



SCRUTINY PANEL A

Date: Wednesday, 22nd January, 2014
Venue: Committee Room, Council Offices,
Kirkby in Ashfield at 6.30 p.m.

You are hereby requested to attend a meeting of the above Committee to be held at the time/place and on the date mentioned above for the purpose of transacting the business on the agenda set out below.

P.G. MARSHALL
Chief Executive

MEMBERSHIP

T. Brown (Chairman)
Mrs. C. Butler (Vice
Chairman)
J.R. Knight
K. Knight
Mrs. E.A. Mays
L.S. Morrison
R.J. Sears-Piccavey
Miss H.A. Smith
S.R. Wilson

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence, if any.
2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Non Disclosable Pecuniary/Other Interests.
3. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 14th November, 2013 (pages 4 to 7).
4. Car Parking Capacity in Ashfield Scrutiny Review (pages 8 to 14).
5. Discussion with Invited Representatives.

If you require an adjustment to enable you to participate or access the meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team at least 48 hours before the meeting (telephone 01623 457314 or e-mail s.oldham@ashfield-dc.gov.uk). This meeting may be subject to filming or audio recording. Members of the public have the right to request not to be filmed or audio recorded at any point during the proceedings.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There are two types of interests **Disclosable Pecuniary** and **Non Disclosable Pecuniary/Other Interests**.

Upon receipt of the attached agenda and reports you are urged to carefully read each item and determine whether you have an interest in any of them.

A standing item appears on every agenda in respect of interests and you should declare your interest at this stage in the proceedings. However, if you do not do so and it occurs to you during the discussion on the item that you should have declared an interest you must declare the matter as soon as it becomes apparent.

The following is a summary which has been prepared to assist you in deciding at the meeting whether you have an interest. It is not intended to be in substitution for the full provisions of the Code of Conduct which are contained in Part 5 of the Constitution.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

A Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is an interest in relation to a Member if it is of a description specified in Regulations and either:-

(a) it is an interest of the Member's, or

(b) it is an interest of (i) the Member's spouse or civil partner, (ii) a person with whom a Member is living with as husband and wife, or (iii) a person with whom a Member is living with as if they were civil partners, and the Member is aware that that other person has the interest.

A schedule of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests defined by the Secretary of State is set out at the end of this document. Failure to register a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is an offence under the Localism Act 2011 and could lead on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale or disqualification for a period of up to 5 years by a court dealing with such an offence.

Action to be taken – Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, the Member shall declare the interest and not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the meeting room or Chamber during the whole consideration of the item unless a dispensation has been sought and granted.

Non Disclosable Pecuniary/Other Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to a Non Disclosable Pecuniary/ Other Interest, a Member should declare that interest to the meeting and having done so, is then free to remain, speak and vote on the matter under consideration.

SCHEDULE OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**Regulation 2**

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Prescribed description</i>
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by M in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of M. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) act 1992(1)
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority – (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to M's knowledge) – (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where – (a) that body (to M's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either: (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you are in any doubt you are urged to contact Ruth Dennis, Simon Oldham or the Democratic Services Team, preferably in advance of the meeting to discuss the matter. It would be even more helpful if details of your particular circumstances could be emailed so that a written response can be provided.

SCRUTINY PANEL A

**Meeting held in the Committee Room, Council Offices, Urban Road,
Kirkby-in-Ashfield,**

on Thursday, 14th November, 2013 at 6.30 p.m.

Present: Councillor T. Brown, in the Chair;
Councillors Mrs. C. Butler, Mrs. E.A. Mays, K. Knight,
L.S. Morrison and R.J. Sears-Piccavey.

Apology for Absence: Councillor J.R. Knight.

Officers Present: Mrs. L. Cain, N. Cotterill, M. Joy and Miss E.P. Saxton.

In Attendance: P. Goode (Road Traffic Manager, Nottinghamshire County
Council).
Councillor T.C. Locke.

SA.21 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Non Disclosable Pecuniary/Other Interests

There were no declarations of interest made.

SA.22 Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 24th September, 2013, be received and approved.

