

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes.

Deputations received:

(i) Deputation: George Street opening hours

Our deputation today requests that Brighton & Hove City Council produces a report to this Committee considering that George Street, Hove is opened to vehicles from 3.00pm, all year round. The current policy is to open to vehicles at 4.00pm in winter and 6.00pm in summer. The only pedestrian street in the county that has a seasonal time shift.

Our deputation recognises that this committee looked at this issue as recently as 24th November 2015, and decided to retain the current hours of operation. This report followed the presentation of a petition signed by 82 businesses from George Street (over 93%) requesting an earlier opening time to traffic of 4.00pm during the summer. The consultation which followed 84% of responses supported the change. Nearly all of these were George Street businesses.

Since 2015, trading conditions have deteriorated and have hugely impacted on George Street because;

1. Tesco now require a minimum spend of £5 to allow parking for greater than 30 minutes in their car park. They have acknowledged this has reduced the average time spent per car in their car park. This change has put off people visiting George St., and people have decided to stay away in great numbers.
2. St Andrew's school is in the process of expanding pupil numbers by 50% (ultimately an additional 210 students will attend). This has put additional pressure on local traffic flow and parking. This presents George St., as well as the parents, with an opportunity to solve the growing problem and benefit, if parents and carers could park in George St., then collect their children from St. Andrew's and then possible additional customer numbers for George Street.
3. The halving of the number of pay and display parking places in Haddington Street from 32 to 16. Also major complaints about on-line payment, some people just do not have the technology or service.
4. The allowance of resident parking permit holders to park in the remainder of the Haddington Street Car Park thereby further reducing parking spaces available to George Street and Blatchington Road customers.

George Street businesses which are represented here today report that their takings have reduced significantly as a result of these changes since the issue was last considered in 2015. Some by at least 10%, others by 25%, and some even higher.

There are numerous examples of the impact of the Tesco car parking restriction; too many for the time that is allowed for this deputation. A selection of examples have been gathered and can be made available. Typical examples range from; *'drop in footfall which has materialised itself in a 32% drop in our revenues. We are a 'walk-in' salon where no appointment is required and as such we rely heavily on foot traffic to run our business.'* Or *'The change to Tesco car parking came into effect on 16 February 2017 and this has had a very noticeable impact on our business.'* Or *'that my takings in compare with the same period last year is at least 10% down.'*

We request that the Committee recognises that George St. employs over 813 people, one of the largest employers in the city. Business owners and their employee's depend on their livelihoods on a thriving retail and recreation area. Businesses in George St. face a stark choice if this is not dealt with; chain stores closing down their Hove store and independents going bankrupt, it could leave the community without a convenient local shopping area and an increase in unemployment. With high business rates, high rents, the drop in footfall adds to the existing pressure.

It is regular and noticeable that trade drops about 3.30pm in the afternoon in summer, as well as in the winter, but trade is reinvigorated in the winter due to being opened to the traffic at 4.00pm.

George Street businesses will be consulting our own customers and visitors to the street over the summer and autumn and will contribute to the discussion. For now we request a revised report and consultation, given the dramatic changes we have seen to the parking environment in which George St operates and its significant impact on our businesses and community.

3.00pm to 6.00pm represents a period that equates to 25% of the working day's potential earning ability, a large percentage that would be a huge help in our survival.

To change to a yearly earlier opening time benefits not only the businesses, but the community and the parents of St. Andrews, and would relieve the traffic build up around the school.

Supported by:

Councillor Andrew Wealls (Lead Spokesperson)

Councillor Clare Moonan

Abid Hussain (QSS Vape)

Leah O'Faolain (Age UK)

Lorna Lewis (Truffles Bakery)

David Ishola (The Studio)

Sean Denyer (Manager - Boots)

(ii) Deputation: Hanover & Elm Grove and Craven Vale Resident Parking Scheme Traffic Regulation Order

When presented to the residents affected, the overwhelming impression given was that the parking scheme would be an entire scheme for the whole area, any information about dividing the scheme into different parts was not prominent and hidden in small print. The information provided by the residents of the 'Top Triangle' was given on the view that there would be a single consistent scheme across the entire area.

The scheme announced is a divided scheme, with the lower half of Elm Grove a full scheme, and the top half a 'light touch' scheme. If residents of the 'Top Triangle' had been made aware that the committee would interpret the consultation with a divided scheme, this would have affected how they voted.

This is quite clear from the petition, which gathered signatories from 118 properties in the area within one week, amounting to over 70% of properties (some of which are empty, and some residents were away or on vacation during this week). This is an overwhelming response indicating a clear democratic view expressed by the residents of the 'Top Triangle', demanding their movement from the proposed 'light touch' to the full scheme.

These views were collected during the consultation period and, again, represent a clear and overwhelming view. The council have decided to ignore this clear and overwhelming view, raising the question of what is the purpose of the consultation?

Finally, the Committee Report released on 19 June contains a falsehood regarding the 'Top Triangle' residents. In 5.11, the report states that "residents in the Top Triangle overwhelmingly preferred a light touch scheme". In actuality, these residents indicated a clear preference for no scheme, and this passage has been included in order to marginalise the clear democratic view expressed by the 'Top Triangle' during the consultation period.

Supported by:

Andy Knott (Lead Spokesperson)

Steve Requena

Allen Lawrence

Andy Knott

Millie Hopkins

Kimani Waiyaki

Imogen Haslam

