

## PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

25 OCTOBER 2023

Present: Councillor Michael(Chairperson)  
Councillors Kaaba, Driscoll, Ferguson-Thorne, Gunter,  
Lancaster, Palmer and Shimmin

### 6 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Jenkins.

### 7 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

### 8 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were approved by the Committee as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 9 : APPLICATION TO PERMIT THE USE OF CORPORATE BRANDING ON PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES ON VEHICLES OWNED BY VEEZU

The Committee received a report on an application from Veezu to permit them to use corporate branded livery on vehicles that were owned by the Veezu Group.

The Chair requested Dan Cook, Licensing Manager, to present the report.

Members were advised that the current Private Hire Vehicle Conditions of Licence related to advertising stated:

#### ***“6. Display of signs and advertisements***

*No signs or advertisements, except those approved by the Council shall be attached to the inside or outside of the vehicle. The following conditions apply: -*

*2 a) Exterior advertising is permitted on the outside rear door panel provided it does not exceed the dimensions of the panel and is restricted to one advertisement only with no other form of advertising displayed on the exterior of the vehicle.”*

As the proposed Veezu livery would cover a larger proportion of the vehicle than the rear door, they sought an exemption from the above condition. Veezu presented a vehicle to Members in order to provide a representation of the livery.

Members were advised that at present, private hire vehicles licensed in Cardiff were permitted to have one advertisement on the rear door panel of the vehicle. The advertisement could not be larger than the size of the rear door panel, and was primarily used to display the private hire operator the vehicle was connected to.

Private hire vehicles in Cardiff were also required to display a yellow plate on the rear of the vehicle and a yellow square in the vehicle’s windscreen, to identify it as a

private hire vehicle. It was not mandatory for private hire vehicles to advertise or display the operator for whom they were connected to, and they were able to choose not to display an operator.

Members heard that under Section 48 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 the Council may impose such conditions upon private hire licences as it may consider reasonably necessary. Under Section 48 of the same Act, a private hire vehicle could not be of such a design and appearance as to lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a hackney carriage. Officers did not consider that the proposed livery would result in the public mistaking those vehicles with a hackney carriage.

Members heard that the trade consultation procedure was undertaken in accordance with the consultation procedure on any policy matters. The draft reports intended for consideration were made available at the licensing offices for any interested party to provide written submissions.

Members were asked to consider the request and determine whether to permit corporate livery on vehicles that were owned by Veezu.

The Chair drew Members' attention to an additional representation received from Unite, which had been circulated just before the committee. The Licensing Manager note that the uniformity referred to in the Unite representation did not really exist with taxis in Cardiff, as there were no requirements on private hire vehicles, and permitting this application might actually have the effect of increasing uniformity.

Reference was made to the point in the Unite representation regarding community consultation. The Licensing Manager clarified that there hadn't been a consultation as such, just as there wouldn't have been when a hackney carriage changed its livery. This was not part of the Licensing Committee's role.

The Chair welcomed Kirsty Oram to address the meeting on behalf of the Veezu Group. She emphasised that wrapped vehicles were more easily identifiable and reassured passengers that they were getting into a licensed vehicle, which they might not have easily been able to identify otherwise. Positive feedback had been received from drivers and passengers who currently used these vehicles in Swindon, South Gloucestershire and Bath.

The Chair invited comments or questions on the report.

Members discussed whether permitting the application could cause confusion amongst customers or an unfair market advantage, since branding cost money and larger companies would be more likely to use it. The Chair noted that other private hire vehicles could have similar livery.

Members asked whether officers would consider the branding to be a benefit to their enforcement work. The Licensing Manager responded that while the vehicles would become slightly more recognisable, it would not have a major impact.

In response to Member questions, Kirsty Oram confirmed that the advertising wrap was not reflective at night and that all their vehicles were white and would be

branded in the same way. She also confirmed that Veezu had made applications to other local authorities where it would have been an exception, as in this case, and these applications had been successful.

Members queried why Veezu was moving away from the more established and recognisable Dragon brand. Kirsty Oram explained that Veezu operated across the UK while Dragon was just in South Wales, and so the latter was gradually being replaced.

The Chair invited Members to vote on the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED – That:

1. The application to permit corporate branded livery on vehicles owned by the Veezu Group be APPROVED.

10 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

The meeting terminated at 10.55 am

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