

## Questions and Statements from the public to the Regulatory Committee on 23 January 2025

### **1) Statement from Mr V on behalf of Chelmsford Taxi Drivers Association in relation to Item 5**

The Hackney Carriage Taxi trade are hugely disappointed and dismayed by the Councils proposal to charge the trade a permit fee to operate service on Beaulieu Park Station Taxi Rank.

We the trade, along with our advisors believe it is unjust and unlawful for a Council to make profit from the licensed trade regardless where the funds end up. Any refusal to allow a locally licensed hackney carriage vehicle from using a locally adopted taxi rank, would be an offence and a complete waste of council funds and any suggestion otherwise would be in our opinion be misplaced.

Put simply the Council wish to double permit the trade. A Licensed Vehicle is in reality a permit to trade. We feel the suggestion by Council point 2.8 of the proposal, seeking to avoid any charges being paid through the licensing function is an admission of doubt regarding this proposal. The Council regardless were the funds go should not make profit out of the Taxi Trade.

Put simply the Trades advisers feel the Council could well be open for legal challenge in court should they go ahead with this proposal. If that is the case, surely this proposal is a complete waste of time and Council tax payers money and should cease immediately.

Furthermore, by charging and controlling numbers would discouraging the entire trade form occupying that rank which then undermines the very need to ensure that there are enough taxis available, thereby compromising public safety and convenience. Ensuring that sufficient taxis are available to transport the public home safely and promptly should remain a key priority for the Council, as it reflects the primary purpose of the Hackney Carriage service.