

Present: Councillor Pat Vaughan (*in the Chair*),
Councillor Loraine Woolley, Councillor Alan Briggs,
Councillor Martin Christopher and Councillor
Adrianna McNulty

Apologies for Absence: None.

35. Confirmation of Minutes - 12 December 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a true record.

36. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

37. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be a disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

38. To Interview An Existing Driver Who Has Failed To Disclose A Conviction For Driving Without Insurance 01/2025

The Licensing Officer:

- a) advised of the reason for this hearing to determine whether the licence holder was a fit and proper person to continue to hold a private hire driver's licence
- b) reported that Members must approach this matter bearing in mind the objectives of this licensing regime which was intended, among other things, to ensure so far as possible that those licensed to drive private hire vehicles were suitable persons to do so, namely that they were safe drivers with good driving records and adequate experience, sober, mentally and physically fit, honest, and not persons who would take advantage of their employment to abuse or assault passengers
- c) added that it was right to regard a licence holder as fit and proper if adequate evidence of good character and record was adduced and there was no reason to question or doubt it
- d) referred to the determined policy to be applied to licence holders developed to set-out a range of robust measures to protect taxi and private hire vehicle passengers, particularly those most vulnerable; the onus was on the licence holder to explain to the Sub-Committee why it should depart from its policy

- e) highlighted that the existing driver had provided the Sub-Committee with a written statement and a character reference from his operator, prior to the hearing which needed to be considered as part of their decision
- f) confirmed that the question to be answered by the Sub-Committee was, “would a member of the Licensing Committee be comfortable in allowing their son, daughter, spouse or partner, mother or father, grandchild or any persons for whom they care, to get into a private hire vehicle with this person?”
- g) highlighted the provisions contained within the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy
- h) requested that Members provide full and frank reasons for their decision within the decision notice to be issued to the licence holder.

The existing driver had been informed in a letter that he could take legal advice about this matter and also that he could bring an interpreter to the hearing. The existing driver had brought along a colleague to offer him support.

The Sub-Committee asked the existing driver appropriate questions to determine whether he were a fit and proper person to continue to hold a Private Hire Driver's Licence.

The decision was made as follows:

1. That the existing driver be permitted the renewal of his Private Hire Driver's Licence.
2. A strongly worded letter be sent to the existing driver to outline and reiterate the high standards, expectations and behaviours expected from a Private Hire Licence holder and to remind him of the importance of complying with the licence conditions.