MINUTES of MEETING of PLANNING, PROTECTIVE SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE BY MICROSOFT TEAMS on WEDNESDAY, 22 MARCH 2023

Present: Councillor Kieron Green (Chair)

Councillor John Armour   Councillor Andrew Kain
Councillor Jan Brown   Councillor Liz McCabe
Councillor Daniel Hampsey   Councillor Luna Martin
Councillor Graham Hardie   Councillor Peter Wallace
Councillor Fiona Howard

Attending: Stuart McLean, Committee Manager
Fiona Macdonald, Solicitor
Kevin Hail, Applicant

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

    Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Audrey Forrest, Amanda Hampsey, Willie Hume, Mark Irvine and Paul Kennedy.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

    There were no declarations of interest.

3. **CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982: APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF TAXI CAR LICENCE (K HAIL, BONHILL, ALEXANDRIA)**

    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 video call and joined the meeting by MS Teams.

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

    APPLICANT

    Mr Hail said that he received his first taxi licence in 1999 from West Dunbartonshire Council. He referred to the LVSA survey carried out in 2019 which, he noted, had concluded that there were a sufficient amount of taxis and private hire cars in the Helensburgh and Lomond area. He advised that from what he has heard from other taxi drivers and taxi car owners in Helensburgh and Lomond, there seemed to have been a down turn in the number of cars since the pandemic. He said that he also knew from the office he worked out of that they regularly had to send cars over to the Helensburgh and Lomond area to cover work there as they were short of cars.

    He advised that he was looking to move over to Helensburgh and Lomond and that in September last year he obtained a taxi driver licence and that someone had offered him shifts. He advised, however, that he did not want to go back to working for someone else and that was why he had decided to apply for his own car licence. He said again that staff

in the office he was working out of at the moment were saying there was a shortage of cars in the Helensburgh and Lomond area and that was his second reason for applying for this licence.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Councillor Green sought and received confirmation from the Council's Solicitor that there were currently 45 taxi car licences in the Helensburgh and Lomond area and that this was down from 48 when the LVSA survey was carried out in 2019.

Councillor Brown referred to Mr Hail working in Bonhill and running a taxi there. She asked Mr Hail, if he was granted this licence, would he continue to work in both areas. Mr Hail said that he could possibly keep his other licence if he was able to get another driver and, if that was not possible, he would surrender his other licence when it was due for renewal in July.

SUMMING UP

Applicant

Mr Hail advised that he had nothing further to add. He thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak and he confirmed that he had received a fair hearing.

DEBATE

Councillor McCabe said that she would be happy to go with this licence and that she had no objection to this application especially as they were 3 short in the Helensburgh and Lomond area.

Councillor Hardie commented that he was quite surprised when he recently travelled through Helensburgh to see a queue of people waiting at the main taxi rank at Helensburgh Central station with no sign of any taxis. He said that he believed there was a shortage of taxis in the town especially at the weekends when it was busy.

DECISION

The Committee unanimously agreed to grant a Taxi Car Licence to Mr Hail and noted that he would receive written confirmation of this within 7 days.

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