

Good afternoon,

I write this e-mail in response to a consultation of a consideration of lifting the limits on the number of hackney carriage vehicles that Hyndburn Borough Council licence.

As licensing sergeant for the area, I am invested in the local pubwatch scheme and have regular dialogue with licensees. One common theme in Hyndburn – Accrington Town Centre especially – is the struggle for people to get a taxi late at night or in the early hours. I often hear stories of staff giving regulars a lift home and people being stranded when local taxi firms cancel without reason.

After the initial Covid pandemic, I believe that many drivers decided to become takeaway/Deliveroo/Just Eat drivers. I wouldn't blame them as they don't have to put up with some of the issues of dealing with drunks and potential violence.

As such, I think there is a necessity for more readily available taxis that can be hailed. This would help to reduce violent crime in town centres (of which Blackburn Road, Accrington near the Railway, Bees Knees and Nags Head pubs is a hotspot) and increase public safety.

If people are hanging around waiting for taxis and growing frustrated then this can lead to public order/violence or just encourage people to stay out later and consume more alcohol than they need. Also, there is a big push around people's vulnerability, especially women, and to have readily available licensed hackney carriages would prevent individuals from being subjected to harassment.

I have copied Inspector Richard Ogdin into this response as Geographic Inspector for Hyndburn to see if he or his team have any further thoughts.

Kind regards

Gary

Gary Hennighan
Licensing Sergeant – East Division