

**MINUTES of MEETING of PLANNING, PROTECTIVE SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE
held by MICROSOFT TEAMS on WEDNESDAY, 23 MARCH 2022**

Present: Councillor David Kinniburgh (Chair)

Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor Graham Hardie
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon	Councillor Jean Moffat
Councillor Audrey Forrest	Councillor Alastair Redman
Councillor George Freeman	Councillor Richard Trail
Councillor Kieron Green	

Attending: Stuart McLean, Committee Manager
Graeme McMillan, Solicitor
Mr Robinson, Applicant

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors McCuish, MacMillan and Taylor.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982: APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF TAXI CAR LICENCE (W ROBINSON, CRAIGNURE, ISLE OF MULL)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. In line with recent legislation for Civic Government Hearings, the parties (and any representatives) were given the options for participating in the meeting today. The options available were by video call, by audio call or by written submission. For this hearing the Applicant opted to proceed by way of audio call and joined the meeting by telephone.

The Chair then outlined the procedure that would be followed and invited the Applicant to speak in support of his application.

APPLICANT

Mr Robinson told the Committee that he was applying for a licence for a 9 seater taxi with disabled access. He said that it would be good for the community as he lived in Craignure and the other taxis on the island were based 45 minutes' drive away in Tobermory, and they did not have disabled access. He added that it would be good for people coming off the ferry.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Councillor Trail asked Mr Robinson if he would be operating exclusively on the island of Mull. Mr Robinson replied yes he would, unless he was required to take someone to Oban, for example, if a wheelchair user required to be taken to a hospital appointment in Oban.

Councillor Devon asked what kind of disabled access the taxi had and if it could accommodate a large power chair. Mr Robinson advised that the access was via the side door using ramps and that the taxi could accommodate a large power chair. Councillor Devon then asked if he would travel to Tobermory to pick up a wheelchair user to which he replied he would.

Councillor Colville referred to Mr Robinson already holding a taxi drivers licence and asked if he was currently using it. Mr Robinson said that he had last driven in August 2021 and that the person he had been driving for had chosen to give up his taxi. Councillor Colville then asked what other taxis operated on Mull. Mr Robinson said that there were 2 private hire taxis and one that could pick up anywhere.

Councillor Kinniburgh asked if this would be the only disabled access taxi on Mull. Mr Robinson said it would be and Councillor Devon also confirmed that it would be.

Councillor Devon referred to the side access of the taxi and asked how many people it could hold. Mr Robinson advised that the taxi could hold 9 people, and that 6 of the seats folded up and back to allow wheelchair access leaving 3 seats for other passengers. Councillor Devon asked if this was a new taxi to the island and Mr Robinson replied that he had brought the taxi to Mull from Manchester.

SUMMING UP

Applicant

Mr Robinson advised that he had applied for a licence for a 9 seater taxi, 6 seats plus 3, with disabled access that he planned to operate in the area of Craignure and Tobermory.

Mr Robinson confirmed that he had received a fair hearing.

DEBATE

Councillor Freeman advised that he had no objection to the application and was supportive of applications with wheelchair access. He advised that he had no concerns and would move approval at the appropriate time.

Councillor Green agreed with Councillor Freeman adding that it would be a valuable addition to the island of Mull and to its visitors. He advised he would be supporting approval of the application.

Councillor Moffat also agreed, advising that it would be perfect for the island.

Councillor Devon advised that she welcomed the application as a wheelchair user as it would be the only taxi on Mull with wheelchair access. She advised she welcomed approval of the application.

Councillor Redman advised that he supported the application as it would benefit the area and there were no current facilities on the island for wheelchair users.

Councillor Kinniburgh said that he agreed with his colleagues, he referred to Mr Robinson having driven a taxi before for someone else who had given the car up. He also referred to the confirmation from Councillor Devon that there was no other taxi on the island with wheelchair access. He advised that he too, supported the application.

DECISION

The Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee agreed to grant a taxi car licence to Mr Robinson. Mr Robinson was advised that he would receive written confirmation of this decision within 7 days.

(Reference: Report by Head of Legal and Regulatory Support, submitted)