

Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission

Monday 1 December 2025
7.00 pm
160, Tooley Street, SE1 2QH

Supplemental Agenda Two

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6.	Blue Badge Scheme An update on a briefing on the Blue Badge Scheme provided in February 2025.	1 - 7

Contact

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Date: 28 November 2025

Meeting Name:	Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission
Date:	1 December 2025
Report title:	Blue Badge Scheme Briefing
Cabinet Members:	
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	N/A

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Recommendation(s) for the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission

1. To note and accept the responses to recommendations one and two, and associated actions, as set out below
2. To consider the briefings provided under points three – five

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. A briefing was provided to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee on the 3 February 2025 on the Blue Badge scheme, and the requests below arise from this meeting.
4. This briefing was a follow up on a previous briefing provided to the commission on 15 November 2024 on the criteria for a Blue Badge and the application process.
5. Southwark Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission have asked for a following action and information:
 - 1) Local Support Team recommendation to update website
 - 2) MySouthwark Service Point recommendation to amend website
 - 3) Briefing request on Fraudulent cases
 - 4) Recommendation to join up Parking applications
 - 5) Briefing request outlining timescales for providing a parking bay

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION 1	
1. <u>Local Support Team recommendation to update website to say the service is available to assist housebound and vulnerable people to complete a Blue Badge application.</u>	
RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 1	
<p>1. The webpage has been updated with the requested information, it can be accessed through this link Get help with claiming benefits Southwark Council</p> <p>The webpage specifically states in relation to Blue Badges is as follows; 'The Local Support Team are available to help housebound and vulnerable people apply for a Blue Badge.'</p> <p>This recommendation is now seen as resolved.</p>	

RECOMMENDATION 1: ACCEPTED AND ACTIONED (delete as appropriate)

COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION 2	
2. <u>MySouthwark Service Point recommendation to amend website to say open to all residents, not just council tenants.</u>	
RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 2	
<p>2. The webpage has been updated with the request made; it can be accessed through this link MySouthwark service point Southwark Council</p> <p>This recommendation is now seen as resolved.</p>	

RECOMMENDATION 2: ACCEPTED AND ACTIONED

COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION 3	
3. <u>Briefing request on Fraudulent cases</u> analysis addressing patterns and learning from case sampling.	
RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 3	
<p>3. Parking Services work in partnership with Blue Badge Fraud Investigation (BBFI) to tackle Blue Badge Fraud across Southwark. BBFI are contracted to conduct blue badge fraud checks eight days per month on vehicles parked on Southwark roads. BBFI prepare prosecution evidence packs based on their findings, which are signed off by a dedicated BBFI solicitor before being sent to the council's Senior Solicitor to organise a formal prosecution in the Court.</p> <p>Based on a year's figures from Oct 2024 to Sept 2025, on average 126</p>	

blue badges are checked every month and of those an average of 11 badges are seized for fraudulent activity. These figures show that of all blue badges displayed in vehicles across Southwark, 8.73% are cancelled badges (lost, stolen, deceased, expired or a counterfeit copy).

Since working with BBFI in May 2023, 296 badges have been seized, of which 32% are Southwark badges closely followed by Lambeth badges at 27%. Prosecution data for 2024-25 show that 25 prosecutions took place, all of which varied in terms of severity and costs awarded. BBFI are working across the entire Borough, however, our records show that a high proportion of seized cancelled badges are from our town centres, with significant numbers seized in Peckham and Camberwell and therefore, BBFI deployments to our town centres have increased.

RECOMMENDATION 3: BRIEFING PROVIDED)

COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION 4

4 Recommendation to join up Parking applications (Parking permit / AD Permit / Streetscape), and consideration of extending to 3 years in order to synchronise with Blue Badge

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 4

4 There are distinctions between the Department for Transport's Blue Badge scheme and the council-administered permit types, below we will demonstrate these, and outline the application and renewal processes for each.

The Blue Badge Scheme, the nature of this permit is a Blue Badge, this is issued to a person, not a vehicle. The administration of this is managed by the Department for Transport (DfT), with local councils facilitating applications and distribution. It allows eligible individuals to park in designated disabled bays and other exempted areas, subject to national and local rules.

The Street Space Exemption/AD Permit are issued to the nominated vehicle of a Southwark Disabled resident, not a person. A single application covers both the street space exemption and the AD permit; no separate applications are required. It may be possible to issue these permits with an expiry date of up to three years, subject to system development within the council's permit management platform. Implementation of extended expiry periods will require updates to the council's permit system to accommodate longer-term validity.

