



CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL CAR PARKS TASK AND FINISH GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD REMOTELY ON
THURSDAY 11TH NOVEMBER AT 5.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor D. Preece - Chair

Councillors: A. Hussey, P. Leonard, J. Ridgewell (Vice Chair) J. Roberts, and W. Williams.

Co-opted Members, Councillors: N. Dix, S. Morgan and J Taylor

Together with:

C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Manager), C. Campbell, (Transportation Engineering Manager) D. Smith (Principal Engineer – Traffic Management) S. Wilcox (Principal Officer – Town Centres & Business Support).

And Cllr J. Pritchard (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Property) observing.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B. Owen and G. Simmonds.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were declared at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL CAR PARKS TASK AND FINISH GROUP - 20TH OCTOBER 2021.

RESOLVED that that the Minutes of the meeting held on 20th October 2021 are approved as a correct record.

4. EVIDENCE GATHERING SESSION

Members discussed the draft methodology circulated following the 20th October meeting and debated the proposed business survey questions. The group were advised that the questions could be added to the business survey that is already planned, which will avoid duplicating contact with local businesses.

The Panel debated whether to conduct a public survey to understand why people visit town centres. Some members considered that the business survey was sufficient and did not consider there was enough time to carry out an in depth public survey and proposed that a public survey is not carried out. Some members were keen to ask the public their opinion and as a compromise suggested an online public survey.

A member enquired if a survey could also include residents parking permits, officers advised that this is a separate and complex issue. Whilst there have been a few complaints about parking in side streets, there is no evidence of a strong link with the suspension of parking charges initiative. It was suggested that this is dealt with as a separate matter as the response would not relate to the free use of P&D car parks. Therefore, it was suggested that a recommendation from the group would be that a further review group is established to look at the Council's resident permit parking policy.

Resolved: It was moved and seconded that a simple on-line public survey is carried out and an additional question added to the business survey, this was supported unanimously.

The panel were provided with a presentation on the number and types of car parks available in the main towns as well as total income of £652,124 for 2018/19 and costs in terms of energy, staff/resources and NNDR, amounting to £257,130. The group received information on footfall in the main towns since January 2021. Members asked if the footfall calculation was able to show dwell time, the group were advised that at the present time this is not possible. Consideration of additional questions in the Business survey to seek views on turnover of parking spaces and dwell time for shoppers and visitors to town centres were agreed.

Clarity was sought on how the rate of NNDR was calculated for each car park. Members were advised that it was probably based on the property value, but officers would check and confirm. It was agreed that an update on the full running costs for the car parks would be provided in order to fully consider the impact of any potential changes.

The presentation included an overview of potential options for charging and not charging at car parks and the financial implications of the options. The options discussed included reinstating parking charges in September 2022 at the current tariff or a permanent change to free parking at all car parks. Other options included offering a free parking periods of 1 or 2 hours, free after 3pm weekdays and 10am Saturdays, and lastly free on Mondays and Tuesdays, free on Saturdays. Members were advised that options that include free periods of free parking would require a new Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), which would take between 6 and 9 months to complete.

Members were asked to consider the range of options which would be debated at the next meeting and also to suggest alternative options. A member suggested an additional option to offer the first 1- or 2 hours parking at a very low rate, such as 20p per hour. This would not require a new TRO and could be implemented relatively easily and is a better option than offering free parking periods which can alter peoples shopping habits. The group agreed to include this as a possible option.

It was agreed to convene the next meeting in January 2022, when the results of the business survey questions could be available for consideration.

The meeting closed at 18:06 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the next appropriate meeting they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR