

OBJECTION RESPONSE 1

Dear Licensing department Request of the drivers

As you know from last few years all the drivers in Spelthorne have constantly requested the licensing department to change few rules. However, we have been neglected and completely taken for granted.

Therefore, we have no choice but to request the following changes to be made and voted for in upcoming council meeting.

The following changes are as follows:

1. Tinted windows

There is rule that the Spelthorne taxi drivers cannot have tinted windows. The rule was proposed by the council due to the police raising concerns over drug trafficking. In last 20 years no driver has been associated with drugs or drug courier service. In TFL there was 50k drivers who are allowed tinted windows. Runnymede allows tinted windows. Are the council and police suggesting that maybe 100 drivers in Spelthorne could be the cause of drug trafficking? There is no evidence, and this should be removed. It's costing drivers extra 2-3k to change the windows or costing 5-7k more to purchase a car without tinted windows. Considering we received no support from the council during covid time, there has been no change in fare since 2015 and no cases in which drivers' involvement in drug trafficking. We understand that public safety is priority and us as drivers take that very seriously. But if our neighbouring council Runnymede feels safe and TFL with 50k drivers feels safe then what's the reason for not trusting only 100 drivers? With the new rule all drivers must have DBS checked every 6 months.

2. Age of the car

We understand that in Spelthorne you must change your car when it is 10 years old. This has caused a huge financial implication on the drivers. Since Uber and Bolt have expand into Spelthorne our business has been cut by 75%. All the drivers are forced to taken on school runs and work additional hours to make ends meet. However, we are still expected to change a good condition car because it has touched its 10th birthday. Our neighbouring council Runnymede has no such rule and drivers save money and provide equally good services as Spelthorne drivers. We would like this rule to be changed. We are happy to do MOT of the car every 6 months and pay annual fee for renewal of the vehicle. **WE WILL NOT ACCEPT RENEWAL OF THE CAR AND PAY A FEE EVERY 6 MONTHS.**

3. Fare increase

As you know our last fare increase was in 2015. At present moment our fare is at -33.5% in recession. This means that all product and services have had an increase of 33.5% since 2015 except our fare. We request the council to see our proposal to the price increase attached with this email and accept or recommend sensible changes. Please see below for the new taxi tariff below.

4. Taxi rank Gresham Road

The condition of the Gresham Road taxi rank is poor. The markings have faded away and there is no clear sign of taxi stand. This is the only active rank in the borough, and it requires URGENT work. Please consider this as matter of urgency. Due to faded signs

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local people park at the rank and when told move they challenge the drivers that it's not a rank as the marking is very unclear.

Tariff 1 Day Time rate	Time 6am to 7:59pm	For first mile (1760 yards/approx. 1609 metres) or part thereof. Rate for each mile thereafter for each succeeding 107 yards (approx. 98 metres) or part thereof.	Mon – Sun £5.70 £3.30 £0.20p
Tariff 2 Night and National Holidays	8pm to 5:59am	For first mile (1760 yards/approx. 1609 metres) or part thereof. Rate for each mile thereafter for each succeeding 107 yards (approx. 98 metres) or part thereof.	Mon – Sun £7.50 £5.00 £0.30p
Tariff 3 Double Day rate for Christmas and New year	Between 3pm from 24 th December and 6am 27 th December and from 12pm December 31 st to 5:59am on January 1 st .	For first mile (1760 yards/approx. 1609 metres) or part thereof. Rate for each mile thereafter for each succeeding 107 yards (approx. 98 metres) or part thereof.	Mon – Sun £10.50 £6.60 £0.40p

OBJECTION RESPONSE 2

Dear Spelthorne council

Thank you for your email regarding price change for new and renewal charges for Spelthorne Taxi fee. I would like to strongly discourage the price increase as I think it's an unfair proposition.

There are several reasons against the price increase.

1. There has not been a change in fare price since 2015 and we are currently charging price at -33.5% based on Bank of England recession calculator. That means the price of all products and services have increased by 33.5% since 2015 except our fares. However, the fee for renewable have been changed several times. This seems to work one way and we are standing against this increase.
2. You have increased the price several times without providing the correct service. The licensing department is a JOKE in Spelthorne. Your email response time is 10 working days, and you expect drivers to provide documents 4 weeks before the appointment. We have literally begged you for an appointment. Each time we call there is no response. We email we hear nothing back for days. Licensing staff is always on long sick leaves or annual holidays. WE WANT THE LEAVES TO BE INVESTIGATED. Lack of staff and repeatedly

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asked for same documents. The service from Licensing department is poor and we don't believe this price increase is fair on the drivers. You are simply not providing the service and this has been going on for several years.

