

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 1ST JULY, 2019

REFERENCE FROM ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 4TH APRIL, 2019

“917 PROPOSED PARKING MANAGEMENT POLICY 2019/20 (REF) -

The Director of Environment and Housing presented the reference from Cabinet following its meeting on 18th March, 2019.

The Director began by stating that the Council's budget was currently £220m which was allocated on a priority basis. Of the Council's total budget, 48% was allocated to Education and 29% to Social Care, this compared to 10% allocated to Neighbourhood Services and Transport.

The Director went on to state that Neighbourhood Services and Transport controlled car parks and also covered waste, recycling, street lights and highways, and he outlined that car parks needed to be made cost neutral as the Authority had been hit hard by austerity. He advised that his Directorate alone had made £8m savings from its budget since 2015, and unfortunately austerity was having a very detrimental effect on Environmental services.

Since 2015, Neighbourhood Services and Transport had found savings of 26% of its budget, and there had been a major impact on services, with a 4.2% budget reduction required for the current financial year. The Director stated that the Council was working towards full cost recovery in order to protect frontline services, these proposals were not aimed at making a profit but they were aimed at paying for the cost of parking. He added that if the same trend was to continue then some services currently provided would no longer exist. In order to achieve further budgetary savings, the Director referred to the Reshaping Services Programme, including the single-use sports pitches and the transfer of assets, and he outlined that the Council was likely to see more similar choices.

The Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport then referred to the proposals contained within the new policy.

The Report provided details of the comments received to the consultation undertaken on Capita's Draft Parking Strategy in Summer 2018 and recommended a Parking Policy for 2019/20.

Parking was an extremely valuable asset which properly managed could benefit the economic activity of areas. To not charge for such facilities where viable was not an option unless there were reductions in other services or the car parks were closed. If it was viable to charge for these facilities the Council should do so in order to ensure that these assets were self-funding and could be properly managed.

Following consideration of the consultation responses received, the equality impact assessment, the current budget position, together with the fact that the provision of car park spaces was not a statutory function, the report recommended the introduction of charging for a number of car parks, at certain on-street locations and for resident parking permits, for the financial year 2019/20.

Town Centre Car Parks

Short Stay Car Parks at Kendrick Road, Thompson Street and Wyndham Street, Barry, The Butts, Town Hall Square and Southgate Cowbridge.

Charges proposed for Short Stay Car Parks up to 2 hours FREE, up to 3 hours £1.00, up to 4 hours £2.00, up to 5 hours £5.00 and all day £6.00. Tariffs applicable 6 days per week from 8am to 6pm with blue badge holders free. Annual permits available for £160 for 6 months and £300 for 12 months, with a direct debit option.

Charges for certain Llantwit Major car parks were to be put on hold pending discussions with Llantwit Major Town Council about the possible transfer of car parks on Boverton Road, Wine Street and at the Town Hall. Le Pouliguen Way car park Llantwit Major would also be considered separately.

Long stay Car Park at Court Road Multi Storey, Barry. Charges for the Long Stay Car Park was proposed to be the same as short stay except that up to 5 hours was £4.00 not £5.00 and all day was £5.00 not £6.00. Tariffs applicable 6 days per week from 8am to 6pm with blue badge holders free. Annual permits available £80 for 6 months and £150 for 12 months.

Resort Car Parks

The Report proposed that Resort car parks were not subject to any seasonal variation in tariff. Resort car park charged for cars are 0-1 hour £1.00, 1 hour plus £6-00 between 8am and 4pm. From 4.01pm to 11pm a reduced charge was applicable for 1 hour plus of £3.00. These charges would be for 7 days per week. Permits would be available for each car park at an annual cost of £300. It was proposed that disabled persons with blue badges would park for free.

Coastal Car Parks

Barry (Cold Knap and Bron y Mor), Llantwit Major Cwm Colhuw, Penarth Cliff Walk. Summer charges for these car parks up to 1 hour £1.00 and all day £3.00 with a £12.00 charge for buses and coaches. Winter period November to February inclusive no charge. Tariffs applicable 8am to 8pm 7 days per week and a permit for individual car parks would be available for £75 per year. Disabled persons with blue badges proposed as free.

Ogmore by Sea (Portabello), West Farm Southerndown and Llwyn Passat Penarth were not shown as viable in the Report based on payback over 7 years of the infrastructure costs and will be subject to further investigation.

Country Parks Car Parks

Cosmeston Lakes and Porthkerry Country Park charges proposed all year round with up to 2 hours parking for £1.00 and all day set at £3.00 with bus/coach parking at £10.00 all day. Tariffs applicable between 8am to 6pm 7 days per week. Permits available for £75 per car park per annum. Disabled persons with blue badges proposed as free.

