

RECEIVED

23 MAY 2014

Kim Evans
Licensing Officer
Cheshire East
Westfields
Middlewich Rd
Sandbach
Cheshire
CW11 1HZ

Tim Sumner
Top Cars Uk Ltd

104 S. Stagg Hill Rd.
Alderley
Alderley Edge
Cheshire
M20 9PL

18/5/14

Dear Mrs Evans,

I refer to your recent letter advising of revised Hackney carriage tariffs in the Cheshire East Area.

Yet again proposals have been put forward that do not take in to account the present state of the economy, the views of the drivers and the views of Cheshire East Council tax payers . Do you really think that the general public want to pay considerably more for their taxis ? We have the supermarkets in a price war where Sainsburys are trying to get their prices closer to Aldi and yet the licensing authority seem to think that these financial constraints don't apply to the taxi industry. Well they do?

You say that these proposed tariffs are to harmonise the price structure over the three regions. You have glibly ignored the fact that both Crewe and Congleton differ from Macclesfield massively in that they are regulated and we are not .That to my mind is a far bigger issue and only heightens the lack of strategic thinking within Cheshire East Licensing.

Just to give a simple overview of how I think the rates should be set follows but I will go on to deal with the detail later.

People do not trust taxi drivers. They know there are different tariffs but they don't know when they start or what % increases there are. Confusion and uncertainty are the two main reasons why people don't buy. During the week the business traveller

just jumps in the cab and there is usually no enquiry about the price because their company is paying. Friday and Saturday nights are normally so busy that nobody cares. Sunday is the best indicator of how the public uses taxis. On the rank at Macclesfield station on a Sunday morning there are normally only four or five cabs till mid afternoon. We are very rarely busy on a Sunday as locals know that we are a third dearer than most private hire companies so they will be much busier at our cost.

People , who arrive at the station will either be picked up by friends and relatives or because they are not business travellers will have pre-booked a private hire vehicle.

It doesn't matter whether it is a third or a half extra our income will not increase and will probably go down.

I would scrap Sunday rates, Bank Holiday rates, with the exception of Xmas and New Year leaving them as they are now. All I would do is increase the minimum fare i.e flag rate to £ 3.50 and keep the pence per mile the same.

I can see NO reason why anyone should pay extra for a cab on a Sunday or Bank Holiday, as you would not pay extra for anything else at those times, drinks food etc. Our industry is part of a bigger industry and should be viewed as such.

To give you an example of how the Sunday tariff would affect us.

From the rank to Whaley Bridge £ 30.00

Cab Co £ 21.00

These rates are a Xmas present for the private hire companies !! I ask myself WHY.

The argument for increases on Sundays and Bank holidays was originally that you wouldn't get enough drivers out. This no longer holds true as drivers are being licensed in record numbers and there aren't the number of customers anyway!! Putting prices up will make matters worse.

As I understand it one of the main points of your proposals is to scrap waiting time ?

Firstly there is no other council in the UK that has that policy !!!!
Why do you want to be the first ? Again it clearly shows that you do not understand how the taxi business works in Macclesfield ! !

Let's take a typical Monday morning off the station rank. There will probably be as many as 20-25 trips to Middlewood Ct AZ at Hulley rd and these will be done in rush hour traffic so the waiting time can easily be a £ 1.00 or more !! I have never had a customer complain about waiting time.

Do you seriously expect us to stop at cash tills, takeaways, toilets, launderettes , private houses etc etc etc and not get paid for that time. Would you work for nothing???

Waiting time payments are an essential part of a driver's income and should be retained.

I have dealt with Sundays and bank holidays in that the intended price rises should be scrapped or as a positive step reduce them to the flat daily rate. Your proposed increase from a third to a half represents an increase of 12.5 % on the existing rate. Do you know the current rate of inflation? This is hardly a competitive move is it? The majority of people are struggling with their household budgets in the worst recession for 70 years and you want to increase the prices at 4 times the rate of inflation.

