

09 November 2021 14:11

I am emailing as Alex Chalk MP has been contacted by a constituent regarding WAV taxi's that can be booked in advance.

We were wondering if the Council held a list of which private hire vehicles that are WAVs and the contact details for the drivers that we may be able to pass on to the constituent?

Dear Licensing

Videos footage attached

The early hours of Sun Morning 24th October.

Vid1

In this video you will see a wheelchair accessible vehicle in front of me. There is another WAV in front of plate 246 also and one directly behind me.

As I approach the front of the queue you will see a wheelchair user on your right hand side. At this point there is no attempt by the Marshalls to instruct a WAV to take the wheelchair customer.

The WAV in front of Plate 246 picks up other customers.

Plate 246 suddenly realises he may have to pick up the Wheelchair customer so he attempts to leave the rank but the WAV in front of him pulls off

and the Marshall in the yellow jacket points him to pull over further up the queue and instructs two young ladies going to Gloucester to enter his vehicle.

So that's 2 WAVs that I'm aware of have left the rank without picking up the wheelchair user.

Vid2

As I approach the front of the queue the Marshall in the black jacket tells the W- customer to get into my saloon car (anyone who refuses customers this Marshall always seems to direct refused customers to me specifically

as I rarely refuse custom) I explain that there is a wheelchair car directly behind me. I would have had no issues if the customer would have preferred a saloon car but in this case it wasn't the case. You can see through my back window the w-customer making his way onto the main side of the road to speak to me on my left - which is dangerous for the user.

I ask whether he would prefer a WAV as there was one directly behind me - he informs that he's already been waiting 30mins for one !!!!

Vid3

I get out of my car to instruct the WAV to pick up the waiting WAV customer and inform the Marshall to make sure that the driver does not make any excuses.

A driver know as SERGIO (sorry don't know his plate) does pull off to the side to eventually pick up the W- customer.

This is totally unacceptable behaviour from the Marshalls and drivers who clearly avoided the pick

up !

So therefore I leave it to your discretion to assess the video evidence provided.

(Vids had to be compressed down in size so quality has been lost but its still clear enough to see what is going on)

Council, 18 October 2021

Public Questions

**Question from ... to the Cabinet Member Customer and Regulatory Services,
Councillor Martin Horwood**

Wheelchair taxi situation is a little crazy. I'd need a private hire car to get my wheelchair into town - usually Dial-a Cab - to find some wheelchair taxis in the middle of town. Can we have some liberalisation for other Private Hire wheelchair accessible vehicles ? Dial a Cab are run off their wheels trying to meet the needs of wheelchair users who can't always use the Cabs on taxi ranks.

04 October 2021 15:08

Dear all

I am writing this email with disgust at the way your licencing department are treating My daughter and other wheelchair users as second class citizens in Cheltenham.

When it comes to your decision to make all taxis in the town Wav. And your dept giving drivers brand spanking new Wav cars, but can only be used at taxi ranks disgusting. You are taking drivers away from taxi company's in the town and deminishing the company's Wav vehicles they have available.

I am now going to tell you a story of my disabled daughter who is a powerchair user.

Cloe my daughter, She is 20 years old, Cloe has a connective tissue disorder, She suffers from Chronic pain, Chronic fatigue and many other problems including Raynaud's, She cannot walk far without one of her Joints dislocating, She relies on her powerchair to get out the house in the mornings.

Cloe has now started Her second year at the University of Gloucestershire taking Primary education as her subject, Her main goal to become a primary school teacher.

She has also received at distinction for Cyber security from Gloscol

Cloe starts Uni most mornings at 9am, She USED to be able to get a Wav Taxi from a Company.

Not any more she can't, Your licencing department have caused this,

There are not enough drivers with Wav taxis to be able to get a taxi now so Cloe cant get to University in the mornings. Cloe now has to TRY and get a bus, Now as you should be aware Stagecoach buses have also got major problems and so many buses are being cancelled and our bus route A is one of the routes being affected. There is now no guarantee that Cloe can now get a bus to University,

And also because the cold wet winter weather is setting in Cloe is having to set off for University at 7.15am, and its having a detrimental effect on her health and I'm extremely worried for her when she has to leave so early, This also has a effect of Cloe's Raynaud's, Her feet and hands turn Blue!

Cloe is not a second class citizen, She is a bright and majorly outstanding young lady who doesn't deserve to be treated unfairly and its your department which is causing this. Your department is causing Cloe ill health. Cloe is not the only one, All over Cheltenham disabled people are being treated unfairly because of you.

Maybe you should try spending more than a hour in a wheelchair and living my daughter's life for a while to see what struggles she had to face on a daily basis.

What are you going to do about it,

28/09/2021 16:52

Hello there,

I have been given this email address to use by the Twitter account operative.

I'll just give a little background....

My Husband is severely disabled and is a full-time wheelchair user. For a number of years we've travelled from Woking in our adapted car to visit Cheltenham for the Jazz, Science and Literary Festivals.

Sometimes during our stay, we've opted to hire a taxi to an event rather than try to find a car park as it's always difficult for us with an 8ft side ramp to find the right parking for our needs in the town during festival time.

It has not been a particular problem to book a cab in the past, although if we've tried to get a taxi from the Montpellier Gdns ranks, they have not wanted to take us as passengers and we've often suspected or felt that we were being given excuses as to why they wouldn't accept us for the tender.

Anyway, during lockdown, Husband has suffered a further relapse in his MS symptoms and we decided to get a new car with further adaptations to enable him to continue driving – which was due with us – now.

Sadly, the car is not even in the country yet, so we've had to find another way to visit the town next month for the literary festival. This has taken an awful lot of planning – not least because my Husband's condition requires a lot of equipment for his comfort and everyday-life. I've had to order more compact or folding items and we've had practice runs with local taxi firms to make sure they can get us and all the equipment in so we can travel to the train station at Reading and onwards to Cheltenham.

All fine – until we try to book a taxi from Cheltenham Spa station to get us just over a mile up the road to Premier inn in Henrietta Street.

We've tried companies we've used before, we've tried many others too – all of which are advertising specifically on their websites that they offer an accessible taxi service, but ALL are giving us what seem to be excuses for not taking the job on – even before we tell them what is required. As I mentioned to the person manning the Twitter account, perhaps because we've had a negative

experience in the town with cabs before, it has somewhat coloured our judgement, but it was beginning to feel discriminatory....

My contact from Twitter suggested I send an email to you so that we could be advised why there seems to be an issue in finding something suitable for our requirements – but also to try to get help for our situation – and frankly, the whole trip hinges on us being able to get from the station to our hotel – and obviously back again for the return journey. Walking what may seem a short way with all the equipment we have is not an option.

We've found a list on the Council website of all the local owners of accessible vehicles – but no contact details, and we've also left a voice message at the department we were put through to by the person answering calls on the general telephone number, but nobody has got back to us yet.

Currently, we have had to book with a company in Gloucester who will charge us £40 surcharge – plus, I assume the journey fee. A ridiculous amount, but one we're just about happy to pay for peace of mind and knowing we won't get stranded at the station.

I really would be grateful if you could get back to me on this one – life caring for someone so disabled is challenging and difficult enough as it is – we've NEVER had such problems with taxis before wherever we have been – and despite all our obstacles, we've travelled a lot to many different places in the past.

Thank you for your time and for reading this email.

I look forward to hearing from you,

From: Collette Sekulic <Collette.Sekulic@cheltenham.gov.uk>
Sent: 28 September 2021 11:30
To: Internet - Licensing <Licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk>
Subject: List of WAVs online, but how do you contact the drivers?

Good morning,

xx on xx left a voicemail this morning asking for help in finding a WAV. He can see the list we have of driver names on our webpage, but there are no contact numbers? He has tried many companies but cannot find a WA taxi.

There is also a voicemail from xx at Cheltenham Radio that says he has a friend with the same issue (might be the customer above) and would like to know what we can do to help. He asked us to email our response to xx

Many thanks,

Collette Sekulic

Business Support Officer

From: Katie Sandey <katie.sandey@cheltenham.gov.uk>
Sent: 28 September 2021 11:16

To: Louis Krog <Louis.Krog@cheltenham.gov.uk>

Subject: twitter

Hi Louis

Can anyone in your team advise – see the below twitter thread.

