

# Public Document Pack

## Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

### Bridgend County Borough Council



Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB / Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

*Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg.  
Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich  
dewis iaith.*

*We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Please  
let us know if your language choice is Welsh.*



#### **Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate**

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 / 643696 / 643694

Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

**Dyddiad/Date: Wednesday, 21 February 2024**

Dear Councillor,

#### **LICENSING COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Licensing Committee will be held Hybrid in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB on **Tuesday, 27 February 2024 at 11:00**.

#### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence  
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest  
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008.
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 6  
To receive for approval the minutes of the Licensing Committee 24/05/2023 and Licensing Act 2003 Committee 24/05/2023
4. Application to Permit the use of Corporate Branding on Vehicles owned by Veezu 7 - 16
5. Bridgend County Borough Council Taxi Testing Regime 17 - 20
6. Urgent Items  
To consider any other item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Rule 4 of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Note: This will be a Hybrid meeting and Members and Officers will be attending in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street Bridgend / Remotely via Microsoft Teams. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact cabinet\_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513 / .643696

Yours faithfully

**K Watson**

Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:

M Lewis  
R Williams  
J Llewellyn-Hopkins  
J E Pratt  
R J Smith

Councillors

RM James  
RJ Collins  
MJ Kearns  
H T Bennett  
A R Berrow

Councillors

S J Bletsoe  
H Griffiths  
P W Jenkins  
S Easterbrook

Present

Councillor M Lewis – Chairperson

J Llewellyn-Hopkins	J E Pratt	R J Smith	RM James
RJ Collins	MJ Kearns	H T Bennett	A R Berrow
S J Bletsoe	H Griffiths	P W Jenkins	S Easterbrook

Apologies for Absence

R Williams

Officers:

Julie Ellams	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Yvonne Witchell	Team Manager Licensing
Katie Wintle	Lawyer

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

19. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Committee dated 22 November 2022 and 1 February 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record

20. APPOINTMENT OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE(S) AND DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS

The Team Manager Licensing presented a report proposing the membership of the Licensing Committee Sub-Committees following the Annual Meeting of Council 2023. It was proposed that the Licensing Committee continue with the existing arrangements and approve the formation of two panels sitting on a rota basis, each consisting of seven Members of the Licensing Committee and chaired by the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Licensing Committee where possible. In the event that the Chair or Vice Chair were not able to attend their respective sub-committee meeting, a chair would be elected from those in attendance.

RESOLVED: The Committee approved the formation of two panels sitting on a rota basis (as listed below), each consisting of seven Members of the Licensing Committee and chaired by the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Licensing Committee where possible. In the event that the Chair or Vice Chair were not able to attend their respective sub-committee meeting, a chair would be elected from those in attendance. These Licensing Sub-Committees would undertake licensing functions, including taxi licensing and street trading as set out in the Council's Constitution.

**Licensing Sub-Committee A**

Cllr Maxine Lewis – Chair  
Cllr Johanna Llewellyn-Hopkins  
Cllr Richard Collins  
Cllr Mike Kearn  
Cllr Jonathan Pratt  
Cllr Steven Bletsoe  
Cllr Anthony Berrow

**Licensing Sub-Committee B**

Cllr Richard Williams – Chair  
Cllr Heather Griffiths  
Cllr Heidi Bennett  
Cllr Malcolm James  
Cllr Rob Smith  
Cllr Steve Easterbrook  
Cllr Philip Jenkins

21. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

The meeting closed at 09:45

Present

Councillor M Lewis – Chairperson

H T Bennett	A R Berrow	S J Bletsoe	RJ Collins
S Easterbrook	H Griffiths	P W Jenkins	MJ Kearns
J E Pratt	R J Smith	R Williams	

Apologies for Absence

RM James and J Llewellyn-Hopkins

Officers:

Julie Ellams	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Katie Wintle	Lawyer
Yvonne Witchell	Team Manager Licensing

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Act 2003 Committee of 25 May 2022 be approved as a true and accurate record.

7. LICENSING ACT 2003 AND GAMBLING ACT 2005 DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

The Team Manager Licensing presented a report setting out the proposed arrangements for the authorisation of officers under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 and confirming arrangements for the formation of sub-committees following the Annual Meeting of Council 2023.