- 3. We are concerned about GDPR. As we would like to know how long drivers record is kept, how is this stored and who has access to? The concern is that some drivers requested for previous documents and Licensing department couldn't provide that information. We would like to nominate two drivers and if licensing department can provide the five-year record of all documents submitted for the two drivers?
- 4. During Covid time there was no financial assistance provided to the Spelthorne drivers. Runnymede council gave the driver between £1500-£2000 during course of 18 months. TFL gave drivers support money, however, repeatedly asking Licensing department for support we only got told that there was no fund for the drivers. However, every driver had to pay FULL FEE during covid to renew license knowing that there was NO WORK.
- 5. As you know that our work has been reduced by 70%+ due to UBER and BOLT and we are struggling. Most drivers are forced to do school runs and additional hours to make ends meet and this increase will just add additional cost.

Please stand with your drivers.

If this price increase goes ahead then all the drivers are forced to turn to local Spelthorne public for support and take legal advice.

I hope you will improve your services first and then suggest price increase in coming years.

Thank you,
xxxxxx – Representative of Spelthorne drivers.

OBJECTION RESPONSE 3

Dear xxxxx

In response to the recent communication to some of the Spelthorne drivers regarding the new Taxi and Private Hire licence fees for 2023/2024.

You are expecting an increase in the licensing fee while the driver proposal has been neglected by you for years, the new licensing fee is not only unfair but also an abuse of common sense.

Just to give a glimpse of what the drivers are suffering from.

- 1. There has been no increase in Hackney Carriage fare since 5 February 2015, according to the Bank of England its 34% inflation increase. while you are reviewing the licence fee every year (<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator>).
- 2. Most of the drivers are paying £12.50 ULEZ daily charge from 29 August 2023, if a driver is working 6 days a week it's 107 days and he/she already paid £1337.50. No action has been taken by the licensing department, while neighbouring councils support their drivers; increased the fare, removed some of the restrictions including tinted windows and age of the vehicles, and even provided some funds to their drivers.

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- 3. Drivers cannot change their vehicle due to the restriction on tinted windows. While 90% of the residents of Spelthorne borough use tinted windows vehicles which are licensed by TFL (Transport for London) and neighbouring councils.
- 4. Spelthorne is the only Borough which has only one Taxi rank which is 24hrs for about hundreds Hackney Carriage drivers and doesn't have a Taxi rank in the main side of the railway station.
- 5. Basic services are not available to the drivers due to shortage of staff, sickness, holidays..., Drivers are waiting for weeks for vehicle inspection appointments.

The new taxi and private hire licence fees for 2023/2024 are not acceptable by us until the acceptance of our proposal which was sent to you in January 2023 and neglected and forgotten by you.

Kind regards

On behalf of Spelthorne drivers
[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

OBJECTION RESPONSE 4

Dear xxxxxxx

I would like to wish you a Happy New Year.

As discussed on the phone regarding some of the changes Spelthorne drivers would like such as:

- 1. Change the policy on tinted windows
- 2. Age of the car
- 3. New Fare
- 4. Improve Taxi rank Gresham road

Please see the document attached with this email with the proposals and new taxi fare proposal.

I would like to represent the drivers and talk for 5mins at the council meeting when these proposals are voted on.

I hope you will and all your colleagues will stand with the drivers.

All the drivers are forced to do school runs, additional hours and still struggling. Some drivers have left already and many considering joining PCO. At this rate in next couple of years you may lose many drivers to PCO and that will affect the taxi service Spelthorne provides to local public.

Thank you,

xxxxxx

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OBJECTION RESPONSE 5

Dear xxxxx.

- 1. I am representing the Spelthorne taxi drivers. We strongly reject the fee increase and requesting to withdraw the proposal.
- 2. If the proposal is not withdrawn then I would like to request 5mins to talk on the issue during the council meeting.
- 3. If the proposal is passed then our next steps are to approach local public for support and seek legal advice from employment Brue

Please see the reasons of reject attached with this email.

Thank you,

xxxxxx

OBJECTION RESPONSE 6

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On behalf of Spelthorne drivers



OBJECTION RESPONSE 7

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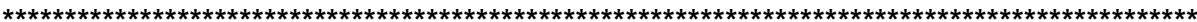
Would you please see in attachment new Elmbridge council Fares Chart and would please update our Fare rates accordingly the current situation.

Kind regards

On behalf of Spelthorne drivers

Regards

xxxxxx



OBJECTION RESPONSE 8

APPENDIX B - OBJECTIONS TO LICENSING FEE INCREASES

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