

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY - CALL IN PANEL

MINUTES of the meeting held at Loxley House, Nottingham on 20 February 2018 from 3.01 pm - 3.42 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Brian Parbutt (Chair)
Councillor Anne Peach (Vice Chair)
Councillor Azad Choudhry
Councillor Josh Cook
Councillor Mohammed Ibrahim
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Andrew Rule

Absent

Councillor Sue Johnson

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Councillor Jim Armstrong	- Call-in signatory
Councillor Sally Longford	- Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Local Transport
Jane Garrard	- Senior Governance Officer
Jason Gooding	- Head of Parking, Fleet and Transport Services
Andy Vaughan	- Corporate Director for Commercial and Operations
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Sue Johnson - leave

18 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

19 CONFIRMATION OF VALIDITY OF CALL-IN

Councillor Brian Parbutt (Chair) explained the procedure for the hearing to the attendees. He outlined the reasons for the call-in and requested the Panel to confirm its validity.

RESOLVED to confirm the call-in request as valid on the following grounds:

(1) Inadequate consultation relating to the decision:

Lack of external consultation outside of Nottingham City Council prior to

publication of the decision;

(2) Relevant information not considered:

Impact on how disabled citizens will access the City Centre if this is withdrawn;

Availability of street parking in proximity to Trinity Square given increased demand arising from withdrawal of free parking from Trinity Square car park;

Impact on wider traffic flows within the city centre arising from increases in on-street parking;

(3) Viable alternatives not considered:

No analysis provided on why Trinity Square was selected ahead of other NCC car parks where disabled users are entitled to park for free;

(4) Justification for the decision open to challenge on the basis of evidence considered:

No analysis provided on why Trinity Square was selected ahead of other NCC car parks where disabled users are entitled to park for free;

No measures included on mitigating negative impact assessment.

20 CONSIDERATION OF CALL-IN REQUEST RELATING TO DELEGATED DECISION 3063 - TRINITY SQUARE MULTI STOREY CAR PARK BLUE BADGE DISCOUNT REMOVAL

Following the report of the Head of Legal and Governance, the Committee was asked to:

- a) consider the information provided in relation to Delegated Decision 3063 – Trinity Square Multi Storey Car Park Blue Badge Discount Removal, and the reasons given for requesting a call-in of that decision and use that information to inform questioning and discussion; and
- b) focusing on the reasons for the call-in request form, and based on the evidence available to the Panel, decide:
 - i) to require that the decision is reconsidered, and make recommendation(s) as to what should be taken into consideration; or
 - ii) that the decision does not need to be reconsidered and can be implemented.

Councillor Sally Longford, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services and Local Transport, who had taken the Delegated Decision, informed the Panel of the reasons for taking the decision:

- (a) the Council has had to make significant savings in order to achieve a balanced budget. This saving was identified in consultation with Council officers;
- (b) Trinity Square is the only Council-owned multi-storey car park which retains free parking for blue badge holders after this was removed from Fletcher Gate car park some years ago;
- (c) there is significant provision of free parking for blue badge holders for up to 4 hours on the streets in the surrounding area. There will still be disabled spaces available at Trinity Square but they will no longer be free;
- (d) this decision will mean that a member of staff will no longer need to be based at the Trinity Square car park for blue badge validation. This member of staff will now be able to be more flexible;
- (e) consultation has been carried out with the Disability Involvement Group and the Disabled Employee Support Network;
- (f) Nottingham has one of the most comprehensive and accessible public transport systems in the country;

Councillor Andrew Rule (one of the call-in signatories) outlined the reasons why the call-in had been requested:

- (g) the networks that have been consulted do not necessarily represent the current disabled users of the car park;
- (h) Disability Direct Nottingham have made a written submission urging that a more in-depth impact assessment with disabled people and carers and for wider consultation to be carried out than with the Council's own disability groups;
- (i) some residents have complained that the Easylink bus service is unreliable and makes cancellations at short notice;
- (j) the appeal of Nottingham as a visitor destination for disabled people from outside the city will be diminished as a result of this decision;

Councillor Sally Longford raised the following in response to the points raised:

- (k) formal consultation with the wider public is yet to come so all citizens will be able to respond to the proposals. This will include a media campaign;
- (l) no problems have been reported recently regarding the Easylink bus service. There were some issues some time ago when the service was restructured but these have now been resolved;
- (m) neighbouring local authorities such as Derby City Council and Mansfield District Council have also withdrawn their Blue Badge concessions, as have most other parking providers in the city. The exception is Intu Victoria Centre who still provide free parking, subsidised by rents from the shopping centre;

- (n) this proposal will displace an estimated 30 users per day and there are 192 spaces available in nearby carparks as well as 1397 bays of on-street parking. Blue Badge holders can also park on single or double yellow lines for up to three hours for free;
- (o) experience from the Fletcher Gate car park demonstrates that the disabled parking spaces continue to be used, despite no longer being free;

The following answers were given to Panel members during the discussion which followed:

- (p) in addition to the media campaign, signage will be displayed at the car-park informing disabled customers of the changes. There will also be a 15 minute free period where they can decide to leave the car-park if they do not wish to pay the charges;
- (q) Trinity Square has barriers and so requires a member of staff to validate passes against Blue Badges, whereas the other car parks where free parking will remain do not have barriers and are policed by parking enforcement officers;
- (r) Parking Services do not have records of all Blue Badge holders in the city, but will investigate if this information can be obtained from the Licensing Department so that they can be individually consulted as part of the wider consultation;
- (s) the proposal has already been covered by the Nottingham Post, and there has been very little response by email or social media.

The Committee noted that there was an exempt appendix to the decision but, having read the appendix, did not feel that it was necessary to discuss the contents. Therefore the Committee did not exclude the public in order to consider the exempt appendix.

RESOLVED to agree that Delegated Decision 3063 - 'Trinity Square Multi Storey Car Park Blue Badge Discount Removal' does not need to be reconsidered and can be implemented for the following reason:

- **consultation has taken place with the Disability Involvement Group and the Disabled Employee Support Network, and further consultation is to take place with the public. There are a number of alternative parking spaces on streets in the local area and the Panel did not feel there was evidence that this would have an impact on wider traffic flows within the city centre.**

Councillor Andrew Rule requested that his vote against the resolution be recorded.