

General Licensing Committee

A meeting of General Licensing Committee was held on Tuesday 27th January 2026.

Present: Cllr Eileen Johnson (Chair), Cllr Mick Moore (Vice-Chair), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Lynn Hall (Sub for Cllr Jason French), Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Hugo Stratton, Cllr Marilyn Surtees and Cllr Hilary Vickers

Officers: Elliott Beevers, Adam Harston, Natalie Hodgson, Leanne Maloney-Kelly (DoAH&W), Kirsty Wannop, Niall Watson (Adults, Health and Wellbeing) and Sarah Whaley

Also in attendance: Applicant - 159461, Driver - 054401, David Wilson (Driver - 054401) and Driver - 159009

Apologies: Cllr Diane Clarke OBE and Cllr Jason French

GLC/30/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

GLC/31/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

GLC/32/25 Minutes

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

GLC/33/25 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/34/25 Combined Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver – 159461

Members were asked to consider and determine the fitness of applicant – 159461 for a new combined hackney carriage and private hire drivers licence who had provided a DBS which contained relevant convictions and currently did not meet the Stockton Borough Council private hire and hackney carriage licensing policy.

Applicant – 159461, 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 - 159461's application with a DVLA check code.
- A copy of the interview transcript with Licensing Officers and applicant – 159461.

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

Applicant - 159461 appeared before the Committee for determination of his application to drive hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, following the submission of his DBS certificate which was part of the application process, and which showed a conviction for 'Conceal/Disguise/Convert/Transfer Criminal Property', which he was convicted of. Applicant - 159461 received a suspended sentence and given community service.

The Committee Members were presented with the officers' report, both Members and the applicant – 159461 had the opportunity to ask questions of the officers report.

The main topics discussed were as follows:

- Applicant – 159461 explained to Members that he was new to the UK and was trying to earn enough money to secure a home for himself and his wife who was not well.
- Applicant – 159461 had been employed as a delivery driver earning approximately £50 to £60 per day, however a friend had introduced applicant – 159461 to someone who offered him a delivery job with much better earnings which he accepted. Applicant – 159461 was given a package to deliver and was told the package contained cash. Applicant – 159461 explained to the Committee that transferring money was commonplace in his country of origin, however he now realised this was not the case in the UK and that he had made a mistake. Applicant – 159461 confirmed to Members that this was the only time he had done this.

Members questioned applicant – 159461's background which included substance misuse and addiction. Applicant – 159461 explained he was young at the time, and it was not an addiction. Applicant – 159461 also confirmed that he did not drink or smoke and it had only happened when he was younger.

Applicant – 159461 ensured the Committee that he was a fit and proper person and although he had made mistakes in the past, he was focused on working hard and providing for his family. Applicant– 159461 appreciated he had made mistakes; however, those mistakes were over 6 years ago, and he really needed an opportunity to make a better life.

It was confirmed to the Committee, and they were satisfied that applicant – 159461 had fully cooperated with Cleveland Police who believed applicant –159461's account of the incident that he was convicted of.

In accordance with the Councils Licensing Policy applicant – 159461 would be free from conviction on 5 February 2026.

The Committee considered all of the information before them and listened to what applicant – 159461 and the officers said to them.

The Committee noted that almost seven years had passed since applicant – 159461's conviction for the offence of Conceal/Disguise/Convert/Transfer Criminal Property.

The Committee found applicant – 159461 to be remorseful and noted that he would fall within the Council's policy in relation to previous convictions for dishonesty offences on 5th February 2026.

The Committee therefore determined that applicant – 159461's application should be granted, as they believed that he was a fit and proper person.

The Committee requested that applicant – 159461 was issued with a licence after the 5 February and the necessary checks be completed.

RESOLVED that applicant - 159461 be granted with a combined hackney carriage and private hire drivers licence after the 5 February and following the necessary requirements / checks being completed for the reasons as stated above.

GLC/35/25 Combined Hackey Carriage and Private Hire Driver - 054401

Members were asked to consider and determine the continued fitness of combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 who was involved in an incident in Thornaby town centre.

Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 and his representative Mr David Wilson, attended the meeting and were 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 an e mail referral from the Community Safety Team to the Licensing Team regarding an incident in Thornaby town centre which involved combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401.
- A copy of a delegated decision front sheet relating to combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401.
- A copy of a suspension letter to combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401.
- A copy of an interview transcript between licensing officers and combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401.
- A copy of a report confirming that combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 had made a call to the enforcement centre to report the incident he was involved in.
- A copy of an e mail from an Honorary Alderman who gave a brief history of the issues in Thornaby Town Centre which related to the incident combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 had been involved in.

- Copies of various historical written warnings relating to combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401.

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

Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 appeared before the Committee with his representative due to an incident which involved combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 where he had been seen on CCTV holding onto a young person in Thornaby Town Centre and who was also seen in possession of a shortened golf club.

The Committee Members were presented with the officers' report as well as various CCTV footage which showed the incident from different camera angles. Committee Members, combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 and his representative had the opportunity to ask questions of the officer's report.