On Street Parking Town Centre and Coastal

It was not proposed to bring on street parking charges in town centres for 2019/20.

Charges were proposed for on street parking in the coastal resorts of Penarth (the Esplanade) and Barry Island all year round, 7 days per week. Up to 2 hours £2.00, up to 3 hours the charge proposed was £4.00, up to 4 hours £6.00, up to 5 hours £8.00 and all day £10.00. Charges in the Winter for Penarth Esplanade were proposed as half the Summer charge. Disabled persons with blue badges proposed as free.

Displacement Parking

No additional measures were proposed by the Report to prevent any displacement parking. This was subject to review once the charges had been implemented.

Resident Parking Permits

This Report outlined a Resident Parking Policy together with charges relating to the purchase of such permits. There were no restrictions as to the number of permits a household could purchase.

Enforcement

A report was presented to Cabinet on 18th February 2019 in respect of the provision of an in house enforcement service which would cover both environmental and Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE). A further report would be brought to Cabinet outlining the future intentions for Civil Parking enforcement once the Parking Policy was agreed.

Technology and Infrastructure

The Report proposed to use modern solar powered 'Pay and Display' Machines with coins and contactless options. Digital payment methods e.g. Parking App would also be improved.

Leisure Centres

Leisure Centre Car Parks had been excluded from the Report and would be discussed as part of the Leisure Contract extension negotiation and reported to Cabinet separately.

The Chairman thanked the officers for the introduction to the reference and the attached report and he advised that a petition signed by over 200 people had been submitted. The petition related to parking charges at the beach, Colhugh Bay, Llantwit Major, and was a call for the Vale of Glamorgan Council not to impose charges at the beach car park as this would affect the popularity of the area and any business's that operate including the Café and Surf Club. The Chairman then invited public speakers to provide their verbal representations to the Committee.

The first public speaker was Mr. Louis Ross, who began by stating that the policy was flawed and had not been thought through enough. Mr. Ross stated that traders on Barry Island had invested heavily to make the Island a success and to give it a feel good factor, with traders who were willing to stay open later in order for more visitors to enjoy Barry Island. Mr. Ross stated that the changes would put people off, mainly locals, from visiting the Island and charging would send the Island backwards with traders being better off closing at the end of summer. The policy would therefore result in less local visitors. He stated that at present 150 people were employed by various traders on the Island and this number would be reduced as a result of the policy. Mr. Ross referred to the amount of money spent within the local economy by the traders on the Island which would also be affected. Mr. Ross stated that all the many events and groups on the Island relied upon local people and the policy around charging would discourage people from visiting, but traders were happy to work with the Council to find a solution.

The Committee welcomed the next public speaker who was Mr. David Elliott. Mr. Elliott referred to the valuable contribution that attractions provided to the Vale economy and he stated that the Council should be looking at ways to attract visitors to the Vale and not allow them to by-pass to other parts of Wales. He stated that charging for parking would have an effect on coastal businesses both in and out of season and he referred to the need for more time to be allowed for dog walkers who would go elsewhere. Mr. Elliott then referred to the charging policy introduced in Tenby and he asked why a lower rate of tariff could not be introduced to the Vale. Mr. Elliott also referred to Government policy around improving high streets and he commented on the "scaremongering" that was ongoing that would put people off from visiting their local towns and coastal areas.

The Committee then welcomed the next public speaker, Mr. John Lake who stated that the Vale Council had received millions in free advertising through the Gavin and Stacey T.V. programme. This was still ongoing and he stated that the policy would spoil Barry Island and benefit Culverhouse Cross and Bridgend as visitors would go there instead. Mr. Lake asked why charges could not be lower.

The Committee's fourth public speaker was Mr. Matthew Lock who stated that he hoped that the Committee would recommend for a total rethink of the policy, which would then likely be ignored by the Cabinet. If so, then Cabinet would not only be ignoring the Committee, it would also ignore the views of 2600 people who responded to the consultation and the 3,200 signatures in a petition against the policy. He asked what was the point of consultation and a Scrutiny process if it was just to be ignored. He stated that the Council needed to undertake better consultation, citing the two hour meeting that he had with officers in Porthkerry and the 12 pop up banners. He added that the report was over 800 pages, with most of

the public not having the time to read or understand. From a personal perspective, he stated that he would need multiple permits to visit Barry Island and Porthkerry Park, but as the cost of this was over £500.00 then it would be cheaper for him to join a Gym. He felt that the policy was another revenue stream for the Council, and he outlined that charging was unacceptable to visitors and traders. He asked for the Council not to follow the example of other Local Authorities, and for free parking to remain in place as a way to encourage visitors.

