

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

19 APRIL 2018

**REPORT OF PLACE SELECT
COMMITTEE**

CABINET DECISION

**Access, Communities and Community Safety – Councillor Steve Nelson
Environment and Transport – Councillor Mike Smith**

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF DISABLED PARKING (TASK AND FINISH)

1. Summary

The attached report presents the Place Select Committee findings and recommendations following the Task and Finish Scrutiny Review Security of Disabled Parking.

2. Recommendations

- (1) That the Council introduce prosecution for fraudulent use of blue badges, on the basis of the Council recouping the costs incurred and that appropriate training for Civic Enforcement Officers be carried out in order to facilitate this.
- (2) That an audit of the location and suitability of disabled bays (for both wheelchair and non-wheelchair users) be conducted in order to assess the nature and extent of improvements required to disabled bay provision within Stockton Borough Council owned car parks, both on and off street.
- (3) That prior to any new car parks being developed by the Authority in the future, Disabled Motoring UK and/or other Disability Advisory Groups be consulted to ensure we are meeting the needs for those who are using them.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

The report presents the findings of the scrutiny review that took place as part of the agreed work programme for 2016/17.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or
- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

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SUMMARY

The attached report presents the Place Select Committee findings and recommendations following the Task and Finish Scrutiny Review of Disabled Parking.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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DETAIL

1. This report presents Cabinet with the outcomes of the Task and Finish Scrutiny Review of Disabled Parking carried out by the Place Select Committee.
2. The overall aim of the review was to examine the extent of abuse of parking bays and the Blue Badge scheme in Stockton Borough and the location of disabled car parking bays in car parks taking into account safe access routes from car parks to facilities. The review will feed into a revised policy.
3. The Committee explored the following key lines of enquiry:
 - What are the statutory requirements for disabled bays?
 - Are disabled bays in the correct locations?
 - What is the process for applying for a blue badge?
 - How aware are the public of the blue badge scheme?
 - How many blue badge applications are rejected and appealed?
 - What is the cost of administering the scheme?
 - How many offences are being committed?
 - What approach do the Council take to enforce the scheme?

- What would the implications and costs of the Council prosecuting people abusing the blue badge scheme?
- What do users tell us about the operation and abuse of the scheme and the location of disabled bays?
- What approach do other Council's take?

4. In addition to evidence presented from Transport Strategy and Road Safety, the Committee asked for feedback from:

- Disability Advisory Group Members
- All Councillors
- Graham Footer, Chief Executive, Disabled Motoring UK
- Private Car Park Operators

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5. The recommendations seek to reduce abuse of disabled bays and the blue badge scheme and make the location of disabled bays more accessible for users.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. The audit will need to be carried out within existing resources. Prosecution for fraudulent use of blue badges will be on the basis of the Council recouping its costs.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7. Set out within the Select Committee report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

8. This review is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

9. The review supports the following Council Plan Policy Priorities:

- **Protecting the vulnerable through targeted intervention**, particularly those people in our communities who are subject to, or at risk of harm, people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and those who are financially excluded or whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- **Creating economic prosperity** across the Borough

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

10. The Committee have received evidence as set out in the final report of the Select Committee and have sought feedback from all Council Members.

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Education related? No

Background Papers None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors The proposals as a whole are not ward specific.

Property None