And finally , well not quite !! Why do you want to create more confusion and mistrust by introducing a mid evening rate?

I have no idea of the reasons behind these proposals ?? It should be remembered that all licensing whether it be taxis, utility supplies, communications etc etc came after the business not before. All decisions connected with pricing should be business driven not the other way round.

This document looks as though it could have been written with the help of the private hire companies because they are the only ones that will benefit from it.

The public will not benefit and neither will the Hackney carriage drivers in the borough.

In your efforts to HARMONISE you will created total discord.

The public don't want these changes and neither do we !!

Regards



Kim Evans
Licensing Officer
Cheshire East
Westfields
Middlewich Rd
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Cheshire
CW11 1HZ

Tim Sumner
Top Cars Uk Ltd
The Brewery, Charnock
Highway
Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK11 7JL

23/5/14

Dear Ms Evans,

I refer to your email to me of the 20th May in which you outline your timescales on this consultation.

Initially put to the Licensing Committee on the 5th November 2012 (what an appropriate date !!) and the Cabinet member on the 7th January .

So this process of consultation was started over 30 months ago ?? !!

The Oxford English dictionary defines the word Consultation as “ the act of consulting “ 2 “ a conference for discussion or the seeking of advice “.

At no stage have me or my colleagues been asked for advice either individually or collectively and it would seem that a number of councillors, who know nothing of these proposed fair increases, have not been asked for advice either.

The definition of the word Objection in the Oxford English Dictionary is “an expression or feeling of opposition or dislike “

Now this I have been asked to do but I only have a couple of weeks to do it as do the Macclesfield Tax Payers.

Had the Macclesfield tax payers been made aware of this via their local councillors you would have had a resounding "No ".If I said to you tomorrow "oh by the way we're putting your grocery bill up is that OK there would be an overwhelming no.

As David Rutley said at his meeting with us on Wednesday that very few people read the public notices in the Macclesfield Express so the number of objections you receive is clearly not a true reflection of public opinion.

These proposals will affect the income of the Hackney Carriage drivers in the borough and will be welcomed by the private hire operators. To the general public there is no difference between these two sectors. It's just a smart phone a Google search and a price.

I am a member of Unite , you may well be also ? If there was a proposal to lessen your income would you expect to be consulted as to why it was necessary ? Would you accept such a proposal ? Clearly not !! So why should we ?

The majority of the drivers are self – employed and each ,in varying degrees , is a small businessman completely reliant on his own abilities to make a living. There are larger companies like GT Tours who serve the school transport sector . Your proposals will affect our businesses.

We work the streets; we know that the Taxi business is a good barometer of the economy.

You have not consulted us or the general public properly when you have clearly had enough time to do so and it is clear that you are trying to railroad these proposals in through the back door!

We will not let you do that.

We have not had an acceptable explanation as to why this increase is needed ? There is not massive unrest on the rank about an increase but we would welcome some proper discussions on how the rates operate.

You use the word HARMONISATION as the reason for the proposals.

As a business person I understand that to mean that these proposals will result in cost savings to Cheshire East or efficiency benefits. In which case have you informed the licensing committee of the actual savings as a figure? If so can you tell us what it is ? It's not obvious to me or most of the business people I've spoken to how substantial a benefit these proposals might bring ?

I suspect that this is a cosmetic idea with little substance which might make admin a bit easier and a bit cheaper !!

I hope you are costing the time that you are now having to devote to sort this mess out ?

If these proposals are to standardise rates across the three towns so that everybody pays the same then that is utter nonsense. Will a person from any of those three towns , who on the odd occasion uses a taxi in a different town worry about the different price, even if they notice ? Of course not !!

People in Crewe , Congleton, and Macclesfield do not pay the same for their housing, groceries, entertainment, meals drinks fuel etc, etc, They are separate economies with different demographics.

