF,
 Quoting the above vehicle plate number.

West Berkshire Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Operators Association

15 Ashley Piece, Ramsbury, Wiltshire, SN8 2QE

Mr Brian Leahy
Senior Licensing Officer
West Berkshire Council
Council Offices
Faraday Road
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 2AF

RECEIVED
7 - JAN 2008
PUBLIC PROTECTION

3rd January 2008

Dear Mr Leahy,

Setting of the maximum chargeable fares for Hackney Carriages W.E.F the 1st April 2008

The members of the above mentioned association have instructed me to apply to you for an increase in charges.

Our application is as follows:

- 1) Initial distance not exceeding 478 meters or part thereof
Initial waiting time 120 seconds or a combination of time and distance £2.00
- 2) For each subsequent 86 metres completed or part thereof. £ 0.10p.

All other charges to remain the same.

In calculating our increase we have used the formula agreed and set out by the TGWU and the Public Carriage Office. Calculations are based on the following criteria,

1. The average cost of providing a vehicle. (In this case a Ford Mondeo and London Taxi). Calculations are based on 4 different methods.
 - a) Purchase new and run for 6 years.
 - b) Purchase new and run for 3 years.
 - c) Purchase at 3 years and run for 6 years.
 - d) Lease.
2. Vehicle Spares:
A basket of 15 components is taken into account, along with tyre costs from 3 manufactures.
3. Garaging and Servicing:
These are divided into property derived costs (rent, rates, heating, lighting), using the Hillier-Parker rent index for industrial premises and labour derived costs using the TGWU National Joint Council for the Motor Retail Repair Industry's Minimum rates of pay index.
4. Fuel costs:
The price of derv per gallon is taken from the Petroleum Times Energy Source, and assumes typical consumption of 25 miles to the gallon.

5. Insurance:

Three insurance companies provide quotes; this figure is then averaged out.

6. Miscellaneous costs:

- 1) Licence fees
- 2) Class 2 NI contributions
- 3) MOT

7. Earnings:

As taxi fares comprise taxi drivers main income the formula takes account of earnings as 45% Of the overall calculation for a fares increase. The earnings figure is derived from the average earnings index for the whole economy.

We would be obliged if you could consider the above and arrange for the appropriate Committee to consider our application at their earliest convenient meeting in order that the proposed increase can be implemented from the 1st April 2008.

Yours faithfully,



Mr R.Nemeth
Vice-Chairman