

Responses from Citizen Panel



Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2024 11:51 AM

To: Taxi Licensing <Taxi-Licensing@tamworth.gov.uk>

Subject: Taxi and Private Hire Licencing Policy Review

Hi

Regarding feedback on your statement of licensing policy 2023-2025, here are my thoughts.

I have written previously about taxis sitting idling for long periods of time in busy areas, releasing excessive diesel fumes, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and polluting the air in town.

I believe this is an offence.

Staffordshire County Council state:-Air Aware Staffordshire is a campaign working with the public, schools and businesses across the 8 districts of Staffordshire to raise awareness of air pollution and the health impacts associated with poor air quality, and to encourage behaviour change to help improve air quality. Air pollution is the single biggest environmental risk and the fourth biggest risk to public health. It affects millions of people worldwide, causes 40,00 premature deaths per year in the UK and many hundreds in Staffordshire.

I received a reply from Susan Timms, the Environmental Health Officer in March regarding this where she stated 'Tamworth Borough Council's Taxi policy at present encourages and promotes the purchase of fully electric and zero emission capable vehicles to be licensed as Hackney Carriages. Where possible the Council will seek to implement a number of 'plug-in' points around the Borough which will be available for vehicle proprietors to use, and also to actively target funding opportunities. Tamworth Borough Council is also working on amending its taxi licensing policy to reduce taxi emissions, and it is looking at a number of options to address this. In the next review of Tamworth Borough's taxi policy measures against engine idling will be included. Officers are encouraging the trade not to idle by way of communication via the Taxi Diver's News letter and officers will request drivers when seen to be idling to switch off their engines. The current anti idling legislation is restrictive, however fines can be issued on refusal.

Have any fines or penalties been imposed on drivers who continue to idle?

I would also like to raise the need for taxi training regarding laws for overtaking cyclists. Tamworth buses are excellent at overtaking cyclists and allowing the 1.5m clearance, but I have had to report taxi drivers to the police for repeatedly doing dangerous close passing - what can be done about that?

Having read the policy I think the concerns I raise are referenced in

page 20:- Noise and Other Public Nuisance - However, when the Licensing Authority's decision making powers under the Act have been engaged following the receipt of relevant representations and where it is considered that there is the potential for noise (or other public nuisance such as that caused by light pollution, noxious smells and/or litter) and where it is considered that such statutory provisions do not provide for adequate protection with regard to public nuisance, consideration may be given to addressing those matters through the imposition of licence/certificate conditions.

page 45:- Responsible Authority - • the local authority responsible for minimising or preventing the risk of pollution of the environment or of harm to human health; • the body representing matters relating to the protection of children from harm;

Thanks for your time

Kind Regards

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Dear Sirs

The only recommendation I can make is Regards to driver qualifications and training.

I have witnessed in and around Tamworth, very poor taxi driving, this extends beyond Tamworth.

A professional taxi driver should demonstrate quality and courteous driving, also staying within the law and following and obeying standard road signs and speed limits etc.

I have been involved in driving Commercial vehicles, as well as maintenance.

I feel that Taxi drivers should undergo an equivalent to driver Certificate of Professional Competence training, i.e. 37 hours over 5 years. The same as HGV.

This would weed out the bad wood.

A commitment to taking the CPC, would show a level of Due diligence from the Taxi company and drivers.

I understand that even professional drivers have the odd lapse, but on the whole, this would improve the quality of this service.

In addition, Taxis should be subject to random stops, by the Vehicle and Drivers Standard Agency or Police, the same as HGVs and PSVs.

This would keep poor vehicles off the road and check driver IDs.

I have 42 years in the motor trade, and I have seen and been in some very suspect Taxis.

I hope this is of some assistance.

Let Tamworth set a precedent, for the whole country.

Regards

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