



ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 11th March 2014 at 7.30pm

Subject Heading:

BLUE BADGE SCHEME

CMT Lead:

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Policy context:

This is an update report

SUMMARY

Blue Badge update report, following on from report previously submitted by Jeff Potter

RECOMMENDATIONS

None – update report only

REPORT DETAIL

The new Blue Badge Scheme, introduced in January 2012, is working well. The issuing of badges is carried out by Northgate. However, the Council still receives the applications and carries out the administration of the service, prior to instructing Northgate to issue a badge.

The Blue Badge criteria is set out below:

- If an applicant qualifies for the higher level of disability allowance, they are an 'automatic' qualification
- All other applications are subject to assessment; i.e. a desk top assessment where the application and relevant supporting documents are assessed
- If the customer meets the criteria, the badge is awarded
- If the desk top assessment does not meet the criteria outright, the customer is invited to attend a Mobility Assessment to assess their eligibility
- Mobility assessments are carried out by an Occupational Therapist

There is no backlog in applications; all applications are processed upon receipt. If a customer has all their documentation with them, we encourage customers that come in to the PASC, to complete the online form whilst they are with us. This ensures the initial application goes straight on to the Northgate database and subject to our checking processes, speeds up the issuing of the badge. A floor walker is always available to assist customers to complete the form.

2013 information is as follows:

- Total number of applications received: **3968**
- Average applications received per week: **76**
- Total number of badges issued: **3480**
- Of these, total number of 'Automatics' issued: **1369**
- Total number of 'non-Automatics' issued: **2111**
- Total number applications refused: **220**
- A further **268** applicants did not proceed with their application after we requested further information or they were asked to attend a Mobility Assessment
- Number of Appeals considered when application refused: **49**
- Of Appeals, number successful: **13**
- Number of instances of fraud that we have been made aware of and the outcomes: **We have been made aware of 17 possible instances of misuse and have no information on outcomes (Fraud issues are referred to Parking Enforcement)**
- Average time to process an Automatic application: 5 days (it is difficult to assess the average process time for a 'non-automatic' as we are reliant on the customer supplying further information or agreeing to a date for a Mobility Assessment).
- Number of corporate complaints received about the Blue Badge service for 2013 = **0. Most enquiries are not corporate complaints but are questions about qualifying criteria(i.e. why a badge has not been agreed)**

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks: None – update report

Legal implications and risks: None – update report

Human Resources implications and risks: None – update report

Equalities implications and risks: None – update report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None