



AGENDA ITEM:

3

SPECIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

3rd May 2011

CALL-IN:

Wilson Street – Traffic Management Issues

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To allow Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) the opportunity to review a decision made at an Individual Executive Member meeting by the Mayor on 12th April 2011, in accordance with the Authority's Call-In Procedure.

EXECUTIVE DECISION — 12th April 2011

2. At an Individual Executive Member meeting, consideration was given to a report relating to Wilson Street – Traffic Management Issues.
3. At this meeting, the report, detailed at **appendix 1**, sets out the following:
 - a) The stretch of Wilson Street between Albert Road and Linthorpe Mews can be extremely congested at peak times, generally between 1am and 4am on Friday and Saturday mornings. This congestion primarily arises from the large number of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles in this location. There are four late night take away premises on Wilson Street which attract the

public at the end of the night. In December 2010 a private hire operator, was also granted a licence to operate a booking office in this location.

- b) Concerns had been expressed in relation to the congestion and consequently a review of the town centre night time traffic management arrangements was undertaken. It was proposed that the issue of Wilson Street would be considered in conjunction with other town centre late night hot spot locations and traffic management issues.
- c) Following extensive surveys and consultation "Transportation Planning International" were unable to form a consensus regarding Wilson Street. As a result of this, three options were proposed to be piloted and evaluated, to identify the way forward. At a previous meeting it had been decided that all taxi issues should be developed and progressed through a Quality Taxi Partnership (QTP). The QTP determined that that Wilson Street should be a priority to address and this would focus on traffic congestion.
- d) The report showed that the three options relating to Wilson Street and a possible staged pilot approach are :
 - Option 1: Full closure of Wilson Street after the last late night bus and up to 04.00 am;
 - Option 2: Wilson Street is retained operating as a two-way road
One rank along Wilson Street (to be decided by the QTP) is retained;
 - Option 3: Wilson Street operating under a one-way system (east – west), after the last late night bus and up to 04.00 am;
One rank along Wilson Street (to be decided by the QTP) is retained;
- e) The QTP met in February 2011 and considered the options during which there was general agreement that option 1 (the full closure of Wilson Street) should be progressed. There was no agreement in relation to the remaining two options.
- f) The role of the taxi marshalls had attracted some agreement through the QTP, however, it was recognised the proposal requires further development and the success of any option for Wilson Street is the co-operation of both the hackney carriage drivers and private hire operators.

- 4 In doing so, the Executive Member, the Mayor ordered the following:

ORDERED

1. That the views of the Quality Taxi Partnership meeting in relation to the options for Wilson Street, be considered, together with the views made at the meeting.
2. That as a first option to tackle the late night congestion issues, the development of proposals for taxi marshalls in the Wilson Street location be approved and that these proposals be the subject of a further report within three months.

REASON

- 5 The decisions were supported by the following reason:

In order to address the concerns in relation to public safety arising from the congestion at peak times in this location, the local authority consider that action is necessary to improve traffic management in the Wilson Street location. Officers have sought the views of stakeholders through the Quality Taxi Partnership and have not achieved agreement in relation to the options proposed in the TPI report. Taxi marshalls are the only proposal that both parties agree on and therefore, as a first option the development of a proposal for taxi marshalls should be developed and evaluated in the Wilson Street location for a set period of time.

CALL-IN PROCEDURE

- 6 The Call-In Procedure allows Members the opportunity to Call-In a decision for scrutiny by the OSB which was made by:
- i) The Executive;
 - ii) An individual Member of the Executive;
 - iii) A Committee of the Executive;
 - iv) A key decision made by an officer with delegated authority from the Executive; or
 - v) Under Joint Arrangements.
7. The Call-In Procedure may only be implemented if so requested by any five Members of the Council and upon receipt of any such request by the Proper Officer before the end of the fifth working day after the making of that decision.
8. Following an Executive meeting, which addressed the report of the Wilson Street – Traffic Management Issues, which was approved by

the Mayor on 12th April 2011. Six Members supported the request to Call-In such decision, in accordance with the Call-In procedure.

9. Throughout this special meeting of the OSB, Members will have the opportunity to review the decision. Having considered the decision the OSB may, if they feel it appropriate, refer the decision back to the decision-making body for re-consideration, setting out in writing the nature of their concerns.
10. If the decision is referred, then a further Executive Meeting will be held within ten further working days. The Executive can then make a final decision in the light of any recommendations made by OSB.
11. If the recommendations of the OSB are not accepted in full, then the Executive should notify the OSB and give reasons for not accepting the recommendations.

REASONS GIVEN FOR THE CALL-IN

12. The reason given to the Authority's Proper Officer which initiated the Call-In Procedure for the Mayor's decision on the Director of Environment's report, re the Wilson Street – Traffic Management Issues. The reasons primarily relate to the accuracy of information presented to the Mayor and procedural issues at the meeting. These reasons are presented below for Members awareness.
 1. More than one representative of the QTP in attendance asserted that their views put forward in the report by a council officer was incorrect and therefore unreliable.
 2. The chair of the meeting was not impartial
 3. Evidence of the actual pre determination of the outcome of the meeting.

Environment – Wilson Street – Traffic Management Issues.

13. To assist Members of the OSB to review the decision made by the Mayor in relation to the Wilson Street – Traffic Management Issues. The following key witnesses will be in attendance during this Special Meeting:
 - i) Head of Community Protection, to present the background to the report presented to the Mayor at an Individual Executive Meeting held on 12th April 2011.
 - ii) The Mayor (to present how the decision was reached); and

- iii) The Member who initiated the Call-In request (to present their views and concerns with regard to the decision made by the Mayor).

PROPOSED CALL- IN TIMETABLE

- 14. To ensure the Call-In procedure is adhered to, the following Call-In timetable is as outlined below:

MEETING	DATE/TIME	PURPOSE
Special Meeting - Overview and Scrutiny Board	3 rd May 11 10.00 AM	To review the decisions taken by the Mayor on 12 th April 2011, in accordance with the Call-In Procedure.
Individual Executive Meeting	To be Determined	To re-consider the decision (if required to do so)
Overview and Scrutiny Board	To be Determined	To notify the OSB of the outcome of the Call In

RECOMMENDATION

- 15. It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Board consider the content of this report, to enable the Call-In procedure to be adhered to.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16. The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:
 - i) Middlesbrough Council's Constitution / Call-In Procedure; and
 - ii) Middlesbrough Council's Scrutiny Handbook.
 - iii) Report to the Executive Member for Community Protection on 12th April 2011

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