The next public speaker was Mr. David Lewis who stated that he was disappointed that the policy had not taken account of the views expressed by the traders on Barry Island. He stated that it was clear that the Island was a beautiful place to visit and he wanted the Council to encourage visitors and not put up barriers. The policy he stated would risk the many weekly events held over the Island and would put people off from attending. He then outlined that there were many risks if the policy was adopted which included increased costs to businesses, reduced sales and impact on employment. This all needed to be taken into account as some businesses would close or reduce staff. The other impact would be on other suppliers such as local producers.

The next public speaker, Ms. Amanda Ewington, outlined that she was speaking as a resident of Barry and the Vale of Glamorgan. She referred to comments regarding austerity made by the Director of Environment and Housing and she stated that people had also been hit during austerity through a rise in Council Tax. She stated that she used many of the areas listed in the report such as Barry Island, Cosmeston, Porthkerry and areas further down the Vale. She stated that she used these areas not just for dog walking but also as a way to help with her own health and mental wellbeing. She stated that during her walks she saw a diverse range of people and on many occasions would see the same individuals. These areas were meeting places and if parking charges were brought in then people would not go out and therefore would not have regular social contact. Ms. Ewington outlined that there were many activities that she saw over the Island, the most recent one being a young mum's fitness club. She stated that she wanted people to go to these places and enjoy the many amenities there and wanted to see businesses thrive. She stated that the parking proposals would hit people hard and she stated that she would not pay a penny to park. She also referred to the new housing development on Barry Island and stated that new residents would be "blighted" with people parking in their streets to avoid paying the charges.

The seventh public speaker was Mr. Frederick Williams-Curtis who stated that they had been living in Barry since 1969. He referred to the 1990 UK Government Act covering on-street parking and he stated that the purpose of this was to prevent shop keepers from parking in his street. He stated that he argued this point at that time and he stated that he had never had a problem with shop keepers parking. He therefore commented that he felt he was being penalised because of a line that had been drawn on a map and he referred to an adjoining street which had no restrictions. Mr. Curtis then commented on the cost of residents permits and he stated that if a family member was to visit then this would be an additional cost for him. This, he stated, was having an impact on his personal life.

The Committee then welcomed Mrs. Melanie Brown, a teacher from Holton Road Primary School, who wished to air the views of staff working at the school. She stated that at present 37 staff members used the all-day car park opposite the school, with a number of parents also using this facility. She stated that the school did not have its own car park and there were insufficient places for on-street parking near the school. This was difficult for teachers and learning assistants who would regularly be required to carry large amounts of paperwork and school work. This was difficult especially during the winter period. Mrs. Brown also referred to the impact on parents of children attending the school who were mainly from the lower economic background. She also advised that this would affect the environment in which children were taught as the school would not be able to attract the same calibre of staff who would be more willing to work at a school with better parking arrangements. She also stated that the school had been affected by austerity and she believed that the charging for parking would affect the education of the children attending the school. She asked whether the Committee would support a proposal for a total exemption for teachers and learning support assistants from paying car parking charges for all day.

The next public speaker was Miss. Claire Cook who stated that in relation to Barry there needed to be a 25% increase in enforcement for the proposals to be cost effective. She referred to enforcement showing a downward trend so the proposals were not cost neutral. She also referred to the Capita report which suggested that four machines were required on Port Road although the Council had decided to introduce just two. She queried whether this was a cost cutting measure and queried how the Council had gone against the Capita proposals. Ms. Cook stated that no one would pay for parking and she added that residents affected were an afterthought so she was unsure of the Councils plans regarding residents' permits which required 50% of an area to agree implementation.

The final public speaker was Mrs. Jane Cook who was speaking on behalf of residents of Llantwit Major. From a residents perspective she stated that the old part of Llantwit Major was a conservation area and so it was very difficult for residents and visitors to find a parking place. She stated that parking was very limited with some spaces available at Wine Street and this had been evidenced by the Capita survey. She stated that there had not been a real analysis of the data and the report did not reflect a true understanding of the needs of residents. She stated that residents would be penalised in order to continue living in their home and town.

The Chairman then invited Vale of Glamorgan Councillors not Members of the Committee to make their verbal representations to the Committee.

