

1. Received 7/1/18

I have been made aware that an organisation known as Taxi Drivers Cardiff, also known as TDC have made an application to be formally recognised as an official trade body representing all Taxi drivers, both Hackney and Private Hire, licensed by Cardiff City Council. I would like to formally lodge my objections against this application being approved.

TDC do not represent all Cardiff taxi drivers as they claim. They hold a strong anti-Uber stance and on numerous occasions have stated a desire to see Uber's operating licence with drawn. Such action would have an adverse effect on hundreds of Cardiff Private Hire driver, as well as most possibly some Cardiff Hackney Drivers who may well utilise the platform Uber provide outside Cardiff City boundaries. It is impossible for any organisation to harbour a desire for an operator to no longer operate, when that operator provides work for hundreds of people it claims to represent.

By hoping Uber no longer operate in the city, they are also hoping hundreds of Cardiff Private Hire drivers lose their source of income. This is the exact opposite of what an organisation who represents a group of people are meant to do. On one hand TDC claim to represent all Cardiff taxi drivers, and seek better pay and conditions for them, whilst at the same time hoping to inflict unemployment and poverty on hundreds of Cardiff Taxi drivers.

Additionally, in the last few months TDC distributed too, and encouraged its members to display posters in there hackney carriages and private hire vehicles that were not in accordance with Cardiff Councils policy on advertising in and on Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles, thus contravening Council policy. Many of these posters are still on display, despite council instructions that they are removed.

An organisation that so willingly flouts council regulations, and makes false claims of representation should not be classified as an official trade body. Therefore I believe the application should be turned down.

In fact given some of the vitriol spouted on social media and actions aimed at Uber drivers, by some of its members is little more than discrimination. In my opinion this organisation is more akin to a hate group than a trade body, who, if council resources allowed, should rather be investigated for discrimination that granted trade body status.

## **RESPONSE**

*TDC has never, could never and will never claim to represent EVERY taxi driver in Cardiff. The saying goes "you can't please all of the people all of the time"*

*The taxi trade is, historically, very fragmented - TDC are trying to unite as many drivers as possible but we are realistic enough to know that TDC will never represent 100% of licensed Cardiff drivers.*

*We ARE NOT anti Uber, what we are is anti the legislation that allows Uber to operate the way they do, we have no issues whatsoever with Uber working in Cardiff. But we are actively campaigning against 'cross border hiring' which allows drivers licensed by authorities other than Cardiff to work here.*

*Yes we have distributed posters for drivers to display in their cars, they are non obtrusive and are not offensive in any way, they do not name any company and they merely highlight our campaign to stop 'cross border taxis'*

2. Received 8/1/18

It has been brought to my attention that Taxi Drivers of Cardiff are applying for recognition by the council.

I'd like to object to this for the reasons followed

1. Not a single member of this supposed private hire and hackney association has ever been elected to represent us. No voting has ever taken place to my knowledge
2. They have expressed a passion to rid uber from Cardiff, an operator who I currently work with as well as many other Cardiff licensed drivers do and enjoy. They provide a means for me to support myself and family and people who want to take that away are not representing Cardiff drivers at all.
3. They conduct secret meetings with a few select drivers. How are drivers supposed to express their opinions when they conduct themselves in this manner.
4. The opinions of four drivers hardly represents the almost 2000 Cardiff licensed drivers.
5. They encourage drivers to display illegal sized signs warning the public that's only Cardiff plated cars are safe to take them. This is a false statement. Cars from Newport have the standards we have the same insurance etc how does that make them not safe ??
6. They currently all work for dragon Taxi's. Their views would be completely biased to other operators in the city. If an application should be made it should be made up of drivers from all companies.
7. Dragon Taxi's themselves have admitted in court that they have taken money from drivers without their consent. The way dragon manipulate people and drivers I'd be weary that this is infact themselves trying new tactics to keep drivers Happy.
8. The named person on the application has infact a criminal record or if this has cleared a past history for violence. Someone who I'd deem not 'fit and proper' to run an association.
9. On many occasions in general conversations via social media and WhatsApp groups if any driver have expressed a different opinion regarding the trade to those named on the application they have been removed from the groups. What is the purpose of an association if they treat drivers with opinions in this manner

## **RESPONSE**

*TDC has evolved from a meeting called back in October 2016, it was called by a member of the current organising committee- John Whittingham (more commonly known as Max Whittingham) (IMAGE#1) initially it was just drivers from Dragon Taxis but it has evolved since then to encompass drivers from any company – INCLUDING UBER*

*Approximately 50 drivers attended and three of those drivers where elected to represent the rest. Among the trio was Max Whittingham - (IMAGE#2) An organising committee was formed consisting of 10-12 drivers to help and assist the 3 representatives. The 3 other named members of today's TDC steering group were involved in that.*

