

General Licensing Committee

A meeting of General Licensing Committee was held on Tuesday 30th September 2025.

Present: Cllr Eileen Johnson (Chair), Cllr Mick Moore (Vice-Chair), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Diane Clarke OBE, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Jason French, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Marilyn Surtees and Cllr Hilary Vickers

Officers: Natalie Hodgson, Rebecca Jackson, Sarah Whaley, Elliott Beevers, Leanne Maloney-Kelly and Kirsty Wannop

Also in attendance: Applicant - 000879, Applicant - 156981 and Applicant - 158785

Apologies: Cllr Marc Besford

GLC/15/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

GLC/16/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

GLC/17/25 Minutes

The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

GLC/18/25 Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

GLC/19/25 Private Hire Driver Application – 156981

Members were asked to consider and determine the fitness applicant - 156981 for a private hire driver licence who had been arrested for two relevant offences but had been no further actioned by Cleveland Police.

Applicant - 156981 attended the meeting and was given the opportunity to make representation.

Committee papers and reports had been provided to all relevant parties prior to the meeting.

The report detailed the following:

- A copy of applicant – 156981's application including a DVLA check code.

- Circumstances of an arrest by Cleveland Police relating to applicant – 156981.
- A copy of a document from applicant – 156981's solicitor outlining that the police had informed them on the 26 June 2025 that they intended to take no further action against applicant – 156981 and that he was no longer under investigation.
- A copy of a full transcript of an interview between officers and applicant – 156981.
- A copy of a letter to applicant – 156981 revoking his previously held combined hackney carriage and private hire drivers' licence with Middlesbrough Council.
- A copy of a review of applicant – 156981's licence with Wolverhampton Council. Wolverhampton Council did not suspend or revoke his licence.
- A copy of the Common Law Police Disclosure Wolverhampton Council had received from Cleveland Police.
- A copy of a STORM report from Cleveland Police
- A copy of documents which were sent to Stockton Council from Cleveland Police showing that applicant - 156981 was no longer under investigation as both offences had been deemed as no further action.

The Chair introduced everyone present and explained the procedure to be followed during the hearing.

The Committee Members were presented with the officers' report and had the opportunity to ask questions of both the officers and applicant - 156981.

The Committee reviewed all the information provided and considered the submissions made by both applicant – 156981 and the officer.

The Committee recognised the individual details of applicant- 156981's case and despite his arrest in July 2022, for the alleged offences of possession of a controlled drug with intent to supply Class A and possessing an offensive weapon in a public place, the Committee noted that no further action was taken against applicant 156981 in respect of these matters.

The Committee found applicant - 156981 to be believable and noted that he had denied the allegations made against him. The Committee therefore determined that applicant – 156981's application should be granted, as they believed that he was a fit and proper person.

The Council had a duty to ensure, so far as possible, that those licensed to drive hackney carriage and private hire vehicles were suitable persons to do so, that they were safe drivers with good driving records and adequate experience, sober, courteous, mentally and physically fit, honest and not persons who would take advantage of their employment to abuse or assault passengers.

RESOLVED that applicant – 156981 be granted his private hire drivers' licence upon the successful completion of all relevant tests, for the reasons as detailed above.

GLC/20/25 Private Hire Driver Application – 158785

Members were asked to consider and determine the fitness of applicant - 158785 who had provided a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which contained relevant convictions.

Applicant - 158785 attended the meeting and was given the opportunity to make representation.

Committee papers and reports had been provided to all relevant parties prior to the meeting.

The report detailed the following:

- A copy of applicant – 158785's application form, including DVLA check code.
- A copy of a summary transcript of an interview with applicant – 158785 and officers.
- Copies of various test fail letters to applicant – 158785
- A copy of applicant – 158785's private hire knowledge certificate.

The Chair introduced everyone present and explained the procedure to be followed during the hearing.

The Committee Members were presented with the officers' report and had the opportunity to ask questions of both the officers and applicant – 158785.

The Committee reviewed all the information provided and considered the submissions made by both applicant - 158785 and the officer.

