

Regulatory Sub-Committee

Minutes - 1 February 2024

Attendance

Members of the Regulatory Sub-Committee

Cllr Zee Russell (Chair)
Cllr Gillian Wildman
Cllr Jonathan Crofts

Employees

Greg Bickerdike	Licensing Manager
Lorraine Jones	Service Lead – Licensing
Balvinder Meetca	Section Leader – Licensing
Ronald Sempebwa	Solicitor
Donna Cope	Democratic Services Officer

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
There were no apologies for absence.
- 2 Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3 Exclusion of press and public**
Resolved:
That, in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act relating to any individual.
- 4 Application for a Private Hire Vehicle Operator's Licence**
The Chair invited Greg Bickerdike (Licensing Manager), Lorraine Jones, (Service Lead Licensing), Balvinder Meetca, (Section Leader Licensing), and the Applicant (ZK) into the Hearing. The Chair led round-table introductions and outlined the procedure to be followed.

Greg Bickerdike, Licensing Manager, outlined the report regarding an application for a Private Hire Vehicle Operator's Licence, which had been circulated to all parties in advance of the meeting. The matter had been referred to the Sub-Committee by an authorised employee of the council for further consideration to be given as to whether ZK was a fit and proper person to hold a Private Hire Vehicle Operator's Licence due to the information outlined in the report.

All parties were invited to question the Licensing Manager on the report. The Licensing Manager responded to questions asked.

The Chair invited the Applicant to make representations.

ZK explained in detail how the incidents had occurred and acknowledged the mistakes he had made. He stated that he had been in the business for 25 years and had no previous issues.

All parties were invited to question ZK on his submission. ZK responded to questions asked and concerns were raised regarding the management structure and legality of his company.

During the discussion, ZK became irritated and felt that the level of questioning was unfair.

The Chair asked ZK to leave the room.

ZK left the room.

Resolved:

That, Licensing Services would write to the applicant to assess whether they would like to reconvene the hearing or withdraw their application.

- 5 **Application for a Private Hire Vehicle Operator's Licence**
The Chair invited Greg Bickerdike (Licensing Manager), Lorraine Jones, (Service Lead Licensing), Balvinder Meetca, (Section Leader Licensing), and the Applicants (CD) and (KR) into the Hearing. The Chair led round-table introductions and outlined the procedure to be followed.

Balvinder Meetca, Section Leader Licensing, outlined the report regarding an application for a Private Hire Vehicle Operator's Licence, which had been circulated to all parties in advance of the meeting. The matter had been referred to the Sub-Committee by an authorised employee of the council for further consideration to be given as to whether CD and KR were fit and proper persons to hold a Private Hire Vehicle Operator's Licence due to the information outlined in the report.

All parties were invited to question the Section Leader on the report. No questions were asked.

The Chair invited the Applicants to make representations.

KR stated that he had learnt from his mistakes and turned his life around. He had a clean record now and wanted to earn an honest living.

CD explained that his convictions occurred during a bad time in his life and had made him the better person he was today.

All parties were invited to question KR and CD on their submissions.

KR and CD explained the circumstances that led to their convictions and the devastating impact it had on them and their families. They explained how they had learnt from their mistakes and how they used their business to help the community.

The Chair invited the Applicants to make a final statement. CD did so.

Ronald Sempebwa, Licensing Solicitor, provided legal guidance to Members and reminded them of their available options.

The Licensing Manager, Service Lead, Section Leader, KR and CD left the meeting to allow the Sub-Committee to determine the matter.

The Hearing adjourned at 12.49 hours.

The Hearing reconvened at 13.05 hours.

All parties were invited back into the meeting, and the Chair confirmed the decision of the Sub-Committee.

Resolved:

That, having considered all the evidence presented at the Hearing, both written and oral, the Statutory Regulatory Sub-Committee were satisfied on the evidence provided that it was appropriate to depart from the Council's guidelines and finds the Applicants, fit and proper to hold a private hire vehicle operator licence.

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