

**MINUTES of MEETING of PLANNING, PROTECTIVE SERVICES AND LICENSING
COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on WEDNESDAY, 18 MARCH 2020**

Present: Councillor David Kinniburgh (Chair)

Councillor Lorna Douglas Councillor Sandy Taylor
Councillor Donald MacMillan BEM Councillor Richard Trail
Councillor Jean Moffat

Attending: Stuart McLean, Committee Manager
Graeme McMillan, Solicitor
Emily Forrest, Applicant

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gordon Blair, Rory Colville, Robin Currie, Mary-Jean Devon, Audrey Forrest, George Freeman, Graham Archibald Hardie, Roderick McCuish and Alastair Redman.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982: APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF PRIVATE HIRE CAR OPERATOR LICENCE (E L FORREST, DUNOON)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. He then outlined the procedure that would be followed and invited the Applicant to speak in support of her application.

APPLICANT

Ms Forrest advised that she was applying for a Private Hire Operator Licence and said she believed there was only one other in the area. She explained that she currently had a Taxi Driver Licence and was driving for another Operator. She said she now wished to set up on her own as several customers contacted her direct and she would like to keep that customer base going. She referred to buying into a taxi operator partnership being out of the question as it would be too expensive and outwith her means to do that. She advised that in the past she had previously worked with a private hire company and she knew a bit about the process. She said she would like to be able to serve and support the customers she already had.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Councillor Taylor sought and received confirmation from Ms Forrest that she currently drove from Toward and out and about to anywhere in the Dunoon area. She advised that private hire wise she had been involved in the Kirkintilloch and Bishopbriggs areas for a few years before moving to Dunoon.

Councillor Moffat said it was her presumption that Ms Forrest planned to give up taxi driving for the company she currently hired her taxi from and that she would use her own car and then be a private hire driver. Ms Forrest said this was correct.

Councillor Moffat asked Ms Forrest to describe the private hire people she picked up at the moment and what types of runs she did. Ms Forrest advised that she did not do private hires at the moment. She said that as a taxi she would take customers to the ferry, to Glasgow or Edinburgh airport, and locally to the shops in the Dunoon area. She advised that she also took children to and from school which their parents had arranged directly with herself.

Councillor Trail asked how many hours she would plan to work. Ms Forrest advised that during the day it would be as and when required and for during the night she only had one or two clients 3 days per week. She indicated that she may stay out longer at the weekend.

Councillor Kinniburgh sought and received confirmation from Ms Forrest that she was currently working for someone else.

Councillor Taylor asked where the other Private Hire Vehicle was that she had referred to in her initial presentation. Ms Forrest advised that she believed it was in Tighnabruaich.

Councillor Kinniburgh referred to Ms Forrest moving to Dunoon from East Dunbartonshire and asked if she had done private hire in East Dunbartonshire. Ms Forrest advised that she had worked in the office and did some private hire in the area.

SUMMING UP

Ms Forrest advised that she had several customers within Dunoon and the surrounding area and she would like to continue with that and extend it. She pointed out that as a female driver there were people that used her because she was female. She said that parents seemed to prefer a female driver for their children and when young people jumped into her taxi they were pleased to see a female driver. She said that she hoped that her application would be successful so that she could continue to offer a service for those that required it.

Ms Forrest confirmed that she had received a fair hearing.

DEBATE

Councillor Moffat advised that she concurred with what the Applicant had said and stated that there were not too many women taxi drivers or private hire drivers out there. She confirmed that she would be happy to see this application granted.

Councillor Taylor said a private hire would better address the needs of customers and that he was content to support the application.

Councillor Douglas advised she was happy with the comments made by her colleagues.

Councillor Trail concurred with his colleagues.

Councillor Kinniburgh confirmed that he too would be happy to see the application granted. He advised that he may have had a different view if it had been for a Taxi Operator Licence.

DECISION

The Committee unanimously agreed to grant a Private Hire Car Operator Licence to Ms Forrest.

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