



Chris Neville
Birmingham City Council
Licensing Section
PO Box 17013
Birmingham B6 9ES

Raja Amin JP MBE
20 Hallam Street
Balsall Heath
Birmingham B12 9PR

29th June 2018

Dear Chris

Taxis – Points based systems – Proposals

RMT organises and represents hundreds of taxi drivers in Birmingham and Solihull. I am secretary of the RMT Birmingham Rail branch and President of the RMT Midlands regional council – I write to you in those capacities.

It has come to our attention as the RMT that the Birmingham City Council wants to introduce a points based system to monitor drivers, which system will be used to prosecute drivers. We as an organisation of negotiation, categorically reject this intended change.

There are a number of points the RMT would like to raise. Firstly; the points system is double jeopardy. Drivers will be penalised twice for any infringements. Once a person is penalised for any violation, they cannot be penalised again for a similar offence for which a legal recourse has been taken. The council is burdening drivers with guilt and threats to haul drivers before the Committee and to prosecute them or even cost them their livelihoods.

This system of points was experimented with in Leicester and was the cause of the running skirmishes between the mayor and the hackney drivers fraternity. It would be foolhardy to introduce a change with potential to be the source of unrest in the city.

Secondly, the Birmingham City Council has continued to introduce measures that make drivers' lives difficult. Despite the Council's failure to introduce corresponding goodwill changes to protect the trade. Pirating is rampant in the city. Enforcement has failed dismally to keep up with the growing brazen disregard for the City bye laws by taxi drivers from outside the Borough and even local drivers. This is great hypocrisy as the demand for professionalism seems to flow one way. Drivers are penalised willy-nilly but the City Council's failure to keep their end of the bargain is not put under scrutiny. Enforcement exercises that are carried out are tick box activities with no real impact. The real trouble pirating times are avoided despite numerous protestations from drivers about various trouble spots and times. If the Council is failing in its professional role it sure has lost the right to make demands on drivers for higher professionalism which it has resoundingly failed to achieve.

The council has continued to fail to protect the taxi trade, it is strange when it is quick to make value judgements and demands on drivers in turn. This ties in closely with the demand that is being made on drivers to buy new cabs by 2020. The same cavalier attitude of expecting others to do things that the Council itself cannot achieve is not lost to the observant eye. But again the drivers are being penalised for something the Council itself cannot sustain.

With these double standards in mind, we strongly believe the Birmingham City Council needs to start by cleaning its own house first before making unattainable demands and expectations on drivers.

Many thanks
Yours Truly

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ramin', with a horizontal line underneath.

Raja Amin JP MBE
President RMT Midland Regional Council.
Birmingham Rail Branch Secretary.
Mobile: 07968 186238