*We have no involvement at all with Dragon Taxis management (although all 4 do currently drive for them) they have absolutely no say and no influence on what TDC do.*

*TDC is about uniting drivers – the major issues facing drivers are three fold*

- *Cross Border Hiring*
- *The number of licenses being issued*
- *Driver exploitation*

*If a driver is not on board with our aims and objectives, then he is removed from TDC groups as occasionally issues are discussed that only concern TDC members. There are other 'open' groups for taxi drivers across social media.*

*The named person on the application that the objector says has a history of violence and a criminal record is, Paul O'Hara. He has appeared before the public protection committee on two occasions . Once for his initial application in*

*2005, where after explaining his past discrepancies was deemed a fit and proper person to hold a license and again in 2011 after an incident that never had no relation at all to the taxi trade and the job he does. Once again he was deemed fit and proper. The offences were in fact, public order offences and NOT violent offences.*

### 3. Received 18/12/17

The biggest concern would be that this group does not actually represent drivers. I would say that they should represent at least 10 to 15% of Cardiff drivers (approx 200 to 300) to gain recognition and have a voice on important items that effect the trade. We cannot have a minority trying to force their views on a much bigger system. If they have the drivers, my concerns are muted.

They need at the very least confirmation of membership to ascertain if this group truly do represent driver's interests and views. We should not just accept a list of names. Signed documents of intent which identify TDC acting as a driver's proxy are required and this should be cross referenced against the licencing database to ensure these individuals do exist and do have licences in Cardiff.

Numerous driver's regularly state that this group does not represent them.

You do not want to open the door for another with militant views. If TDC do have the numbers to warrant recognition then there articles of association need to change as they are discriminatory toward any driver that does not want to be registered with the GMB Union. All drivers should have a chance at being elected not just ones which are GMB members. This suggests that you must have the same views as the GMB to manage the interests of the TDC. All GMB associated policies should be removed from the document because drivers are self-employed so a union cannot act for them, but also this set up forces drivers to become members to have a real say in the running of TDC which is improper to do.

### **RESPONSE**

*We take on board the objections regarding membership of the GMB and have adjusted the constitution accordingly. We are willing to make our membership list available to the Council only and will not publish the list publicly due to data protection.*

4. Received 7/1/18

Further to my previous emails and after much consideration I have decided to log my objection to TDC or taxi drivers of Cardiff being recognised as a representative of taxi drivers by the council.

Although I believe they do have good intentions I don't think that they truly stand for all drivers, they have become an anti Uber group and nothing more.

Despite being given evidence against dragon taxis no action has been taken yet numerous attempts have been made to get action taken against Uber. Also there has been no vote to determine leadership.

I personally was removed due to my disagreement of where their focus should be. I am still a licensed taxi driver.

Although I am not a fan of Uber at all I believe that dragon taxis are far more of a threat and unfortunately I feel that TDC are protecting them from scrutiny of their actions whether knowingly or no

#### *RESPONSE*

*Once again we are NOT anti Uber, we have no issue with Uber operating in Cardiff. We are anti the legislation that allows Uber to operate the way they do.*

*Regarding this persons issues with Dragon Taxis, its common knowledge that Dragon/Veezu have recently been involved in legal proceedings with a former driver. At two separate hearings the verdict went in Dragon/Veezu favour although we believe this person has appealed.*

*We're not sure what this person expects from TDC?*

*We do not charge any sort of subscription for membership, so have no capital.*

*We do not have any sort of legal backing (which is why we encourage drivers to join the GMB to take advantage of the benefits, including legal cover they provide)*

*Does this person want us to actively campaign for the immediate removal of Dragon Taxis operating license? (Something the majority of drivers are against) And in doing so affect approximately 750 Cardiff licensed drivers??*

*Our view on the legal proceedings is/was to wait on the verdicts of the legal professionals.*

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#### **RESPONSE**

#### **AGAIN – WE ARE NOT ANTI UBER**

*We have attached screenshots from 2 petitions published online, one by Paul O'Hara before TDC came into existence and another by TDC to the National Assembly Government (IMAGE#3) (IMAGE#4) At no point have we asked in any petition for the removal of Ubers license.*

*We have also attached links to three separate responses we made to the petitions committee at the Welsh Assembly at their behest.*

*AGAIN we did not ask for Ubers license to be revoked in either.*

6. Received 29/12/17 (from 2 named drivers, and also claims to be from 'other Uber drivers who wish to remain anonymous')

I wish to comment regarding the application by TDC to be recognised as an official representative body of taxi drivers and private hire drivers in Cardiff.

1. Firstly, without trying to sound picky, I feel the name adopted is misleading. Taxi drivers (of Cardiff) are not private hire drivers and many of my fellow private hire driver colleagues assume that this group is only for Cardiff hackney drivers. Indeed, I believe the vast majority in this group to be actually private hire drivers rather than taxi drivers.

