

19th February 2009

Dear Cheshire East Licensing Committee,

A recent meeting took place with Congleton Borough Licensing Authority Officers and Private Hire/Hackney Carriage operators of the borough; at which proposed changes currently under consideration for the Cheshire East authority area were discussed. Operators later reconvened and would like to suggest the following amendments to those proposals. The operators present at the meeting are listed separately.

Licence Fees

In the present financial climate where many have to realign their business's to allow for falls in turnover, to increase the current fees would make it much harder for operators to maintain what is currently a good level of service.

Though increased fees are inevitable, if the Operators are to maintain and improve the service they provide, we would like to suggest a phased approach to the price increases, which is relative to passenger fare prices from what is effectively the lowest fare area, Macclesfield.

In addition to ease the cost burden for new drivers to our industry, who face several hundred pound costs to meet all the legal criteria required, plus a wait of 8-12 weeks for CRB checks to be completed before they can start earning, we would like to suggest a new one year badge to be issued for new drivers at a reduced cost instead of the current three year only application. This would make it more financially attainable.

Vehicle Conditions

4. Vehicle Testing: The value of a rule which states vehicles in excess of 7 years of age is unacceptable, when these vehicles if maintained and well presented still have a market within the hire industry. If a vehicle is deemed to be not of acceptable condition it should not be passed for licence whatever age.

We would further suggest that the Council test date be geared in such a way that it would be due 6 months after MOT testing. Currently some vehicles have an MOT followed by a Council test within one week. This way no additional 6 monthly test would be required. This would ensure that regular 6 monthly safety checks are carried out and provide better value for money for the operator.

2.5 Tow Bars. If a tow bar is fitted to a Hire Vehicle this implies the use of a trailer which enables operators to carry outsize luggage i.e. ski's or larger than normal amounts of luggage whilst ensuring the passenger areas remain safe. This is a valuable facility to some Operators, We would like to propose that if a tow bar is fitted then the trailer must also be tested for structural integrity, lights, brakes, if applicable, and a council plate fitted corresponding to the vehicle.

Deregulation

Operators feel strongly that deregulation at this point in time would be totally counter productive and we would like to suggest the current zones are maintained until further investigation into the implications be made.

7.1 Car Markings/Signage on vehicles. Many operators retain on their client lists executive customers who prefer to travel in un-logo'd vehicles, these vehicles currently carry Council Plates front and rear, have the necessary safety checks and the authority markings inside the vehicles. We believe that the proposed signage to all vehicles will mean that we will lose this type of business. We therefore suggest that vehicle exterior markings be left to the operator's discretion, or reconsidered.

6. Fire Extinguishers. Clarification on the subject of testing and who and how this can be effectively carried out is required, some operators questioned the requirement of extinguishers on the grounds that they are not trained fire fighters and their first priority in the event of a fire is to get their passengers and themselves out of harm's way, the presence of an extinguisher tempts a driver into what is a very dangerous situation. The vehicle after all is insured as are all contents, many operators indicated they would take a dim view of any driver who placed himself in harms way to save a vehicle.

2.7 Tinted Glass. National and European Law currently states to what degree glass may be tinted. In most cases manufacturers supply vehicles with tinted windows which are legally allowed under current legislation which has been arrived at following extensive investigation and testing. Can we remain within these criteria without adding a further complication to vehicles which are acceptable within the law of the land.

5.2 LPG The proposed modifications to vehicles fitted with LPG fuel options are felt to be both illegal and dangerous, and a little ill perceived. LPG systems are legally only fitted by accredited garages and trained engineers, and carry a certificate which is required by all insurance companies prior to cover being provided, this allows no modifications of any kind be carried out by unauthorized persons, the proposed modifications of further shields fitted to tanks would invalidate warranty and insurance and is deemed unnecessary following extensive design and testing by manufactures of the systems.

Vehicle Usage

Currently insurance companies provide policy cover of 'Private Hire/Social and Domestic use' on vehicles, we request the council recognize and allow this usage of vehicles where operators own one vehicle negating the necessity of purchase of two vehicles where one would be constantly parked when not in use, this aside from the financial impact also would be the environmentally friendly avenue.

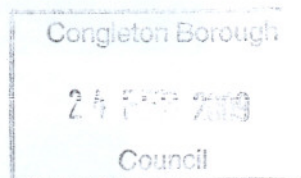
Consultations

May we finally suggest that a reorientation of the industry operators be appointed to the committee to allow a balanced input to the decision making process from those that any decisions will directly effect.

I would like to thank the committee for taking the time to consider these proposals and attach the list of Congleton Operators who support these proposals.

Licensing Section
Congleton Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
Cheshire
CW11 1HZ

22nd January 2009



Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Proposed Licence Fees with effect from 1st April 2009

I write in response to a letter from Mrs Khan the Principal Legal Officer on behalf of Cheshire East Council dated 20th January 2009.

The proposed fees are extortionate and unjustified in the current economic climate. Many Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Operators are already struggling with poor trading conditions and may cease to trade as a result of the proposed increases.

The current fee for Private Hire Vehicles is £210 the proposed fee with effect from the 1st April 2009 is £300. This is an increase of £90 per vehicle and a percentage increase of 42.8% per licence. I currently operate 11 vehicles therefore my annual costs will increase by £990.

The current fee for Private Hire Drivers is £75 the proposed fee with effect from the 1st April 2009 is £204. This is an increase of £129 per driver and a percentage increase of 172.0% per licence. I currently operate with 40 drivers and because it is not seen as a major career move by many people I will pay the licence fee for both current and new drivers. (Many companies pay the licence fee for drivers) On an annual basis I will pay for 30 Private Hire Drivers Licenses therefore my annual costs will increase by £3870.

I strongly object to the proposed fees for both Private Hire Vehicles and Private Hire Drivers because the increases are both unjustified and unaffordable.

I would like to protest to the proposed increase of Hackney carriage licenses.

I have recently applied to renew my Hackney drivers badge at a cost of £111, which includes the CRB check.

My Hackney Carriage vehicle license is at present £210.

Your proposals are way above inflation and are quite unacceptable.

If the vehicle licenses were capped then the proposed increase would be more acceptable.

As it stands, the majority of owner drivers like myself, drive taxis for a living and have no other income.

Because our local authority deregulated the Hackney plates many years ago it has allowed part time operators to simply license there family saloon car and become taxi owner/drivers who simply trade after they have finished there normal employment.


We are not only competing with other taxi companies, but with other part time owners who simply top up there earnings.

Maybe a part time operator should pay the higher cost of both Hackney Carriage vehicle and drivers licenses.

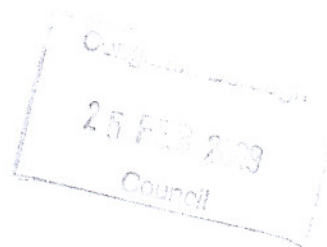
After all they have other income from there full time employer.

Would it not make sense to deter these part time operators from stealing our livelihood.

Your increase is totally unacceptable.



Licensing Section
c/o Congleton Borough Council
Westfields
Sandbach
Cheshire
CW11 1HZ



Re: Proposed variation in Licence Fees relating to hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, drivers and operators.

I write to lodge an objection to the proposed increase in licence fees as described in your published notification.

I am a Macclesfield Taxi Proprietor trading as Sparetime, operating 8 Taxis in Macclesfield, with 20 years experience.

My objections to the increases, in order of publication, are as follows.

1. Hackney Carriage/Private Hire

After months of negotiation via Macclesfield Licensing Committee and representatives of the Macclesfield Borough Taxi Trade a new Tariff was agreed to represent a fair increase in Fares(in force from 23April 2008) which reflected both the Council's on what would be a fair deal for the Council, the public and the Trade. This figure represented a 5.77 – 6.2% increase. The proposed increase represents a 42.85% increase in the annual charge. An increase of this magnitude could not be passed on to the customer and therefore would have to be borne by the Taxi proprietor seriously compromising ability to continue to trade. In the current economic climate an increase, if at all justified, relating to the agreed Fare rate of 5.77 – 6.2% may, after negotiations, be acceptable.

2. 6 month Test – no objection

3. Joint Badge Fee

A cost directly borne by drivers, who via the fare increase have seen a “wage” increase of 5.77 – 6.2%, therefore the proposed increase of 9.67%, 3.9% above the “wage” increase, would not be acceptable, imposing unnecessary hardship.

A joint badge is surplus to requirement for most drivers, particularly Owner Drivers who have either a Hackney Vehicle or a Private Hire Vehicle. It should remain an option available to those who by choice want greater flexibility when seeking work as a Driver.

4. Operators Licence

No tangible objection as an increase of 4.54% reflects the net effect of the increase in fares.

Notes:

Having attended the Public meeting it seems patently clear that there is considerable room for the sharing of information between the Licensing Committee and the Taxi Trade.