The Disabled Resident's Permit Holders Only Bay Permit is a paid-for permit linked to a vehicle and residence, this costs £30 per annum. It requires an annual application and renewal process. This ensures continued eligibility and accurate vehicle registration.

Summary Table:

	Permit Type	Issued To	Administered By	Validity	Application Required	Renewal Required	Fee	
	Blue Badge	Person	DfT + Council	Up to 3 years	Yes	Yes	£10	
	Street Space Exemption / AD Permit	Vehicle	Council	Up to 3 years*	Yes (single form)	Possibly	Free	
	Disabled Resident's Permit	Vehicle	Council	1 year	Yes	Yes	£30/year	

*Subject to system development.

RECOMMENDATION 4: BRIEFING PROVIDED

COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATION 5 TO CABINET

5. Briefing request outlining timescales for providing a parking bay

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 5

5. Initial Acknowledgement and Guidance

All disabled bay applications are initially acknowledged via our online services. Guidance and relevant information can be found in the Southwark Disabled Bay Application Form.

This guidance outlines the requirements that must be included when submitting a disabled bay application via email to: Highways@southwark.gov.uk.

Our Southwark website page related to disabled parking bays is called Southwark Disabled Parking Bays. Applicants can navigate the page using three visible drop-down options:

- a. Current disabled parking bays
- b. Applying for a disabled parking bay on the highway
- c. Removing a disabled bay

Under option (b) – *Applying for a disabled parking bay on the highway* – the expanded guidance includes the following advisory: “The process to add a disabled parking bay can take up to a year. The process begins once a Highways technician has reviewed and confirmed that the bay has been approved. At this stage, applicants will receive a forecasted timetable outlining our current stage and the next steps.”

Application Categories and Influencing Factors

Following initial acknowledgement, the timeline and process are influenced by:

- a. The specific location(s) requested
- b. The viability of the applicant's disability-related needs in relation to highway considerations

Applications may fall under one of the following categories:

- a. Housing association with on-street parking
- b. Car-free development
- c. Adopted highway
- d. Estate resident – Please note: the estate team is responsible for any disabled bay located on estate land. In some cases, the estate may request that we identify a suitable alternative location.

Indicative Timeline and Process

The process can be illustrated as follows:

- a. Initial Assessment: 5 weeks
- b. Design Stage: 6–8 weeks (designs and requests may be amended)
- c. Site Visits: 4 weeks
- d. Review of Exceptions: 4–6 weeks (e.g., Minor Traffic Scheme (MTS), destination bays, removals, relocations)
- e. Consultation: 4 weeks (with internal teams, departments, or external parties)
- f. Decision – Draft Preparation for TMO Officers: 4 weeks
- g. Decision – Draft/amendments if required: 2–3 weeks
- h. Statutory Consultation: 8 weeks
- i. Scheduling: 4 weeks
- j. Implementation: 4–8 weeks

Review and Improvements

The maximum time to process and implement a disabled bay application is currently 48-52 weeks. We recognise this is not ideal and as part of a Highways Service review we are actively reviewing opportunities to reduce the waiting time to under 6 months. This will depend on the availability of additional support to strengthen our guidance and streamline our processes.

Engaging with multiple TMO officers would enable us to explore the feasibility of reducing the existing 12-month timeline, in alignment with our current guidance.

Guidance Updates in Progress

We are currently reviewing the existing disabled bay application guidance to support immediate updates:

- a. Updating the hyperlink under 'Current disabled parking bays' We propose replacing the current link to Southwark spatial maps with AppyWay – *Active Consultations / In Reviews*. This change would allow new applicants to view any proposed disabled bays currently being advertised.
- b. Policy and Terminology Review The term *Disabilities and Community Council* has evolved significantly over the years. We are working with our policy team to initiate updates to our guidance and policy. This may involve collaboration with **our** internal Occupational Therapy department or the appointment of a third-party service provider.

These discussions are in the early stages. Our aim is to explore options that support the personalisation of new disabled bays and, in future, the retrofitting of existing bays. This would be based on an agreed matrix that measures thresholds aligned with our evolving standards.

	RECOMMENDATION 5: BRIEFING PROVIDED
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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
<u>Blue Badge Scheme Follow up Briefing</u>	Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission 2024/25	Report Author: Shaidi Khan, Accessible Transport Manager

Health & Social Care Scrutiny Commission

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025-26

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		Dated: June 2025	