

Thomas, Robert

From: Rod Williams <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 13 August 2019 14:05
To: Thomas, Robert
Cc: Morey, Paul
Subject: Re: Spelthorne Taxi & Private Hire Licensing Policy revisions

To : Rob Thomas - Principal Licensing Officer - Spelthorne Borough Council.

Dear Mr. Thomas,

The Imperative for Exemptions and Grandfather Rights for qualifying Spelthorne PH Licensed vehicles with Tinted windows currently trying to survive in, or enter, the increasingly-competitive London Chauffeur market.

Further to your 7th August letter below - and confirming my telephone conversation with Paul Morey this morning - I believe the imposition of an outright, across-the-board ban on 'Tints' in Spelthorne vehicles - **Before the same action by TfL** - would effectively exclude Spelthorne vehicles from competing for work in London - thereby putting Operator / Drivers like myself totally out of business.

The majority of my work is as a sub-contractor for agencies offering me work shuttling corporate clients between central London, The City and Heathrow -
but it's now extremely rare to see London S-class, or equivalent, chauffeur cars or chauffeured Mercedes MPV's without Tints -
and I know that it would only take one client to complain that they'd spent 2.5 hours getting from Heathrow to The City - as it can in a term-time morning 'rush'-hour - in the glare of a motorised gold-fish bowl for me to be dropped from somebody's sub-contractor list -
why wouldn't they ? - there would be literally Thousands of Tinted **TfL-licensed** alternatives for an agency to use instead !

I would also like to mention the comfort / privacy / security aspect of Tints too - how many high-value clients trapped in any of London's all-too-frequent demonstrations at least felt comforted that photos of them cowering in a clear-window car couldn't be taken and viralled around the world on social media by an Extinction Rebel ?

As for my own American clients -

the 1st - a multi-millionaire older lady - has a skin-sensitivity, which I have no intention of inquiring about, who expects to be protected from the sun - and always dons a wide-brimmed hat as soon as she gets out into sunshine.

with the 2nd - a billionaire family, friends of the 1st - there are security issues too - they own an English football team and, if a massive stone-chip hadn't put me off the road, last Saturday I would have been driving a family member and guest through narrow streets heaving with thousands of passionate supporters towards their stadium. ~ I believe their security team would understandably veto the use of a vehicle with clear glass for that particular journey - even though the family principle has said he prefers my current car as he feels it's not as 'flashy' as a shiny black S-class Mercedes.

and with Oprah Winfrey - also a friend of the 1st - I'm still haunted by seeing her feel the need to lie down across the back seat of my clear-window 1st BMW 7 - because she saw a group of young girls, who she thought might recognise her, approaching us whilst we were stuck solid in a Soho traffic jam.

Spelthorne is the closest non-TfL borough to Heathrow - with the shortest 'unladen' mileage - so surely an anti-competitive complete ban on Tints would have an Environmental deficit as well ? - with tinted TfL-licensed cars coming from anywhere being preferred to really local clear-window Spelthorne ones.

Given the TfL Licensing area has - I would have thought - a much greater problem with crimes involving vulnerable adults ; child sexual exploitation & "County Lines" drug-trafficking than Spelthorne ... and given Spelthorne drivers have been discriminated against for years at costs of Thousands of £pounds by TfL's unfair anti-competitive protectionist Congestion Charge exemptions for its own Private Hire licensees

...
and given I'm now being discriminated against again - at a cost of up to a possible £387.50 per month - by TfL's refusal to grant ULEZ Grandfather Rights to a 26-06-2014 reg. diesel car bought - in good faith - for £40,980 on 30-09-2014 ...
and even though I'm obviously hopeful I would be granted Grandfather Rights to my tinted windows myself

...
I must nevertheless say I'm surprised and disappointed that Spelthorne is considering a measure as anti-competitive as banning Tinted Windows ahead of any action by TfL ...
surely until TfL do, out of fairness to its Licensees, Spelthorne could concentrate on making sure all Licencees are aware that those convicted of any involvement in the crimes above will remain on the hopefully-adopted National Register of Refusal and Revocations for Life !

My only other comment about your letter is - given the number of all-Black phones, and even a high-end all-black Tablet on Friday night, which clients try to leave in my car when they get out - I always wonder how clients of app-based "virtual-offices" manage to search for / reclaim their left / lost property.

Very best regards to yourself & Paul Morey