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Dear driver and operators

FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS WITH THE TRADE

We recently contacted you about the recent taxi policy and taxi tariff consultations that you were asked to comment on and which we have now extended the time period to do so until 5 August. We promised that we would arrange face-to-face meetings with you to discuss any concerns that you have, and we are writing to confirm what those arrangements are.

There will be 2 meetings, both at Swale House but in the committee rooms rather than the Council Chamber as we want the meetings to be more informal and a chance to have meaningful discussions with you without creating a 'them and us' atmosphere. The dates of the meetings are:

Thursday 21 July at 10:00 and Wednesday 27 July at 19:00.

We would hope that as many of you as can find the time to attend do and we look forward to seeing you.

Can you please email taxis@swale.gov.uk to confirm your attendance or phone us on 01795 417286

TAXI TARIFF

If you want to respond online to the taxi tariff consultation, then we have changed the link to use. Please use the one below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=pwB-GLHLqEKkkyKMjspWwzKqq46eCQ1PpQ7CPSaJ4WNUM1ZKTVpOSUITUDU1RU1JOE83VExBSzVVSy4u>

You can still email your preference, post your form back or drop it into the letterbox at Swale House if you prefer.

One of the main reasons for trying to increase the tariff is obviously the huge increase in fuel prices. Whilst we are aware that if you work for an operator the cost of fuel is absorbed by them, please do still respond to the consultation to help the people in the trade who are affected by the rising costs.

NEW LEGISLATION REGARDING ACCESS TO TAXIS AND PHV'S FOR DISABLED USERS

The Equality Act 2010 has been amended to assist disabled people in travelling by taxi and PHV's without the risk of discrimination in any way. One of the changes is that if drivers have a physical condition which make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for them to provide the sort of physical assistance to disabled persons using their vehicle, they can apply for an exemption from having to do so. If you think this applies to you, we would ask that you provide evidence from your GP and we will then issue you with an exemption certificate

REFUSING A FARE

We are beginning to receive complaints that drivers are refusing to take fares from ranks using excuses such as:

- Their operator told them not to undertake any long journeys and to keep local
- The passenger wants to pay by card, but the journey is less than £10 and the driver says he only accepts card payments for over £10
- Other excuses of a similar vein

May we remind you that you cannot refuse a fare unless you have a reasonable excuse to do so. These reasons are not reasonable excuses and if we receive complaints that can be substantiated then we will not hesitate in issuing penalty points as this is a breach of the law not just the taxi policy. Please take note!

Kind regards, Licensing Team