The Team Manager Licensing explained that in the interests of effective performance it was proposed to delegate the responsibility for authorising officers to administer the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005, to the Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy and for the Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy to institute proceedings under those Acts. She explained that it was also proposed that, where appropriate, the Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy, the Team Manager Licensing (Bridgend County Borough Council and Vale of Glamorgan Council), the Senior Licensing Officer (Technical), Senior Licensing Enforcement Officer and Licensing Policy Officer be authorised to acknowledge and issue Notices relating to Temporary Event Notices; to issue, refuse, suspend licences, registrations, certificates, permits and notices, to implement the relevant provisions in respect of offences, reviews or other requirements; pursuant to any of the rules, regulations and/or Orders made under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 (as amended).

The Team Manager Licensing explained that the Committee was also asked to approve the existing arrangement of the formation of further Sub-Committees consisting of three Members of the Licensing Act 2003 Committee to determine applications under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005. It was proposed that the Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committees would be chaired by the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson of the Licensing Act 2003 Committee where possible. In the event that the Chair or Vice Chair were not able to attend, a chairperson would be elected.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee exercised its delegated authority and:

1. Authorised the Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy to institute proceedings under the above-mentioned Acts.
2. Authorised the Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy, the Team Manager Licensing (Bridgend County Borough Council and Vale of Glamorgan Council), the Senior Licensing Officer (Technical), Senior Licensing Enforcement Officer, and Licensing Policy Officer to acknowledge and issue Notices relating to Temporary Event Notices; to issue, refuse, suspend licences, registrations, certificates, permits and notices, to implement the relevant provisions in respect of offences, reviews or other requirements; pursuant to any of the rules, regulations and/or Orders made under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 (as amended).
3. Approved the arrangements for the formation of Sub-Committees set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report.

8. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

The meeting closed at 10:15

# Agenda Item 4

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>LICENSING COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>27 FEBRUARY 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>APPLICATION TO PERMIT THE USE OF CORPORATE BRANDING ON VEHICLES OWNED BY VEEZU</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>KIRSTY EVANS LICENSING TEAM MANAGER</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>The report content has no direct effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<b>This report is for members to consider a request to permit the use of corporate branding on vehicles owned by the Veezu group</b>

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to determine whether to permit the use of corporate branding on vehicles owned by Veezu.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1** The Licensing Department have received an application from Veezu to permit a corporate branded livery on vehicles that are owned by the Veezu Group.

- 2.2** Both the current Private Hire Vehicle and Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions require written approval from Bridgend County Borough for all advertisements.

- 2.3** The Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions state:

“The proprietor shall not display or suffer or permit to be displayed in or on the vehicle any advertisement without the prior written approval of the Council. For the purposes of this condition, “advertisement” means any word, letter, sign, notice, illumination, device or representation in the nature of the advertisement.”

- 2.4** The Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions state:

“No signs or advertisements shall be displayed in, on or from the vehicle unless first approved by the Council in writing.”

2.5 Full details of Veezu’s application, including their justification for this request is contained in **Appendix A**.

2.6 A digital impression of the corporate livery intended to be used is contained in **Appendix B**.

### **3. Current situation / proposal**

3.1 Officers have delegated authority to provide approval for advertisements on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles. However, as a full livery has been requested on all Veezu vehicles, members are requested to determine this application.

3.2 Private Hire and Hackney Carriage vehicles licensed by Bridgend County Borough Council must display the licence identification plate on the rear of the vehicle, a window licence in the vehicle’s windscreen and door stickers on each of the front doors which all identify the vehicle as either a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle. Veezu have advised that the livery will not prevent them from complying with these conditions of licence.

3.3 It is not mandatory for a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle to advertise or display the operator for whom they are connected to, and they may choose not to display an operator.

3.4 Veezu will present a vehicle to Members on the day of the meeting in order to demonstrate their corporate branding. The vehicle presented during the meeting is not currently licensed with Bridgend County Borough Council and the application is not for this specific vehicle, but to provide a representation of the livery.

### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

### **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

### **6. Climate Change Implications**

6.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

### **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 There are no safeguarding and corporate parent implications arising from this report.

**8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report.

**9. Recommendations**

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider the request by Veezu and determine whether to permit them to use a corporate livery on vehicles that are owned by Veezu.

**Background documents**

None.

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Ms Kirsty Evans  
Licensing Team Manager,  
Civic Offices,  
Angel Street,  
Bridgend,  
CF31 4WB

6 November 2023

Dear Ms. Evans and Officers

This application is in respect of Hackney Carriage Vehicles which are owned by the Veezu Group as part of its fleet management only and which are associated to the Operators trading name, within the Bridgend licensing district. The material appearance will not cause any confusion with the approved appearance of Bridgend licensed Private Hire vehicles.

If the approval process requires formal approval by Elected Members, the vehicle to be presented to Members as an example of the wrap appearance, is not currently licensed by Bridgend Council and the application is not in respect of this vehicle but a policy approval of the corporate wrap.

The attachment to this email is representative of the corporate wrap.

In respect of your licensing conditions, we would make the following observations. (Members will be advised by your legal officer that as a policy, exceptions can be made to that policy when appropriate and a policy is not totally binding.)

To support the application, with reference to the relevant Bridgend licensing conditions:

#### **HACKNEY CARRIAGES CONDITIONS OF LICENCE**

1. All vehicles shall be white in colour.

Response: The wrap does not change the clear primary white colour of the vehicle.

2. Adhesive signs be affixed on the upper part of the driver and front passenger side doors indicating that the vehicle is licensed by the Council with the number of the vehicle in letters no smaller than 3" in height.

Response: The wrap will not intrude on any part of this licensing requirement.

3. The licence plate shall be fixed and displayed outside on the rear of the vehicle directly on or immediately above the bumper in such a position that the vehicle's registration mark is not obscured, with the particulars thereon facing outwards in such a manner and place that the licence plate is clearly visible by daylight from the road at the rear of the vehicle.

Response: The wrap will not intrude on any part of this licensing requirement.

**Comment:** We understand the necessity for conformity within the licensing context, particularly around Advertising Standards Agency compliance; maintaining the image of the Council in respect of some forms of advertisement that do not compliment the status of the licensing district, or the



necessary controls on appearance to maintain the professional image of the licensed trade and the licensing environment.

However, we do not consider that this design causes conflict with any of those points and is uncontentious and is already approved in other licensing districts in South Wales, the Southwest and the Midlands.

The wrap does not intrude on the licensing identification plate issued by the Council and always remains clearly visible to the public view.

### **The wider context:**

Prior to undertaking the transition to corporate signage an independent Research Group carried out a market evaluation of the wrap comparable to the general appearance of current licensed vehicles. Participants were recruited from Veezu's passenger base, supplemented with additional external recruits. These additional recruits were taxi passengers in the same area. Across both recruitment pools, we ensured a mix of women-only and also mixed groups, covering a wide range of ages and usage occasions.

Research groups lasted approximately 60 minutes. In each group, participants were shown both the existing and proposed new Veezu look and feel, including the car wrap design. We believe that higher the instant recognition of a pre-booked vehicle is, safeguarding and general standards of personal safety, particularly for women, vulnerable Groups and people with visual impairments, are significantly enhanced.

The car wrap design was overwhelmingly positive. Particularly among women, the distinctiveness of the hot coral was an added layer of reassurance that the taxi was credible, reliable and above all, safe.

The results from 150 respondents concluded that:

- Their biggest concern on taxi/PHV safety is around knowing which company to use and recognising the vehicle, particularly in areas people are less familiar with.
- When shown different vehicles, Veezu was overwhelmingly chosen by both men and women as the most distinctive and recognisable.
- This was more pronounced for women. 73% of female respondents identified the Veezu vehicle as the most distinctive and recognisable.
- The survey strongly validates the rationale for a Veezu car wrap being a powerful safety feature.

Delegated Decisions by licensing officers form part of the day-to-day administrative duties of officers but if this application is required to be brought before Members on the basis that it is an application outside of the conditions and that it is not for a singular vehicle, but a fleet application, and as such may need the wider overview of Elected Members.

