

The Highland Licensing Committee

Meeting - 31 March 2015

Agenda Item	7.1
Report No	HLC/022/15

Application for the Grant of a Taxi Driver's Licence – Shajith Parambathu

Report by the Legal Manager

Summary

This Report relates to an application for the grant of a taxi driver's licence.

This item is subject to a formal hearing procedure.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Highland Council has resolved that in terms of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 a licence will be required for the driving of a licensed taxi. A licence for the same is issued by the Highland Council and is valid for the whole Council Area.

2.0 Application

2.1 On 22 October 2014 an application for the grant of a taxi driver's licence was received from Mr Shajith C Parambathu, 34 Novar Road, Alness, IV17 0QH.

3.0 Process

3.1 Following receipt of the application a copy of the same was circulated to the following Agencies/Services for consultation:

- Police Scotland
- Highland Council Trading Standards Service

3.2 An observation dated 6 November 2014 has been received from Police Scotland. A copy is attached as an Appendix.

4.0 Taxi Driver's Knowledge Test

4.1 As part of the application process all applicants for taxi driver's licences must pass a knowledge test. The knowledge test consists of two sections and the applicant must pass both sections. The first section is a multiple choice paper on general knowledge in relation to highway code, landmarks etc. in Highland and shortest routes between 2 locations in Highland. The second section consists of a written test in relation to the local Ross-shire area and includes questions on shortest routes between 2 locations within that area and the locations of local landmarks etc. Applicants are allowed three attempts to pass the knowledge test.

- 4.2** Mr Parambathu sat the knowledge test for the first time on 7 November 2014 but failed both the general knowledge section and the local test.
- 4.3** A re-sit was arranged for 9 January 2015 at the Council Offices, Dingwall. Due to power outage and bad weather the offices had to close. Numerous attempts were made to contact Mr Parambathu on his home telephone and mobile phone in order to cancel the re-sit and rearrange on the following Monday, however no contact could be made. On Monday 12 January contact was made with another gentleman at Mr Parambathu's home telephone number who advised that the Applicant was on holiday and would not return for 3 months. Following the telephone call a further letter was sent on 20 January 2015 requesting Mr Parambathu to make contact. Further attempts to make contact by telephone have also failed, the last being on 26 February when the same gentleman at Mr Parambathu's house again said that the Applicant was on holiday but this time saying he would be away for 6 months.

5.0 Determination of Application

- 5.1** Under Section 3(1) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 the application requires to be determined within six months, i.e. by 22 April 2015.

6.0 Policies

- 6.1** The following policies are relevant to this case:

Standard Taxi Driver's Licence conditions. A copy of these can accessed at www.highland.gov.uk/businessinformation/licensing/civicgovernmentlicensing or a hard copy can be supplied where requested.

7.0 Recommendation

- 7.1** The Committee is invited to determine the application in accordance with the Council's Hearings Procedure.

Designation: Legal Manager

Officer Reference: L Gunn

Date: 13 February 2014

Background Papers: Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982

Appendix: Letter of Observation from Police Scotland dated 6 November 2014.