

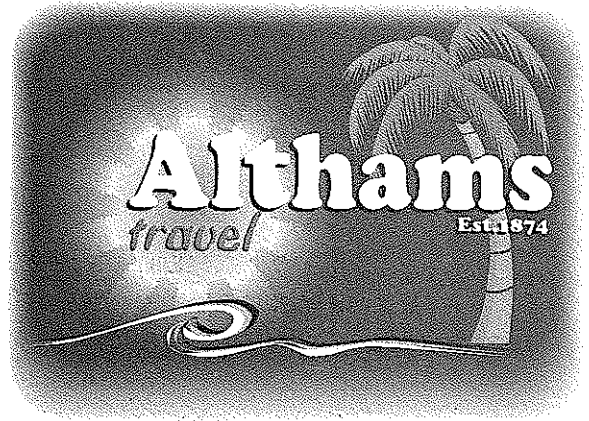
APPENDIX 'D'

PM/KK/78

18th July 2008

Peter Henderson
Principal Licensing Officer
Burnley Borough Council
Licensing Office
20 Nicholas Street
BURNLEY
BB11 2AP

RECEIVED
21 JUL 2008



Dear Peter

Consultation on Licensing Committee Reports
Private Hire Operator Licence No: P00026

I write with regard to the recently received letter and attachments dated 11th July, which arrived at our office on Tuesday 15th July.

Firstly, I must object to the amount of notice given if a response was required in writing by 18th July, as it does give very little time to put together a substantiated reply to the respective reports I received.

Firstly, dealing with vehicle safety for taxis and private hire fleet, I have spoken with regard to this previously and certainly the changes proposed do give me concern as to defects when a licence is suspended, as our vehicles have been suspended not purely for the areas covered in this report, which you say are vehicle tyres, brakes, steering or suspension. I therefore have grave concerns with regard to LCC's instructions and the way they carry out their testing, as each of our vehicles has a service at least once a month by main dealerships and also before going in for your private hire test, also has what we call a pre MOT, which they normally pass to the standard of the MOT at the main dealership before being released to yourselves.

I do have grave concerns with regard to the authorities that LCC have and certainly I have concerns with regard to our vehicles, which are all under 3 years old, as it deems a vehicle could have 2 or more serious faults, but it is what the serious faults imply in this recommendation. I do have grave concerns with regard to this.

Whilst I appreciate the safety of carrying passengers, we do take this very seriously, hence why I have quoted what we do with regard to our vehicles and their respective service periods, with the high volume of mileage which we do.

Continued



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Determining Taxi Licence Fees

Again, I feel that the costs with regard to licence fees vary up and down the Country, but certainly Burnley's, I am sure must be one of the highest. Whilst I have not actually checked, I am sure that some other councils do subsidise assistance towards private hire, and certainly where we have a situation with regard to your own department, which has to be self-funding, it is putting the costs up considerably to us as an operator year on year, which is obviously sometimes difficult to budget for. Certainly with high volume now having to have vehicles in twice in 12 months for testing.

I would fully agree that we should establish a fair mechanism for fee setting, but certainly feel the council should consider some support towards us, the actual operators.

Vocational Training for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers

Here I feel I must object quite strongly with regard to the proposed recommendations that have been put through. Whilst again I can understand why, our own position is that when we, as a company employ a private hire driver, where presently it can be costing them up to £200 before they even start work, with regard to medical fees, CRB checks, licence fees, and admin fees, and now you wish to burden them with an additional £30 for knowledge and essential skills tests. We presently carry this out at interview, in which we give our applicants a test on local knowledge, as you know our own particular situation is that we do not just pick up in Burnley, but in some 16 different areas, taking people to and from Manchester Airport, not just running passengers locally.

I also feel that the BTEC award, which again has to be paid for by the driver of £150, is putting further burden onto people who are presently not the most highest paid, certainly for the work they do.

I have lost a number of drivers recently, due to the fact of the high costs involved and burdening them even more with regard to the vocational training that has been recommended, does give me grave cause for concern as to whether we will be able to obtain further applicants, as hopefully our business expands.

I would therefore feel that we would be looking to ask for exemption from this because of the high standard of training we do with our drivers, commencing on the first day of interview, in which we do, as I said a knowledge test and also a driving test to check their abilities on the road and towards other road users.

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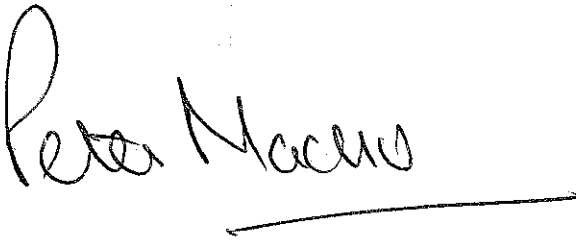
We also take health and safety matters seriously, where we do now have to help with regard to disabled people and as we do carry them to the airport, we also carry wheelchairs, motorised scooters etc, on our vehicles and until we obtain a fully disabled vehicle with lift, our drivers have to ensure that all health and safety requirements are fully met, as you can imagine costs us substantially.

The areas that you suggest in the BTEC award of customer service, passenger transport on disability awareness, taxi & private hire safety, carriage of luggage, route planning etc, are all taken into account with regard to our own training. A driver can go through at least 4 weeks training before we allow him to transport passengers. Again, I would therefore look for exemption for our section, due to the nature of our work, compared to other taxi operators. I can fully understand why the council wish to bring in such a regulation.

I hope that you will look at these comments favourably and I will be happy to discuss these with yourself or the committee, if required.

Yours sincerely

For **ALTHAMS TRAVEL SERVICES LIMITED**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Mackie". The signature is written in a cursive style. Below the signature is a horizontal line that starts under the first name and extends to the right, ending under the second name.

Peter Mackie
GENERAL MANAGER