SA.23 Car Parking Capacity in Ashfield Scrutiny Review

The Scrutiny Manager introduced the update report and informed the Panel on the progress of the review following the last meeting. Members were informed that there remained a number of people to speak to including community groups and some local businesses to gain a fuller understanding of the concerns about current car parking capacity. Andrew Wraight, the Idlewells Centre Manager, had also been invited to attend the meeting but was unable to attend due to another appointment. However he did provide some additional information to assist in the review that had been included in the update report.

Further to discussions at the last meeting, a letter had also been sent to ASDA officials in Sutton requesting them to participate in discussion and give consideration to options discussed at the last meeting. This included exploring the possibility of extending the current car parking limit from 2 hours to 3 hours in ASDA car parks to enable

customers to extend their stay and increase their shopping experience within Sutton town centre. The Scrutiny Manager informed the Panel that he would inform them of any response once received.

The Chairman informed the Panel that to gain a district wide view of the issue he would also be aiming to meet with representatives from the supermarkets in Kirkby in Ashfield and Hucknall to ascertain their views in relation to current car parking capacity and its impact, or otherwise, on trading figures.

The three main areas for review/discussion were in relation to the impact of residential parking permit schemes on town centre trading, the mix of car parking provision within the town centres (i.e. short-stay and long-stay) and the requirement for a longer term Car Parking Strategy to ensure the continued provision of sustainable, appropriate car parking facilities in the future.

The Chairman welcomed Peter Goode, the County Council's Highways Manager, to the meeting. Mr. Goode outlined to the Panel the process for applying for a residential permit or permit scheme and explained that the initial request usually came from residents. Once requested the County Council would be required to establish if a 'traffic generator' existed that was currently affecting the resident's ability to park or was intrusive to their everyday lives. If so, subject to the prescribed process, a scheme would be introduced that would strike a balance between meeting the parking needs of the residents and likewise, visitors and shoppers to the town centre.

The removal of residential permit parking schemes was often initiated by residents, who became aware of the yearly charge for the permit. Some schemes no longer served their original purpose (i.e. change from industrial land to a residential development) and this again could generate a request to have the scheme removed.

A lengthy debate ensued and Members discussed, amongst other things, the following:-

- current enforcement procedures for dealing with vehicles parking on single and double yellow lines and in designated traffic hotspots both inside and outside of core restriction hours;
- the current problems being experienced by residents on Hodgkinson Road due to inconsiderate parking by local football team matches at particular times during weekends;
- the current problem of insufficient long-stay car parking facilities for the local workforce in Sutton town centre;
- the influence of local residents in determining the levels of restriction contained within new residential parking schemes which at times, proved detrimental to other users of the local town and facilities;
- the framework of the Notts. Parking Partnership and its remit for managing traffic enforcement throughout the Nottinghamshire area;

- the work of the enforcement contractors and four bailiff companies, managed by the County Council, and the allocation of the income and expenditure associated with the service;
- the yearly income generated by the residential parking permits and the percentage allocation between the County Council and the District Council in question;
- the scale of the consultation process undertaken for local/nearby residents in relation to any proposed residential parking permit scheme including its publication by virtue of newspaper notices, on street adverts and letter drops;
- concerns regarding the recent parking displacement of Sutton town centre workers due to the introduction of the residential parking permit schemes around the centre and the lack of consultation with Ashfield District Council prior to the new schemes being introduced;
- Council concerns regarding the piecemeal approach by the County Council towards the introduction of residential parking schemes and in mitigation, the restrictions placed on the County Council to deliver the schemes quickly to secure the appropriate funding;
- the process and costs (£5,000 each order) for making an amendment to a Road Traffic Order i.e. changing the waiting times;
- the importance for Councils to ensure that they maintain the right balance of parking facilities (length of stay) in their local town centres to ensure visitors/shoppers have enough time to browse, shop and eat;
- the potential issues surrounding future car parking capacity within Hucknall in light of the proposals for an inner relief road which would require the removal of the current Station Road car parking facility.

The Scrutiny Manager, to sum up the Panel's discussions, reiterated that the main piece of work arising from the review would be the development of a new Council Car Parking Strategy. The development of this strategy would need to ensure proper consideration is given to car parking capacity (and demand) as part of any future decisions in respect of strategic growth and town centre regeneration. Furthermore, work to consider the impact on town centres of short stay/long stay parking and whether there are any options for reconsidering this mix would also be considered in preparation for the next meeting of the Panel.

