

UPDATE - UPDATE - UPDATE - UPDATE

CHANGES TO PROPOSALS FOR AGE RESTRICTIONS

Representatives of the Leeds Private Hire Association met with licensing officers on the 3rd April 2009 at Torre Road to discuss a number of issues affecting our members.

The first item for discussion was the issue of age restrictions. Des Broster, Head of Licensing, confirmed that they had now dropped the proposal to impose a new age level for buying a new car from five to four years. He also outlined his proposals to introduce an "Exceptional Conditions Policy" at six years.

This would mean that once a car has reached six years old then it would be subject to an extended inspection lasting two hours and you would have to pay a £60 inspection fee. The standard to pass this test will be exceptionally high, you will be expected to service your vehicle to the manufacturer's instructions throughout the lifetime of the vehicle, it must be mechanically sound, meet emissions standards, have good exterior bodywork and paintwork, meet high standards of interior cleanliness and comfort with evidence of service history. As you can tell, to get a car through and beyond six years will be truly 'EXCEPTIONAL'.

The GMB is fully against these proposals; we find them unnecessary, bureaucratic and a burden on private hire drivers. The Department of Transport's best practice guidelines for taxi and private hire vehicles states that "Licensing requirements which are unduly stringent will tend to unreasonably restrict the supply of taxi and PHV services by putting up the cost of operation or otherwise restricting entry to the trade" it goes on to say that "It is perfectly possible for an older vehicle to be in good condition. So the setting of an age limit beyond which a local authority will not license vehicles may be arbitrary and inappropriate."

Please pass this newsletter to a colleague who has not yet had the chance to join GMB and encourage them to complete and return the form overleaf to GMB Freepost NEA524, Grove Hall, 60 College Grove Road, Wakefield, WF1 3SY.

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YOUR CONTACTS

Javaid Akhtar - 07944 155119

Aurangzeb Qabal - 07828 681112

Mohammed Ilyas - 07866 467395

Akhtar Mohammed - 07974 302445

Naeem Azam - 07825 216963

Faheem Malik - 07852 188474

Rashid Hussain - 07527 873990

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