

Annex C: Previous Consultation Analysis

- 1 To inform the decision in October 2023 to review the removal of Blue Badge Holders' vehicular access the Executive requested an initial consultation on the principles of permitting Blue Badge vehicular access within the Hostile Vehicle Mitigation measures.
2. The 2023 October Executive report detailed the consultation responses. In summary, the total number of responses was 3,126 with approximately 500 paper copies received.
3. The principles and levels of support were as follows:

Principle 1 – Return to previous access – This principle aims, subject to full consultation, to revert to the Blue Badge accessibility measures that were in place before the emergency COVID measures and the Council's decision of November 2021 to make them permanent.

83% Agree, 12% Disagree, 5% Don't know

Total responses = 2867

Principle 2 – City centre events – Some events, as prior to the November 2021 decision, may require Blue Badge access to be suspended at times (for example during the Christmas Markets).

61% Agree, 32% Disagree, 7% Don't know,

Total responses = 2870

Principle 3 – Recognising Security Risks – In light of any security risk intelligence, the Police will have the power to lock down all access to the City Centre under an Anti-Terrorism Traffic Regulation Order, a counter-terrorism measure under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

88% Agree, 7% Disagree, 5% Don't know

Total responses = 2866

Principle 4 - Finding solutions – the Council Executive agrees to restore Blue Badge access through the new hostile vehicle barriers, then the council will work with Blue Badge holders on the detailed ways to achieve this

90% Agree, 5% Disagree, 4% Don't know

Total responses = 2858

Principle 5 - Longer term improvements – The Council is committed to considering and implementing longer-term improvements to accessibility in the city, taking into consideration the needs and opinions of the community on an ongoing basis, including in the development of its Transport Strategy
89% Agree, 4% Disagree, 7% Don't know
Total responses = 2861

4. There were 1223 detailed comments many of which contain personal data, but 188 provided a personal experience because of the restrictions, 125 provide suggestions on how things can be improved. (access and general ideas), 93 commented on the consultation (81 negative).
5. Due to the way the comments were provided using freetext we could identify the following groups:
 - Unknown = 754 (unable to identify)
 - Disabled = 319
 - Elderly = 12
 - Business = 7
 - Family = 2
6. Comments for disagreeing with Principle 1 came from businesses, people who felt the streets would become unsafe and those who either thought the whole of the city centre would be opening up and not enough information to be able to make a decision
7. Although the majority agreed with principle 2 (and the requirement for restrictions for some city centre events) there were more comments against this principle than there were for it.
8. Most responses were in favour of principle 3, however there was concern that the Anti-Terror Traffic Regulation Order could be used to close the city centre whenever the Council decided it wanted to.
9. A small number of comments were around deliberately delaying tactics to give the Council time to find excuses to change its mind on the commitment to reverse the ban.
10. This shows strong support for the principles. 61% supported the principle “Some events, as prior to the November 2021 decision, may require Blue Badge access to be suspended at times (for example during the Christmas Markets).” and 32% did not support this principle.