RESOLVED

that the Scrutiny Manager, in conjunction with the Chairman, be requested to undertake the following in readiness for the next meeting of the Panel:-

- (a) to endeavour to capture the views of a sample of local businesses, operating within the Kirkby, Sutton and Hucknall town centres, in relation to the current car parking capacity and its impact, or otherwise, on their trading figures;
- (b) to endeavour to arrange a meeting with ASDA officials to explore options around reviewing the car parking maximum stay limits;

- (c) to submit a copy of the Council's draft Car Parking Strategy (if available) for consideration;
- (d) to formulate a set of draft recommendations (for submission to Cabinet) for consideration by the Panel Members at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.47 p.m.

Chairman.

AGENDA ITEM: 4.

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY PANEL A

DATE: 22 JANUARY 2014

HEADING: SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CAR PARKING CAPACITY

**PORTFOLIO
HOLDER:**

KEY DECISION: YES/NO

SUBJECT TO CALL-IN:

YES/NO

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides further information in relation to some of the issues raised at the last meeting of the Scrutiny Panel in their review of car parking capacity. Members of the Panel have already agreed that the development of a Car Parking Strategy is fundamental to ensure that car parking issues are considered and reviewed in the ongoing economic regeneration of the Districts town centres.

The report further details the potential areas for making recommendations based on the discussions and information that has already been gathered from officers, businesses and stakeholders (including Nottinghamshire County Council and Idlewells Shopping Centre), and also details work to be completed to finalise the review of car parking capacity.

It Aims to set out some considerations in developing a Car Parking strategy and issues relevant to the District. Further consultation on the issue is still pending and will be reported to the Committee in due course.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Panel Members note the information contained within the report and consider suitable options to move the review forward.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

Scrutiny Panel A undertook this review following consultation on the workplan whereby this issue was considered to be important to address due to the impact that parking within the district can have on economic growth of our town centres.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED (with reasons why not adopted)

As detailed in the report.

5. BACKGROUND

Car parking is of interest to most residents and businesses of Ashfield. Members of the Panel have so far discussed a number of issues associated with parking from a range of stakeholders. The Panel agree that the development of a Car Parking Strategy is needed to ensure that parking issues are considered as part of any economic regeneration activity of the Districts town centres.

As part of the considerations for developing a Parking Strategy, the Council with involvement from the Notts Parking Partnership, should consider what the objectives for a Parking Strategy for

Ashfield should be. To assist this process a number of Parking Strategies from other local authorities have been reviewed to assess the value and impact of such a document.

What is clear is that any Parking Strategy should have clear objectives and contain an understanding of;

- where parking is needed and why
- what is available
- how the Council's approach could be refined in future to ensure it is attuned with local needs; helping to improve the quality of life of residents while helping local businesses flourish.

In setting out these objectives, the Strategy could highlight the challenges facing the town centres and the likely impact of changes during any regeneration activity of the towns. Secondly, it should describe where we want to be; what car parking in Ashfield will look like in the future balancing demands for additional car parking against the need to promote more sustainable modes of transport. Thirdly it could make recommendations and proposals on how the strategy will be achieved; how we get there.

As part of the broad principles of any strategy developed, Members should consider a range of factors. These include;

- Assessing possible future demand
- Proactive Approach
- Responsive to change
- Cost effectiveness

Parking availability of any type of vehicle is an important factor in determining how people travel. Parking availability also influences the vitality and viability of town centres and the attractiveness of residential areas. In some places on-street parking can act as a traffic calming measure, in others it is a problem for residents and businesses and can be a barrier to accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, passenger transport, emergency and other service vehicles.

The economic downturn clearly affects town centres and can have an effect on the demand for parking generally. Pressure of non-residential parking in residential areas may, in some areas, ease but will be likely to return when economic circumstances improve. Similarly demand for town centre parking may reduce during less favourable economic times but there is an opportunity to plan for possible returning high levels of demand alongside any growth in housing and jobs in and around the district.

