

**LICENSING APPLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
8 MAY 2025**

Present: Councillors Woodward (Chair), Asare and Magon.

51. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

52. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved –

That, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following item of business as it was likely that there would be disclosures of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5 specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

53. AN APPLICATION FOR THE RENEWAL OF A PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE DRIVER'S LICENCE, REPORTS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE SUSPENSION/REVOCATION OF PRIVATE HIRE AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE DRIVER'S LICENCES AND AN APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF A PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE.

The Sub-Committee considered a report that set out the cases relating to the following individuals:

- An application to consider the renewal of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver's Licence. Licence Holder: MAH (Appendix 1);
- An application to consider the suspension/revocation of a Private Hire Driver's Licence. Licence Holder: SSA (Appendix 2);
- An application to consider the suspension/revocation of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver's Licence. Licence Holder: MWA (Appendix 3);
- An application to consider the grant of a Private Hire Vehicle Operator's Licence. Licence Holder: FH (Appendix 4);

Summaries detailing the circumstances relating to each case were attached to the report at Appendices 1 to 4.

MAH and his representative Adonis Daniel, Andrew Storch Solicitors, attended the meeting, addressed the Sub-Committee and responded to questions.

SSA attended the meeting, addressed the Sub-Committee and responded to questions. Mr William Donne, Silver Fox Consultants, attended the meeting in the role of a McKenzie Friend to support SSA.

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MWA and his representative, Mr William Donne, Silver Fox Consultants, attended the meeting, addressed the Sub-Committee and asked and responded to questions.

FH did not attend the meeting and in the interests of fairness, the Sub-Committee agreed that consideration of the application for grant of Private Hire Vehicle Operator's Licence be deferred to the next meeting to allow them to be present.

Tabitha Shaw, RBC Licensing Team, presented the report to the Sub-Committee and asked and responded to questions. Mike Harding, Clyde Masson and Ben Williams, RBC Licensing Team also attended the meeting, addressed the Sub-Committee and asked and responded to questions.

In reaching its decisions the Sub-Committee gave due consideration to the written material contained in the paperwork, the video and oral evidence provided at the meeting, and to relevant legislation, guidance and the policies of Reading Borough Council, and in particular:

- The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions Act) Act 1976;
- The Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022;
- The Secretary of State's Guidance;
- The Equality Act 2010;
- Reading Borough Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Convictions Policy;
- Reading Borough Council's School Transport Vehicle Operator Conditions;
- Reading Borough Council's Private Hire Vehicle Operator Conditions;
- Reading Borough Council's Private Hire Vehicle Driver Conditions & Penalty Points Enforcement System;
- All of the documents provided for the meeting, including the additional information circulated via email, and;
- The Fit and Proper Person Test.

Resolved –

- (1) That the application for the renewal of the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver's Licence in respect of MAH be refused due to the Sub-Committee not considering MAH to be a fit and proper person to hold such a licence for the following reasons:
 - (a) The failure to declare the conviction on his application form;
 - (b) The nature of the offence which was classed as a major conviction under the Council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Convictions Policy;
 - (c) The failure to declare that another Licensing Authority had refused a licence;
 - (d) The lack of honesty when completing the application form.

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- (2) That the Hackney Carraige Vehicle Driver's Licence in respect of SSA be revoked with immediate effect for reasons of public safety and due to the Sub-Committee not considering SSA to be a fit and proper person to hold such a licence for the following reasons:
- (a) The video and photographic evidence showing SSA making the same unlawful manoeuvre on two separate occasions;
 - (b) The video evidence showing SSA's dangerous driving and lack of consideration for other road users including an elderly pedestrian using a crossing;
 - (c) SSAs lack of awareness of their poor driving, the need to follow clear road signage and the need for licensed drivers to be held to a higher standard of driving;
 - (d) SSAs attempts to dilute his behaviour by stating that all taxi drivers in Reading carried out the same unlawful manoeuvre;
 - (e) The Sub-Committee noted that SSA had a long history of non-compliance leading to periods of suspension and did not have confidence that SSA would not continue to repeat the poor driving in the future therefore putting other road users at risk.
- (3) That the Private Hire Vehicle Driver's licence in respect of MWA be revoked with immediate effect for reasons of public safety and due to the Sub-Committee not considering MWA to be a fit and proper person to hold such a licence for the following reasons;
- (a) The Officers' video clip clearly showed MWA failing the Test Purchase by agreeing to a fare with no prior booking, and doing this when illegally parked, and when not wearing his badge;
 - (b) MWA had regularly committed plying for hire infractions, throughout his time whilst licensed. This was a criminal offence, and it also invalidated his insurance;
 - (c) MWA had previously served two suspensions and had also committed a series of more minor infractions with a total of 54 penalty points recorded against him from 2009 and 2024;
 - (d) The Sub-Committee was concerned that MWA had been dishonest by denying any previous recorded instances of plying for hire when interviewed under caution
- (4) That the application for the renewal of a Private Hire Vehicle Operator's Licence in respect of FH be deferred to allow them to attend the meeting.

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MAH, SSA and MWA were informed of the right to appeal to the Magistrates Court.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraph 1, 2, 3 and 5)

(The meeting started at 9.30 am and closed at 1.10 pm)