Councillor Janice Charles voiced her lack of support for the policy, citing that not one of the traders on Barry Island thought the policy was a good idea. She referred to the seven year period required for the policy to make a profit, and so she indicated that this felt like an incompetent tax. Councillor Charles asked "where was the sense of community" as the policy was likely to result in job losses, and which would drive many people to big supermarkets. The policy, she stated, was wrong, would turn people away and would result in Barry becoming a sterile town. People of Barry were "fuming" with this policy, and was something that voters would not forget.

Councillor Lis Burnett, began by stating that the reference contained a number of inaccuracies that she did not want to go into at this stage, but it was good to see that there would not be any charges for on street parking. She stated that the policy was flawed and lacked proper disaggregated data to move the proposals forward. It had been mentioned that the policy was cost neutral, but it was stated in the report that the aim was to achieve the maximum amount of income without reducing visitor or user numbers or detrimentally affecting the local economy. This contradicted Council policy on wellbeing, economic development, tourism and town centres, these being the Town Centre Framework, Wellbeing Objectives and the Destination Management as well as the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Councillor Burnett stated that there may be reason for car parking charges in some areas, but charging should be geared to visitors that would usually expect there to be a charge and protecting locals who would already contribute to the running of services through their Council Tax. She added that planned charges appeared to target Vale residents who already supported local facilities through Council Tax. Turnover of car parking spaces was necessary, but the economies of town centres and resorts were already fragile and easily damaged, she asked that any changes to charges should be carried out in partnership with traders and residents who were the local experts. Councillor Burnett commented that a recovery of full cost for certain areas was inappropriate. She also stated that the Equality Impact Assessment was flawed and needed to be looked at again as it did not fully reflect the impact on life expectancy. She went on to comment that the policy for Penarth was a “joke” given that funding for other schemes had already been “pulled”. She stated that the Council could not bring in charges given that it would only raise an estimated £6,000 and would damage the voluntary organisations that needed access to the Cliff Top car park. The proposals for residential parking were flawed as they did not fully consider the impact of displacement parking. Finally, Councillor Burnett queried the costs per resident permit, stating that a family with two cars and who regularly walked their dog could be £425 a year worse off, and she asked whether this was acceptable.

Councillor George Carroll thanked the Committee for allowing him to share some of his concerns, which related to proposals for residential parking in Llandough, which could be supported given the following amendments to Appendix 5:

- Paragraph 1.1 states that the majority of residents must have no alternative but to park their vehicles on street. This was of concern and Councillor Carroll asked for this to be deleted and changed to a specific area.
- Paragraph 2.1 sets out the criteria for resident parking schemes as the average parking level observed must reach or exceed 75% of the available parking spaces. Councillor Carroll asked for “on-street” to be added after 75%.
- Paragraph 2.3 outlined that the parking surveys should be carried out between Monday and Saturday. Councillor Carroll advised that problems in the Ward of Llandough were most notable on weekdays so he requested if Saturday could be replaced with Friday.

Councillor Kevin Mahoney addressed the Committee and in objecting to the policy commented that people should be able to enjoy free car parking. Councillor Mahoney specifically referred to proposals for Cosmeston Country Park with charges being implemented between 8.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. Councillor Mahoney ironically

offered thanks for these proposals as this would put off many local visitors to the park, especially during the winter period. Councillor Mahoney then outlined the impact that the proposals for Cosmeston would have on residents of Lavernock Park, as many visitors would choose to park in the residential area for free. Councillor Mahoney stated that this would cause huge problems for residents due to the narrow streets, meaning that people would have to park on pavements. Councillor Mahoney could not believe that the proposals for Cosmeston had been progressed given that the problems of displacement had already been identified within the report. He also stated that the policy would hit businesses, which were the lifeblood of the economy and damage jobs. Councillor Mahoney also voiced concerns against resident parking zones, the damage and impact on businesses and job losses and the Council's decision to appoint Capita to review parking proposals at a cost to the public tax payer.

Councillor Jayne Norman was then invited to speak and she stated that she felt that the policy was a money making scheme with many local shops against the policy. Councillor Norman stated that local shops relied on local people and that these shops would lose customers and could be forced to close. Councillor Norman also referred to the lost income to the Council through less business rates, and she stated that out of area shopping centres would be the main beneficiary. Councillor Norman then referred to the impact the proposals would have on low paid workers who heavily relied on free parking, and she stated that the policy would decrease footfall and discourage browsing. In regards to Llantwit Major, Councillor Norman referred to the free parking available at the railway station and that many people would decide not to drive to Llantwit Major but would use more easily accessible supermarkets. She also referred to the possible transfer of car parks to Llantwit Major Town Council, stating that she had never seen these car parks undergoing any maintenance work, and she queried the costs that were being incurred to maintain them and what work was required to bring them up to standard.

