

LEGAL & ACCOUNTS
SERVICES

23 MAR 2010

20th March, 2010.

Director of Corporate Resources and Interim Director of Finance,
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
5 Ednam Road,
Dudley,
DY1 1HL

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Fees.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We refer to the Statutory Notice placed in the Dudley Express and Star on 25th February, 2010.

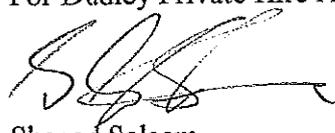
The Taxi Alliance and Private Hire Association in Dudley submit this letter as a formal **Objection** to the fee variations as resolved by the meeting of the Licensing Committee on 10th February, 2010.

We enclose a schedule of enquiries to which we would be pleased to receive the Council's reply at the earliest possible opportunity.

The detailed nature of our Objection will be submitted as soon as possible after receipt of the information requested.

We would be grateful to receive acknowledgement of this letter of objection and look forward to receipt of the information we have requested.

Yours faithfully,
For Dudley Private Hire Association



Shazad Saleem

Please reply to:

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.

Revision of Licensing Fees for Hackney Carriages, Private Hire Vehicles, Drivers and Operators

Request submitted by Dudley Private Hire Association,

We ask the Council to provide the following information at the earliest opportunity;

i) Please provide details of the income and expenditure for 2009/10, to the last period for which interim accounts are available, for the Cost centre(s) which record transactions in respect of the licensing of taxis, PHV's , licensed drivers and Operators; premises licensed under the Licensing Act 2003; Gambling Act licensing; street trading permits and any other sundry licences, showing the costs/income recorded against each Nominal ledger code for which there was any activity within the period.

ii) Please provide the forecast outturn/ any revised budgets for the year to 31st March, 2010 for the cost centres as noted above

In addition,

- a) Please provide details of the number of vehicles, drivers, and Operators the Council envisages licensing in the year 2010/11.
- b) Please provide details of the income forecast for 2010 analysed for Driver licences, Vehicle licences and Operators.
- c) Please advise details of the staff and management structure in respect of all licensing functions for the year commencing 1st April, 2010.
- d) Please advise estimated staff costs to be charged to the taxi licensing account(s).
- e) In respect of vehicle licensing, please advise the cost elements (and values) on which grant and renewal fees are based. Please advise the cost elements included in the additional fee of £137.67 (proposed) for four/six month tests.
- f) Please advise the basis on which the fees of £31.99 – mid-term production of insurance; £33-00 Admin fee; and £69.49 – Repeat knowledge/driving test are determined.

22nd March, 2010.

Submitted by Dudley Private Hire Association

Our Ref: 4/4(GEN)JE/GS **Please ask for:** Mrs J Elliott **Direct Dial:** 01384 815377 **E:Mail** licensing.LDS@dudley.gov.uk

30th March 2010

Dear Mr Saleem,

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
Section 70

Thank you for your letter hand delivered 23rd of March 2010 to this office, the contents of which I note.

Please find a joint response to your questions from the Group Accountant and the Licensing Officer set out in chronological order below: -

i) And ii) The interim accounts 09/10 contain unaudited financial information. We are therefore unable to provide that detail at this time.

a) As of the 23rd of March 2010 we have licensed 447 private hire vehicles, 214 hackney carriages, 772 private hire drivers, 474 hackney carriage drivers and 44 private hire operators.

b) The income budget 10/11 for the whole taxi licensing function has been set at £415,000 as presented at the Taxi Licensing Committee of the 17th of March (Copy papers were sent to you prior to the meeting).

We do not set sub targets for individual licences or the individual cost elements.

c) Interim Assistant Director Legal Advisor (Taxi and Private Hire)

Principal Solicitor Public Protection Legal Advisor (Liquor and Gambling)

Licensing Officer

5 Enforcement Officers and 2 Part-time Enforcement Officers

Senior Licensing Clerk

I/T Officer

Nine Licensing Clerks plus 3 Part – Time Licensing Clerks

Continued.....

Mr Shazad Saleem
31 Ploverdale Crescent
Kingswinford
West Midlands
DY6 8XU

d) The salary costs charged to the private hire and taxi licensing account for 10/11 is £350,000. That represents approximately 80% of the total licensing salary costs base on estimated time and work allocations.

e) And f) I would refer you to response (b) and in addition the following points

Due to the complexity and significant variance in workloads associated in awarding individual licences, we are unable to give you a detailed breakdown of costs that make up each license fee.

Instead, our charging model has developed based on a combination of local economic circumstance, budgetary demands, anticipated service requirements and regular benchmarking against other West Midland Authorities.

The net consequence is that, under existing arrangements, the Council offers a highly competitive pricing model that offers good value for money in consideration of the quality of service and level of resources it has invested into this service.

The following provides a more detailed description of the taxi licensing budget 2010/11; it shows that, currently, the Council subsidises the taxi licensing service by over £100,000 per annum:

	£	As %age of total cost	
Staff	370,000	71%	Includes enforcement and all associated staff costs including travel allowances, expenses and training
Vehicle testing	72,500	14%	
CRB checks	10,000	2%	
Legal fees	15,000	3%	Being court costs
Other operational	53,500	10%	Includes ICT, printing and stationery, postages, and core central charges (e.g. building costs, accountancy support etc)
Gross cost	521,000		
Income from fees	(415,000)		Includes all fee income
Net cost	106,000		

The Taxis Committee will be meeting on the 28th of April 2010 to consider your objections to the proposed fees in relation to Private Hire Operator private hire vehicle and hackney carriage licence's.

Please let me have your written objections by the 15th of April 2010.

Yours sincerely,

Licensing and Service Improvement Officer