

Invitation to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 29 November 2016 – re Taxi Licensing Policy

Dear Nick and Graham,

Thank you for your comments.

The Chairman raised the matter with the Committee because he had received a number of complaints from taxi drivers about the provision of taxi ranks and how this provision impacts on the economic needs of the Borough. Taxi drivers had also queried whether they were getting value for money from the Council's charges. The Committee agreed to add a review of the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy to its work programme.

As well as a report on these issues from Spelthorne Borough Council's Licensing Manager, the Chairman, Councillor Colin Davis, has invited any written comments that Surrey County Council might like to submit on the issues relevant to you. I understand your involvement is to comment on the Borough's proposals for new or amended ranks and I am sure Dawn will be happy to include these in her report to the Committee. However, if you feel there are any additional written comments you can provide, either generally or about specific locations in the Borough, which may assist the Committee in their consideration of this matter, then I would be very grateful to receive them.

Whether or not you feel there is anything additional you can provide in writing, the Chairman would be very grateful to have your attendance at the meeting, so that you may hear directly the concerns raised by councillors and be able to assist them at the meeting with a response.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards
Gill
Committee Services

Comments from Surrey County Council

You are absolutely right in saying that SCC's role is to comment on SBC's proposals for new and / or amended Taxi Ranks. Sometimes this process is iterative, and with Dawn attending the Parking Task Group we have the ideal forum for any discussion of detail and normally we are able to find mutually agreeable solutions. Beyond that we have no role in Taxi Licencing at all. It is for the Borough to decide how many Ranks are required, to propose locations, provide appropriate enforcement, etc, etc.

In this context I don't feel we have anything to contribute to a review of the Borough's Taxi Licensing Policy, and so I am quite puzzled to know what Cllr Davis feels we could add to the discussion.

If there are Highways matters that are of interest to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, then they would be very welcome to send a deputation to the Local Committee, where written formal questions may be raised, answered and debated. I am sure that Cllr Saliagopoulos, the current Chairman of the Local Committee, would be delighted to receive any questions the Overview and Scrutiny Committee might have.

If Cllr Davis has something in mind that he feels we could contribute to then please let me know.

Thanks, Nick
Parking Project Team

Comments from Surrey Police

My involvement has been that certain locations for new taxi ranks have been put forward by your office and I think some of these have been suggestions from the taxi drivers themselves. These locations have been referred to SCC and Surrey Police (me as the police rep) for consideration. My involvement has always been on the issue of road safety and this includes if the location is safe to act as a rank and also if the area is already parked up with private vehicles and what this displacement of parked vehicles will have in the local area. In the past I have made full comment on these proposed locations, with some rejected and some agreed as suitable and this has often been as a result of site visits carried out in conjunction with representatives from both SCC and SPC Taxi office. I am not aware of any recent new locations that have been put forward.

In light of the fact that SCC will not be attending and the latest info on what the committee require on that evening, I do not feel that this is a meeting that I wish to attend. I really cannot add anything further to the comments I would have made at the time on these individual locations and the above comments on the general principles involved.

Kind regards,

Graham

Graham Cannon
Road Safety & Traffic Management