It would be laughable for say the Regional Director of a supermarket chain or indeed any retail business to write to their store managers in the three towns and say " just to make the spreadsheets easier to read we are going to have the same prices in all the stores. It would not happen because sales and profits would go down !!

Yet you, without consultation are proposing to do just that !

You have a " B " in your bonnet about this but it happens to be the wrong " B ".

I met with you a while ago to discuss issues affecting taxis in Macclesfield and I know that I NEVER mentioned a tariff increase but I will highlight those issues which I did talk about then. The Macclesfield public and drivers both have a poor deal .

There has never been an enforcement officer on any of the ranks in Macclesfield on a Friday or Saturday night as far as I or any of the other drivers are aware. I have asked you tell us the date of any such visit that might have been made. I have never had a response. They would be able to address the following issues.

- 1) Overcharging . This happens regularly and could easily be resolved by an enforcement officer or mystery shopper.
- 2) Private hire taxis from out of town waiting for jobs at the station after dropping off.
- 3) Private hire taxis from out of town ranking up on Mill Street.
- 4) Private hire taxis ranking up by the Medical Centre.
- 5) Hackney carriage drivers from out of town doing private hire work in the town, a loophole in the regulations which I am told by a licensing officer from Stockport they are trying to close.

N.B if you are up to speed with the Law Commission's interim report on the industry you will have noted that they have changed their mind on de-regulation.Originally they were intending to implement it but have now done a 180 degree turn and are proposing to have councils regulate the number of plates. Macclesfield has no adjacent boroughs that are fully de-regulated as we are.

6) Drivers being allowed to work in the borough without sufficient local knowledge

These are more relevant issues than the Harmonisation of tariffs but Licensing has done virtually nothing to sort these matters out !!

We do not accept these proposals which should be deferred for 6 months and a proper consultation process begun.

Cheshire East has had its INCINERATORGATE, WASTEGATE, REFUSEGATE or what you will. It's about to get its TAXIGATE.

Regards,

Tim Sumner

Houses

Groceries

Tim Sumner
Top Cars Uk Ltd
100, 500, 1000, 1500cc
Ford, Vauxhall
1000cc, 1500cc
1000cc, 1500cc
1000cc, 1500cc

23/5/14

Dear Licensing committee member,

Obviously the furore regarding the proposed increase in Hackney Carriage tariffs is gaining momentum.

This is unfortunate because this is taking up valuable time of both the council and Hackney drivers who are trying to earn a living.

There is some question as to the legality of the proposal concerning the removal of waiting time? The National Taxi Association are taking legal advice on this and I, at present have a QC reviewing it through my union.

These are all unnecessary wastes of time and money.

I feel that the Council, by it's own short-sightedness has backed itself into a corner which might mean that this will go down to the wire.

There will be an article in the Macclesfield Express on Wednesday, as there was in the Congleton Chronicle last week and our campaign to collect support will begin through an extensive social media campaign, the physical collection of signatures on a petition and the support we have enlisted through a number of councillors.

There is a way out of this for you which though it will not completely leave you without egg on your face will show you in a better light as a caring council that has the interests of it's tax payers at heart in these difficult times.

Simply say that when these proposals were first mooted in November 2012 that you took advice on what the state of the economy might be when they were to be introduced in May 2014.

Reiterate that advice was taken in January 2013.

You now withdraw these proposals accepting that whilst the economy is moving slowly upward that for those people at the lower end of the economic spectrum and those who depend on short taxi journeys on a regular basis that your proposed increases would be an unfair extra burden to their budget.

I am sure that you can find someone to write this properly.

Agree that you will review this situation in say October and will CONSULT with appropriate parties.

This will include representatives of the Licensed Hackney Carriage drivers!!

The public don't want this proposed new tariff and neither do the drivers.

Finally, we are pretty sure we know the reason why you have introduced these tariffs!! Couldn't possibly be a hike in our License fees coming could there?

These tariffs will not increase our incomes!! That surely must be clear to you now!!

