

APPENDIX 4

Emma King

From: Michael Cook on behalf of Licensing Section
Sent: 19 April 2016 09:15
To: Emma King
Subject: FW: Review of Council's seating policy

From: [redacted]@egerton.com [mailto:[redacted]@egerton.com]
Sent: 18 April 2016 20:42
To: Licensing Section
Subject: Review of Council's seating policy

Mr Simon Harvey
Licensing Section, Council Offices
Thorpe Road
Weeley
Essex CO16 9AJ

18 April 2016

Dear Mr Harvey,

RE: Review of Council's seating policy for multi-purpose vehicles (MPV's) which carry up to 8 passengers

Thank you for your letter dated 5 February 2016 regarding the above.

I am the joint owner of a tour company called 'Diplomatic Guide Services', a position that I have held for 13 years. Prior to this I was a police officer for Essex police for over 30 years. Our company is based in Brightlingsea, however we operate the majority of our tours in and around the London area and often take our clients, many of whom are visiting the UK from the USA, on excursions to visit the Essex and Suffolk countryside.

Having read your letter, I am pleased to provide you with my comments as part of the consultation process regarding the Council's current seating capacity policy.

I have been licensed by Tendring District Council to carry up to 8 passengers for many years. In my experience, the current policy has been easy to follow and I have been impressed at the work of your licensing department who have, upon close inspection of my vehicle, deemed that it meets all necessary safety requirements and is suitable and fit for purpose.

I have reviewed the information on Basildon's taxi and private hire vehicles policy which was included with your letter. In my opinion, these new requirements would be overly bureaucratic and unnecessary. I am concerned that should such a scheme be implemented in Tendring, it would disadvantage small-to-medium sized business by requiring us to make further changes at

additional cost. The vehicle that I drive is certified by Ford as meeting all necessary EU safety standards and has been approved by your licensing team. I am therefore totally assured that my vehicle is suitable for transporting my clients around safely without the need for any additional signs or labels.

I note your comment that the current seating policy will remain in place until the consultation has been completed and the committee has reconsidered the issues. However, I would strongly urge that the committee agree a process whereby drivers who have had their vehicles licensed under the existing policy are allowed to continue to operate as they are for the remaining life of the vehicle. At the point when the vehicle needs to be replaced (which in my case is approximately every four years), the owner would then need to make sure that they adhere to any new policy. This would be a much fairer approach and would prevent costly changes for those who have only recently purchased vehicles (of which mine is in excess of £30,000) and secured their licence under the existing policy.

As I am sure you can imagine, my company takes booking for clients many months (and sometimes years) in advance based on the expectation that we would continue to have a properly licensed 8-seated vehicle. Clearly if the policy were to change so that this would not be the case, this would be very harmful and disruptive to our business.

I would be very happy to discuss these issues with you further if it would be useful. Could you please send us an acknowledgement of receipt of this letter.

Yours Sincerely,

Gary Egerton