

**LICENSING APPLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
2 JULY 2026**

Present: Councillors Woodward (Chair), Gurung and Keane.

5. 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.

6. APPLICATIONS FOR THE GRANT AND RENEWAL OF PRIVATE HIRE AND SCHOOL TRANSPORT VEHICLE DRIVER'S LICENCES AND REPORTS TO CONSIDER THE SUSPENSION/REVOCATION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE DRIVER'S LICENCES.

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

- An application for the grant of a Private Hire (School Transport) Driver's Licence. Applicant: AA. (Case at Appendix 1);
- A report to consider the suspension/revocation of a Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence. Driver: RA. (Case at Appendix 2);
- A report to consider an application for the renewal of a Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence. Driver: RA. (Case at Appendix 3);
- A report to consider the suspension/revocation of a Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence. Driver: MRA. (Case at Appendix 4);
- A report to consider the suspension/revocation of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver's Licence. Driver: KB. (Case at Appendix 5).

Detailed reports setting out each case were attached at Appendices 1 to 5. Additional information relating to the case at Appendix 4 had been circulated to members of the Sub-Committee on 30 June and 1 July 2026, following publication of the agenda papers.

AA did not attend the meeting. No explanation for their absence was received by Licensing Officers.

RA attended the hearing, addressed the Sub-Committee and responded to questions. RA was accompanied by their spouse. The Sub-Committee considered the matters set out at Appendices 2 and 3 concurrently, as both cases concerned the same underlying facts and circumstances.

MRA attended the hearing, addressed the Sub-Committee and responded to questions.

KB did not attend the meeting. No explanation for their absence was received by Licensing Officers.

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Nicola Butler, Senior Licensing Enforcement Officer, presented the reports to the Sub-Committee and asked and responded to questions. Anthony Chawama, Licensing Enforcement Officer, also attended the hearing, addressed the Sub-Committee and asked and responded to questions. Riley Timney, Licensing Enforcement Officer, also attended the hearing.

In reaching its decisions the Sub-Committee endeavoured throughout to strike a fair balance between the interests of the applicant and licence holders and the concerns of the Licensing Officers, but its overriding consideration was to the safeguarding of the public.

The Sub-Committee also gave due consideration to the written material contained in the paperwork, the oral evidence provided at the meeting, and to relevant legislation, guidance and the policies of Reading Borough Council (RBC), this included but was not limited to:

- The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions Act) Act 1976;
- The Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022;
- The Equality Act 2010;
- The relevant Secretary of State's Guidance;
- RBC's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (February 2026), including the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Convictions Policy;
- The relevant RBC driver, vehicle and operator conditions and penalty points schemes;
- All of the documents provided for the meeting, including the Additional Informational circulated to the Sub-Committee by email in relation to the case at Appendix 4; and
- The Fit and Proper Person Test.

Resolved –

- (1) That consideration of the application for a Private Hire (School Transport) Driver's Licence in respect of AA be deferred to a future meeting of the Licensing Applications Sub-Committee to provide AA with a further opportunity to attend the hearing and make representations in support of their application;
- (2) That, in the interests of fairness and natural justice, consideration of the application for the renewal of the Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence held by RA, together with the report concerning the possible suspension or revocation of the current licence, be deferred to a future meeting of the Licensing Applications Sub-Committee to enable RA to obtain and submit further relevant evidence. The Sub-Committee considered that such evidence may assist it in reaching a fully informed determination of the matters before it, including whether RA is a fit and proper person to hold a Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence;
- (3) That the Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence in respect of MRA be suspended for a period of 7 days pursuant to section 61 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, with the suspension to take effect 21 days following written notification of the decision;

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REASONS

- (a) In reaching its decision the Sub-Committee took into consideration the relevant policy documents outlined above, and to the written and oral evidence presented at the hearing.
- (b) The Sub-Committee considered that a 7-day suspension was appropriate to allow MRA time to reflect upon and refresh his understanding of the conditions attached to his licence and his obligations as a Private Hire Vehicle Driver, following his failure to fully and accurately disclose relevant information during his licence applications and his failure to notify the Licensing Authority of convictions, as required by his licence conditions.
- (c) The Sub-Committee carefully considered revocation, noting the seriousness of the offences and the Council's policy relating to violent offending. However, the Sub-Committee considered that, on this occasion, it was appropriate to depart from the policy for the following reasons:
 - (i) The email provided by his Probation Officer dated 1 May 2024.
 - (ii) His attitude and level of insight demonstrated during the hearing.
 - (iii) His expression of remorse.
 - (iv) His otherwise satisfactory licensing history and antecedent record.
- (d) The Sub-Committee considered that, given the circumstances of the case, a 7-day suspension was the proportionate response. It further considered that, following the period of suspension and reflection upon his obligations under his licence conditions, MRA would be a fit and proper person to hold a Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence.
- (4) That consideration of the report concerning the possible suspension or revocation of the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver's Licence held by KB be deferred to a future meeting of the Licensing Applications Sub-Committee to enable KB a further opportunity to attend the hearing and make representations in relation to the matter under consideration.

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

(The meeting started at 5 pm and closed at 7.48 pm)