Councillor Nic Hodges in addressing the Committee stated that he was pleased to see that the resort of Barry had become an all year round resort. However, he stated that traders during the winter period relied on local people and so charging would impact on local businesses. Councillor Hodges stated that charging would cause chaos on Barry Island as there would be an impact on residential parking and temporary cones would have to be deployed in order to stop this. Councillor Hodges then cited Cardiff as an example where many attractions were free to use. He stated that the proposals would decimate businesses on the Island and he referred to the new restaurant that was being developed in the old toilet block and that the policy could jeopardise future improvements. Finally, Councillor Hodges stated that charging must be avoided and asked for the policy to be resisted.

Councillor Sally Hanks, in representing the Llantwit Major Ward voiced her objections to the policy outlining that the beach café was very popular and the policy would impact on the footfall of this business. She also queried whether the lifeguards had been considered as these were volunteers who would have to pay for parking. She also questioned how the policy would be enforced.

Councillor Sandra Perkes, in being invited to speak, stated that she was Chair of Shop Local who had outlined their concerns on behalf of High Street and Holton

Road in Barry. She stated that the people who worked for these businesses were some of the lowest paid, and she asked how would the charges effect these people. She added that residents too would be effected, some of which came from the lowest economic group. Councillor Perkes then stated that the attraction of Barry Island was that it was a cheap day out with free parking available on the sea front. She compared the proposed charges to the cheaper tariffs for parking at Porthcawl, which may lead to people going there instead.

In responding to some of the comments, the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport stated that he could remember being a Member of the Scrutiny Committee back in 2015 when the previous administration plans for car parking charges were considered. He quoted the then Cabinet Member who had stated that “no one liked the introduction of charges but this had been forced on us because of reduced budgets.” The current Cabinet Member stated that this statement was true now as it was back in 2015. He added that the current policy was different to the one proposed in 2015, and the Council had run a good consultation on the plans and Officers had spent a considerable amount of time looking at the responses. As a result, the policy had been amended and some proposals dropped, so the report was a fair reflection.

The Chairman read out a letter sent on behalf of the Barry Island Traders Association, which had also been attached as supplementary information. He then outlined that consideration of the policy would be split up under the following headings: Town Centre, Coastal/Resorts, Country Parks, On-street and Residential.

In relation to Town Centre Parking, a number of Members aired their initial views and the following comments were made:

- Concern regarding the impact on business and the ethos to maintain a low taxation base
- Struggling to support the policy which went against town centre regeneration, and citing the impact on staff at Holton Road, with a recommendation that there should not be any charges for town centre parking
- The policy was a big mistake and was something that town centres could ill afford. The Council should be looking to ‘beef up’ the attractiveness of town centres, which would be undermined by the policy
- Difficult to support the policy as the number of spaces for some car parks were so small and the revenue to be generated would be insignificant and in some cases would be at a loss, so was there any real point in bringing in charges
- Would like to understand how much revenue the policy would raise and the Council should understand that businesses would know their customers, and businesses were telling us how much of an impact the policy would have on their customers. The policy also did not promote the health and wellbeing of local residents
- There had been a huge disquiet around parking proposals made during the Barry Town Centre Summit, and the policy would not improve the viability of the town centre. Also, it was very sad to see the impact on staff at Holton Road Primary School.

A Committee Member as former Cabinet Member for the previous administration, stated that the proposals for car parking were first aired back in 2013 following a request to look into charges made by the Cowbridge Chamber of Trade. He stated that following consultation it was evident to the previous Administration that there was very little support to bringing in car parking charges. The Committee Member went on to refer to the possible transfer of car parks in Llantwit Major stating that these needed to be brought up to a better standard before a formal request was made to the Town Council. He also outlined that car parking data for Llantwit Major in the report was inaccurate. The Member also stated that it was clear that the parking proposals would impact on footfall, which would have an obvious effect on shops and jobs. He added that the town centre of Bridgend had been badly affected following the introduction of parking charges, and so most people had therefore decided to park for free in a local supermarket. The Member supported the call for no town centre parking charges.

Following this, another Committee Member and former Leader of the previous Administration stated that car parking had been considered back in 2013, but the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) had rejected proposals for parking charging, which were subsequently dropped. The Committee Member in referring to current proposals stated that some charges for town centres were higher than those suggested by Capita, and the Member queried whether enough consideration had been given to displacement and the impact on affected staff. He stated that since 2015, the financial pressures on the Council had become worse, so he understood the need to raise income, but he could see that there was not enough appetite for parking charges. The Member highlighted that during the winter months most of the visitors to Barry Island would be local to the area, and he queried the amount of revenue to be generated.