You would do well to concentrate on the law commissions report that councils should regulate the number of plates before looking at badge increases.

Regards,

Tim Sumner

EVANS, Kim

From: Tim Sumner [mailto:tim.sumner@cheshire.gov.uk]
Sent: 29 May 2014 07:33
To: EVANS, Kim
Subject: Answer the questions.

Hi Ms Evans,

the problem is Ms Evans is that you never answer the questions which have been posed and you contradict yourself.

You say that there has been extensive consultation with the trade ?

Please be good enough to tell us how many representatives from the trade you have met with and who they are ? We have formed the Cheshire East Taxi Group which will encompass the three towns involved and none of the members (about a 100 on the first day) has any recollection of being invited to a meeting to discuss these proposals nor have we nominated any person to represent our views.

Did you invite certain persons to consult with you ?

I am forwarding an email to you reference a meeting that took place on the 26th April 2014.

You say that this was widely debated in the council so how come that at least five active councillors knew nothing about these proposed increases ?

You say that the public were aware of the proposed increases by way of information on your website. How many people do you think would look on your website to see if their taxi fares were going to rise ?

You say that these tariff rises are to create harmonisation yet you have added another tariff band ?? You are proposing to alter the double time timings on Xmas and New Year yet the general public do know and accept that that has been the case .

Again I repeat the question WHY are you proposing to scrap waiting time when no other council in the UK has ever considered or proposed such a thing ?

In your email you say that we can charge less than the meter price ?

On the Taxi Fares sheet which we display in the cabs it says " The fare shown on the meter is the fare to be paid "

That will cause more dis- harmony with passengers as they will almost certainly think that you can charge more than the meter as well . This is hardly standardisation is it ?

Are you saying that in the unlikely scenario of you rail roading these changes through we can keep our meters as they are now if we want to ? If so your're pursuing a pretty pointless exercise.

You fail to answer the the precise question put to you in a previous email. What are the actual costed savings of these proposals and have they clearly been demonstrated to the Licensing committee and the leader of the council. Can we see these figures ? Do they exist ?

Were these proposed changes your idea or one particular licensing committee member ?

I am not sure how many people from the trade support these ideas but I am assuming that as a democratic country if the number of objectors exceeds those in favour then the proposals will not be carried ? Or is this purely arbitrary on the Councils part and you can do what you like ?

We are a hundred strong and growing.

We have representatives from each of the three towns and insist that to give you a true reflection of the trade's views we meet with you, the licensing committee or both ?

I have asked David Rutley to arrange a meeting between ourselves and Michael Jones.

Please Ms Evans answer the questions honestly and fully and look at your diary.

Regards,

Tim Sumner

you continue to tell us this is about harmonisation yet nothing could be further from the truth

You say that these rates would help help the public understand better. ||

I have not had one person in the 4 years I have been doing this look at a tariff card!!

What they obviously do Ms Evans is look at the meter and they understand that " the fare on the meter is

How can the public trust such inconsistencies?

The public does understand that rates go up at 11:30 to time and a half

The public does understand that Ymases and New Year are at double time

Your proposed change to 20% after 9pm will come as a shock to passengers and those people who have

Your business partner's share through when you say that because a person held a joint private hire/

Public: The top Hackney drivers work the ranks have flag downs and build there own customer base

Upset the boss and get your radio taken away. That will hardly give them an impartial view when your consulting with them.

As experienced licensing officers would never have put themselves in a position such as you did at

1. Do you think that the consequences of removing writing time or have you

If we could change some things, do you think drivers will be the same on the roads? I don't know. Would

How can we make the police aware of the difficulties that will arise when in the early hours of the morning a

long would you suggest he waits before reporting the incident to the police as a non payer. Have you consulted with the police on these issues. I would suggest you do.

Similarly what do we do with older people who maybe go shopping , collect their prescriptions etc. Ask them to pay and order another cab ?

People picking their kids up from Schools nurseries and it's raining " can you wait 10 mins driver " No you will have to get another cab .

These are scenarios which we deal with everyday and whilst the waiting time is not a lot (and a lot less than Congleton) the drivers do deal with these situations sympathetically.

Back to this wonderful word Harmonisation enabling the fare paying public to understand the tariffs better.

When you took over this role I came to see you to talk about the issues that were of common interest to both the drivers and licensing enforcement.

I suggested that at the earliest opportunity you would make yourself known to the rank by visiting it on a Friday or a Saturday night to learn first hand what goes on. To my knowledge you have not done so. What a golden opportunity missed to form a working relationship with us. We do have the same goals Ms Evans. A well regulated rank gives the public peace of mind in terms of safety and fair prices.

You say you feel the tariffs would be easier to understand. Have you physically been on the street talking to people who use taxis ? That's the way to understand what the public thinks. I invite you, sometime in the next few days to spend some time with me talking to ALL sectors of the Boroughs council tax payers ? This is the real world !

Nearly finally. You have still not provided what the actual cost benefit is to the Council. Has this information been logged with the Chief Finance officer or is it as we all suspect just

HAVING THE SAME WALLPAPER IN EVERY ROOM

Stop the implementation of these proposals and meet with us properly in October and we will have proper proposals for you.

After all Ms Evans you have had since 5th November 2012, with all the resources of Cheshire East at your disposal and access to fine minds and still managed to come up with a DOG'S BREAKFAST OF A PROPOSAL.

BOTH THE PUBLIC AND THE DRIVERS WILL BE WORSE OFF WITH THIS PROPOSAL AND YOU HAVE STILL NOT EXPLAINED WHAT THE BENEFIT IS TO CHESHIRE EAST. IT MUST BE MINIMAL AND CAN NOT BE WORTH DOING. YOU HAVE NOT CONSULTED PROPERLY .

NOBODY WANTS THE SAME WALLPAPER IN EVERY ROOM

Regards

Tim Sumner

Cheshire East Taxi Group

EVANS, Kim

From: LICENSING (Cheshire East)
Sent: 16 May 2014 14:16
To: EVANS, Kim
Subject: FW: Kim evans

From: Christopher Hall [mailto:chall@cheshireeast.gov.uk]
Sent: 16 May 2014 14:14
To: LICENSING (Cheshire East)
Subject: Kim evans

I object to the new proposed tatiff as its unfair on drivers no waiting time and a big reduction in wages

TOM ASHDOOTH

19/05/2014

19/05/2014

19/05/2014

19/05/2014

19/05/2014

To Licensing committee East Cheshire

I strongly object to the proposals for changes to the Taxi tariff for Cheshire East in particular to the abolishing of waiting time something that is operated in every other borough in the country and I wish this objection to be noted.

I also object to the allowing of Taxis from other boroughs being allowed to operate in our area.

Yours sincerely



JD 0296

**Miss Kim Evans
Licensing Team Leader
Cheshire East Council
Municipal Buildings
Crewe
CW1 2BJ**

Dear Miss Evans,

Re: The proposed Table of Fares @ Macclesfield Zone.

I agree with the proposal with the exception of the omission of a waiting time charge.

I presume this to be a clerical error as no waiting charge would not be acceptable.

Waiting should reflect at least the minimum wage per hour and the standing cost of a Taxi per hour.

Yours sincerely

PAT GILLICK

Pat Gillick, Team Leader

Cheshire East Council

Crewe

Cheshire East

Date: 22-05-2014

EVANS, Kim

From: Patrick Gillick [mailto:patrick.gillick@sparetime.co.uk]
Sent: 30 May 2014 13:48
To: EVANS, Kim

Dear Kim

Re: Waiting time charge. This charge should reflect standing costs and the "at least" the national minimum wage. The amount required to fulfil this is £18 per hour pro rata.