2. This group is not representative of those who work in the trade, private hire and hackney. This group was first formed in a Tesco car park in October 2016 with about 40 drivers attending all of whom were Dragon ph drivers and who were angry with their treatment from Dragon, especially since Veezu took over in 2015. There are very few, if any, drivers within this group from Premier, Capital, Uber or the other smaller firms.

3. The leadership of this group is unelected and, in just over a year of TDC's existence there has been three different leadership incarnations, two of which were a coup d'etat. The second coup d'etat was amidst allegations of racism. The first leadership was elected by a show of hands at that first Tesco meeting but they were simply later ejected by some drivers who then assumed control. There has been no vote put to the members to elect leaders since that first meeting, who were displaced anyway. This strikes as more a dictatorship.

4 These unelected leaders then pursue their own interests, mainly verbally attacking Uber AND Uber drivers via social media, and any driver who opposes this is then expelled from their group. Two of the current leaders, and , are particularly vocal in their abuse and one only need to check "Cardiff Taxi Drivers Group" on Facebook which is a public forum. Uber, and Uber drivers, are described as "scum" "parasites" and other, these are the more polite abuses. TDC also have a private group doing the same. Whether they like it or not, Uber are a licensed operator in Cardiff as are their Cardiff licensed drivers and there are now hundreds of registered Cardiff licensed drivers with Uber, probably taking them to the second largest firm in Cardiff. Uber drivers had to create their own Facebook group due to this in-fighting "Uber Drivers Of Cardiff". Therefore, Uber drivers licensed by Cardiff will never get representation by TDC.

5 It appears all four of the leaders are ph drivers with Dragon. I believe TDC's constitution, to be truly representative of licensed Cardiff Drivers should hold free elections to ALL drivers within Cardiff and there should be 5 positions, one from each of Premier, Capital, Dragon, Uber and another for the smaller firms. Drivers just now believe TDC to be a mouthpiece and management appeasers for Veezu/Dragon and very unhealthy for the trade, and frankly dangerous.

6 I believe the last meeting of drivers was way back in May where only a few drivers attended. This group initially gathered momentum until the bitter leadership in-fighting and their focus away from drivers problems with one particular operator to just attack Uber, the very place disgruntled ex Dragon drivers moved to. I'd say TDC have very few members now anyway and any figures of driver numbers claimed by TDC would be historic.

7 To conclude, many of us believe TDC to be just a total mess of a few drivers led by unelected individuals whose sole aim is to destroy Uber and the loss therefore of hundreds of Uber drivers jobs. It would be totally irresponsible and inappropriate that the council give this group any official sanction without further investigation of just what they claim to represent and how they have elected those to lead.

## **RESPONSE**

*The term 'TAXI' is generic. Every driver licensed by Cardiff County Council is dual badged. Meaning they can drive both Hackney AND private hire vehicles. So in effect we are ALL taxi drivers.*

*AGAIN- initially the group was formed due to drivers being upset with the way Dragon Taxis treated their drivers, it has evolved into something much bigger. The group's leadership HAS had many incarnations. The only constant has been Max Whittingham.*

*From the early days there was always going to be differences of opinions in the way the group should move forward. A minority wanted to just concentrate on just ONE single issue and that was taking Dragon to court and potentially ruining them. The majority wanted to open dialogue with management and to campaign for legislative change and on much wider issues. Obviously the majority won the day and we moved forward in an organised and professional manner.*

*The racism charge that is being levelled at the steering group is nothing of the sort. From the outset it was decided that TDC would not have one figurehead as a chair. The reason being was twofold - to avoid one person being singled out by management, and so one single person was not there to be shot at by drivers. One gentleman took it upon himself to go away from that and saw himself as a leader of sorts, he also took it upon himself to send unsolicited emails to management without it being passed by the rest of the group . In short he was impossible to work with. He was not asked to leave due to the colour of his skin!*

*We have indeed expelled a member from the group due to his blatant racism (IMAGE#5) TDC is open to any Cardiff driver whatever the colour of his/her skin or whatever god he/she worships. Racism has no place in society and no place in TDC*

### SUMMARY

*TDC was created to form unity amongst as many taxi drivers as possible, initially to fight against one particular companies treatment of its drivers. It's now moved onto much more important issues (at the same time not ignoring the reason the group was formed in the first place)*

*These objections could well have been written with the same pen. They are obviously from former member's of TDC with a grudge against the current steering group and an even bigger grudge against Dragon Taxis . What they fail to grasp is, if they joined TDC they could then nominate each other to be elected onto the steering group at our first AGM in August. This is not a dictatorship if they get enough support then they can organise things!*

*The current incumbents (one of which WAS elected) want to form a trade organisation that benefits Cardiff drivers, and all will be putting themselves up for election at the AGM. It's these drivers that have made TDC into the well organised and professionally run organisation you see today.*

*With the Welsh Assembly Government taking control of Taxi and Private Hire Licensing it is imperative that drivers voices are heard and we believe that TDC are in the best place to do so.*

IMAGE#1

 **Max Whittingham**  
Guys we all need to arrange a date all get together meet at said place in city somewere and get a plan of attack because drivers are the ones who are losing ....  
Let meet monday tell as many drivers as we can tesco car park pengam green monday cmon guys i will be there 3pm any one want to join me ????????