Thanks, Katie

Completely frustrated. We've organised everything carefully & in minute detail for a planned trip to [@CheltLitFest](#) for my wheelchair-using Husband. I've reduced the vital equipment he needs for taking on the train to get us there, booked taxis this end to the station - BUT.....

[10:03 AM · Sep 28, 2021 · Twitter Web App](#)

[1 Like 1h](#)

Replying to

NOBODY in Cheltenham seems to have a wheelchair accessible taxi to get us from the train station there to the central [@TravelodgeUK](#) in the town - and yet we KNOW we've used one before. [@CheltenhamBC](#) can you help us? Our whole trip hinges on this part of our journey!

From: xx <xx@activeimpact.org.uk>

Sent: 16 August 2021 13:20

To: Internet - Licensing <Licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk>

Subject: WAV Hackney Carriage Licences Holders contact details

Hello,

I wonder if you could help us by supplying a list of licence holders in Cheltenham who have Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles please?

Historically, our disabled colleague has used Dial-a-Cab. But when we called to arrange a new account with them this week they stated they cannot offer pre-bookings for WAV customers which is an essential requirement for our colleague, meaning we now need a new provider.

We are looking for several providers who could accept prebookings to enable our colleague to travel to and in work. Usually this is done on an account basis and paid by Access to Work, however, we are happy to pay directly until the account details can be put in place.

many thanks,

xxx

CEO



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Mobile: xxx Web: www.activeimpact.org.uk

Facebook: [@activeimpact](https://www.facebook.com/activeimpact)

Twitter: [@ActiveImpactUK](https://twitter.com/ActiveImpactUK)

Instagram: [@active_impact_glos](https://www.instagram.com/active_impact_glos)

[Join our inclusive online community to find things to do that work for you:](http://www.yourewelcomeglos.org)

www.yourewelcomeglos.org

From: xx <xx@hotmail.co.uk>

Date: Monday, 18 Oct 2021, 2:05 pm

To: Councillor Martin Horwood <Clr.Martin.Horwood@cheltenham.gov.uk>

Subject: Taxis

Dear Mr. Horwood,

I hope you can give me some answers as to why it is impossible to pre- book or even to arrange a wheelchair taxi on the day- (to take my friend home from a nursing home for a day visit) before the pandemic we never had a problem, she came home a day a week.

Every week I try to book a taxi (as I'm not allowed to pre-book) mostly without success. Recently on local news it confirmed Cheltenham had 70 wheelchair taxis so

Why are they not doing pick-ups.? From what I've been told by a taxi rank driver I can get one from town centre or Pittville St. IF I push my friend to town!! If I could do this I wouldn't need a taxi. I believe this issue is totally wrong. To- day I've rang at least 7 taxi companies NO success. Surely this is breaking the Disabled discrimination Act.

I hope you can help or pass my concerns onto the correct person,

Yours faithfully,

xxx

Sent from my iPad

From: xx@yahoo.com <xx@yahoo.com>

Date: Thursday, 07 Oct 2021, 3:48 pm

To: Councillor Martin Horwood <Clr.Martin.Horwood@cheltenham.gov.uk>

Subject: Wheelchair accessible taxis

Dear Martin,

Wheelchair accessible taxis

I am prompted to write by the article in last week's Echo on the scrapping the plan to make all "hackney carriages" wheelchair accessible. I would have written after the previous article, but we mistakenly understood from

something Dilys Barrel said that Cheltenham was simply implementing national policy.

I would be most grateful if you could send me the detailed analysis on which the original decision was made. It would be inappropriate for me to comment in detail before seeing the full information, but I have a strong personal stake in the matter. For some years now the onset of old age has given me considerable mobility problems, but not disabling enough to make me use a wheelchair. (I note with approval that most public toilets have a sign that not all disabilities are visible.) In particular, without going into all the details, for over 5 years I have found it almost impossible to use a London taxi, and a ramp would not help. Elsewhere, I use a taxi resembling a private car.

Even before seeing the paperwork, I very much welcome Ann Lightfoot's comment that we should be "working towards equality of access for all."

Best wishes,

xxx