The Panel have already considered a number of research reports which detail the possible effect of parking on town centre economy. The Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM) identified that town centres, which are not consumer friendly, lose business to locations which cater for the consumer.

During the discussion of this document Members debated the impact of parking on town centre economy and acknowledged that the development of a Parking Strategy could assist the Council in long term planning and consideration of the impact of parking for local businesses. However, they further agreed that increased car parking provision is not a panacea for reversing the decline in local town centre trading, as many other factors played a part in influencing the reasons why shoppers may not visit town centres. These other factors included the economic downturn, the popularity of online shopping and competition from other shopping facilities.

During the review, Panel Members discussed the issue with the Idlewells Centre Manager, to gain an understanding from a business perspective of current car parking provision and its ongoing impact on local trading.

The Panel were informed that the main source of comparator data came from analysing footfall through the centre but a system was in place to ascertain trading data from the shops on a fairly basic traffic light indicator basis. He considered that the fall in trading during 2013 had been a result of many factors and not just as a result of the installation of residential parking permit schemes on the majority of streets within the centre of Sutton. National austerity measures had also played their part which had resulted in less people visiting the centre.

Furthermore, he considered that the residential parking permit scheme had affected workers trying to park their cars during the working day. Long stay car parking provision was considered inadequate within the town centre and requests for workforce parking permits for the Idlewells Centre were on the increase.

In discussing the issue of parking permits with the County Council, the Panel were informed that the initial request for a parking permit usually came from residents. Once requested the County Council would be required to establish if a 'traffic generator' existed that was currently affecting the resident's ability to park or was intrusive to their everyday lives. If so, subject to the prescribed process, a scheme would be introduced that would strike a balance between meeting the parking needs of the residents and likewise, visitors and shoppers to the town centre.

The Panel agreed that the extent of the residential permit parking around Sutton town centre was now beginning to have an impact on current car parking capacity. Panel Members agreed that it might be prudent to concentrate on reviewing 'longer-stay' car parking provision and for the Panel to consider options for re-designating current car parking spaces (to consider an appropriate mix of both short and long-stay) without incurring any additional (and currently unavailable) resources.

In discussing the issue with a representative from the County Council, Members debated the influence of local residents in determining the levels of restriction contained within new residential parking schemes which at times, proved detrimental to other users of the local town and facilities;

In considering this issue the Panel agreed that it wishes to explore the possibility of the length of stay of parking facilities in Ashfield to see whether any amendments to this could have a positive impact for both residents and local businesses. This was important to ensure that the right balance of parking facilities (length of stay) in local town centres is maintained to ensure visitors/shoppers have enough time to shop and browse.

In considering this issue the Panel were informed that any amendment to a Road Traffic Order i.e. changing the waiting times, did have an associated cost attached and this would need to be considered as part of any review of waiting times.

Consideration of any changes to this would need to be reflected in any proposed Strategy document. The Panel have concluded that effective parking management is important for a variety of reasons, these include:

- for the local economy, to encourage visitors and shoppers;
- for residents, who need to have access to parking near their homes and at the places they visit, and for those living outside of the main towns who need to use their cars to access goods and services
- for businesses, who need access to essential car parking and loading facilities;
- for special needs groups, such as people with mobility difficulties. Who need to access goods and services by car:
- for commuters;
- for reducing congestion and improving road safety; and
- for dealing with demand for parking

Broader Principles of a Proposed Parking Strategy

As part of the research already undertaken and taking into account the views already expressed by the Scrutiny Panel there are some broader principles that the Parking Strategy should contain. These are;

Assess future demand

To provide adequate appropriate quality, car parking provision to meet the needs of customers, to support the local economy and maintain current income levels. To achieve a balanced car parking provision across the District in alignment with the town centre regeneration and the principles of sustainable development.

Proactive Approach

take a planned and proactive approach to the exploration of current car parking facilities and capacity to meet the demand for existing businesses; to remain ahead of demand for car parking and provide the right amount of provision of the right type in the right place.

Responsive to change

to undertake periodic assessments of demand and provision of car parking and to encourage the use of other more sustainable forms of transport by ensuring adequate parking provision for cycles and motor cycles.