Usually, Councils are alert and sensitive to a wide variety of possible conflicts or concerns which vehicle signage could cause to communities, but in this application, we feel there is nothing which raises such concerns or conflicts with the Council's licensing policy or conditions. On the contrary it is felt that the easier recognition of a vehicle which has been booked through a particular operator is a positive move, not only for the public, but Enforcement Officers also.



Drivers trying to enter the licensing market face economic challenges on many fronts and the opportunity for potential drivers to rent new and compliant vehicles from the Group is attractive and growing. Such progression also gives the Council greater assurance that there is stronger oversight of the vehicle's maintenance schedule, in line with the manufacturer's warranty, by the fleet management team of Veezu Business Services.

Driver Partners are further attracted to the newer, environmentally cleaner vehicles displaying the wrap because of other discounts available to them in their association with Veezu. On a final point, the brand image of the wrap will be clearly associated with the decision of the Veezu Group to move away from all petrol or diesel cars to an entirely environmental approach on its fleet management.

We would be grateful if suitable arrangements could be made with the Licensing Committee for this application to be formally considered if necessary.

Thank you for accommodating this request.

Kind regards, Desmond.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. P. Broster". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Desmond Broster  
National Director – Safeguarding & Licensing  
Veezu

[dbroster@veezu.co.uk](mailto:dbroster@veezu.co.uk)

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<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>LICENSING COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>27 FEBRUARY 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL TAXI TESTING REGIME</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>KIRSTY EVANS LICENSING TEAM MANAGER</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>The report content has no direct effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<b>AN INFORMATION REPORT PROVIDING MEMBERS WITH AN UPDATE ON THE TAXI TESTING REGIME</b>

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to members on the feasibility study in respect of Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC) taxi testing regime.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Council must be satisfied that a vehicle is in a suitable mechanical condition, safe and comfortable before issuing a licence.
- 2.2 The Council currently uses its powers under Section 50 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to require all vehicles to be presented to the Council's in-house MOT testing station at Ty Thomas Joint Vehicle Maintenance Facility, Newlands Avenue, Brackla Industrial Estate, Bridgend.
- 2.3 On 22 November 2022 the Licensing Committee heard representations from the taxi trade, through local Members and a petition of approximately 170 signatories, to open taxi testing in Bridgend County Borough Council to other MOT garages.

The specific request in the petition was to allow for testing in any MOT testing station.

- 2.4 During this meeting the Licensing Committee resolved to authorise officers to conduct a feasibility study on alternative models of discharging our statutory duties in respect of the testing and licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.

### **3. Current situation / proposal**

3.1 Following the Committee meeting in November 2022, Licensing Officers from the Shared Regulatory Services attended the Management Board that is responsible for governance of the Ty Thomas testing facility to discuss the current agreement that exists between BCBC and South Wales Police. At this meeting, a discussion took place on the possibility of an early exit from the taxi testing agreement, but it was confirmed that the existing testing arrangements will run for the initial fixed term entered into between both parties, which expires in March 2025.

3.2 Due to this binding date, the feasibility study will now take place in the 2024-25 financial year. This will ensure that Members have the most up to date, relevant information to enable them to make an informed decision.

3.3 The feasibility study will consider four models:

- Proprietors obtain a MOT Certificate from any MOT testing station in the County Borough, and that the same testing station undertakes the additional taxi compliance check.
- Proprietors obtain a MOT Certificate from any MOT testing station in the County Borough but require a separate taxi compliance check to be undertaken in-house.
- Select an approved number of MOT testing stations to conduct MOT testing and/or taxi compliance checks.
- Retain the current in-house regime.

### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

### **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

### **6. Climate Change Implications**

6.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

### **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 There are no safeguarding and corporate parent implications arising from this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 Income received in 2022-2023 by Ty Thomas through taxi test fees was £49,785. The feasibility study and consultation will encompass all financial implications of the options open to Members.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 That Members note the contents of the report and await a feasibility report on alternative models of discharging our statutory duties in respect of the testing and licensing of taxis (hackney carriage and private hire vehicles).

## **Background documents**

None.

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