

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

LICENSING AND APPEALS BOARD

Minutes from the Meeting of the Licensing and Appeals Board held on Wednesday, 23rd July, 2025 at 3.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillors B Jones (Chair), B Ayres and C Rose (Vice Chair)

OFFICERS:

Craig Pease – Senior Licensing Officer

Amy Pearce – Legal Advisor

Lauren Steele – Democratic Support Officer

OBSERVING:

Councillor Everett – Member of the Licensing and Appeals Board

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

2 **ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

4 **APPLICATION TO DEPART FROM LICENSING PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS IN RESPECT OF PRIVATE HIRE SIGNAGE**

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The Chair welcomed everyone to the Hearing and stated that the purpose of the Hearing was to consider an application to depart from Licensing Procedures and Conditions in respect of Private Hire Signage. The Chair introduced the Panel Members, Officers and Legal Advisor.

The Applicant introduced himself.

5 **PROCEDURE FOR DETERMINING HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PRIVATE HIRE LICENCE APPLICATIONS AND DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS**

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The Legal Advisor outlined the procedure which would be followed at the Hearing.

6 **REPORT OF THE LICENSING OFFICER**

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At the request of the Chair, the Senior Licensing Officer presented his report as included in the Agenda. He requested that the Panel consider the application, including any submissions put forward by the Applicant, and dispose of the matter using one of the options as set out in the report.

There were no questions.

7 **APPLICANT'S CASE**

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At the request of the Chair, the Applicant presented his case and explained he had used the car to provide an additional service over the last two years.

The Applicant emphasised that a special event vehicle had additional requirements, including a £30.00 minimum fee and the need for the customer to specifically request it. He explained that many customers did not understand this requirement and that some high-end clients preferred not to give a reason for using the vehicle.

The Applicant believed there was only one other similar vehicle in the area and wished for King's Lynn to have this type of service at a reasonable cost. He explained that the vehicle was expensive to run and that he needed to earn enough to cover its upkeep.

In response to questions from the Senior Licensing Officer, the Applicant explained that he had chosen to change from special events only to private hire to allow customers to use the car without the higher hire costs associated with special events.

He stated that he did not have a suitable alternative vehicle other than an eight-seater with wheelchair access, which was not always available.

When asked why he believed stickers on the vehicle would deter customers, he explained that some valued privacy, others preferred a car without signage, and that stickers were unsuitable for weddings. He confirmed he was content to display the plate on the back of the vehicle.

The Applicant further explained that special event use alone was not ideal, as weddings occurred only at certain times of the year. He wished to use the vehicle more often for regular customers and believed that private hire use without stickers would increase demand, helping him to cover running costs. He felt it was important to offer this type of vehicle and service to customers at a reasonable price.

There were no questions to the Applicant from the Panel.

8 **SUMMING UP - LICENSING OFFICER**

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The Senior Licensing Officer reminded the Panel to consider the application, including any submissions put forward by the Applicant, and dispose of the matter using one of the options as set out in the report.

9 **SUMMING UP - APPLICANT**

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The Applicant thanked the Panel for the opportunity to present his case. He stated that he intended to retain the additional service within his company, emphasising that public safety was very important and that he always sought to offer all possible services and accommodate all customers.

10 **OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

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The Legal Advisor confirmed there were no outstanding matters.

11 **DECISION NOTICE**

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The Chair advised that the Panel would retire to make their decision in private, accompanied by the Legal Advisor, Democratic Support Officer and Councillor Everett who was observing for training purposes.

All parties were then called back into the room and the Chair read out the Panel's decision. A copy of the Decision Notice was handed to the Applicant.

The meeting closed at 5.19 pm