

PUBLIC PROTECTION LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 21st September, 2021.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The meeting recording is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor J.W. Thomas (Chair); Councillor P. Drake (Vice-Chair); Councillors J. Aviet, Mrs. J.E. Charles, R. Crowley, V.P. Driscoll, O. Griffiths, K.F. McCaffer, M.J.G Morgan, J.M. Norman, R. Nugent-Finn, S.T. William and M.R. Wilkinson.

365 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Chairman read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing.”

366 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor A. Moore.

367 MINUTES –

RESOLVED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 15th June, 2021 be approved as a correct record.

368 DECLARATION OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

369 EXEMPTION FROM PRIVATE HIRE PLATES AND DOOR STICKER REQUIREMENTS (DEH) –

The Licensing Team Manager presented the report for Committee to consider a request by Mr Forbes to allow his vehicle, licensed Private Hire PH002, DFZ 500, to be exempt from the Vale of Glamorgan Council's conditions in relation to Private Hire Vehicle identification door stickers, and for the vehicle to be exempt from the requirement to display a Private Hire Licence Plate.

Committee were informed that Mr Forbes had also submitted a further email supporting his application and business model and how he proposed to establish his Executive Hire business.

The Chair subsequently invited Mr Forbes who was present at the meeting to address the Committee.

Mr Forbes explained that he fully understood the conditions that were in place, but that he was trying to do something different. His request to not have external door stickers and licence plate on display was due to the nature of the clients he would be looking to transport who required a level of anonymity and discretion and wouldn't use a taxi as they would be high-profile clients within the TV and film industry.

The Chair thanked Mr Forbes and asked Members if there were any questions.

Councillor Wiliam asked for an explanation as to why high-profile clients may not want people to know that they were in taxis. Mr Forbes replied that often they were being transported across the country, often from London, and come to South Wales for filming. They would not necessarily want to be identifiable in a car and being identifiable would take away from the executive nature of the vehicle. The windows of the vehicle would be blacked out from the factory. There were numerous TV and film studios in South Wales such as Bad Wolf, Pinewood and Dragon, all of whom have a requirement to carry passengers with discretion and can often be a contractual stipulation.

Mr Forbes informed the Committee that he had previously tried to do something similar whilst also doing some taxi work in another car and that car was damaged as a result. He explained he had no intention of doing taxi work and the focus would be on TV and film work, where often you could be with one person for a fixed period of time as 'their driver', etc. He planned to have a second car next year, licensed with the Vale of Glamorgan again, and then a third as and when finance allowed and build a fleet of executive cars to fit the business model. Ideally, he would like to be a studio's first choice of carrier. There would also be potential for weekend wedding work, especially with three cars available. Mr Forbes also explained that as the car was made of aluminium, there was no option for the use of magnetic door stickers.

Mr Forbes also referenced an email that had been circulated that morning from Paul Pearson, transport captain from Bad Wolf Studios, which was in addition to information already received and was shared on-screen with Members, for their information.

Councillor Nugent-Finn asked if there was any alternative that could be considered that would give the Vale of Glamorgan Council recognition as the licence permitter and to identify the vehicle as a licensed vehicle. Mr Forbes replied that he was not sure what alternatives there might be. The Licensing Team Manager advised that there was no other recognised alternative provision, just the door stickers and the license plate.

Councillor McCaffer expressed that there could be concern that vehicles are licensed and visible for passenger safety, and asked Mr Forbes if he was assuring the Committee that he would never be using the car for picking up the general public and work would be organised in advance. Mr Forbes stated that was correct.

Councillor Morgan wanted the same assurance. Mr Forbes stated that he hoped to be signed to contract from next year from the start to the end of a production, from

February to November / December, and so he would have a fixed employer over that period and not picking up the general public.

Councillor Wilkinson said that were there to be any concerns, Officers would be able to monitor the vehicle use and report any concerns as appropriate. She supported the request as this was a growing industry.

The Licensing Team Manager clarified that Mr Forbes' license was for private hire and as such he was not able to hailed or use taxi ranks and would have to be pre-booked. The Chair added that the vehicle could still be used as private hire and the Committee had to be content to take Mr Forbes at this word that the vehicle would not be used for that sort of work as legally, he would be allowed to do so.

Committee agreed unanimously to approve the exemption.

Mr Forbes asked if when he was in a position to license any second vehicle, potentially in February / March 2022 if he had to go through the same process again for that second vehicle. The Chair advised that was correct as the legislation required that each license was granted on its merits.

RESOLVED - T H A T exemption from both conditions 8 and 9 relating to Private Hire vehicles to Mr Forbes in respect of an application made for a Private Hire Vehicle Licence, for vehicle registration DFZ 500 be granted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

370 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC –

RESOLVED – T H A T under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 4 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act, the relevant paragraphs of the Schedule being referred to in brackets after the minute heading.

371 REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM VALE OF GLAMORGAN PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE CONDITION – CONDITION 9 FROM S (DEH) (EXEMPT INFORMATION – PARAGRAPHS 12, 13 AND 14) –

The Licensing Team Manager presented the report to consider a request from S to allow his vehicle, licensed Private Hire PH099 HS21 FTC, to be exempt from the Vale of Glamorgan Council's conditions in relation to Private Hire Vehicle identification door stickers.

The applicant was not in attendance and had asked that the application be heard in their absence.

The Chair stated that the application was the latest request due to a change in vehicle following previous requests to Licensing Committee that had been approved.

Committee agreed unanimously to approve the exemption.

RESOLVED - T H A T the request for an exemption from Vale of Glamorgan Private Hire Vehicle Licence Condition – Condition 9, allowing magnetic door stickers to be used on the vehicle in question be approved.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.