I would propose that a working group is formed which combines members of the Committee, Taxi Trade representatives and Licensing professionals so that a reciprocal sharing of information can occur ensuring all parties reach fair and equitable solutions. This would engender a level of trust and understanding which currently is at a low point.

The extent of the contribution of the Taxi Industry to the service sector, the economic success and potential for Cheshire East Council cannot be underestimated.



Dear Sir or Madam

5

In response to the proposed increase in Private hire and Hackney carriage Licenses I object for two main reasons.

Firstly the present financial climate means there is a large reduction in people using taxis and the general increase in the cost of fuel and repairs.

Secondly there are too many licenses being issued and that is reducing the share of business available to make a reasonable income.

Is the M O T certificate included in the increase in fees or are we expected to pay out again for something which has been unnecessary in the past?

Yours faithfully



DEAR SIR/MADAM

RE:PROPOSED LICENCE FEES WITH EFFECT FROM 1ST APRIL 2009

I WRITE IN RESPONSE TO LETTER FROM MRS KHAN THE PRINCIPAL LEGAL OFFICER ON BEHALF OF CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL DATED 20TH JANUARY 2009.

THE FEES THAT HAVE BEEN PROPOSED WITH THE EFFECT FROM THE 1ST OF APRIL 2009 IS UNJUSTIFIED .AND I STRONGLY OBJECT TO THIS INCREASE FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE / PRIVATE HIRE.

I ALSO OBJECT TO CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL REQUIREING AN M.O.T CERTIFICATE WHEN VEHICLE.S ARE NOT 3 YEARS OLD. THE INCREASE IS UNAFFORDABLE AS WE ARE TAKING LESS , AND LESS INCOME WITH MORE AND MORE LICENCES GIVEN OUT .AND LESS PEOPLE TRAVELING IN TAXIS.

YOURS SINCERELY

Licensing Section
C/o Congleton Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach, CW11 1HZ

3rd March 2009

Dear Sir/Madam,

As you will have seen from my previous letter addressed to Vilma Robson on 2nd February 2009, we at Autocruise are extremely unhappy regarding the proposed new fees for Private Hire licences.

It would be difficult to absorb any increase in the current economic trading conditions, but the huge increases proposed will be extremely damaging to many small businesses such as ours,

I note from your letter of (no date), advising of the re-published proposals, that the only reduction from previous proposals, relates to the additional charge for the testing of vehicles over 7 years old. Surely the Council should be discouraging the use of older vehicles for the carriage of people rather than rewarding their use.

I understand that some local authorities refuse to licence vehicles over a certain age. There would seem to be some logic in this approach by any council wishing to enhance its image with local and foreign travellers.

Many of the more prestigious vehicles operated in the Congleton Borough area are owned by small 2 or 3 car businesses. These vehicles are a credit to their operators and to their licensing authorities, but I fear your proposed new fees will put some of these small operators out of business.

The Licensing Committee should be aware that the margins in running a small business with modern vehicles, renewed regularly, rising insurance costs and now, crippling licence fees, are very small indeed. If the Committee wishes to retain a thriving Private Hire industry in the new Cheshire East area, the current proposals should be withdrawn and replaced by more business-friendly charges.

Yours sincerely

N. N.

Cheshire East Council
Licensing Section
c/o Congleton Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich road
Sandbach
Cheshire
CW11 1HZ

28th February 2009

Dear sir,
Re:- Private Hire Driver Licence Fee

Currently I am the holder of a Private Hire Drivers Licence Issued by Macclesfield Borough Council which cost the following, **£75.00** (excluding the CRB check cost and £100.00 fee for a medical examination).

I have been informed by letter that in future the Private Hire Drivers Licence which will be issued by the new Cheshire East Council is a proposed **£204.00** (not including the CRB check fee and medical examination fee), this represents an increase of **172%**.

Last year inflation reached **5%**, so the question is quite simple. How does the new Cheshire East Council, which has been promoted as of great benefit to its residents, justify such a jaw dropping increase. Also I hope that the Council is aware that the country is in recession with inflation rapidly falling, if not, then its not just us poor private hire drivers that are in for a shock.

Please will you forward my objection to this unacceptable rise in licence fee to the Licensing Committee, particularly on the grounds of it being vastly in excess of the current rate of inflation.

Yours faithfully.



Dear Sir/Madam

9

Re: Proposed Licence Fee's with Effect From 1st April 2009

In response to a letter from Mrs Khan Legal Officer for Cheshire East Council dated 20th January 2009.

