

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Pat Vaughan, Councillor Alan Briggs, Cullen,
Rob Cuffling and Louise Simpson

1. Confirmation of Minutes - 11 April 2024

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Pat Vaughan and Councillor Alan Briggs. Vice-Chair, Councillor Loraine Woolley took the Chair.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a true record.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

3. 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.

4. To Interview An Applicant Who Has A Previous Relevant Offence - Item No 05/2024

The Licensing Officer:

- a) advised of the reason for this hearing to determine whether the applicant was a fit and proper person to be granted a Hackney Carriage and 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 as well as agreeing to the implementation of the Statutory Best Practice Taxi Private Hire Standards, 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) confirmed that the question to be answered by the Sub-Committee following the introduction of the best practice standards was, "Without any prejudice, and based on the information before you, would you allow a person for whom you care, regardless of their condition, to travel alone in a vehicle driven by this person at any time of day or night?", and that if, on the balance of probabilities, the answer to the question was 'no', the individual should not hold a licence
- f) confirmed provisions contained within the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and Statutory Best Practice Taxi and Private Hire Standards
- g) requested that Members provide full and frank reasons for their decision within the decision notice to be issued to the applicant.

The applicant had been informed in a letter that she could take legal advice about this matter and also that she could bring an interpreter to the hearing, however she had chosen to come alone.

The Sub-Committee asked the applicant appropriate questions to determine whether she were a fit and proper person to hold a Private Hire licence.

The decision was made as follows:

- a) That the applicant be granted a Private Hire Driver's Licence subject to being sent a strongly worded letter to outline and reiterate the high standards, expectations and behaviours that were expected of a Private Hire Driver Licence holder.

5. To Interview An Existing Driver Who Has A Conviction For Using A Mobile Or Handheld Device While Driving - Item No 06/2024

The Licensing Officer:

- a) advised of the reason for this hearing to determine whether the applicant was a fit and proper person to be granted a Hackney Carriage and 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 as well as agreeing to the implementation of the Statutory Best Practice Taxi Private Hire Standards, 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) confirmed that the question to be answered by the Sub-Committee following the introduction of the best practice standards was, “Without any prejudice, and based on the information before you, would you allow a person for whom you care, regardless of their condition, to travel alone in a vehicle driven by this person at any time of day or night?”, and that if, on the balance of probabilities, the answer to the question was ‘no’, the individual should not hold a licence
- f) confirmed provisions contained within the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy and Statutory Best Practice Taxi and Private Hire Standards
- g) requested that Members provide full and frank reasons for their decision within the decision notice to be issued to the applicant.

The applicant 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, however he had chosen to come alone.

The Sub-Committee asked the applicant appropriate questions to determine whether he were a fit and proper person to hold a Private Hire licence.

The decision was made as follows:

That the applicant be granted a Private Hire Driver’s Licence subject to being sent a strongly worded letter outlining the high standards, expectations and behaviours expected from a Private Hire Driver Licence holder.