

Agenda item	<b>8.2</b>
Report no	<b>HLC/037/20</b>

## **THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**Committee:** THE HIGHLAND LICENSING COMMITTEE

**Date:** 8 September 2020

**Report title:** Application for the grant of a taxi driver's licence – Darren A Sutherland (Ward 1 – North, West and Central Sutherland)

**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 Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (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 Darren Sutherland applied for the grant of a taxi driver's licence on 17 October 2019.

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 twelve months from receipt of the application to determine the same, therefore this application must be determined by 16 October 2020. 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 Mr Sutherland for a period of 1 year. The application is before this Committee as this is the last meeting before the determination date expires.

### **5. Immigration Act - Right to work check & foreign conviction check**

5.1 Mr Sutherland had attended an appointment to undergo a right to work check on 17 October 2019 and this was satisfactory.

### **6. Taxi driver's knowledge test**

6.1 Mr Sutherland has sat the knowledge test once scoring 86% in the Highland Section, which is a pass, and 80% in the local section (pass mark is 85%). He has not yet made an appointment to re-sit the local section.

6.2 The Council's policy in respect of a taxi driver's knowledge test states that an applicant is permitted a maximum of three attempts.

### **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** 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.

**7.3** 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.

**7.4** A copy of this report has been sent to Mr Sutherland who has been invited to state his case.

## **8. Implications**

**8.1** Not applicable.

Date: 10 August 2020

Author: L Gunn

Background Papers: Civic Government (Scotland ) Act 1982