

Support for the provision of Card Payment facility

In support of the proposed condition of licensing for provision of the facility for card payments the following points should be considered

When this proposal was submitted around three years ago there was objection from the trade on several points such as possible issues with internet connections in certain areas and card fraud as well as further conditions of licensing being applied to the 'Blue Book'.

It was hoped at the time that drivers in the trade would take the opportunity to provide the facility for card payments on a voluntary basis and there has certainly been an increase on drivers doing this.

However, it is very unfortunate that we still have an issue within hackney carriage trade on the ranks where it is more often than not that drivers that use certain popular ranks are turning people away when potential customers are seeking to pay by card.

It is a common occurrence which not only annoys potential customers at the ranks but also fellow cab drivers who provide a card payment facility who may be further back in the queue. A potential customer may try the first couple of taxis on the rank seeking to pay by card and then just give up and walk away.

Additionally it is very sad to say that when some drivers are approached the first question asked is 'Where are you going?' when the customer asks if a card payment is accepted. The driver may well take cards but tells the customer that he/she doesn't on the basis that the journey is only a short distance. We call this 'Cherry Picking'.

Having recently conducted an online poll with members of the BHCTA.

Of the seventy drivers that took part fifty-three voted in support of compulsory card payments being a condition of licensing and twelve voted against this.

It should be noted that whilst there is now more support for the proposal we do not wish to see drivers losing their licences for any genuine reason as to why a card payment was refused as there are circumstances where there may be a legitimate reason.

We would also like consideration given to drivers being able to notify Licensing when there may be a faulty card reader which is being replaced to ensure that this covers the driver.

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