1 y Like Reply 1

IMAGE#2

 **Paul O'Hara** ▶ **Taxi Drivers Of Cardiff (drivers only)**  
25 Oct 2016 · Cardiff · 🌐

Things need to be done professionally if the management and are to take us seriously.  
EVERYTHING in writing so it can be traced.  
Also needed is our aims and objectives and authorisation from us that the 3 who were elected yesterday actually has a mandate from the rest of us to represent them.  
No good turning up at the first meeting and just saying 'oh we represent the drivers.' they'll just say where's your proof that you represent all these drivers??  
I've quickly produced this if you all agree we I can print a load off and at the next meeting get everyone's paw print on there. **Thomas Stirling Max Whittingham Bill Lewis**

13:21 83%

DRAGON DRIVERS ASSOCIATION.docx

**DRAGON DRIVERS ASSOCIATION**

We, the undersigned, have formed the DRAGON DRIVERS ASSOCIATION. Our aims and objectives are to work together with the management and owners of Dragon Taxis for improved working conditions for the drivers and improved standard of service for the customer. Thus ensuring a successful business for the owners of Dragon Taxis. We have voted the following three drivers to represent The Association in ongoing discussions with management. They are:-

Bill Lewis  
Thomas Stirling  
Max Whittingham

NAME	SIGNATURE	DRIVER NUMBER

IMAGE#3

### License in Cardiff.

Paul O'Hara Cardiff, United Kingdom



The City of Cardiff is being flooded with hundreds of uncheckable, unenforceable Hackney and private hire vehicles from all over the country working on the Uber platform.

These cars and drivers do not conform to the high standards laid down by Cardiff County Council designed to keep the travelling public safe.

There have also been vehicles not on the UBER platform illegally plying for hire, hiding behind the fact so many 'alien' cabs are in the City.

Local enforcement officers in Cardiff have absolutely no authority over these 'alien' cars working in OUR city. They can't even check to see if they have the relevant insurance required to drive a Hackney or private hire.

It is now time for Cardiff County Council to review Uber Britannia Ltd operators license, and insist they conform and strictly adhere to the undertaking to only use Cardiff licensed vehicles and drivers.

#### Petition Closed

426 supporters  
74 needed to reach 500

Share on Facebook

Add a personal message (optional)  
Cardiff County Council: Review Uber...

Post to Facebook

Send an email to friends

Send a message via WhatsApp

Tweet to your followers

[https://www.change.org/...](https://www.change.org/)  
Tap and hold the link to copy it

Embed

IMAGE#4

### e-Petition: Put an end to the Cross Border and Sub-contracting Taxi Licensing loophole.

“

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government, in the context of its consultation into the reforms of the taxi licensing laws, to put a stop to the 'cross border' and 'sub-contracting' loophole in the law which means hundreds of out of town taxis and private hire vehicles descend on Cardiff to work Private Hire.

There are enough Cardiff licensed vehicles to cover the City without the need for these cars from as far afield as London, Merseyside, the Midlands etc. As well as from neighbouring authorities like Newport, the Vale and RCT etc. There have even been vehicles not working on any platform, illegally plying for hire, hiding behind the fact so many 'alien' cabs are in the City.

Many of these vehicles have NO markings on them, making a mockery of the standards set by Cardiff County Council for vehicles licensed by themselves, including highly visible livery and local street knowledge. Alas it will be only matter of time before a vulnerable person jumps into a non licensed car with catastrophic results.

We urge the Welsh Government to ensure that the only Taxis and Private Hire vehicles allowed to work in Cardiff are those licensed by Cardiff County Council. This is to ensure public safety and to ensure that Cardiff isn't saturated with even more cars than what is needed which if allowed to continue will see even more congestion and pollution in our Capital. It will also give existing drivers licensed by Cardiff a chance to earn something approaching a living wage.

”

IMAGE#5



## Taxi Drivers of Cardiff ▶ Taxi Drivers Of Cardiff (drivers only )



19 Dec 2017 •

This group was created to form unity amongst drivers in Cardiff.

It doesn't need people trying to drive a wedge between different nationalities.

It doesn't matter what colour you are, where you're from or what god you do or don't worship - if you're a Cardiff licensed driver and want a united fleet of taxi drivers then you're welcome here.. If you're a racist you're not!!



has been deleted from the group and blocked.

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