



OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TO CABINET 9 SEPTEMBER 2015

Report Title	RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – PARKING
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Agenda Status: PUBLIC

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present to Cabinet for consideration, the comments and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the findings of the Review –Parking.
- 1.2 Members of Cabinet have been issued with a copy of the full report. All Overview and Scrutiny review reports are published on the Overview and Scrutiny page on the Council's Webpage and a copy of this report can be located: www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny - Previous Scrutiny Reviews.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet that:
 - 2.1.1 Discussions are held with the Saints and Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) regarding the possible introduction of caretaker facilities, provided by Sporting Clubs, and residents parking permits at the flats in St James on match days.
 - 2.1.2 In recognising the increased traffic after a match and increased parking need on match days, the Saints is approached to ascertain whether it could subsidise a Parking Scheme, such as the provision of a steward to man the pedestrian crossing on Weedon Road after a match and the provision of a caretaker at the flats in St James on match days should a residents parking scheme be introduced.
 - 2.1.3 The Saints is asked to advertise match day parking further by including parking details in its programmes.

- 2.1.4 Consideration is given to widening the use of the Claret car park, free of charge, to include Saturdays when just the Saints are playing at home.
- 2.1.5 Free car parking facility available at the Claret car park on match days is given heightened publicity.
- 2.1.6 Consideration is given to giving supporter access to the Doddridge and Castle car park, (Chalk Lane) on Saturday match days.
- 2.1.7 Consideration is given to providing additional parking at Pineham and Swan Valley on match days.
- 2.1.8 Early implementation of the St James Mill Road extension; although the Scrutiny Panel understands that procedures on the construction are taking place.
- 2.1.9 Contact is made with StageCoach and the Saints regarding the introduction of pilot scheme whereby a Season Ticket Holder can travel to the ground for £1 single each way.
- 2.1.10 The Executive Committee of the St James Mosque is contacted suggesting that they liaise with local businesses on the Weedon Road, such as Beacon Bingo, to ascertain whether they would be able to offer the mosque parking spaces on Fridays, between 11:30am and 3pm, for a trial period.

3. Background and Issues

3.1 The purpose of the review was to undertake a review, to gain a better understanding of residential parking problems, as detailed in motion that was unanimously carried at full Council on 27 October 2014. In doing this, the Working Group will:

- Investigate the possibility and viability of issuing tenants in NBC homes (including Cordwainer House, Stitchman House, Stirrup House, Lapstone House, Eyeletter House, Abbey House, Melbourne House, Dover Court, Devonshire House) that have allocated parking areas with free parking permits.
- Investigate the possibility and viability of extending free parking permits to other parts of St James, Upton, Duston and other parts of the town.

3.2 A motion was unanimously carried at full Council on 27 October 2014:

“This Council recognises the exceptional parking problems that residents and tenants regularly encounter in St James as a result of match day parking. But the problems in St James are not only match day parking. The people coming into St James taking up residents’ and tenants spaces include people coming into the area to work and some people parking at the flats and walking to the station to

avoid the parking charges there. This council therefore resolves to do the following:

1. *Look into the possibility of issuing tenants in NBC homes that have allocated parking areas with free parking permits. The properties considered would be: Cordwainer House, Stitchman House, Stirrup House, Lapstone House, Eyeletter House, Abbey House, Melbourne House, Devonshire House, although this list is not exhaustive. This measure would ensure that premium allocated parking is not occupied by people from the outside area. This should be supplemented with sufficient enforcement to tackle inappropriately and incorrectly parked vehicles.*
2. *This council also agrees to consult with Northamptonshire County Council, the Police and Highways to look at the possibility of extending free parking permits into other parts of St James, Upton, Duston and other parts of the town which may then replace the current parking permit scheme which is presently under review and thus remove the need to financially penalise the people of St James simply because people from the outside area come to park in St James, as a successful sports club is located on their door step.*
3. *This Council resolves to ask the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to carry out a detailed investigation to look at these options for Cabinet to consider.”*

3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a short, sharp review and established a Working Group comprising Councillor Brian Sargeant (Chair); Councillors Tony Ansell, Rufia Ashraf and Mick Ford.

3.4 This Scrutiny activity links to the Council's corporate priorities, particularly corporate priority 2 – invest in safer, cleaner neighbourhoods (creating an attractive, clean and safe environment.)

3.5 After all of the evidence was collated the following conclusions were drawn:

3.6 Evidence gathered during the site visit that took place on Saturday 7 February 2015 highlighted that the free car park (Claret car park) had only been 1/3 full but the Saints car park was full; with a cost of £4 per car to park. The Northampton Town Football Club car park was around ½ full. On street parking was very busy. A school on the Harlestone Road was being used as a car park for match day parking. Parking at the school was very busy. The car park at the Doddridge Centre was empty and felt it could have been used to generate income for the Centre. The car park at the Thomas Beckett pub had been full but there were only around 4 people inside the pub.

