

**LICENSING APPLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
13 AUGUST 2026**

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

11. 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.

12. HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE - LICENCE APPLICATIONS AND A CASE FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE SUSPENSION/REVOCATION OF A LICENCE

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

- A report to consider the suspension/revocation of a Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence. Driver: RA. (Case at Appendix 1);
- A report to consider an application for the renewal 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 Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver's Licence. Driver: ZS. (Case at Appendix 3);
- A report to consider an application for the renewal of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver's Licence. Driver: MS. (Case at Appendix 4).

Detailed reports setting out each case were attached at Appendices 1 to 4.

RA attended the hearing, addressed the Sub-Committee and responded to questions. RA was accompanied by his wife NAR. Both addressed the Sub-Committee and responded to questions. The Sub-Committee considered the matters set out at Appendices 1 and 2 concurrently, as both cases concerned the same underlying facts and circumstances.

ZS attended the hearing accompanied by his nephew SS. Both addressed the Sub-Committee and responded to questions.

MS attended the hearing accompanied by his daughter SK who assisted with translation. Both addressed the Sub-Committee and responded to questions.

Mike Harding, Licensing Enforcement Officer, presented the reports to the Sub-Committee and asked and responded to questions. Anthony Chawama, Riley Timney and Ben Williams, Licensing Enforcement Officers, also attended the hearing, addressed the Sub-Committee and asked and responded to questions. Clyde Masson, Principal Licensing Enforcement Officer, also attended the hearing for the consideration of Appendices 1 and 2.

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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 the Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence in respect of RA be revoked on the basis that RA was not a fit and proper person to hold the licence. This revocation would take effect at the end of 21 days after RA was formally informed of the decision.

REASONS

- (a) In coming to its decision, the Sub-Committee had taken into account the relevant legislation, the Reading Borough Council Licensing Policy and considered carefully the written evidence and the oral evidence presented to it at the hearing.
- (b) The Sub-Committee noted that RA had been subject to other contraventions during his licencing period but not any relating to safeguarding matters.
- (c) The Sub-Committee noted that RA had not, as advised in the previous sitting of the Sub-Committee on 02 July 2026, approached the police in a timely manner nor secured legal advice. RA's reason for this was that he was busy. RA finally contacted the police 24 days after the last Sub-Committee.
- (d) RA said he did not understand when the incident happened that he had a caution. RA said that he cannot remember being offered an interpreter and/or legal representation in the police station when he

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was interviewed. He said that he never signed anything nor admitted guilt.

- (e) The Sub-Committee heard that RA believed he received the caution for giving a lift to someone under 16. The caution was pursuant to S14 Sexual Offenders Act 1956.
 - (f) RA was insistent throughout that nothing more happened than giving the victim a lift.
 - (g) The Sub-Committee noted that RA and his wife's submissions were contradictory.
 - (h) The Sub-Committee noted that RA and his wife stated that it was incorrect that it said no on his recent renewal to the question about cautions/spent convictions.
 - (i) The Statutory Guidance set out the test for fitness to hold a licence, and the Sub-Committee was not satisfied that RA met that test.
 - (j) In light of all of the above, the Sub-Committee found that RA was not a fit and proper person to hold a private hire driver's licence. RA's licence was therefore revoked.
 - (k) RA can appeal against this decision to Reading Magistrates' Court, Civic Centre, Castle Road, Reading, RG1 7TQ within the period of 21 days beginning with the day on which he was notified by the Licensing Authority of the decision appealed against.
- (2) That the application for renewal of the Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence in respect of RA not be considered, as the original licence had now been revoked (Minute 12(1) above refers).
- (3) That ZS's application to renew be granted with a warning as to future conduct as he was found on the balance of probability to be a fit and proper person to hold a Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence.

REASONS

- (a) In coming to its decision, the Sub-Committee had taken into account the relevant legislation, the Reading Borough Council Licensing Policy and considered carefully the written evidence and the oral evidence presented to it at the hearing.
- (b) ZS had failed to disclose a 2012 conviction for false imprisonment, for which he had received a 10-month custodial sentence, of which he had served approximately 3-4 months in prison.

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- (c) ZS, in 2022, did not declare the conviction on his renewal application. ZS said this was because he thought he did not have to declare it as it was a spent conviction. Despite being subsequently told he did need to disclose such a conviction even if spent and the fact that ZS confirmed he understood, he failed to declare it again on their renewal application in 2025.
 - (d) The Sub-Committee noted that ZS had not had any complaints or contraventions whilst holding a Hackney Carriage licence.
 - (e) ZS told the Sub-Committee that he and this son had completed the form together.
 - (f) ZS told the Sub-Committee that he now understood that he must continue to declare the conviction on every subsequent renewal.
 - (g) The Statutory Guidance sets out the test for fitness to hold a licence, and the Sub-Committee were satisfied that ZS met that test.
 - (h) In light of all of the above, the Sub-Committee found that ZS was a fit and proper person to hold a Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence and his licence was therefore granted.
- (4) That MS's application to renew be granted with a warning as to future conduct as he was found on the balance of probability to be a fit and proper person to hold a Hackney Carriage Driver's Licence.

REASONS

- (a) In coming to its decision, the Sub-Committee had taken into account the relevant legislation, the Reading Borough Council Licensing Policy and considered carefully the written evidence and the oral evidence presented to it at the hearing.
- (b) MS had failed to disclose an allegation of sexually assaulting a female passenger when working as an Uber driver. The incident was alleged to have occurred in January 2020. TFL revoked MS's licence as a result of this allegation. No criminal proceedings were pursued due to insufficient evidence.
- (c) It was noted by the Sub-Committee that MS stated that his licence was not revoked by TFL. MS stated that he did not receive either of the two letters sent by TFL nor the call made by TFL to them. MS told the Sub-Committee that he did not at any point contact TFL to clarify the situation.
- (d) The Licensing Team had been alerted to the alleged offence and revocation by shared information regarding the NR35 register.

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- (e) MS on more than one occasion had answered in the negative to the question on his renewal application to the questions concerning holding, being refused, revocation/suspension/refusal of a licence, which was incorrect.
- (f) The Sub-Committee further noted that MS had failed to disclose six penalty points on his DVLA licence. MS's explanation was that he thought when he did the course offered by DVLA, his points were not applied to their licence.
- (g) The Sub-Committee noted that MS explained that he had refused a fare because he did not take AMEX.
- (h) MS told the Sub-Committee that he now understood that he must continue to declare the events referred to, matters concerning his DVLA licence or any other matters in accordance with the Policy on every subsequent renewal.
- (i) The Statutory Guidance sets out the test for fitness to hold a licence, and the Sub-Committee were satisfied that MS met that test.
- (j) In light of all of the above, the Sub-Committee found that MS was a fit and proper person to hold a Hackney Carriage driver's licence. MS's licence was therefore granted.

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

(The meeting started at 9.30 am and closed at 12.45 pm)

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