

C.C. - PHIL RILEY
C.C. - DONNA RIDING

Mr Harry Catherall/Cllr Mohammed Khan
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Town Hall
Blackburn
BB1 7DY

4th September 2017

Dear Mr Catherall/Cllr Khan

RE: Petition on Behalf of Taxi Trade

We would like Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to consider the following which have been a concern for some time and are impacting on customers and the Taxi trade. We pay a significant fee for licensing and therefore would like to see better co-operation between the council and trade to improve the image of the taxi trade and service to both residents and visitors.

We feel that there are areas of policy which could help the council, the Taxi trade and customers.

1. Use of Pennine Reach bus lanes –

- a. We would like you to allow taxis to use the bus lanes and consider taxis as a form of public transport. It is very noticeable that the lanes are empty for the majority of time with so few buses.
- b. By allowing the taxi trade to use bus lanes it would allow customers a better incentive and an alternative to using their own cars. It would also encourage taxi sharing for common journeys.
- c. We would as a trade give priority to buses.
- d. 90% of the time the bus lanes are empty.

2. Private hire drop off / pick up points around the Town Centres –

- a. The taxi trade is targeted by over zealous Traffic Wardens. There is no common sense. Where are we supposed to pick up and drop off? Could there not be designated areas of spots around the Town centres to help both customers wanted to be picked up and dropped off?
- b. In many instances we are transporting older people or people who can't drive or use buses. Surely this is an important service to the council as it brings trade into the Town and also helps prevent older people becoming housebound or isolated. We have many regular customers who come together to the Town for lunch or to have tea together.

3. Independent testing station --

- a. The council has been running its own testing station for many years now and has the monopoly. This would not be so much an issue but we feel that the testing is too harsh and testers are very picky.
 - b. A further independent station would give confidence to the trade and a choice.
 - c. Other Towns and cities have several authorised testing stations, why can't Blackburn.
4. We want to work with the Council and Police to improve the safety, security and image of the Taxi Trade -
- a. We recognise that the reputation of the taxi trade and the borough goes hand in hand therefore we want to ensure that it is of the highest standard.
 - b. Areas where we could work together could be on training for taxi drivers on things like safeguarding, personal security, language, health and wellbeing, crime prevention.
 - c. Use of technology for in cab cameras, GPS tracking etc.
 - d. Accredited taxi scheme for assisted shopping/appointments where we can assist in getting older, disabled or vulnerable people to appointments and ensure they are not isolated. In the past there used to be a voucher scheme for Social Services. We thought this worked well and should be re-considered.

We recognise times are difficult for the council and for the Taxi trade. However we believe we need to work together to make sure that the reputation of the taxi trade and the Town is strong.

There have been many negative stories from other Towns. We want to ensure the taxi trade in Blackburn with Darwen is seen as a reliable, trusted and safe trade. One which customers are confident in using where we give the best service. In order for us to do this we believe the council has to start to work with the trade.

Yours faithfully,

Lead petitioner
On behalf of Taxi Trade Operators

Darwen St. Blackburn.

[illegible]

UK
Private hire

[illegible]

INTACK PRIVATE HIRE
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[illegible]

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