

Sent by e-mail

Ms. Carol Foster, Licensing Team Leader
Shropshire County Council
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

17 February 2012

Dear Ms. Foster,

**Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976
Application for an exemption from policy in respect of saloon
type vehicles in Zone 4**

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 14 February 2012, regarding the above, and confirm my attendance at the Licensing Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday 29 February 2012.

Following the amalgamation of the Boroughs within the County into a Unitary Authority and discussions of various items in previous committee meetings, (please see Item 10 – Strategic Licensing Committee – 15 December 2010) including that of allowing existing saloon cars to run to the end of their life. On this basis I contacted the Taxi Licensing Office prior to upgrading my previous vehicle to a newer model to enable me to plan my retirement to coincide with the *'end of life'*.

I was also assured by the Taxi Licencing Office there would be *'no problem'* in upgrading my vehicle to enable me to continue to run it as a Hackney saloon until it's *'end of life'* I therefore went ahead and invested the sum of £10,000 in a new vehicle, and also had the necessary tests carried out and meters installed. I had also worked out that the payback period for such an investment would be 4 years from date of purchase, which would take me to a retirement date of

2015. I subsequently presented my *'upgraded'* vehicle to them in March 2011. At no time did they advise me I would no longer be able to continue to operate this vehicle as a Taxi in Zone 4 after March 2012.

In view of the foregoing, I wish to appeal against the decision taken by Shropshire Council, which will require me to take my hackney saloon off the road and replace it with a wheelchair accessible vehicle

Surely, the existing *'mixed'* fleet of taxi vehicles operating in Zone 4 does not require all vehicles to be wheelchair accessible as the demand is not there. Nor have the government implemented any such rules overall, it has been left to the *'discretion'* of local authorities.

Considering the residual value of my existing saloon vehicle has dropped considerably, if I was required to sell it I would be left with a deficit between that and the resources required to invest in a wheelchair accessible vehicle .

It is my opinion that the decision taken by Shropshire Council, to require *'only Zone 4'* drivers to provide a wheelchair accessible vehicle in place of a saloon vehicle is discriminatory and unacceptable. It would *'force'* me into extreme financial difficulty whilst also having to retire earlier than planned due to no fault of my own, and having to join the ranks of the *'unemployed'* in the present economic climate.

I trust a copy of this letter will now be circulated to the other 8 drivers (and/or their representatives) who will be affected by this decision, and all committee members, prior to the meeting taking place on 29 February 2012.

Yours sincerely,

P.I. Jones

c.c. Ken Fletcher & Daniel Kawczynski MP