

Consultation Responses for L/C 1 March 2021

1. Ref Change in policy.

I do not know how as a council you can even think of implementing any of the changes to the age of a vehicle when most drivers can't make ends meet where do you think they can find money to change their vehicle.

I think you should cancel this idea for at least two to three years so drivers can at least get some money behind them and get back on their feet.

2. I fully support the draft proposed and believe that that proposals will improve customer confidence.

In relation to the installation of CCTV in taxis I think this is a fantastic idea and one which I would fully support. The use of taxi's to facilitate the transportation of children or other vulnerable people is a concern nationwide and is something that the national crime agency have created videos on to highlight the issues. The installation of cameras will help tackle this issues. I also think it will provide a sense of reassurance to the taxi drivers themselves who are victims of many incidents including assaults, racial abuse and making off without payment offences. If a perpetrator knows that CCTV is installed then this may act as a deterrent and prevent the taxi drivers from being a victim of crime and will also prevent any allegations being made against the taxi driver in the event of an incident happening in the taxi.

3. Thank you for the copy of the proposed changes in policy, I have only one observation in that my two vehicles would no longer be licensed from December 2022. As you are aware the current restrictions placed upon us all has had a catastrophic effect on business. If this policy comes into force they is no way that I will be able to replace these vehicles in line with council requirements and be, I would suggest, like many others be forced out of business. I would be interested to know what percentage of taxi and private hire vehicles currently licensed would not be effected by this change of policy. I would ask that at least this decision be held pending some form of normality returning when I would be able to support funding for two such new vehicles.

4. nice to see the council being as sympathetic as ever, we're earning absolutely F ALL and now you want to do this to us, don't ever ask us for anything to help you lot out again, i know i won't

hope you have cutbacks and lose your jobs tbh

waste of time asking us for objections and bus trying to reason with you, telling you how bad these things are, hope you get the same in future

idiots

5. I feel that it is unfair that your even considering such drastic changes to the age policy of vehicles. My thoughts are that everything should be kept as it is for a least 1-2years to give us a chance to catch up. You haven't given us any form of help during this pandemic where as other councils have done things to help! The policy changes you suggest will be to much for some and I can see people having to seek alternative work and it having an impact on people's mental health.

6. I can't quite believe that in the present economic crisis, where everyone is desperately trying to keep their heads above water, the committee is considering changing the rules about vehicle ages AGAIN ! Over the past 10 years you have changed them several times. In London there are fields full of London Cabs that have been abandoned due to the present situation we all find ourselves in. If these new age restrictions are brought in, most of us will go bust as a vehicle is our single most expensive item.

With regard to tinted glass.....at last your committee has come to their senses. I had to travel twice to Coventry to purchase my present car as none were available with clear glass !

CCTV is a good idea but again too costly to install in the present economic climate !

7. The Parish Council reviewed this consultation at their last meeting and would like to make the following comments:

1) The Council noted that incentives were to be provided to vehicle operators that began to introduce low emissions vehicles prior to 2030 (when all new operator vehicles must be low emissions, or hybrid). The Council would like to suggest including electric vehicle incentives as this will work toward the goals of the climate emergencies set in both Waverley and Cranleigh Parish.

2)The Council recognises that we should not be trying to burden the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage businesses at a time of economic restriction, so we would ask that incentives be offered, like reduced licensing fees be offered for those converting to environmentally friendly vehicles supporting climate emergency goals.

3) The Council would like to suggest a cap on the clause 21b of the licensing conditions that allows operators to claim 5% of the value of lost/left behind items returned to licensing authority offices. It might be unreasonable, if £2m bankers draft or £30k ring/watch was left in a taxi, to require such a high return.

4)Under Clause 3 Section 5 of the Private Hire conditions where notification of changes of Directorships and Management are required. The Council considered whether changes in corporate ownership should be included.

5) Could consideration be set to testing vehicles over a given mileage by vehicle type? A very young vehicle in terms of years may have been taken on a very long road trip, or used for excessively long journeys, thus affecting its condition, and yet still be within the age criteria for testing.

6) Is there consideration for maximum hours or consecutive shifts for drivers to a mitigate against driver fatigue?

7) The Council would like to suggest additional, simplified notification of fare guides in taxis and private vehicles so that passengers are able to see more "at a glance" what their expected fare may be, rather than having to make an uncertain calculation based on rates per mile, per time of day and day of week/year.

