

**Mr Andrew Newell**

**(NVQ 2 Qualified In Passenger Transport)**

**29/04/2013**

**To the licensing committee T.V.B.C.**

**I am writing this letter regarding the possible deregulation of hackney plates in the test valley.**

**I have been operating in this area for 20 years as a partner in A & B Cars private hire. (The second largest private hire company in Andover) I am also a hackney carriage proprietor plate 3.**

**I feel that with this experience I can give a fair and truthful general feeling of the taxi trade on the matter of deregulation.**

**Work in the trade is generally slow at the moment with taxis easily available on the town ranks and also at the station.**

**Sometimes you can be waiting hours for a £3.60 fare and it is very demoralising to see the large queues of taxis waiting on the ranks for a job.**

**The hackney proprietors in Andover have all invested large sums of money (typically) £25,000 to be able to operate in the test valley which shows the commitment we have to the trade.**

**The government are in consultation at the moment on new rules and regulations regarding taxi / private hire licensing and I**

**believe we should wait until these new rules are agreed on by the government before any new rules are made by the T.V.B.C.**

**At present there are 36 hackney plates operating in the test valley 1 purpose built taxi as agreed at the licensing committee meeting on 19/ 10/2010 and 35 existing hackney plates which do not have to comply with any new criteria.**

**My suggestions are:-**

**wait until the government have agreed on their new rules for taxi / private hire vehicles before making any decisions on deregulation in the test valley.**

**If this is not possible my next suggestion would be to leave things the way they are at the moment but to allow new hackney plates to be issued to any proprietor that is willing to meet the strict criteria as set out at the licensing committee meeting on 19/10/2010.**

**This would stop any legal challenge for the refusal of a hackney carriage plate**

**The criteria as set out on this date: - (annex 2)**

**1, THE VEHICLE SHALL DISPLAY COUNCIL APPROVED ACCESSIBLE VEHICLE SIGNAGE.**

**2, VEHICLES MUST HOLD EUROPEAN WHOLE VEHICLE TYPE APPROVAL AND APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION INDICATING THIS MUST BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION BY THE COUNCIL PRIOR TO THE VEHICLE BEING LICENSED AND AT ANY TIME THEREAFTER.**

**3, VEHICLES FIRST PRESENTED FOR LICENSING MUST NOT BE MORE THAN 12 MONTHS OLD FROM THE DATE OF REGISTRATION.**

**4, VEHICLES PRESENTED FOR LICENSING MUST BE FULLY WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE, SIDE LOADING AND CAPABLE OF BEING LICENSED TO CARRY 5, 6, 7 OR 8 PASSENGERS.**

**5, A VEHICLE WILL ONLY BE LICENCED WHERE IT HAS MET THE CRITRIA SET OUT IN THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. ANY VEHICLE REPLACING ONE ISSUED UNDER THESE CONDITIONS MUST MEET THE SAME CRITERIA.**

**By setting and maintaining this strict criteria any new hackney carriage proprietors would have to inject a similar amount of money as the existing 35 proprietors and would prove their commitment to the trade to maintain the very high standards we have in the test valley.**

**As stated in item 7 of the same meeting the requirements contained in recommendation 2 do not apply to the existing 35 hackney carriage proprietor licences.**

**I believe that this would over a period of time leave the test valley with one of the best taxi services in the country offering vehicles for every possible need.**

**I hope you have found these comments helpful in making your decision.**

**Yours**

**Mr Andrew Newell (driver licence 009)**