

# Appendix I

## Brian Leahy

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**From:** MICHEAL HUTCHINS [mickhut@btinternet.com]  
**Sent:** 30 November 2014 11:16  
**To:** Brian Leahy  
**Cc:** john.carr@wbda.org; Valerie Witton  
**Subject:** Fw: Swivel seats in taxis

Hi Brian,

After further thought on the matter re swivel seats, we would like to add a proviso to our support for option 2. To retain the goodwill of the taxi drivers and ensure they can build in the cost of possible vehicle replacement into their business plans we would be happy to see the 29 swivel seat vehicles being retained once the swivel seats are replaced with the understanding that they are replaced by a wheelchair accessible vehicle when the original vehicle is changed.

Mick Hutchins, Chairman, West Berkshire Disability Alliance.

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** MICHEAL HUTCHINS <mickhut@btinternet.com>  
**To:** Brian Leahy <BLEahy@westberks.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** "john.carr@wbda.org" <john.carr@wbda.org>; ValerieWitton <vwitton@westberks.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** Monday, 24 November 2014, 18:57  
**Subject:** Re: Swivel seats in taxis

Hi Brian,

The West Berkshire Disability Alliance (WBDA) supports option 2 which would eventually give us 60% of the fleet as wheelchair accessible vehicles, which must also go in hand with rigid enforcement to ensure that all operators do not refuse wheelchair users access to these vehicles on the grounds of pieces of missing equipment or lack of knowledge about how to use equipment. Finally, we would also encourage the council to continue with its excellent awareness training for all taxis drivers.

Regards,

Mick Hutchins, WBDA Chairman.

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**From:** Brian Leahy <BLEahy@westberks.gov.uk>  
**To:** Mick Hutchins <mick.hutchins@wbda.org>; Valerie Witton <VWitton@westberks.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Cheryl Lambert <CLambert@westberks.gov.uk>; Sharon Gavin <SGavin@westberks.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** Monday, 24 November 2014, 10:33  
**Subject:** Swivel seats in taxis

Good Morning both

The trade have asked us to do something about converting all swivel seated taxis to either wheelchair accessible or saloon cars.

Those that own this type of vehicle naturally want to go saloon (option 1) but many others believe that wheelchair accessible is the right way forward (Option 2).

We currently have 29 swivel seats, 88 wheelchair access and 72 saloon or non conditioned vehicles.

I am in favour of getting rid of the swivel seats for the reason that I know that they are not used and in most cases probably not even offered. Swivel seats have moved on in design and are now manufactured in an electronic version however this starts at around £1250.

The fleet currently stands at;

Wheelchair access	46%
Swivel seat	15%
Non converted vehicle	39%

Clearly if we go with option 1 the fleet will remain 46% wheelchair accessible, with option 2, 61% will be wheelchair accessible.

In addition to the saloon car taxi fleet we also have 138 private hire vehicles, which really should be brought into the equation, almost all of which are non wheelchair accessible vehicles. This gives a total fleet of taxi/private hire vehicles of 330.

In combining the fleet, total wheelchair accessible vehicles would be, at option 1- 27%, at option 2 – 36%.

Do you have a view on either option, taking into consideration that all taxi/private hire vehicles can be booked but only taxis can be hailed in the street or operate from a rank. The consensus on all hiring's is that the main proportion of journeys are pre booked and not from a rank.

I need to get a report in for Committee by 1 December so a swift reply would help. Sorry about the tight timescale.

Regards  
Brian

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