Cost effective

To deliver cost effective car parking to ensure available and suitable car parking for both shoppers, commercial users and residents.

The proposal for the development of a Parking Strategy is to provide a framework and to define the role of parking in the overall transport and regeneration strategies of the Council. Any Strategy should be developed in partnership with key stakeholders in the area to ensure that our policy contributes to the success of the local town centres and provides a first class facility for visitors and local users of the car parks as well as residents.

Notts Parking Partnership

Members of the Panel were informed that the Council was part of a wider partnership called the Notts Parking Partnership. The Partnership was formed to ensure that parking enforcement is provided consistently and fairly across the County.

The Partnership employs NSL Services to supply Civil Enforcement Officers (formerly known as Traffic Wardens) to enforce parking restrictions in the county. They provide approximately 20 officers across the county. The District and Borough Parking Managers manage parking enforcement in their respective areas. This consists of allocating daily patrol 'beats', issuing daily parking dispensations (permits), informing Enforcement Officers about reported parking issues and resolving formal appeals.

The County Council operates a single Penalty Charge Notice (parking fine) processing centre which ensures that all correspondence relating to Penalty Charge Notices is fairly and consistently responded to within set timescales.

In discussing the partnership Members were enthusiastic that the issues currently being faced in the District are considered appropriately to ensure that action is taken to address topics such as the length of stay and parking permits and how these are affecting visitors to the Districts town centres

Underground Car Park (Idlewells, Sutton)

During the review the Panel discussed issues and speculation relating to the underground car park at the Idlewells in Sutton. To find out the facts on this issue Members discussed it with the Idlewells Manager. They were informed that the car park would take over £750,000 to reinstate and the car parking income to offset the investment could not be guaranteed at this point in time. The project was not currently viable.

Consideration had also been given to placing a roof on the top two levels of the multi storey car park but again, this would cost in the region of £200,000 and the projected income generation from the additional car parking could not guarantee the required yield to offset the investment cost.

Next Steps

further work is ongoing with both officers and partners to consider the options to move this review forward. Work towards the development of a draft strategy is ongoing and the Panel will need to agree recommendations to take to Cabinet.

Furthermore, views are also being sought from representatives for economic regeneration and businesses and car users in the district. In consideration of this the following potential areas for recommendation will need to be discussed and agreed:

- ADC Car Parking Strategy (principles and objectives)
- Residential parking schemes
- Strengthen relationship and joint working with County Council
- Working with other stakeholders to improve the supply of parking to meet demand
- Current Length of stay restrictions in the districts car parking facilities
- Making more efficient use of existing supply
- Reviewing types of parking provided
- Control on-street parking while retaining some provision for shoppers
- Possible development of Car Parking Monitoring Group (ADC)

The above areas for possible recommendation are taken from the discussions that have already taken place as part of the Scrutiny Panel considerations with both officers, businesses and stakeholders. Further information on this issue will be presented to Members at the meeting.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Plan:

It is acknowledged that the review of car parking at Ashfield District Council has the potential to impact the following Corporate Priorities;

- A dynamic, productive, competitive and rewarding local Economy
- Stronger and more resilient communities where people want to live, work, play and be involved

Legal:

There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report. However advice will be sought from legal to help inform both the review and any potential recommendations.

Financial:

There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report. Advice will be sought from finance to help inform both the review of car parking in the district and any potential recommendations as part of the process.

Health and Well-Being / Environmental Management and Sustainability:

There are no immediate Health and Well-Being / Environmental Management or Sustainability issues contained within this report. However it is recognised that car parks and any subsequent policy development should consider the factors associated and should be engaged prior to any recommendations being made.

Human Resources:

There are no immediate Human Resources implications arising from this report.

Diversity/Equality:

Equality / Diversity implications relating to a review of car parking will be considered as part of this review including the participation of the Equality and Diversity Project Officer who will provide both knowledge, advice and assistance.

Community Safety:

There are no immediate Community Safety implications contained within this report.

Other Implications:

There are no immediate Unison / implications contained within this report. Unison / GMB will be consulted as part of the review.

REPORT AUTHOR AND CONTACT OFFICER

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ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (GOVERNANCE)