Regards

Pat Gillick
Sparetime

EVANS, Kim

From: John Hanmer [mailto:john.hanmer@silvertown.co.uk]
Sent: 30 May 2014 13:32
To: EVANS, Kim
Subject: Proposed tariff increase

Hi Kim I agree with the proposed tariff increase but the only two things missing is the waiting time which should be around the £18 per hour. The other thing is the 4 seats + should be Fare + 50% saving customer 50% as they would need two Taxi's.

regards John Hanmer @ Silvertown

Macclesfield

Radio

Cars

100 - 1000000
1000000 - 10000000
10000000 - 100000000
100000000 - 1000000000

1000000000 - 10000000000

Attn Kym Evans

30TH May 2014

East Cheshire Council
By Email Only

Dear Ms Evans

We write with reference to the recent proposals for changes in the local taxi tariffs and would like to put on record our acceptance of the new proposed terms, with the exception of the waiting time which appears to have been omitted. With regard to this we would expect to charge around £20.00 per hour on a pro rata basis.

Yours sincerely

Bob Cooper
Partner

EVANS, Kim

From: Becky Hilton
Sent: 30 May 2014 13:03
To: EVANS, Kim
Subject: Re: Re changes to taxi tariff

Hi,

Thank you for your response.

We would like to see the waiting time reinstated to the rate pre October 2011, £18.00 per hour or 30p per minute.

We are satisfied with all other proposals and would like to distance ourselves from the approach of Mr Sumner.

Please could you forward to me a copy of the report to committee that asked for waiting time to be removed and the minutes of that meeting. I've looked on the Cheshire East web site and it doesn't seem to be there.

Regards
Becky Hilton & Graham Trevena,
GT Tours Ltd.

Sent from my iPhone

> On 30 May 2014, at 09:54, "EVANS, Kim" <Kim.Evans@cheshireeast.gov.uk> wrote:

>

> Dear Miss Hilton

>

> Thank you for your enquiry regard the proposed amendments to the Table of Fares. I can confirm that the omission of waiting time is not a clerical error.

>

> However, we have received several consultation responses requesting that waiting time be reinstated and the decision-maker has the opportunity to consider those suggestions and vary the proposals. If you have an suggestions at what level you think waiting time should be set at you can provided those during the consultation process.

>

> Regards

> Kim Evans

>

> -----Original Message

> From: Becky Hilton

> Sent: 29 May 2014 12:01

> To: EVANS, Kim

> Subject: Re changes to taxi tariff

>

> Hi Kim,

>

> Please could you clarify whether the omission of waiting time on the proposed new tariff is merely a clerical error or intended.

>

> Regards,

> Becky Hilton, GT Tours Ltd

> *****

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PROPOSAL FROM WILMSLOW ON TABLE OF FARES

TARIFF 1	TARIFF 2	TARIFF 3	TARIFF 4
DAY TIME	NIGHT RATE	SUNDAY,	CHRISTMAS DAY
MONDAY - SATURDAY	11-30PM - 7-00AM	BANK HOLIDAY	BOXING DAY
7-00 AM - 11-30PM		RATES	NEW YEARS DAY
FIRST MILE 3-60	FARES STAY AT THE SAME RATES AND PRICES THEY ARE AT NOW	7-00AM - 11-30PM	7-00PM 24 DEC
FLAG DOWN			- 7-00AM 27 DEC
FIRST 1280 YARDS 2-80			7-00PM 31 DEC
EACH SUBSEQUENT 160 YARDS -20			- 7-00AM 2 JAN
WAITING TIME PER HOUR 18-00			FARES STAY AT THE SAME RATES AND PRICES THEY ARE AT NOW
FOR EACH PERSON IN EXCESS OF ONE -20			
USE OF LUGGAGE SPACE -10			
PASSENGERS BETWEEN 5-8 PEOPLE 2-00			
WHEEL CHAIRS NO			
GUIDE DOGS CHARGE			
SOILAGE CHARGE 50-00			