3.7 The Working Group noted, from the recent site visit, that people do pay to park at the Saints but the free car park (Claret car park) is not as well used. There is a need for it to be publicised more.

- 3.8 Evidence received confirmed that co-ordination between Agencies, the Saints and Northampton Town Football Club is generally good. The Scrutiny Working Group considered that there is a need for joined up working between Northampton Partnership Homes and Highways at Northamptonshire County Council.
- 3.9 In recognising parking on-street on match days, the Scrutiny Working Group emphasised that there is a need to ensure tenants that they are able to have the benefit of quiet enjoyment of their accommodation; rather than casual users such as match day parkers and commuters. It is therefore important that this right is preserved and parking enforced. The Scrutiny Working Group emphasised that problems with parking are not limited to match days but also include commuter parking.
- 3.10 The Scrutiny Working Group noted that Hammersmith and Fulham has three key football teams in its area. Resident caretakers work on match days so that only those with a right to park would park in specific areas. This process is reported to work very well. The Scrutiny Panel felt that if the Saints could provide caretakers; a similar process could work at the flats in St James. Northampton Partnership Homes confirmed that it could provide the permits to the tenants.
- 3.11 The Scrutiny Working Group considered that there needs to be better Traffic Management Plans in place but noted that previous arrangements whereby traffic had been asked to leave the car parks after the match at the Saints, via a left turn only, had not been effective as it had not been enforceable.
- 3.12 The evidence received highlighted that information about parking and travel is on the Saints website and on the back of tickets. Information about parking is also disseminated via Social media; such as asked supporters to park responsibly. Whilst recognising that the Saints promote parking arrangements the Scrutiny Working Group felt that it would be useful for details regarding parking to be included also within the match programmes. Such information would be useful for supporters for future matches.
- 3.13 The Scrutiny Parking Working Group considered that it would be useful if St James Mill Road was extended into the Southern approach road as soon as possible.
- 3.14 The Scrutiny Parking Working Group felt that it would help traffic flow after a match at the Saints if the pedestrian crossing on the Weedon Road was manned.
- 3.15 Evidence received from expert advisors indicated that there is a lot of parking in the vicinity of both stadiums on match days. When Northampton Town Football Club is playing on its own there is not such a great impact as there is when there is a clash of fixtures or when the Saints is playing at home.

- 3.16 London Midland currently has temporary access to the Doddridge and Castle Car park, (Chalk Lane) but they are generally not used at weekends, as the station car park is not at capacity. The Scrutiny Parking Working Group considered that the use of these car parks for Saturday matches would be beneficial to supporters and could also generate income. It was considered that additional parking at Pineham and Swan Valley would help. StageCoach runs buses from these areas which are currently catered to shift patterns but they could be amended.
- 3.17 The Scrutiny Working Group noted that the Council has a licence to use the Claret car park and the ability to sub-licence the use of the car park to either sports club, if they wish to make arrangements with the Council. The Working Group was pleased that the Council opens this car park free of charge when both clubs have home fixtures, but noted that neither Club has chosen to make an arrangement with the Council for regular use of the car park for match day parking. On those days the car park is advertised as a free car park and it is open for anyone to use. The Working Group felt that it would be useful for the Claret car park to be open, free of charge, when just the Saints play at home too.
- 3.18 StageCoach is currently trialling, with Northampton Town Football Club, a scheme whereby a Season Ticket Holder can travel to the ground for £1 single each way. The Scrutiny Parking Working Group considered that a similar pilot scheme for Saints Season Ticket Holders would be useful.
- 3.19 The Scrutiny Working Group acknowledged the problems that users of the St James Mosque incur, particularly on Fridays during prayer time. It was considered that a potential solution could be for the Executive Committee of the St James Mosque to liaise with local businesses in the area, such as Beacon Bingo, to ascertain whether they could use their car parks during 11:30am to 3pm on Fridays for a trial period.

4. Options

- 4.1 Cabinet will need to consider the possible options as part of its response to the recommendations.

5. Implications (including financial implications)

5.1 Policy

- 5.1.1 The work of Overview and Scrutiny plays a major part in the development of the Council's policy framework through its work programme.
- 5.1.2 The report and its recommendations have policy implications in relation to parking. Cabinet's response will need to consider these issues in detail.

5.2 Resources and Risk

5.2.1 Cabinet will need to consider the resourcing issues for the recommendations made.

5.3 Legal

5.3.1 Legal issues will need to be considered as part of Cabinet's response to the recommendations.

5.4 Equality

5.4.1 Equality issues will need to be considered as part of Cabinet's response to the recommendations.

5.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

5.5.1 The Committee consulted and took evidence from a variety of sources.

6. Background Papers

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee report – Parking Working Group (March 2015)
- Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 23 March 2015

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