The main topics discussed were as follows:

- Discussion was had around the circumstances of applicant – 158785's two convictions, one of which was assault occasioning actual bodily harm and the second being destroying / damaging property. Applicant – 158785 explained to the Committee that he had been trapped by 2 people that he knew, one of which was his ex-partners father and that he had acted in self-defence. Applicant – 158785 explained that the issues were of a personal nature.
- Applicant – 158785 did feel the convictions were not his fault and were out of his control however had pleaded guilty following advice from his solicitor, to save time and stress.
- Applicant – 158785 informed the Committee that he was currently employed as a civil engineer and quantity surveyor and had the opportunity at times to work remotely from home.

The Committee had considered all the information before them today and listened to what applicant - 158785 and the Licensing Officer had presented to them.

The Committee determined that applicant – 158785's application should be refused. This was due to applicant -158785 being outside of the Council's Policy, in that he had

two convictions from September 2020, for the offences of assault occasioning actual bodily harm and destroying or damaging property, which were listed as offences of a violent nature under the Councils licensing policy.

Ultimately, the Committee did not believe that applicant – 158785 was a fit and proper person, and therefore his application was refused.

RESOLVED that applicant – 158785's application for a private hire drivers' licence be refused for the reasons as detailed above.

GLC/21/25 Combined Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver – 000879

Members were asked to consider and determine an application for a combined hackney carriage and private hire driver licence from applicant - 000879 who previously had had his licence revoked and had also had an application refused by the General Licensing Committee in February 2025.

Applicant - 000879 attended the meeting and was given the opportunity to make representation.

Committee papers and reports had been provided to all relevant parties prior to the meeting.

The report detailed the following:

- A copy of applicant – 000879's application, including a DVLA check code with no endorsements.
- A copy of minutes from a General Licensing Committee to applicant – 000879 revoking his licence.
- A copy of minutes from a General Licensing Committee to applicant – 000879 refusing an application for a combined hackney carriage and private hire driver licence.
- A copy of a summary transcript between applicant – 000879 and Licensing Officers.

The Chair introduced everyone present and explained the procedure to be followed during the hearing.

The Committee Members were presented with the officers' report and had the opportunity to ask questions of both the officers and applicant – 000879.

The Committee reviewed all the information provided and considered the submissions made by both applicant - 000879 and the officer.

The main topics discussed were as follows:

- Applicant – 000879 explained the circumstances to the General Licensing Committee of why his licence had been revoked and expressed remorse and told Members he was sorry for what had happened and asked for another chance and if granted would never again appear in front of Committee again.

The Committee had considered all the information before them and listened to what applicant - 000879 and the Licensing Officer had presented to them.

The Committee determined that applicant – 000879’s application should be refused, despite understanding applicant – 000879’s circumstances.

The Committee had previously revoked applicant – 000879’s licence in July 2024, and had also refused his application in February 2025, where it had been noted then that applicant – 000879’s history, in addition to his responses to three complaints before the Committee at the time, demonstrated a pattern in relation to his attitude towards breaking the rules. The Committee noted, at that time, that applicant - 000879 had already received written warnings and advice on at least six occasions during his career.

The Committee had considered applicant – 000879’s submission, however still felt that he was not a fit and proper person. The Committee felt that nothing had changed since applicant – 000879’s application in February 2025 to give them confidence that he was safe and suitable to be licenced by this authority.

Ultimately, the Committee did not believe that applicant – 000879 was a fit and proper person, and therefore his application was refused.

RESOLVED that applicant – 000879’s application for a private hire drivers’ licence be refused for the reasons as detailed above.

GLC/22/25 Private Hire Driver Application – 159009

Members were asked to consider and determine the fitness of applicant - 159009 who had provided a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which contained relevant convictions.

Prior to discussion of the item, the Licensing Officer informed Members that applicant – 159009 had contacted Licensing Services to request a deferment to enable him to arrange legal representation.

A vote took place and the deferment was agreed.

RESOLVED that applicant – 159009’s application be deferred to a future meeting of the General Licensing Committee.

Chair: