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Meeting	Licensing and Regulatory Committee Sub-Committee
Date	28 April 2025
Present	Councillors Melly (Chair), Nicholls and Wilson
In Attendance	Matt Boxall (Head of Public Protection) David Cowley (Taxi Licensing Manager) Sandra Branigan (Senior Lawyer)

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### **1. Declarations of Interest (10.07am)**

Members were invited to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests, or any disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have in respect of business on the agenda. There were none.

Introductions were made. Andrew Westcott (Director Licensing and Public Affairs, Veezu) and Chris Hall (Regional Managing Director, Veezu), introduced themselves and in response from a question from the Chair, confirmed they understood the procedure for the Veezu application for a private hire operators licence.

### **2. Application for a Private Hire Operator's licence - Joshua Ryan & Arun Singh, Veezu North Ltd, which trades as "Veezu" (10.08am)**

Members considered a report that sought their determination of an application for a private hire operator's licence by Joshua Ryan and Arun Singh on behalf of Veezu North Ltd, operating from 39 Layerthorpe, York YO31 7UZ under the trading name of Veezu.

In coming to their decision, Members took into consideration all the information and submissions that were presented, and determined their relevance to the issues raised including:

1. The application form and the papers before it.
2. The Taxi Licensing Manager's report and comments at the meeting. The Taxi Licensing Manager introduced the report. He explained that the premises had planning permission and currently operated as Drive and that as legislation did not allow the transfer of the licence, a new application was needed. He noted that the Council's new Taxi Licensing Policy came into

effect in November 2024 and he detailed the policy guidance. He noted that the applicant currently held 115 private hire operator's licences from different authorities. He noted the annexes and added that under the 2015 Deregulation Act allowed bookings to be subcontracted out. He detailed the definition of fit and proper under the Button's textbook. He added that the applicant had undertaken CRB checks. He outlined the options available to Members in determining the application.

3. The oral representations made by Andrew Westcott (Director Licensing and Public Affairs, Veezu) and Chris Hall (Regional Managing Director, Veezu), who spoke on the application on behalf of the applicant. They thanked the Sub-Committee for the invite to the meeting. The explained that Veezu had operated since 2013 and had 115 operator's licences that were all fit and proper. They explained where they operated and outlined the business model. They explained that they knew that local markets were different and that they offered commercial and consumer contracts. They explained that they held health and safety audit data. They added that they supported local organisations, for example through sponsorship. They thanked the Sub-Committee for the invite to the meeting and added that they looked forward to working with the council team.

In response to questions from Members they explained:  
How they consulted with the views of drivers.

- The process for dealing with complaints from members of the public.
- They currently operated 50-60 drivers weekly on the fleet and there was a drive to get Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) on the fleet and they hadn't got to that at the moment. They planned to grow the number of WAV, which at the moment was impossible to offer because of the number of vehicles on the road. They added that they would be happy to partner up on incentives for WAV.
- How conditions 33, 34 and 35 would be complied with.
- They knew if a driver was an out of town driver via the driver's phone.
- Pedestrianised zones in the city centre would also be on a driver's phone and the driver would agree with the passenger where they would be picked up.

The Taxi Licensing Manager summed up noting that the applicant had completed all the documentation, and the previous operator had complied with all checks in January.

Having regard to the above information, the Committee considered the steps which were available to them to take under sections 55 and 57 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 Part 2, the Sub-Committee have the following options available to them in making their decision, which was outlined by the Chair:

Option 1: Grant a private hire operator's licence as requested, with the standard for a period of five years (or for such lesser period, as the Council thinks is appropriate in the circumstances of the case).

Option 2: Grant the private hire operator's licence with the standard conditions and any additional conditions considered reasonably necessary or for a period of five years (or for such lesser period, as the Council thinks is appropriate in the circumstances of the case).

Option 3: Refuse the application providing the grounds for refusal. If the Sub-Committee chooses option 3 they must be satisfied that the applicant

A member noted that the applicant was fit and proper and in response to a question from the Member, the Chair noted that the standard grant of a licence was 5 years.

The Chair proposed Option 1, to grant a private hire operator's licence as requested, with the standard for a period of five years (or for such lesser period, as the Council thinks is appropriate in the circumstances of the case). This was seconded by Cllr Wilson. Following a unanimous vote in favour it was:

Resolved: That approval be given to Option 1, to grant a private hire operator's licence as requested, with the standard conditions, for a period of five years.

Reasons: The Sub-Committee was satisfied that:

- i. There were no valid objections or reasons to refuse an operator's licence and the applicants were fit and proper to hold an operator's licence and
- ii. The applicants were not disqualified by reason of your immigration status from operating a private hire vehicle.

Cllr Melly, Chair

[The meeting started at 10.07 am and finished at 10.42 am].

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