I **STRONGLY** disagree with the proposed increase's in fee's for the private hire and hackney carriage operators as the trade is already struggling with the economic climate.

The current fees are about right and I find that the new proposed fee's for vehicle plates are increasing by approx 50%.

Also an increase of driver's badge's Fee's are an increase of approx 180% and that is not taking into account medical and photographs.

J Quigley



Dear Mr Potts, (I assume is the person relating to proposed fee increases)

First I would like to deal with the lack of information provided by your department, to anyone in the taxi/private hire business with regard to changes in licensing fees, I only became aware of the proposed charges by accident via an article in a newspaper.

Your department should be ashamed of the fact that it has not contacted anyone in the hire business either about the increased fees or any information about a consultation on the subject ! Had it not been for the article in a newspaper I would be totally unaware of you proposals and any consultation.

Next, I would like to deal with the fees themselves, what you are proposing is a 43% increase in fees at a time when you are fully aware that everyone in the vehicle hire business is earning far less than in previous years due to market conditions, the current RPI is less than 2% and you pluck out a massive increase from out of the blue which bears no relation to current conditions, We, unlike yourselves, do not have a steady income, it rises and falls along with the economic conditions, I put it to you that you would be most unhappy if I were in a position to take 43% more off YOUR income just to go to work !

Not only are you squeezing incomes by proposing this hike you are also going in direct opposition to Government policy, which is to conserve as many jobs as possible and (as Gordon Brown requests) create more employment by spending in shops etc, how can we do this if you are taking more money out of a depleting business ?

I request that this policy is dumped into a waste bin never to see the light of day again, particularly as the current fees are among the highest among other authorities, I do not find the article about the proposals humorous or funny, I see it as a rip off by your licensing dept that is plainly not fair in the current times and is only possible due to the powers that you have been given and are abusing.

I also have much more to say about this, so I await a consultation meeting being put forward by you that all in the business are made aware of and can attend in which to advise you of the anger we all feel.

Yours

(11)

I would like to comment on the proposed licence fee changes for hackney/private hire licences in the new Cheshire East Council.

In making my comments the following points should be taken into consideration;

- a) Any merger of authority offers an excellent opportunity for economies of scale, savings, and the sensible rationalisation of the best aspects each individual offered before merging.
- b) We are in a recession and for the last 3-6 months my income has dropped to around £3-£5 per hour, well below the minimum wage. Even in a small combined region like the new Cheshire east there are great regional variances in opportunity for earning (ie train timetables, local business and availability of night/evening custom from the pub/club trade (which in Wilmslow has reduced to almost negligible levels)). Costs have risen for operators while income reduces and soon operators who offer a better service by investing in new cars will have to pay the government's increased road tax prices having no option but to purchase larger more powerful cars (I doubt the new council would plate a gee-whiz or Toyota Prius for hire!!!)
- c) Many drivers in Wilmslow are disillusioned and looking for alternative careers. I myself will be ceasing to trade as a hackney driver in February but leave my comments in the hope they may benefit those drivers still trading.
- d) A council's duty is to serve the public. The public does not exclude the drivers and operators themselves without whom there would not even be a licensing dept for hackney/private hire or a service to offer the public.

Taking the above into account it is difficult to see how the new council can propose and justify such an increase in fees both for driver and vehicle licensing.

It would be interesting to know if these fees are the average or the highest of the previous individual councils fees.

Any increase at this time can only have the effect of forcing experienced drivers particularly independent owner operators to leave the trade.

With the economies of scale savings in a combined council I'd be interested to hear the increased costs in production of said licences that justify a 100% increase in the driver licence for example when it gives no benefit to the driver unless he/she happens to wish to drive separate private hire vehicle in addition to his/her hackney carriage or vice versa.

I can only suggest licence fees are increased in line with inflation until they reach your target. It would not even be fair to apply these increases to new licence applications only. Or compensation and justification is offered with a flag increase as suggested at the end of this e-mail.

In relation to the conditions I note the sensible condition re a medical only being required every other year. This will offset the licence fees increase noted above every other renewal and I am surprised the council has not even mentioned this in mitigation of the licence increase which suggests the council is ignorant of the impact the increased fees will have.