The Committee queried non-domestic rate tax payments for the car parks. The Senior Accountant stated that a number of car parks were already subject to payment and that following the policy some of the charges may change. The current overall payment was not known but this would be in the region of £100,000.

The Chairman, in summarising the debate on the town centre proposals, stated that there had been a number of comments outlining that the policy was not a guaranteed money spinner. The Chairman issued caution as more enforcement would be required for the policy to be cost neutral which was a worry as the current trend had shown a fall. In addition, the Chairman highlighted that another concern was turnover and people accessing a car parking space, it was therefore possible to increase turnover through better enforcement. The Chairman also highlighted a point made by a public speaker that the only winners would be Culverhouse Cross and McArthur Glen out of town shopping centres, and he outlined his concern that the policy could decimate Holton Road, which as a high street was not competitive as it was. The Chairman therefore supported the recommendation for there not to be any parking charges in town centres.

In coming back on some of the comments, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport stated that the trend in relation to enforcement was based on the current enforcement model and did not take account of additional enforcement officers. If

the policy was agreed then there would be a review of the Civil Parking Enforcement operations.

The Director of Environment and Housing stated that it was important to understand the principles behind the policy, which was to increase customer turnover by encouraging people not to stay longer than two hours. This was the same for all town centres across the Vale. The Director also stated that the alternative to the policy was issuing £60.00 parking fines. He then referred to Appendix 2 which considered the different characteristics that each town centre area had, and the aim of the policy was to raise income in order to recover costs of maintaining car parks.

A Committee Member sought clarification to a comment made by public speaking regarding enforcement having to increase by 25%, and the reduction in the number of ticket machines as suggest by Capita. In reply the Director stated the public speaker had partly got the issue civil parking enforcement mixed up. The Director outlined that report was indicated that enforcement would break even, as the service was being brought back in house from April 2020. In relation to ticket machines, the Director advised that the ticket rate suggest be Capita was excessive as it did not fully take account of new digital payment options, such as a new App and pay by phone.

In relation to Town Centre car parking, the Committee agreed that it did not support charges for parking. In addition, it was agreed that prior to any formal discussions with Llantwit Major Town Council about the possible transfer of car parking assets, that these car parks needed to be brought up to a good quality of standard by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

The Chairman then moved the debate on to proposals regarding Coastal and Resort car parks.

A Committee Member in relation to the beach car park in Llantwit Major commented that this car park was a former quarry and had been used as a dumping ground. The Member outlined that during stormy weather large rocks and boulders could be moved around and so work was needed to make this car park safe. The Member also stated that cars heading to the car park needed to be careful of potholes and grass cutting on the meadow used as an overflow car park was no longer undertaken. The Member queried the impact on the car parking charges for the surfer group that used the facility every day and he stated that the Council could be liable for damages should charges be brought in. Finally, the Member referred to the many elderly people who would regularly visit the beach area as a meeting place and to eat a meal and he stated that Maria's Café may have to close if business was affected.

In relation to Penarth, the Local Ward Member on the Committee stated that visitors to the Esplanade should be encouraged. She queried whether the Council could work with the owner of the Snow Cap Cinema, with a suggestion as to whether local residents could have a ticket that provided free parking. The Member stated the Council should engage with all those affected, and she commented that the strategy for Penarth needed to be looked into, with a suggestion of whether a new car park was possible. In addition, the Member referred to the RNLI station in Penarth, which

had only five spaces available, and as the RNLI volunteers trained four days a week, the Member asked whether some alternative arrangements could be considered. In relation to the RNLI station, the Director advised that the Council would waive any penalty charge that volunteers had incurred.

A Member made the point that during the winter months most of the visitors to coastal areas were local residents and he felt that there needed to be some form of free period without a charge. He referred to the Capita report which had shown that there was not much point to on-street charges, so there was a need for some ability for free parking. The Member also stated that on Barry Island there would be a lot of residential parking which would increase the level of displacement parking but he agreed with a two hour free limit for coastal car parking. In relation to the purchase of seasonal car parking tickets, the Member suggested that this should be transferrable to other areas. The Member also posed to the question as what specific area was referred to as Barry Island, was it all of it or just the sea front.

