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Perth & Kinross Council

Licensing Committee Members

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Appeal to the Licensing Committee to extend usage of vehicle as a public hire vehicle

Dear Members of the Committee,

I have vehicle registration number NA13XPM which is a 7-seater Seat Alhambra the vehicle is licensed to carry 6 passengers with Perth & Kinross Council as a Public Hire Vehicle, the vehicle is Licence Number TO 1. I purchased the vehicle in August 2016 when it was 3 years old, it was bought to replace an older Seat Alhambra I had been using. One of the reasons I purchased this size of vehicle was to cater for the number of passenger seats required for a Perth & Kinross Council School Contract I had at the time, the contract had 2 years remaining and ran until the end of the academic year in June 2018.

In July 2018 during the tendering exercise, I retendered for the same contract which required the same amount of passenger seats I was successful in that tender and was awarded the same contract. The contract was awarded for 3 years the contract would now run until end of school in June 2021. In 2021 when the contract was due to expire the vehicle would be 8 years old and therefore would have to be replaced. I had plans to apply for another contract in the tendering exercise in the July 2021, if successful in that tendering exercise depending how many seats were required for the contract would determine the size of vehicle I would need.

The country was put into lockdown on the 23rd of March 2020 due to the covid pandemic, over the period various covid restrictions were imposed throughout 2020 and 2021. As mentioned, I had planned to replace the vehicle In 2021 this was now put on hold due to the covid restrictions put in place by the government, fortunately by this time the council had extended the age of a vehicle which could be used as a Public Hire Vehicle, you could now use a vehicle until it was 10 years old.

I stopped all taxi hire work during the covid restriction period to reduce the spread of infection I worked throughout the covid restriction period on behalf of the Council. I continued with the school contract, during the more severe covid restrictions when the schools were closed I assisted with the transportation of key workers to and from work, I covered the nurses and staff at Cragieknowes Care Home. As a veteran I had been doing voluntary work for the previous 4 years for the charity fares4free, this voluntary work was also put on hold during the covid restriction period due to the possible spread of the infection. I did help fares4free during covid restrictions with veterans who were shielding and were not allowed to leave home. I received the veterans shopping list from a veteran's association by phone I would then do the shop and pay for it.

Wearing the appropriate PPE I then delivered the shopping to the front door of the veteran's home without close contact to the shielding veteran i had a wee chat with them then continued on my way, my bank account was then reimbursed by the appropriate veterans' association.

When considering the wear and tear and milage of the vehicle the amount of work I carried out during the covid restriction period the vehicle did not carry out near as much mileage as it would have done had the covid pandemic not happened. I would estimate that the vehicle over the 2-year period covered 20,000 to 30,000 less miles than it would have done had the pandemic not happened, this reduced milage and usage although it doesn't reduce the age of the vehicle it significantly reduced the wear and tear of the vehicle. Although my income was reduced over the covid period, I didn't claim for any Self-employed Income Support from the government or for any of the government grants that were available as my income didn't fall below the level at which you could claim for financial support.

In April 2021 the Public Transport Unit at the Council made the decision to offer operators an extension to the school contracts for 2 years, the offer was that contracts would be extended until end of term in June 2023, I accepted that extension. I presume that there will be a major tendering exercise in June and into the month of July 2023 and contracts will be awarded before Schools commence on the 16th August 2023.

The vehicle had its last 6 monthly fit for purpose test on the 22 July 2022, the next test is due on the 21st January 2023. The vehicle is 10 years old on the 17th May 2023, this is only 6 weeks before the term ends on the 29 June 2023 and only 9 weeks before the date that the 6 month fit for purpose test carried out in January 2023 would expire if the vehicle was under 10 years old. Taking all this into consideration I have decided to put a case forward to the Licensing Committee to request an extension to the use of the vehicle beyond the age of 10 years.

I intend to tender for a school contract in the June/July 2023 tendering exercise. If I am successful in the tendering exercise, then depending how many passenger seats are required to fulfil the contract would then determine the size of vehicle I would need. I expect the results of the tendering exercise to be published sometime in July 2023. I am making this application to the Licencing committee to grant me permission to use vehicle registration number NA13XPM until the 21st July 2023 which would be the end of the 6-month period that starts when the vehicle is tested on the 21st January 2023. If my application for the extension is granted this would allow me time to purchase a vehicle and give me the opportunity of purchasing the appropriate size of vehicle depending how many seats would be required if I was awarded a school contract. The price of second-hand cars has risen dramatically over the past 18 months, however if a 7-seater vehicle is required then so be it, the vehicle and its cost will be appropriate to the contract. If a smaller 5 seater was to suffice and accommodate the council contract or if I was unsuccessful in the tendering exercise then I would most likely decide to purchase a 5 seater vehicle which would considerably lower my financial commitment.

Yours sincerely

Peter John Pendlebury

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