

Swindon Borough Council

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee

Tuesday, 15 July 2008

Committee Room 1, Civic Offices (Anticipated meeting room)

At 12.30 p.m.

Conservative Councillors

Andrew Bennett
(Chair)
Michael Bray (Vice-
Chair)
Eric Shaw
Vera Tomlinson
David Wren
Sinead Darker
(Deputy)
Doreen Dart
(Deputy)
Michael Dickinson
(Deputy)
Brian Ford (Deputy)
Russell Holland
(Deputy)
Kevin Parry
(Deputy)

Labour Councillors

John Ballman
Fay Howard
Robert Wright
(Deputy)

Liberal Democrat Councillors

Independent Councillors

Committee Officer: Shaun Banks (Telephone 01793 463606)

sbanks@swindon.gov.uk

Swindon Borough Council, Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon, SN1 2JH
(Telephone 01793 445500)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 2)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd May 2008,

4. Public Question Time

See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.

5. Hackney Carriage Fares - Consideration of Objections (Pages 3 - 14)

6. Matrix to Increase Hackney Carriage Fares Annually (Pages 15 - 18)

7. Tinted Windows on Licensed Vehicles (Pages 19 - 26)

Date of Despatch: 07 July 2008

Public Question Time - Swindon Borough Council is committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. Up to 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from members of the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters and specific planning applications). Questions must be relevant, clear and concise. Because of time constraints Public Question Time is not an opportunity to make speeches or statements. Prior notice of a question to the Director of Law and Democratic Services is desirable - particularly if detailed background information is needed.

Access Arrangements – The Venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you would wish to attend the meeting but have any special requirement to enable you to do so please contact the Committee Clerk above, as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.

If you would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size please contact the Committee Officer whose name appears on the first page of this agenda.

PRIVATE HIRE AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 22 MAY 2008

PRESENT:- Councillors Andrew Bennett (Chair), Michael Bray (Vice-Chair), Fay Howard, Eric Shaw Vera Tomlinson and David Wren.

Councillors Sinead Darker and Brian Ford were also in attendance.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor John Ballman.

1. Appointment of Chair

Resolved – That Councillor Andrew Bennett be Chair of this Sub-Committee for the Municipal Year, 2008/09.

(Councillor Bennett took the Chair.)

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Resolved – That Councillor Mick Bray be Vice-Chair of this Sub-Committee for the Municipal Year, 2008/09.

3. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

4. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th December 2006, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

5. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

6. Hackney Carriage Fares

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Group Director, Environment and Regeneration setting out proposals to increase Hackney Carriage Fares from 1st July, 2008.

Resolved – (1) That the revised fare chart, set out in Appendix B to the Group Director's report be advertised in compliance with Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and, if no objections are received, officers be authorised to implement the revised fares on and from 1st July 2008.

(2) That, further to (1) above, any objections be reported to this Committee for consideration.

(3) That agreement in principle be given to an annual review of hackney

carriage fares, the calculation matrix to be the subject of an additional report to this Sub-Committee.

Hackney Carriage Fares

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008

Author: Group Director, Environment and Regeneration

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To consider objections received to the proposed Hackney Carriage fare increase from 1 July 2008.

Recommendation

The Sub-Committee is asked to: -

- Uphold the objections discussed in paragraph 2 and that the revised fare scale should take effect from 1 September 2008 as shown in Appendix C.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 At a meeting of this Sub-Committee on 22 May 2008 it was agreed to advertise a revised Hackney Carriage fare scale, to take effect from 1 July 2008, provided no objections were received.
- 1.2 Objections have now been received. Section 65 (4) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 states that if objections are made to an advertised scale of fares, and is not withdrawn, the District Council shall set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date (ie 1 July 2008) on which the table of fares shall come into force with or without modifications as decided by them after consideration of the objections.