The suggestion of a free grace period was supported by the Committee, with it also being suggested that charging should be on a seasonal basis. In reply, the Operational Manager stated that the current proposal was for a £1.00 charge for one hour and then £3.00 for all day, with the winter months being free. This however only related to coastal and not resort car parks. In following up this point, the Chairman stated that for resort car parks there was a jump from one hour for £1.00 to one hour plus for £6.00. The Committee considered one hour did not allow much time for visitors, with two hours being more acceptable. In reply to these comments, the Operational Manager outlined that a charge of £2.00 for two hours on-street was being suggested for Barry Island and Penarth, with visitors being able to pay for extra time should they wish to stay longer. Furthermore, the Director stated that the current charging regime of £1.00 and £6.00 had been in place for some time, with very few complaints received. A trial of a two hour period for £2.00 had been carried out, but this had resulted in a loss of revenue. The Director outlined that traders on the Island were objecting as the charges were all year round and they preferred for there to be a winter concession.

In clarifying the hike in charges, the Operational Manager stated that at present the £1.00 and £6.00 related to the main car parks for just the summer months. The proposal was for these charges to be all year round. The reason for this was to increase turnover and it was felt that many visitors may struggle to find a place if the two hour for £2.00 option was adopted. This could also mean that more people may be faced with paying a £60.00 parking fine. Members noted that the winter concessions had been removed as it had been recognised that Barry Island and Penarth were now all year resorts that no longer shut during the winter.

A Committee Member stated that the issues around on-street parking had not been addressed, adding that if it was free then it would entice people to stay. The Member commented that he had an issue with a massive hike to £6.00, believing that not many people would spend the extra £5.00 and were likely to leave after an hour. He therefore made a call for there to be a reduced tariff. In reply, the Director stated that traders had not voiced any issues with the £6.00 charge and he outlined that a pay by phone option was being introduced, which would work better than the current system and allow visitors to pay remotely.

Following this, a Committee Member made a formal recommendation that there should not be any charges for parking at coastal car parks at Barry (Cold Knap and Bron y Mor), Llantwit Major (Cwm Colhuw) and Penarth (Cliff Walk). He cited that charging in these car parks could expose the Council to claims for damages. In response to this point, the Director confirmed that Council liability would be the same if it charged for car parking or not.

In addition, two further recommendations were put forward. The first was for the annual permits to be transferrable, and the second was in relation to Barry Island off-street car parks, and for the charge of £1.00 for one hour to be supplemented by two hours for £2.00, and for the charges in these car parks to remain seasonal. These were agreed by the Committee.

The Committee noted that charges for Penarth were halved during the winter, as the demand was less when compared to Barry Island.

In discussing charging proposals for country parks, namely Cosmeston and Porthkerry, the Committee considered the hours to which the tariffs were applicable. These being 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m., seven days a week. Members also noted that these hours may discourage local residents from visiting the parks and there was a suggestion for this to be changed to 9.00 a.m. It was also suggested that the permits per annum be transferrable to other parks and vehicles.

Councillor Lis Burnett, with permission to speak, stated that it was not clear from the report where any surplus revenue would be allocated to, and this needed to be clarified. For Cosmeston, displacement would be a huge issue which was a worry for many local residents. She also referred to the strong volunteer element that existed and she queried whether for these individuals if two hours was long enough, as some volunteering could stop. Councillor Burnett also made a suggestion as to whether the annual permits could be transferable to different vehicles.

Councillor Kevin Mahoney, as local Ward Member for Sully and with permission to speak, could not see the point of extending the free period from 8.00 a.m. to 9.00 a.m. as this would still discourage local visitors. He stated that there should not be any charges for the country parks. He outlined the impact that the charges could have on the café at Cosmeston, which could lead to job losses and he asked whether this had been fully considered. Councillor Mahoney also reiterated his previous concerns regarding displacement parking in Lavernock and how the single entrance to the housing estate could be easily blocked by just three or four cars. He stated that charging for Cosmeston had been trialled before and had caused chaos. Councillor Mahoney also called for better consultation and he felt that responses to this had been ignored.

In clarifying some of the points made, the Senior Accountant confirmed that any extra revenue raised would be allocated back to the running of the parks. Members noted that the annual running costs for Cosmeston were £325k, which generated an income of £150k. The annual cost for Porthkerry was £175k, which generated income of £26k. The Operational Manager – Engineering in response to comments regarding displacement parking at Cosmeston, advised that the evidence had shown

that this was not happening. He added that there was the potential for some and he referred to the Residential Parking Policy which could be considered if there was a particular problem with a street. He outlined that in his professional opinion, as a Highways Engineer, the entrance to the Lavernock estate was wide enough, but he could look at possible parking restrictions.

Members of the Committee agreed, that the annual permits should be transferrable to other vehicles and other sites, and it requested for a further report to consider the issues of displacement.

