

## LICENSING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 12 FEBRUARY 2026

**Present:** Councillor Woodward (Chair);  
Councillors Tarar (Vice-Chair), Asare, Dennis, Keane, Leng, Magon, Rowland, DP Singh, Stevens and Thompson

**Apologies:** Councillors Edwards

### 4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 22 July 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 5. HACKNEY CARRIAGE & PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY

Further to Minute 2 of the meeting held on 22 July 2025, the Committee considered a report seeking approval of the proposed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Policy. The following documents were appended to the report:

- Appendix 1 - Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy
- Appendix 2 - Comments Summary Document and Consultation Responses
- Appendix 3 - Proposed Changes to Hackney Carriage Driver's Byelaws, Conditions and Penalty Points System
- Appendix 4 - Proposed Changes to Private Hire Driver's Conditions and Penalty Points System

The report reminded the Committee that the intention of the Policy was to combine several existing policies relating to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles, drivers and private hire operators, including driver, operator and vehicle conditions, into a single, cohesive policy document.

The Licensing Applications Committee had resolved that the draft Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy, be published for public consultation with the hackney carriage and private hire vehicle trades for a minimum of eight weeks. The consultation was published online via the Council's Consultation Hub from 26 August 2025 to 27 October 2025. The Reading Taxi Association, Reading Private Hire Driver's Association and operators were informed of the consultation, emails were sent to licensed drivers and details of the consultation were added to the Taxi Licensing section of the Council website and email signatures of Licensing Officers and members of Business Support. The Licensing Team also held four drop-in meetings at the Civic Offices and at All Saints church hall to engage with the taxi and private hire trades and to answer questions or help with accessing the consultation portal. Drivers were also asked to spread the word within their networks.

In total 137 different individuals made 2,178 comments on the proposed policy document via the consultation portal and emails that had been sent directly to the Licensing Team. These included a written response from the Reading Taxi Association and a number of emails from individuals and operators. The comments were collated and ordered within an

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excel spreadsheet according to the sections of the policy document they related to and were attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

The report explained that, having considered the consultation feedback, officers had made amendments to the Policy where it was considered appropriate to do so, bearing in mind current legislation and the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards and details of these were set out in sections 3.8 to 3.30 of the report. Appendices 3 and 4 to the report set out the detailed changes to the Hackney Carriage Driver's Byelaws, Conditions and Penalty Points Scheme and the Private Hire Driver's Conditions and Penalty Points Scheme respectively made following the consultation exercise.

The report explained that one of the key changes in response to the consultation was the retention of the School Transport Driver's Licence, although School Transport Vehicles and Operators Licences regime would be discontinued and incorporated into Private Hire Vehicle and Operators Licences. Existing Licences would be updated upon renewal for vehicle and one-year operators' licences, or within one year of approval of the policy for operators with a five-year licence.

Licensing Officers had met with the hackney carriage and private hire trades on 4 December 2025 to provide feedback on the responses received and the amendments that had been made to the proposed Policy as a result of the consultation.

At the invitation of the Chair the following attendees addressed the Committee on the item and responded to questions from the Committee:

- Ashif Rashid - Representing Reading Taxi Association
- Jasvir Singh - Representing Reading Private Hire Association
- Moe Afzal - Ruby Cars
- John Purvis - (on behalf of Nazreen Abbas, Queen Bee Cars and Berkshire Mobility Transport)
- Zulfoqar Hussain
- Zara Crookes

Sikander Hayat had requested to speak on behalf of the Private Hire Operators, but was not present at the meeting.

Councillor Ennis was present at the meeting and, at the invitation of the Chair, spoke to the report in his capacity as the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport.

At the meeting the Committee discussed the report and proposed policy and considered the representations made by the attendees. The Committee also questioned Licensing Officers on the Policy and accompanying documents, particularly with regard to the second sentence of condition 6.1 requiring approval of Hackney Carriage livery "The first cab of any contract must be presented to Council offices for inspection of the finished livery", given recent advances in 3D renditions, and the practicalities involved in operators having to prepare just one vehicle for approval.

**Resolved –**

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**That the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy, as appended to the report, be approved subject to the removal of the second sentence from section 6.1 of Appendix G to the Policy.**

(The meeting closed at 8.48 pm)