

Agenda item	8.1
Report no	HLC/042/18

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: THE HIGHLAND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Date: 26 June 2018

Report title: Application for the grant of a taxi driver's licence – Ana Gonzalez (Ward 11 – Caol and Mallaig)

Report by: The Principal Solicitor – Regulatory Services

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

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

This item is subject to a formal hearing procedure

2. Recommendation

2.1 Members are asked to determine the application in accordance with the hearings procedure.

3. Background

3.1 The Highland Council has resolved that in terms of the Act a licence will be required for the driving of a taxi. A licence for the same is issued by the Highland Council and is valid for the whole Council area.

4. Application

4.1 Mrs Ana Gonzalez applied for the grant of a taxi driver's licence on 30 October 2017.

4.2 The application was circulated to both Police Scotland and the Council's Trading Standards Service.

4.3 There have been no objections received in relation to the application.

4.4 In terms of the abovementioned Act the Licensing Authority have nine months from receipt of the application to determine the same, therefore this application must be determined by 29 July 2018. Failure to determine the application by this time would result in the application being subject of a 'deemed grant' which means that a licence would require to be issued to Mrs Gonzalez for a period of 1 year. The application is before this Committee as this is the last meeting before the determination date expires.

5. Taxi driver's knowledge test

5.1 The Council's policy in respect of a taxi driver's licence requires the applicant to undertake and pass a knowledge test.

5.2 Licensing staff have attempted unsuccessfully to contact Mrs Gonzalez on several occasions to arrange a convenient appointment to sit the knowledge test..

6. Immigration Act - Right to work check and foreign conviction check

6.1 Mrs Gonzalez did not produce right to work documentation to support her application.

7. Determining issues

7.1 Paragraph 5(3) of Schedule 1 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 states that a licensing authority may refuse an application to grant or renew a licence where:

- (a) the applicant or anyone else detailed on the application is not a fit and proper person;
- (b) the activity would be carried out by a person other than the applicant who, if he had made the application himself, would have been refused;
- (c) where the licence applied for relates to an activity consisting of or including the use of premises or a vehicle or vessel, those premises are not or, as the case may be, that vehicle or vessel is not suitable or convenient for the conduct of the activity having regard to
 - (i) the location, character or condition of premises or the character or condition of the vehicle or vessel,
 - (ii) the nature and extent of the proposed activity,

- (iii) the kind of persons likely to be in the premises, vehicle or vessel,
- (iv) the possibility of undue public nuisance, or
- (v) public order or public safety; or

(d) there is other good reason for refusing the application.

If required the Principal Solicitor – Regulatory Services will offer particular advice on the criteria relating to this particular application.

7.2 In addition, section 13(5) of the Act provides that a licensing authority may require an applicant for a taxi driver's licence to take a test of his knowledge of the area to which the licence is to relate, of the layout of roads in that area and such other matters relating to the operation of a taxi as the authority consider desirable, and the authority may refuse to grant a licence to a person who does not satisfy them that he has adequate knowledge of any of these matters.

7.3 Separately, section 13(3A) of the Act, inserted by the Immigration Act 2016, prohibits licensing authorities from granting a taxi or private hire car driver's licence to any person unless first satisfied that the person is not disqualified from working in the UK by reason of his or her immigration status.

8. Implications

8.1 Not applicable.

Date: 7 June 2018

Author: Julie Traynor

Background Papers: Civic Government (Scotland)Act 1982