2. Detail

- 2.1 Following publication of a revised scale of hackney carriage fares to take effect from 1 July 2008, the Council has received 27 objections to the new scale (Appendix A). All objectors are of the same mind; they object to the proposed "tick over" rate of £16.20 and wish this to be restored to its' present rate of £11.20. The effect of the higher "tick-over" rate is to reduce the fare for longer journeys.
- 2.2 Of the 27 objectors, one is no longer licensed; two voted against the fare rise in the ballot held in April 2008, two voted to accept the fare rise, and the remaining 22 failed to register their vote.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466212 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

Hackney Carriage Fares

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008

- 2.3 To illustrate the impact of the objections, if upheld, the matrix as shown in Appendix B has been worked up to show the proposed revised fares applying to journeys of one to five miles, and the comparison if the objections are upheld.
- 2.4 In view of the current escalating price of fuel it is the view of officers that the objections be upheld and the revised fare chart attached at Appendix C should be implemented from 1 September 2008.
- 2.5 Members of this sub-committee are reminded that the last fare increase was in December 2004.

Alternative Options

- To overrule the objections and implement this fare chart agreed by this Sub Committee on 22 May 2008 to take effect, without modification, on 1 September 2008.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

There are no direct financial implications to the Council itself arising from this report. There are no procurement issues arising from this report. The costs of managing the Council's Hackney Carriage responsibilities are met from existing budgets.

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

A Healthy and Caring Place; An Economically Prosperous Place; An Environmentally Friendly Place; A Safe Place.

Consultees

The Director of Finance (s.151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix "A" – Objections to the proposed fare chart.
- Appendix "B" – Chart of proposed revised fares.
- Appendix "C" – Objectors' Proposed fare chart from September 2008.

Swindon Borough Council
Premier House
Station Rd
Swindon

2/06/08

OBJECTIONS TO ADVERTISED HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

Dear Sirs.

We the undersigned all being fully licenced hackney carriage drivers/proprietors wish to legally object to the advertised alteration to hackney carriage fares proposed by the Swindon Borough Council.

Our reasons are quite simple . the **"only"** part of the fare structure that we object to is the **"DECREASE"** in the higher rate tick over , which has been decreased from £11.20 to £16.20 . this will mean that many fares particulary at night ,where it is Council policy, practice and procedure to have premium rate late night fares(balti report) to encourage drivers to work the ever increaingly dangerous twi-light hours midnight-06am ,(as the licencing officer will explain) will now be at a far **"DECREASED"** rate than the present rates. This we find totally unacceptable & legally **"UNREASONABLE"**

Would the committee please consider that the last increase in Hackney carriage fares was on the 1st December 2004. where the cost of a litre of fuel was only 78.2p (source AA) and any decrease in our fares is totally unjust .

For information and consideration by the committee we have shown the losses that will occur should the advertised fare be passed without what we consider is a **"REASONABLE"** alteration. to re-instate the click over rate to £11.20 where it is at present .

Current night rate (after Midnight)		(New) proposed rate		+ / -
1 mile	£5.20	£5.50	+ 30p	
2 miles	£6.90	£7.10	+ 30p	
3 miles	£8.70	£9.00	+ 30p	
4 miles	£10.60	£10.90	+ 30p	
5 miles	£12.80	£12.60	- 20p	
6 miles	£15.30	£14.30	- £1	
7 miles	£17.80	£16.10	- £1.70p	
8 miles	£20.30	£18.60	- £1.70p	

9 miles	£22.70	£21.40	- £1.30
10 miles	£25.20	£23.50	- £1.70p
11 miles	£27.70	£26.00	- £1.30p
12 miles	£30.20	£28.50	- £1.70p

We are not asking for an increase ,but only to have the higher tick over rate returned to its "**existing**" level of £11.20 and not £16.20 as advertised. this will return to our present levels & will automatically counter the losses as detailed above.

We hope the Committee will return the higher rate click over to £11.20 from the advertised £16.20 thus avoiding any losses upon the trade ,should this happen our objections will be withdrawn.

Name	Hackney Carriage Drivers badge No	Vehicle plate number	Signed
IAN C HUNT	HD 122	064	<i>[Signature]</i>
RAY WILLIAMS	HD 015	30	<i>[Signature]</i>
JOHN KING	HD 53	25	<i>[Signature]</i>
RICHARD WILKINS	HD 456	213	<i>[Signature]</i>
JOHN KING	HD 0129	10	<i>[Signature]</i>
KEVIN STRATTON	114	-	<i>[Signature]</i>

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Name	Hackney Carriage Drivers badge No	Vehicle plate number	Signed
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M WALKER	303	30	M Walker
S. GILLES	490	220	S. Gilles
E. PHASE	83	193	E. Phase
A MOORE	355	59	A Moore

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2/06/08

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Comparison of Fares – Proposed Hackney Carriage fare table against current fares

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	
(c)						
Mileage	Current Fares – Day	Proposed fares - Day	Alternative fares - day	Current fares - night	Proposed fares - night	Alternative fares - night
1 mile	£3.50	£4.50	£4.50	£5.20	£5.50	£5.50
1 miles	£5.50	£6.50	£6.50	£6.90	£7.10	£7.10
2 miles	£7.30	£8.30	£8.30	£8.70	£9.00	£9.00
3 miles	£9.30	£10.30	£10.30	£10.60	£10.90	£10.90
4 miles	£11.10	£12.10	£12.30	£12.80	£12.60	£13.40
5 miles	£12.10	£14.10	£14.50	£15.30	£14.30	£16.00
6 miles	£13.90	£15.90	£16.30	£17.80	£16.10	£18.60

(a) Current fares = fares currently in force

(b) Proposed fares = fares proposed by fare chart agreed by Sub-Committee

(c) Alternative fares = fares proposed by objectors to the fare chart

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Hackney Carriage Fares – Objectors Proposal (Appendix C)

<p>DAY RATE</p> <p>Monday - Friday 0600 – 1900 and Saturday 0600 - 1800</p> <p>Minimum Fare £2.90 for the first 368.8 metres or 79.3 seconds then 20p for each additional 184.4 metres or 39.6 seconds until the fare exceeds £11.20 thereafter 20p for each 129.9 metres or 27.7 seconds.</p>	<p>NIGHT RATE Monday - Friday 1900 - 0600 AND SATURDAY NIGHT SUNDAY AND PUBLIC HOLIDAY RATE From 1800 on the day before until 0600 on the day after Public Holidays and Sundays</p> <p>Minimum Fare £3.50</p> <p>Distance and times as Day Rate</p>	<p>CHRISTMAS/ NEW YEAR 2000 Dec 24 to 0600 Dec 27 and 2000 Dec 31 to 0600 Jan 2</p> <p>Minimum Fare £6.50</p> <p>Distance and times as Day Rate</p>
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EXTRA CHARGES TO APPLY AT ALL TIMES

- ADDITIONAL PASSENGERS** Each additional person (excluding infants in arms) (2 children under 10 count as 1 person) **50p**
- Luggage (excluding wheelchairs)** Each item in the driver's compartment and each other item over 61 cm long **20p**
- Soilage Charge** Where the customer has soiled the vehicle requiring off the road valeting **£75.00**
- Telephone Bookings** For any hiring which is arranged in advance **£2.00**

**THERE IS NO EXTRA CHARGE FOR CARRYING WHEELCHAIRS OR ASSISTANCE
DOGS**

Matrix to Increase Hackney Carriage Fares Annually

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008

Author: Group Director, Environment and Regeneration

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To consider a matrix to increase Hackney Carriage fares annually in line with inflation.

Recommendation

The Sub-Committee is asked to: -

- Agree a matrix to increase Hackney Carriage fares annually from September 2009 based on the mean average of the established indices outlined in paragraph 2 of this report.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 At present the Council relies on the hackney carriage trade to propose rises in hackney carriage fares. At a meeting of this Sub-Committee in May 2008 officers were asked to formulate a proposed matrix to increase fares on an annual basis, in line with inflation. This report is in response to that request.

2. Detail

- 2.1 In considering how best this might be done, officers are mindful that an established formula already exists and is used to calculate the annual inflation increase for each of the Council's home to school transport contracts. This is calculated using three elements, as follows:
 - 2.1.1 Fuel costs. This figure is obtained from the Confederation of Passenger Transport and is available from their website, www.cpt-uk.org. The figures are compiled on behalf of the Confederation of Passenger Transport by an independent consultant and are published twice per annum.
 - 2.1.2 Labour Costs [Average Earnings Index (whole economy)]. This figure is available monthly from the Office of National Statistics and is published on their website, www.statistics.gov.uk.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466212 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

Matrix to Increase Hackney Carriage Fares Annually

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008

2.1.3 All other costs and profit element [Retail Price Index (excluding mortgages)]. Again, this figure is available monthly from the Office of National Statistics and published on their website.

2.2 As an example, for the twelve months ended December 2007 the following figures are available;

Fuel costs (South West England) – increased by 4.3%

Average Earnings index – increased by 4%

Retail Price Index - increased by 4%

Taking a mean average of all three figures gives an inflation increase of 4.1% and it is recommended that this rationale be similarly used to calculate all future hackney carriage fares increases. This use, of course, does not infer any change to children and adult services taxi contracts.

2.3 Acceptance of this proposal will lessen the likelihood of “ad-hoc” requests for fare increases being made during the year by members of the trade.

2.4 It is proposed that the first fare increase following the recommendations contained in this report will occur on 1 September 2009, and then annually on 1 September each year.

2.5 Any proposed fare increase will be subject to public advertisement and any objections reported to this sub-committee for consideration.

Alternative Options

- Allow the status quo to remain and rely on the hackney carriage trade to submit requests for fare increases as and when they feel it necessary.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

There are no direct financial implications to the Council itself arising from this report. There are no procurement issues arising from this report. The costs of managing the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire responsibilities are met from existing budgets.

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

A Healthy and Caring Place; An Economically Prosperous Place; An Environmentally Friendly Place; A Safe Place.

Consultees

The Director of Finance (s.151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466212 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

Matrix to Increase Hackney Carriage Fares Annually

~~Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008~~

Background Papers and Appendices

- None

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Tinted Windows on Licensed Vehicles

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008

Author: Group Director, Environment and Regeneration

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To seek approval to amend the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licence conditions regarding the licensing of vehicles with tinted windows.

Recommendation

The Sub-Committee is asked to: -

- Approve an additional condition which will prevent vehicles with dark tinted windows being licensed by the Council for the purpose of carrying passengers for hire and reward.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 The Council, in licensing vehicles as Hackney Carriages or for Private Hire work, is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is suitable in type, size and design to be licensed. Officers have noted that vehicles with dark tinted windows and privacy glass are becoming more popular and manufacturers are now supplying these as standard, particularly in higher quality vehicles. This raises concerns about passenger safety and security.
- 1.2 There is nothing in the existing Hackney Carriage or Private Hire legislation covering vehicles with tinted windows or privacy glass.

2. Detail

- 2.1 The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 specify the minimum levels of light which must pass through the windscreen and the front windows of the vehicle. These Regulations do not extend to the remaining windows in a vehicle.
- 2.2 These regulations require light transmission through the windscreen of the vehicle of at least 75% and light transmission through the front side windows of at least 70%. If a glass is tinted to a point whereby less light is transmitted through the windows, then that vehicle fails to meet the legal requirement.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466212 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

Tinted Windows on Licensed Vehicles

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008

- 2.3 Recently several vehicles have been presented for licensing, both as Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles, with rear side passenger windows and rear screens fitted with dark tinted windows. Officers are concerned regarding the suitability of licensing such vehicles for the following reasons:
 - 2.3.1 It could reduce the driver's visibility, especially under artificial light.
 - 2.3.2 Incidents which could compromise the safety of the driver or passengers may not be seen from outside the vehicle.
 - 2.3.3 Authorised Officers would be unable to determine the number of passengers being carried.
 - 2.3.4 The Police could not check that all passengers are wearing seat belts.
 - 2.3.5 Vulnerable passengers may feel compromised. It is suggested that they will feel safer in a vehicle where they can be seen from outside the vehicle.
 - 2.3.6 In the event of an accident, the emergency services can instantly check whether there are injured passengers inside the vehicle.
 - 2.3.7 The proposed restriction on the use of tinted glass in licensed vehicles has the potential to reduce crime and disorder.
- 2.4 Given the concerns expressed above regarding this issue, officers believe that all vehicles newly-presented for licensing should conform to an additional condition in that all windows on the vehicle should allow the transmission of at least 70% of light.
- 2.5 Officers have consulted on this matter with Private Hire operators, as well as with the Police and Emergency Services. Responses in support of the proposal have been received and are attached to this report.
- 2.6 Testing equipment, called a "Tint Testa" (Light Transmission Detector) has been purchased by many Local Authorities. This device is capable of measuring the light transmission through any type of glass in minutes. This equipment is reasonably priced at £375 and will allow Officers to instantly check on the suitability of the vehicle for Hackney Carriage or Private Hire work. Officer training on the use of the equipment is included in the purchase price.
- 2.7 It is not intended for the proposed condition to be retrospective and apply to those vehicles currently licensed, however operators of these vehicles will not however be permitted to modify their windows by fitting darker glass or to apply laminated film to glass, which would make the vehicle non-compliant with the condition.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466212 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

Tinted Windows on Licensed Vehicles

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008

- 2.8 It is recommended that all vehicles newly-presented for licensing on and from 1 August 2008 be subject to an additional condition which will prevent vehicles which allow less than 70% of light through the rear passenger windows and rear screens from being licensed as Hackney Carriages or Private Hire vehicles.

Alternative Options

- Not apply the proposed new condition.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

There are no direct financial implications to the Council itself arising from this report. There are no procurement issues arising from this report. The costs of managing the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire responsibilities are met from existing budgets.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

Legal and Human Rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations in this report are compatible with convention rights. The proposed recommendation is also in accordance with the Council's policy to support the requirements of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

A Healthy and Caring Place; An Economically Prosperous Place; An Environmentally Friendly Place; A Safe Place.

Consultees

The Director of Finance (s.151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix A: Letter from Chief Superintendent Howlett of Wiltshire Constabulary.
- Appendix B: Letter from John Popowicz, Borough Commander, Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- Appendix C: Letter from Dan Lane, General Manager, V Cars.
- Appendix D: Letter from Masoud Baiky, Director, United Radio Cars

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466212 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

Tinted Windows on Licensed Vehicles

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008
Appendix A

WILTSHIRE POLICE



Swindon Police Station
Gablecross
Shrivenham Road
South Marston
Swindon
Wiltshire SN3 4RB
Telephone: 0845 408 7000
Ext: 760212
Direct Dial:
Facsimile: 01793 507878
DX: 132780

Mr R Collett
Taxi Licensing
Passenger Transport Services
Premier House
Station Road
SN1 1TZ



Date 9 May 2008

Your ref

Our ref PH/CEW

Reply contact name is: Chief Superintendent Paul HOWLETT

Dear Sir

I am writing as both Chair of the Community Safety Partnership and Divisional Commander for Swindon, to support the proposed report to prevent vehicles with dark tinted windows being licensed by the Council for the purpose of carrying passengers for hire and reward. I am aware that recently a number of vehicles have been presented to the Licensing Authority with dark tinted windows, we are concerned that such vehicles present a potential safety concern to passengers and would urge that provisions are put in place to ensure these vehicles are not used for the purpose of carrying passengers.

The rationale for the support of this proposal is that dark windows present a safety concern for the driver of the taxi and clearly the passengers in the vehicle. It also presents an operational problem for Police Officers who would be unable to determine if seatbelts are being worn by passengers and indeed how many people are being carried in the vehicle. In the unfortunate event of a road traffic collision, the dark windows would prevent easy sight of the potential casualties for emergency services, which could impact on the service given.