8) Is there a need to notify maximum luggage sizes prior to booking a private vehicle?

9) At item 12 on Annex 3 there may be a typing error in that items "2 and 11" should be referred to, not "2 and 10" as currently. This does not make sense otherwise.

The Council supports the provision of CCTV within vehicles.

8. Thank you for your email regarding the proposed amendments to the policy for Taxi and Private Hire within Waverley from spring 2021. Much of what is proposed is both sensible and necessary to ensure that the Council in turn, ensures that the drivers, cars and policies provide a safe service for clients and one that reduces the opportunities for criminal behaviour, the exploitation of the vulnerable etc.

However, at the meeting in March 2020 when some of the new proposals were muted, you were witness to the many comments of all present regarding a number of matters. Not least of which were the proposed changes to the ages of vehicles at first registration and the maximum age of vehicles.

In your email you state that these proposals are

“The updated policy is based upon the ‘National Standards’ released by the Department for Transport on 21 July 2020 and changes recommended by officers”

Might I ask for clarification as to who are the “officers” to whom you refer? It is not clear if they are DoT officers or WBC. I ask as WBC currently wish to retain their ability to set their own fee structure so one safely assume that you would also be willing to not adhere to all the national guidelines and recommendations? I am all in favour of anything that ensures our guests can feel safe and comfortable, knowing their driver is licensed following a stringent test / series of tests but there is a time when rules seem to be made up just for the sake of it.

These recent months have been horrendous for our industry. We have all seen the influx of the “uber” from London, registered with the PCO and where the restrictions on the age of vehicles is less stringent than that being proposed by WBC. I have addressed this matter in the text of my reply below. The proposed changes by WBC are drastic, some might consider them draconian and changes to the requirements for vehicle will, without doubt, have an adverse effect of the business we all try to operate.

I have no doubt that many of the proposals are justified although some might argue that when you refer to Rotherham the drivers are being penalised for the failings of many local authorities, I am sure we all welcome safeguarding as it does or at least should give our clients confidence. It is interesting to note that the Council requires us and trusts drivers to report any accidents, arrests, points, change of directors etc and yet also requires us to have cars of a certain age – not trusting us to realise that an “old” vehicle would have a detrimental effect on our bottom line.

I would urge you and the Councillors on the committee to revisit the proposals regarding vehicle ages at first registration and the longevity rules.

I would also add that I see no benefit in having CCTV fitted. It is an invasion of privacy and one that offers no protection. If a driver wants to “behave inappropriately” he would simply turn of the system!

I hope that you find my comments of interest and would welcome the opportunity to discuss any points you wish me to clarify or elaborate on.

9. I think you changing the vehicle age restrictions to what you are proposing is a bit ridiculous. Waverley is nowhere near busy enough to justify having a car that is newer than 3 years old and replacing it at 7 years. Even Guildford hasn't got anything that crazy and they are a far busier area than any of the towns in Waverley. You would also need to increase the fares by 3-4 times the amount that

they currently are to make it even financially viable and even then i think that you would lose a massive majority of the drivers you currently have.

I for one won't be renewing my licence if these rules come in and I'll not spend any money building up my business in the area. All you will achieve is a hell of a lot less taxis and how would the elderly, people with special needs and disabilities get around?

Also drink driving would go up as people wouldn't be able to get a taxi home after a night out having a drink.

Also cars are built so much better now and if you take care of your car then they can still look really good at 12-15 years.

Also I don't think that bringing in ULEV vehicles by 2023 is going to be a great idea as the taxi trade will only just and i say just be getting back on its feet after this coronavirus pandemic. I don't think it's a bad idea but maybe from 2025.

I've always thought the signage on PH is a bad idea as they've had it in Guildford for years now and it just makes people approach those cars if they need a car to take them home. You might as well just say that they are a hackney carriage as well if you do that.

I think a DBS check is a good idea and really easy if you've signed up to the yearly updates. Also if a driver has been banned in another area then i think it's a good idea to have a look at whether he's a suitable driver to hold a licence in Waverley.

Think everything that is proposed towards Operator is basically taking things too far. I don't have a Waverley operators licence as i only deal with hackneys but who i employ would be entirely up to me. I couldn't care if they have a past criminal record as long as they do the job properly and are polite and helpful with my customers. If they weren't then they wouldn't last long as i pride myself on providing good customer service.

I don't think it's a bad idea for the joint warranting but you need to make sure that these other councils aren't targeting licences from out of their area.