

Appendix B – Details of Objections

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. One 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 willing 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.

Infact 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.

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

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 not.

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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 admist 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.

7. Received 27 February 2018

The most important item to address is if this group does actually represent a significant population of taxi and private hire drivers in Cardiff. The driver community in Cardiff is very large and diverse and is comprised of many different communities. Does TDC actually represent all of these communities and can they actually talk on all of their behalf for the benefit of all drivers. If they can not, then recognition should not be approved.

It must also be stressed that we should not just accept a list of drivers or copies of their plates/badges etc. A written contract for each driver with signatures confirming the driver's association to the group is required.

The TDC grant access to their closed facebook group by way of a copy of the driver's badge being sent to the administrator. Drivers are naturally curious and therefore would provide this to "see what is going on", this does not constitute support of the TDC, only written and signed confirmation from the driver should constitute their support of this group.