On a separate note and with regard to my comment about not even earning the minimum wage, the council should be aware that trade has diminished to such an extent and new licences in Macclesfield granted to a number of new drivers meaning the average wait on a rank for a fare has increased while the length of that fare is much more likely not to be reward enough for the wait. It is common to wait over an hour on the rank for a £2.60 fare. Working for a company I get 40%, some company drivers

50% and independent drivers say they work on 50-60% **meaning an hourly rate of £1.56** or less. With respect to the paying customer who should also be considered, it would not be unfair to suggest they should pay a fare which affords the driver a minimum wage and that currently they are using a service and not paying the full cost of that service.

I therefore suggest a minimum fare or flag of £5 to cover the first 2 miles with all other rates remaining as they are.

AOL Email goes Mobile! You can now read your AOL Emails whilst on the move. Sign up for a free AOL Email account with unlimited storage today.

26th February, 2009

To all members of the Cheshire East Licensing Committee:

We would like to raise some points on the issues of fees.

1. This is a £90 increase equivalent to just under 49%. We now find we have got to have an MOT Certificate as well as the normal test. Macclesfield has always had an outside independent body which is an approved MOT testing station, so in real terms the rise to Macclesfield operators is around £143. For this we can see no justification, when we are being told that there are no changes to take place in the foreseeable future, we will still be applying to Macclesfield Licensing for our plates, testing will be the same, etc. As I understand, Macclesfield is not behind on its budget for 2008/09 and when we were asked to vote on the formulation of Cheshire East (as a resident), we were told that this would cut costs overall. So would someone please explain the need for extra revenue, when everything is staying the same for the time being, and what will this extra revenue be used for? We would also like to know how the council officials can determine that it costs £50 per hour to process an application, when Cheshire East, at present, does not have an office to process applications? Also when you speak to officials concerned, no-one seems to know if they yet have a job in the new Cheshire East.
2. The introduction of a joint badge:- Why is there a need for drivers to incur excessive charges when most of the single operators have either Hackney or Private Hire, not both.

3. Operators License:- I have no concerns in the increase in the price for the operators license, as this seems to fall within a proportional increase to the tariff increases we received in 2008.
4. Six monthly test fees:- Our personal views on this is that the issue of 2 plates a year is more justifiable than issuing 1 plate for a year, than having to have enforcement officers chasing around removing plates on cars that have not been tested. We think the 6 monthly test should £100 with the issue of 2 x 6 monthly plates is a better alternative as previously proposed.
5. Incidentals:- We are also concerned that the council has not published the charges for replacement plates, replacement licenses (driver, vehicle and operator) and replacement badges if they are lost, as the prices seem to vary significantly, depending on who processes the request.

In conclusion, when Cheshire East decide when zoning is to finish, it would be a good time to sit down with the trade and discuss a way forward to end zoning and re-align fees. At which time I would assume that the council will have a better idea of the cost of administration in the newly formed Licensing Department, instead of using guess work.

I have been a Taxi Driver in the Borough of Macclesfield for 18 years and there has been talk for all of that time of the formulation of a Macclesfield Taxi Association. I am astonished that since the meeting of the Licensing Committee on 13th February, 2009 that the people from within the Taxi Trade (that have personal differences) have come together to form a Macclesfield Hackney & Private Hire Association. For this to happen after all these years, people obviously feel very strongly about all the changes.

The last year for our trade, has been one of the hardest years we could have had, with the large rise in fuel costs. Running a fleet of vehicles has been a nightmarish experience and our overdraft over this time has increased significantly and now with the credit crunch, having to find an extra £90 for the plate, extra funding for our badges and now approximately £50 for an MOT certificate, also our banks wanting to reduce our debt levels, we can see no alternative to cutting our fleet size, stopping our renewal programme (of cars) and probably having to cut corners on our maintainance and service schedules.

All this at a time when our overall turnover seems to be down about 22% on the previous year. We have approximately 60 staff at present and a significant number of these are going to lose their jobs if these large increases come into force.

Dear Mr Osbourne

As I am sure you are aware, the new Cheshire East Council have put forward their proposals regarding the local regulation and pricing of the taxi/private hire industry. The following, sent to Mrs K Khan at licensing@cheshireeast.gov.uk, is my initial reaction and response to these ill-thought proposals, and I would be grateful for your comments and support for local businesses in these difficult times:

1st Class Private Hire are based in Knutsford, regulated by Macclesfield B.C. at present. Although based in Knutsford our cars ACTUALLY do travel throughout the North West of England, occasionally London, South Wales and the Southern Coast.

We employ 6 full/part time office personnel and 26 full/part time drivers. Our drivers are all in their maturer years and have generally retired from professional backgrounds. When driving they wear a shirt and tie as standard.

