



NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 JUNE 2018

BRIEFING NOTE: MATCH DAY PARKING

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An Overview & Scrutiny Report in March 2015 outlined an 'activity' that had taken place around issues concerning Match Day Car Parking; availability, congestion and potential solutions.
- 1.2 The Cabinet response of March 2017 proposed a meeting with the relevant organisations to discuss the issues and potential ways forward based on the recommendations contained in the original O&S report.
- 1.3 An Officer/Member working group has been established which comprises Northampton Saints Rugby Club (NSRC), Northampton Town Football Club (NTFC), Stagecoach, Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH), Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) and Northampton Borough Council (NBC). The working group is chaired by Cllr Brian Sargeant, chair of the original Scrutiny Parking Working Group. Five meetings have been held to date with a final meeting planned for 9 July 2018.
- 1.4 This paper provides an update on progress made and the next steps.

2 UPDATE / ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2.1 The group has been working in partnership to recommend potential solutions to the car parking and traffic flow issues which occur in the St James area, Duston, Upton and further afield on Match Days.
- 2.2 Work has been undertaken around the location of the Saints season ticket holders. This has allowed the group to understand where they are situated to give a better idea of how they are likely to travel to a match. The data suggests most are likely to travel by car.
- 2.3 Northampton Saints Rugby Club has confirmed that their car parks are at capacity on match days and they work with an external company to ensure there is a traffic management plan in place for each match. This

plan aims to guarantee that the traffic vacates the site within 40 minutes. This target is met on most match days. The group has managed to enable the opening of Claret Car Park on Match Days which has assisted with car parking.

- 2.4 It was agreed that all partners would promote the available car parks to fans on Match Days on the relevant pages on their websites.
- 2.5 The two sports clubs are now working more closely in terms of supporting the issue of congestion and parking on Match Days. Where there is a joint match day, NTFC has, wherever possible, changed the time of the match to assist with the congestion issue. This is, at times, governed by the media and away teams. This is something that the clubs will continue to work together to achieve.
- 2.6 NPH have confirmed that there are mixed views on car parking barriers within the housing blocks across the town. There are however issues with parking in a number of areas of the town and NPH are investing funding into these car parking issues. NPH are currently testing a new fob barrier system which, if successful, they will roll out to other blocks. The idea is to find a solution to solve the problems across the town. These solutions are hoped to be in place by the end of the summer and therefore ready for the next season.
- 2.7 NPH are also now looking into 'Residents Only Parking' signage.
- 2.8 NCC are adding wording to their electronic signage to encourage the sports fans to park considerately on Match Days.
- 2.9 The group explored a number of options in terms of parking permits in the area including:
 - Zoned permit areas,
 - Match Day Only residents permits,
 - One permit zone across the affected area.

NCC confirmed that all the above options would require:

- consultation of the area in question (with a majority of responses and within this a majority of positive votes to enable the permit system to be put in place)
- permanent signage across the area in question
- additional enforcement

Due to the level of commitment/resources involved in setting up a permit system of any kind, the residents would still have to pay the full permit amount each year. Consultations have been undertaken previously which have shown little interest in the permit scheme due to the cost and therefore, overall, it was decided not to move forward with any kind of permit system at this time.

- 2.10 NBC sent a letter sent to all the businesses located on Pineham and Swan Valley to understand whether there was any interest in using their car parks for a Park and Ride system on match days. The finer details

around parking charges and beneficiaries would require further discussion with one suggestion being that the money raised from parking (or part of it) could go to a charity of the business' choice. The business would however only be able to take part in this scheme should they not use their car park at the weekends and potentially some evenings in line with the match times/dates.

NBC did not receive any interest from any of the businesses.

- 2.11 The St James Mill Link Road, once completed, will assist with the congestion on Match Days. This project has its own programme.
- 2.12 Multi Storey Car Park at the Railway Station – currently looking into the viability of this and other options for NBC.

3 NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The ongoing work outlined above will continue to be undertaken by the various members of the group. The idea is to gradually change habits of fans to encourage them to consider alternative parking/traveling solutions.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 That Overview and Scrutiny note the progress that has been made by the group.
- 4.2 That Overview and Scrutiny recognise the work undertaken above has assisted with the overall issue and, at the present time, little else can be achieved towards the matter.
- 4.3 That Overview and Scrutiny agree to the 9 July 2018 being the final meeting of this working group.

Rick O'Farrell
Senior Regeneration Consultant
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