I would strongly support an application to place an additional licensing condition on taxi vehicles to ensure dark tinted windows are prohibited.

Yours faithfully

Paul Howlett
Chief Superintendent
BCU Commander



www.wiltshire.police.uk

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466212 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

Tinted Windows on Licensed Vehicles

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008
Appendix B

WILTSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Andy Goves MA MSc LLB(Hons) FIFireE
Chief Fire Officer

Rod Collett
Taxi Licensing Dept
Passenger Transport Services
Premier House
Station Road
SN1 1TZ



Please ask for : John Popowicz

Tel: 01793 401 200

Our Reference : Tinted Windows License

Date : 19th May 2008

Dear Rod

I am writing as both Executive Board member of the Community Safety Partnership and Borough Commander for Swindon to support the proposed report to prevent vehicles with dark tinted windows being licensed by the council for the purpose of carrying passengers for hire and reward. I am aware that recently a number of vehicles have been presented to the licensing authority with dark tinted windows. I am concerned that such vehicles present a potential safety concern to passengers particularly children under 14 and would urge that provisions are put in place to ensure these vehicles are not used for the purpose of carrying passengers.

The rationale for the support of this proposal is that dark windows present a safety concern for the driver of the taxi, and clearly the passengers in the vehicle. It also presents an operational problem for fire officers who would be unable to make a risk assessment of the position and injuries to the occupants. This is further compounded by the fact taxi's have an exemption from the seat belt law and children under 14 do not have to wear a seat belt. In the unfortunate event of a road traffic collision the dark windows would prevent easy sight of the potential casualties for emergency services and further compounded by children not wearing a seat belt as to their location, position and injuries inside the car.

I would strongly support an application to place an additional licensing condition on taxi vehicles to ensure dark tinted windows are prohibited.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Popowicz'.

John Popowicz,
Borough Commander,
Area HQ's



Awarded for excellence

Area 1 Headquarters
Swindon Fire Station, Drove Rd, Swindon, Wiltshire SN1 3AD

Tel: +44 (0)1793 401200 Fax: +44 (0)1793 401208
Web site: www.wiltfire.gov.uk



Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466212 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

Tinted Windows on Licensed Vehicles

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008

Appendix C

Letter from V Cars Ltd

Date: 17th May 2008

Re: Vehicles with 'Non-Tinted' Windows

Dear Mike,

Please be advised that V-Cars are happy to support the initiative to for future vehicles to have 'clear glass', thereby providing a more secure environment for all customers / passengers.

V-Cars are committed to delivering excellence and are extremely supportive of any initiative to develop greater levels of safety and security for all our passengers and drivers.

Kind Regards,

Dan Lane

General Manager for V-Cars

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466212 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

Tinted Windows on Licensed Vehicles

Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee Date: 15th July 2008

Appendix D

Letter from United Radio Cars

Mr. Mike Shears
Swindon Borough Council
Premier House
Station Road
Swindon
SN1 1TZ

15th May 2008

Dear Mike,

Further to our conversation earlier this week, I would just like to re-iterate our support for your view concerning the matter of taxis/private hire vehicles using tinted windows.

We feel that the use of tinting raises serious safety concerns for both passengers and drivers.

We recently introduced new signage for the windows of all vehicles to indicate to customers that the vehicle they are entering is a licensed private hire vehicle. Unfortunately when these signs are fitted behind tinted glass they are no longer visible, thus negating the effectiveness of signs which could lead to passengers boarding unlicensed vehicles.

In addition to this, if a vehicle has passengers on board and they are causing the driver a problem it is clearly visible to other road users and pedestrians. The use of tinted windows restricts the view from the outside and could lead to an increase in attacks on drivers.

To this end we would be more than happy to support a change in the rules allowing the council to outlaw the future use of tinted windows.

Yours Sincerely

Masoud Baiky
United Radio Cars

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rod Collett on 01793 466212 or e-mail rcollett@swindon.gov.uk.

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