The Committee then moved on to discussing on-street car parking and the Committee began by discussing proposals for Penarth, with a Member querying the apparent inconsistency when compared to Barry Island. The Director responded by advising that the aim was to encourage visitors to use the main car parks as opposed to parking on-street. A Committee Member suggested that there was an alternative option, and he suggested that for some residential areas, one side of the street could be earmarked for residents, while the other side could be used as parking for visitors. The Director was not sure that this would cover the cost for the car parks and it was also likely to be something that most residents would not want. Members were advised that this was something that would be looked at when implementing the residential parking policy.

A Committee Member stated that there needed to be a two hour free period and he also suggested that for residential charges there should be a flat rate for numerous cars. He commented that the charges for residents parking was too high, and he considered this to be a tax on those that lived close to car parks that the Council was charging to park. The Member also reiterated previous concerns regarding displacement, and he asked whether the impact of the proposals on displacement parking could be assessed further, and as an immediate priority.

In relation to amendments to Appendix 5 and the Resident Parking Policy, which were suggested by Council Carroll, the Committee agreed that these should be considered.

Finally, the Director agreed that financial information regarding the purchase of ticket machines, would be presented to the Committee.

Subsequently, the Committee

RECOMMENDED -

Town Centre Car Parking -

(1) T H A T Cabinet be advised that the Committee does not support town centre charges for parking.

(2) T H A T Cabinet be advised that prior to any formal discussions with Llantwit Major Town Council about the possible transfer of car parking assets, that these car parks are to be brought up to a good quality of standard by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

(3) T H A T Cabinet agree to the principle that turnover can be improved without recourse to charging for parking through free parking and better enforcement.

(4) T H A T Cabinet recognise the inequality that exists in the report from some Council staff being required to pay for parking while other Council staff would be exempt from paying to park at their place of work, and give consideration to introducing parking charges on site at Council offices should charging go ahead.

Resort/Coastal Car Parks -

(5) T H A T Cabinet be advised of the Committee's view that there should not be any charges for parking at the coastal parks at Barry (Cold Knap and Bron y Mor), Llantwit Major (Cwm Colhuw) and Penarth (Cliff Walk).

(6) T H A T Cabinet agrees for annual permits to be transferrable to other vehicles and sites.

(7) T H A T Cabinet be advised of the Committee's view that in relation to Barry Island off-street car parks, the charge of £1.00 for one hour be supplemented by two hours for £2.00, and for the charges in these car parks to remain seasonal.

Country Parks -

(8) T H A T Cabinet agrees for annual permits to be transferrable to other vehicles and other sites.

(9) T H A T a further report be presented to the Committee that addresses the issues of displacement.

On-Street Parking -

(10) T H A T Cabinet be advised of the Committee's view for greater consideration to be given around the impact of displacement should on-street charging be adopted.

(11) T H A T Cabinet be advised of the Committee's view that on-street parking on Barry Island should be free for the first two hours and parking free during the winter period.

Residents Parking Policy -

(12) T H A T in relation to Appendix 5 and the Resident Parking Policy, for Cabinet to agree the following amendments:

- Paragraph 1.1 - Resident parking schemes are provided in streets where the majority of residents have no alternative but to park their vehicles on-street and where the typical parking conditions throughout the week justify a level of assistance.

Delete underlined

- Paragraph 2.1 - Requests for resident parking schemes will be assessed on the basis of parking conditions throughout a typical week. For a scheme to proceed, the average parking level observed must reach or exceed 75% of the available parking space.

Add “on-street” after “75% of the”

- Paragraph 2.2 - If the initial evaluation suggests that the 75% criteria is likely to be reached, at least 2 further detailed surveys will be carried between out Monday to Saturday up to 6.00pm. Depending on specific circumstances and locations additional surveys may be undertaken as considered necessary to evaluate the parking availability.

Replace “Saturday” with “Friday”

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To outline to Cabinet that there should not be any town centre charges for parking.
- (2) In order that prior to transfer of parking assets to Llantwit Major Town Council that the car parks are brought up to a good quality of standard.
- (3) In order to recognise that turnover can be improved through free parking and better enforcement.
- (4) In order to address the inequality from some Council staff being required to pay for car parking.
- (5) In order that no charges be applied to the car parks in question.
- (6) In order for the annual permits to be transferrable and more acceptable for residents.
- (7) In order to encourage visitors to Barry Island.
- (8) In order that the annual permits are transferrable and more acceptable to visitors.
- (9) In order to consider the impact on displacement car parking.
- (10) In order to consider the impact on displacement car parking should on-street charges be adopted.
- (11) In order to encourage visitors to Barry Island.
- (12) In order to amend Appendix 5 – Resident Parking Policy.”