

I can only assume that UDC are determined to reduce and force out of business as many taxi operators and drivers as possible. Are you sponsored by Uber?

You are surely aware of the pressures that the taxi industry is under from the infestation of Uber cars in the country. An operation that is not bound by any regulation, tests or standards levels or even a simple DBS check, yet are allowed to operate prolifically.

By introducing more fees, more training, more tests, more licensing requirements, knowledge tests, stricter vehicle requirements, you are making the Uttlesford taxi trade untenable. Perhaps that is your aim, as part of a bigger vision of “Uberizing” the taxi trade.

Whatever your motivation, I strongly object to every point on your agenda. If it proceeds, I will move my operation to a different licensing district.

### **RESPONSE:**

It is not UDC’s intention to force any existing driver or operator out of business. UDC’s primary concern in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing is the safety of the public which includes licence holders, passengers and the public at large. The proposed changes, if implemented, will all have a positive impact on public safety and will help UDC to ensure that it is fulfilling its responsibility diligently.

The main policy changes are aimed at those coming into the trade in order to raise the standards of safety and service offered to the public.

The issue of Uber and other App based operators is often contentious. As you will no doubt be aware it has been decided that Uber are fit and proper to hold an operator’s licence and that the model under which they operate is legal. This leaves the authority in a position that it cannot take action against Uber as it would not be in the public interest. If there is a successful appeal against the court decision then this position may change.

Every driver that operates using the Uber App has been licensed as a driver by an authority within the UK. Without national minimum standards the checks done at the time of granting a licence differ widely but nationally every driver has a minimum of an enhanced criminal record check and a medical. They are bound by regulation but as some of the legislation predates the internal combustion engine it does not take into account advances in technology and is therefore open to interpretation.

The fact that there are lower standards and costs elsewhere in the UK is not a reason for UDC to not aspire to put measures in place to help ensure public safety and the highest standards.

Your response will be put before the Licensing & Environmental Health Committee when they consider the proposals but it would be helpful for you to explain in more detail why you believe the proposals will force out operators or drivers. Similarly if you wish to suggest any amendments to the proposals then UDC would welcome those comments before the end of the consultation at midnight on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

The proposals have been suggested to improve public safety and UDC believe they will achieve this however if you would like to discuss any of the above points in more detail then I am happy to arrange that.