Our customer base is corporate with a few private accounts. 97% of our turnover is account custom.

We have 14 licensed vehicles of which 3 mercedes vehicles have licenses under Condition 10. All vehicles have private registration plates to enhance our professional image and we have NO other marks or signs. Our customers EXPECT clean and discreet as possible vehicles.

Here are my views and concerns in respect of your PROPOSED conditions, and I note on the M.B.C Website Public Notice of variation, that we are expected to GIVE FULL GROUNDS FOR OBJECTION, so I would expect a response giving \'FULL GROUNDS\' for the proposals.

Can we deal with \'TAXI FEES\' firstly.

Private Hire Vehicle (Annual) MBC £ 210. East Cheshire £ 300 = an increase of 43%

Hackney/Private Hire Driver Licence MBC £ 75. East Cheshire £ 204. = an increase of 172%

I and my drivers and myself do not have nor will ever have cause for a Hackney Licence, nor will need to learn how to use a taxi meter, therefore we would all oppose a dual type licence.

The majority of my drivers are part time, and any significant increase in licence renewal would deter most from renewing their licence.

Five years ago 1st Class bought out our local competitor Briton Tours, there were many price differences between the two companies, which caused me a huge problem as it appears, you, as a council may have. If I had increased a customer price significantly I would have lost their business. I believe that if you as a council increase the fees the way you are proposing you will cause drivers to leave, I should be unable to recruit and you will lose my business, and I will be without a business. Please also consider inflation is less than 3% and wages are generally less than 5%. In view of your significant fees outlined 43% and 172% please could you give full grounds for this outrageous increase.

My next major concern is Magnetic Signs applied to the side of my cars. I accept when Hackney taxi's are in busy town centre area's, people looking for taxi's need to distinguish that they are not getting into the wrong type of persons car, but PRIVATE HIRE should mean privately booked and our customers know where to meet, and know our vehicle registration numbers, as ours are C1 FCH to C15 FCH, meaning Car No. and First Class Hire. If we were forced to apply signs to our cars not only would our cars look unsightly, we would not be able to retain the type of customer base we have worked so hard over the past 10 years to build up.

You granting this condition to us would be like picking up your grandmothers glass vase and smashing it.

I strongly oppose these signs on the grounds they are unsightly and unnecessary and degrade our business. It takes the meaning out of the wording 1st Class Private Hire and Private Hire itself. Please consider signs as 'Optional' if at all. Because of the clientele base we have, if I had my way ALL vehicles would apply for Condition 10.

Another condition is No Vehicle should be fitted with a tow bar. My view is so long as the council have tested and approved the towing unit, surely this free's up any obstruction of luggage within a vehicle allowing passengers in an emergency a free and safe passage to egress from the vehicle. Those officials that visit i.e Manchester Airport would many times see passengers climbing over cases to get out, vehicles in particular MPV's. (NB. 1st Class Private Hire DO NOT have tow bars.)

I also note you expect vehicles to be equipped with a Reflective Warning Triangle and a High Visibility Vest for the drivers for use in an emergency. Why does the council feel the need to demand this at extra cost to us, when the D.O.T. does not enforce it for a normal MOT. Again another additional cost in a difficult economic climate.

As outlined my two main concerns are ridiculous rises in the fees and 'Stickers, Signs' on our vehicles.

Unless serious consideration is given to your new proposals I will lose more custom than I have already done in these difficult economic times and go out of business. Please do not make life any harder for us small businesses who do things the correct way.

Yours faithfully

Robert Burton

Please confirm receipt of this e mail.

Telephone

5th March 2009

Licensing Section
C/o Congleton Borough Council

Dear Sir or Madam

I am in receipt of your letter dated 18th February regarding the increase in the licence fees.

The increase in the vehicle licence seems to be particularly excessive and because of this I have to ask you a number of questions and also make a number of requests.

Firstly. Would this increase have been as great if Macclesfield Borough alone had been dealing with the licensing?

Secondly. What are the factors that have brought about such a large increase?

Thirdly. How many local authority employees are involved in the licensing of public and private hire vehicles in Macclesfield at the moment and how many vehicles does this involve and what is the total wage bill for these employees.

Fourthly. How do the above figures compare to the same numbers involved in 1999?

Fifthly. Can you assure me that the taxi account is entire of itsself and that none of the money goes to any other source?

I know that you will understand that there has been an unprecedented fall of incomes in the taxi business at the moment and it is a time of great anxiety for all who are involved.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours faithfully