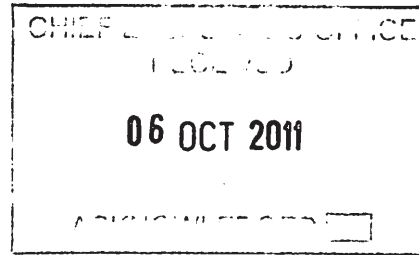


Mr John Barradell  
Chief Executive  
Brighton & Hove City Council



5<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Dear John

I am writing under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.5 to request a call-in of the decision taken by Cllr. Ian Davey at the Cabinet Member Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October – Citywide Parking Review.

I believe that the decision made by the Cabinet Member, in respect of the citywide parking review, was not taken in accordance with Article 13 of the Constitution ('Decision Making'). In particular, I believe that it breached the principles d) a presumption in favour of openness and e) clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

The first problem was around the distinct lack of clarity on the timetable for the proposed citywide review. Recommendation d) stated that officers be instructed to undertake this review and to report back within 6 months of commencement. However, at no point in the report was it stated when this was to start or, indeed, just as importantly, when it was to finish. When I pressed this point with the Cabinet Member, he sought clarification from officers who said that it may be possible to start it by the end of this year and finish it by the end of 2012. However, this was not made explicit and was not added to the recommendations. Furthermore, new recommendation e) now states that after a non-disclosed commencement date, only a **progress report** is required within 6 months.

Secondly, I believe that one of the statements in the report (and the main reason given for not going ahead with a consultation in the West Hove/Portslade area) was factually inaccurate. It states in paragraph 3.4 that "it is still difficult to identify a larger geographically viable boundary supported by residents and ward members, which if sub-divided, would not cause immediate displacement." I have never been consulted on areas which might or might not be acceptable and so to suggest that this is the case was completely wrong. It was also factually inaccurate to suggest in Appendix A, that there are no significant road safety concerns in relation to the parking situation in West Hove/Portslade. As a resident confirmed at the meeting, there are serious road safety issues around Wish Park, which have particular significance given the number of children and young people who use both the park and seafront.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly in respect of upholding the integrity and transparency of the decision-making process, many residents told me that they left the meeting completely confused and unsure as to what had actually been agreed by the Cabinet Member – a clear breach of the presumption in favour of openness. The confusion stemmed from the insertion of an additional recommendation by the Cabinet Member which, I accept was intended to be helpful, but which merely added to the uncertainties. The extra recommendation reads: (b) Instructs officers to review the timetable in Appendix B and the resources required to implement it and,

if possible, to accelerate this timetable. However, this extra recommendation now directly contradicts new recommendation c) which agreed the timetable set out in Appendix B and where no review in Wish Ward was to take place before 2015. Which of these two recommendations takes precedence?

Whilst the Cabinet Member stated that the works to be agreed within Appendix B could be undertaken by the end of 2012, the new recommendation b) fails totally to reflect this view. Furthermore, the recommendation suggests that the resources required to meet the unrevised timetable need to be reviewed. This would suggest that resources are not yet even in place for the original timetabled works to be carried out, let alone an accelerated programme.

In addition, during the meeting, the Cabinet Member talked about setting up a separate working group for a Wish Ward parking scheme which would report in 18 months time. However, this wasn't added to the recommendations and so residents are none the wiser as to whether this will be going ahead.

Finally, with regard to the proposed extension to zone A – Preston Park Station area – no consultation has been carried out in roads that will fall just outside the proposed new zone, such as to the south of Dyke Road/Dyke Road Avenue in Hove Park Ward. These areas will inevitably suffer from displacement parking from the proposed zone A extension and so the Cabinet Member did not have the full picture before coming to his decision. The same could equally be said of roads adjacent to the other 3 schemes that have been put forward in the report.

In summary, I believe that the whole basis for the report was fundamentally flawed. Two very separate decisions were being made – one on the proposed citywide review and one on the extensions to the specific areas outlined in the report. This immediately made it unclear as to what was actually being recommended to the Cabinet Member for agreement. The misinformation and additional ad hoc recommendations outlined above then only served to confuse the public, with the confusion being exacerbated by the contradictory decisions subsequently published. With so many members of the public present at the meeting it was even more important that there was transparency and clarity in the decision-making process. Sadly this wasn't the case and many people unfortunately left disillusioned. Therefore, I strongly recommend to the Overview & Scrutiny Commission that this decision should be referred back to the Cabinet Member for reconsideration with the full facts and accurate recommendations before him.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Garry Peltzer Dunn  
Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group