The main topics discussed were as follows:

Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401's representative explained to Members that driver – 054401 was a family man with no criminal convictions and had been a licenced driver for over 20 years and had worked from the taxi rank in Thornaby for a very long time. A number of Anti-Social Behaviour incidents had been reported in and around the area of Thornaby Town Centre and the taxi rank in the last few months.

Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 kept the number for the enforcement team in his phone to report any incidents he saw.

The Committee were shown CCTV footage which showed applicant – 054401 having a shortened golf club thrown at his vehicle causing damage by youths. Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401's then retrieved the golf club and put in his vehicle. Fifty minutes later, combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 saw who he believed to be the youths who threw the golf club at his vehicle. Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 was seen exiting his vehicle and got hold of one of the youths by the arm. Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 held on to the youth for over a minute. Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 agreed that with hindsight this was not one of his greatest moments and was regretful. Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 was aware he was being observed by CCTV.

Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401's representative, Mr David Wilson, explained that combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 did this as he thought help was on hand as the security guard from the nearby ASDA store was walking towards the incident and combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 believed he would help apprehend the youths.

Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 was then seen returning to his car and then back into the town centre area. Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 appeared to record the youths using his mobile phone.

Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 was then seen on the CCTV footage to have a shopping trolley pushed at him twice by the youths.

Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 was then seen chasing one of the children. Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 appeared to look unhappy, with the footage showing combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 lifting his arms into the air.

Footage viewed by the Committee showed combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 return to his vehicle and open the boot. Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 was seen retrieving the shortened golf club from his boot and walking back towards the children in the town centre area. Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 walked towards the ASDA store, and entered it for a short amount of time, before exiting the store with the shortened golf club still appearing in his hand.

The youths were seen on the footage throwing objects at combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401.

Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 confirmed that the same group of youths had thrown big stones at his vehicle approximately 2 months prior to the incident being considered at the committee hearing today.

Combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 reported the incident to the security centre which was confirmed to be true as recorded on the Councils FLARE system.

The Committee had regard to all the evidence presented in the Committee report, CCTV footage and the submissions made by officer's combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 and his representative, at the hearing.

The Committee found combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 to be a fit and proper person to hold a licence. The Committee agreed to lift combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401's suspension and reinstate his licence with a strong warning as to his future conduct.

The Committee confirmed that any further incidents of concerning behaviour would see combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 brought back before the Licensing Committee, where his licence could be revoked.

RESOLVED that combined hackney carriage and private hire driver – 054401 have his suspension lifted and his licence reinstated for the reasons as detailed above.

GLC/36/25 Combined Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver - 155051

Members of the General Licensing Committee were informed that Combined Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver – 155051's representative had contacted the Licensing Service requesting a deferral to allow for additional evidence to be presented to the Committee.

Members considered the request and agreed to defer the item to a future meeting of the General Licensing Committee.

RESOLVED that Combined Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver – 155051's application be deferred to a future meeting of the General Licensing Committee.

GLC/37/25 Private Hire Driver Application - 159009

Members were asked to consider and determine an application for a private hire drivers licence from applicant – 159009 who had provided a DBS which contained relevant convictions relating to the alleged offence of 3 x assaults occasioning actual bodily harm and engaging in controlling/coercive behaviour.

Applicant – 159009 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 – 159009's application form, including DVLA check code.
- A copy of a summary transcript between the applicant and licensing officers.

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

Applicant - 159009 appeared before the Committee in relation to his application due to his DBS certificate containing information relating to the alleged offence of 3 x assaults occasioning actual bodily harm and engaging in controlling/coercive behaviour.

The Committee Members were presented with the officers' report. Committee Members and applicant - 159009 had the opportunity to ask questions of the officer's report.

The main topics discussed were as follows:

- Applicant – 159009 explained to Members the history to the allegations which had been made against him and which he also denied. He told Members that he had fully cooperated with the police and was awaiting a bail hearing which kept getting deferred. Currently the latest bail hearing was scheduled for February 2026.
- Applicant -159009 stated that he had put in his application prior to the bail hearing as he did not know if the February hearing would be also put back as the others had been.
- Applicant -159009 said he was physically and mentally fit, he was a safe driver with no endorsements on his DVLA licence. He also stated he did not have a criminal record, just the current outstanding police investigation relating to the assault allegations. Applicant -159009 believed he was a fit and proper person to hold a private hire drivers licence, was not dangerous and would not cause any harm to anyone.

The Committee had considered all the information before them and listened to what applicant - 159009 and the licensing officer had said to them.

The Committee felt they were not currently able to determine that applicant - 159009 was a fit and proper person, due to the outstanding allegations against him of assault occasioning actual bodily harm and engaging in controlling/coercive behaviour for which applicant – 159009 was currently on police bail.

The Committee had determined applicant – 159009’s application be refused.

RESOLVED that applicant –159009’s application for a private hire drivers licence be refused for the reasons as detailed above.

Chair: