



## **REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 29TH MARCH 2016**

**SUBJECT: SCOPING OF THE COUNTYWIDE REVIEW OF THE OPERATION AND  
MANAGEMENT OF HIGHWAY OWNED COUNCIL CAR PARKS**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek views and support from the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on the scope of the proposed review on the operation and management of the Council's Highway owned public car parks and the potential for future changes to the current parking regime and charging tariffs.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Following discussions on the Highway owned off street car parks related MTFP proposals at the special Regeneration and Environmental Scrutiny committee in June 2014, Members raised a number of issues related to the budget saving proposals and wider operational policy issues. Subsequently a number of related issues have also been raised by Members for which Officers have proposed the scope of a review for discussion and agreement with Members.

- 2.2 The following key issues are proposed to be included in the scope of the review:

- History of parking charges in CCBC
- Impact of P&D on town centres
- Consistency, equality and equity of approach
- Review of the existing tariffs and the variations between car parks and between towns
- Balance of long stay and short stay car parks
- Extension of P&D to current non P&D car parks
- Transferrable tickets
- Residential permits
- Business permits
- Trading
- Payment methods

- 2.3 Members views are sought on the scope of the review and the process and timescales to complete it.

### **3. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 3.1 To work towards the Council's corporate objective of improving peoples' living environment through targeted actions, regulation, information and advice.

- 3.2 Engineering Division Objective: To provide safe and efficient transport and land drainage infrastructure through quality services delivered by means of cost effective management, maintenance and improvement of the networks.
- 3.3 The report links to the Safer and Prosperous themes of “Caerphilly Delivers”, the Local Services Board (LSB) Single Integrated Plan.
- 3.4 Equalities Objectives and Action Plan: Equality Objective 3 - Physical Access.

## **4. THE REPORT**

### **4.1 History**

- 4.1.1 Prior to the inception of Caerphilly County Borough Council, Twyn car park and Crescent Road car park in Caerphilly and Emporium car park in Bargoed were already subject to parking charges. In 1996 the car parks were inherited by CCBC and following a review carried out at that time parking charges were extended to a number of other public car parks in the county borough. These included Bedwas Road, Station Terrace and the long stay element of Crescent Road car park in Caerphilly, Oakfield Street in Ystrad Mynach, and all of the car parks in Blackwood that are presently subject to pay and display. Appendix 1 provides details of the parking charges as set by CCBC during its early years i.e..between1996-1998.
- 4.1.2 The parking charges were originally introduced in order to discourage long-term parking by workers, ensure a turn-over of parking spaces and availability for shoppers and visitors and to contribute towards the significant maintenance and operational costs associated with running the public parking facilities.

### **4.2 Parking Regime**

- 4.2.1 The town centre parking regime has evolved since 1996 to provide a balance between provision for commuters, workers, shoppers and visitors. At two to three year intervals, studies of car park usage, ticket sales and income have been undertaken and when appropriate changes to the tariffs have been made. The tariffs were last changed in September 2010, which resulted in a general increase of the 2007 tariffs. Prior to 2007 the tariffs were changed in 2002. Details of the historic parking tariffs for 2002 and 2007 are provided in Appendix 2.
- 4.2.2 Since 1996 the number of Highway owned public car parks has increased significantly through a number of initiatives. Some have been related to improvements in public transport with the provision and expansion of rail park and ride car parks, others have been linked to regeneration projects in the key towns. A total of 83 public off-street car parks are currently managed by the Council’s Engineering Services Division as listed in Appendix 3. The location of all these car parks is shown on the plans in Appendix 4.
- 4.2.3 The car parks comprise the following different types of facility:
- 16 pay and display (season tickets are available for 8 of the car parks)
  - 3 limited waiting (Caerphilly, Blackwood & Machen)
  - 10 park and ride (free to use)
  - 2 residents’ only (Blackwood)
  - 1 season ticket only (Blackwood)
  - 51 free to use
- 4.2.4 The 16 pay and display car parks are situated in the primary shopping centres of Caerphilly, Blackwood, Bargoed and Ystrad Mynach where parking charges are necessary to discourage long term parking by workers and ensure a turn-over of parking spaces and availability for shoppers and visitors, thereby contributing to town centre vitality and relieving or preventing congestion.

- 4.2.5 The 51 free car parks are generally located away from the main town centres and receive a lower level of usage than those facilities that are subject to parking charges.
- 4.2.6 A significant number (72) of the car parks are subject to the Off-Street Parking Places Orders that enable their use to be regulated and parking charges to be made. The 10 Park & Ride car parks are currently unregulated, however it is intended that Orders will be applied to these facilities in the future to improve regulation.
- 4.2.7 Highland Terrace (10 spaces), Gordon Road (9 spaces) and part of Libanus Road (6 spaces) in Blackwood are designated for residents' only parking. A total of 15 residents parking permits were issued for use in these car parks in 2014.
- 4.2.8 Season tickets can be purchased for Crescent Road, Bedwas Road and Lawrence Street car parks in Caerphilly, Libanus Road, Thorncombe 2, Thorncombe 3, Cliff Road and Courthouse car parks in Blackwood, and Emporium and St Gwladys car parks in Bargoed. In 2014 a total of 84 season tickets were issued for use in these car parks.

### **4.3 Legislation**

- 4.3.1 Section 32 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act gives local authorities power to provide suitable parking places for vehicles for the purpose of relieving or preventing congestion of traffic. Section 35 (iii) allows authorities to make provision for charging for parking for off-street parking. There are no further provisions detailing how off street parking revenue should be spent nor is there case law citing the power of charging under Section 35 of the Act. Local Authorities being bodies created by statute can only act in ways in which they are authorised by statute. Since there is no specific power of revenue raising by off-street parking charges, the Council is effectively limited to spending any surplus on the provision of off-street parking for relieving or preventing congestion.
- 4.3.2 Section 45 of the Act gives the authority power to designate on street parking. In determining whether to designate on-street parking the authority must have regard to the free movement of traffic, access to premises, and the existence of any off-street parking within the locality. Section 46 of the Act gives power to include provision for charging for on-street parking.

### **4.4 Current Parking Tariffs**

- 4.4.1 Appendix 5 provides details of the current tariffs, introduced in 2010, for all Highway owned pay and display car parks. The variation in tariffs has historically been determined by the attractiveness of the car parks (i.e. demand, location and size) and whether the facilities are aimed at short stay or long stay parking. Certainly there is seemingly a previous view that such aspects can be used to positively promote those town centres whose vitality is less than those that surround it. Historically a lower tariff has existed in Ystrad Mynach as this is the only Council owned car park in the town and there is no free to use Highway owned car park. Short stay car parks are directed towards shoppers and visitors and are generally well used. Long stay car parks are directed towards both shoppers and workers.

#### Variation of tariffs between car parks and towns

- 4.4.2 The long stay car parks are located on the edges of the towns in order to encourage their use by workers and commuters. This maximises the available space for shoppers in those car parks closest to the town centres.
- 4.4.3 Currently different tariffs exist in different towns. The highest tariff is in the Twyn car park in Caerphilly as this car park has the greatest demand within the borough, and because of its high level of demand for tourism parking charges also apply to this facility on Sundays. The lowest tariff is in Oakfield Street car park in Ystrad Mynach as this has the lowest demand and it is also the only Council owned car park in the town. The remainder of the pay and display car parks in Bargoed, Blackwood and Caerphilly town centres are set at the same level of charges for both long stay and short stay car parks.

#### Comparison of parking tariffs with neighbouring authorities

- 4.4.4 Appendix 6 provides a comparison of the Council's parking tariffs with neighbouring local authorities. Newport City Council has radically altered their approach owing to city centre redevelopment disruption and Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent CBCs do not charge. Torfaen is unusual in that its car park charging regime is dictated by that of the privately owned Cwmbran Town Shopping Centre, who decided not to charge. Merthyr CBC has recently amended its parking tariff and no longer offers a 2 hour tariff.
- 4.4.5 The current charging system is cheaper than in comparative neighbouring towns.

#### Research

- 4.5.6 In March 2015 MRUK Research published the findings of a study that they undertook (on behalf of Welsh Government) on the relationships between car parking charges and town centre footfall. The study took account of local authority decision making in relation to parking charges in Wales, the views of people visiting town centres across Wales, local stakeholders and examples of best practice across the UK. The key findings, conclusions and recommendations from this study will be considered as part of this review.

#### Scope of Review

- 4.5.7 The review will need to consider:

- What are the main objectives for the Council in applying parking charges in the Council's Highway owner car parks?
- Is the current parking regime and parking tariffs across the borough still appropriate to meet these objectives?
- Is the application of current legislation still appropriate?

### **4.6 Enforcement**

- 4.6.1 Regular enforcement of the public car parks is necessary to ensure that a high level of compliance of the parking regulations is maintained. Priority is given to enforcing the pay and display car parks in the main shopping centres as these facilities receive the highest level of demand. The free car parks are enforced on a less frequent basis, as and when required.

- 4.6.2 The following enforcement methods are employed in the public car parks:

#### Car Park Attendants

- 4.6.3 A total of 5 part-time attendants are employed by the Council's Traffic Management Section. The attendants are split into two teams covering different areas as defined below; these best reflect the enforcement requirements for each of the primary shopping centres.

- Blackwood town centre – 3 part-time attendants
- Caerphilly, Ystrad Mynach and Bargoed town centres – 2 part-time attendants

- 4.6.4 An additional part time member of staff is employed to open/close the gates/barriers between 08:00am-8:00pm Monday–Saturday at Wesley Road and Thorncombe Road 3 car parks in Blackwood (enforcement and the issuing of excess charge notices does not form part of this employees' duties). The night time closures were introduced as a result of anti-social behaviour and cost in the order of £5k per annum to operate. The current level of such anti-social behaviour within the car parks is minimal.

#### CCTV

- 4.6.5 CCTV cameras are installed in 13 of the 16 pay and display car parks. Appendix 3 identifies the sites where CCTV has been installed to date. In some circumstances CCTV footage can be used to generate Excess Charge Notices issued through the post to any persons who are observed to contravene the car park regulations. CCTV is particularly useful for night time enforcement when there are no Attendants on duty. The footage can also be used when investigating appeals against Excess Charge Notices as and when required.

### Scope of Review

4.6.6 The review will need to consider:

- Is the current enforcement regime still appropriate to meet the Council's objectives?
- Is the current level of provision and use of the CCTV system still appropriate?

## **4.7 Income**

### Ticket Sales

4.7.1 The graph in Appendix 7 shows the annual income from ticket sales for the Council's Highway owned off street car parks since 2006/07. The decline in income in 2008/09 and 2009/10 is considered to reflect the downturn in the UK economy at its lowest point. Since then annual income has increased as signs of economic recovery have emerged. Blackwood has most of the pay and display car parks and has consistently generated the highest level of income, followed by Caerphilly, Bargoed and Ystrad Mynach. In 2014/15 the following incomes (inclusive of VAT) were achieved from ticket sales in each town centre:

- Blackwood – £438,764
- Caerphilly – £197,883
- Bargoed – £29,029
- Ystrad Mynach - £20,054

4.7.2 Since 2009/10 the income for Blackwood has increased consistently year on year indicating improved vitality in Blackwood. However the incomes from Caerphilly, Bargoed and Ystrad Mynach have remained fairly constant over the five year period (apart from a noticeable reduction in income for Bargoed and Ystrad Mynach during 2014/15).

4.7.3 The tables in Appendix 8 show the monthly/annual income from ticket sales for all car parks for financial years 2010/11 - 2014/15. A summary of the income totals from ticket sales for 2014/15 is also provided below. High Street car park in Blackwood generates the highest level of income followed by Twyn in Caerphilly. These two facilities account for approximately 50% of the total income generated from ticket sales for all Highway owned public car parks and is predominantly due to their desirable locations. Market Traders and Court House car parks in Blackwood consistently generate the lowest levels of income due to their locations.

- High Street, Blackwood - £201,490
- Twyn, Caerphilly - £128,869
- Cliff Road, Blackwood - £49,708
- Thorncombe 3, Blackwood - £47,829
- Bus Station, Blackwood - £43,973
- Crescent Road, Caerphilly - £42,076
- Woodbine Road, Blackwood - £40,219
- Wesley Road, Blackwood - £28,717
- Oakfield Street, Ystrad Mynach - £24,054
- St Gwladys, Bargoed - £16,674
- Station Terrace, Caerphilly - £13,984
- Thorncombe 2, Blackwood - £13,799
- Bedwas Road, Caerphilly - £12,954
- Emporium, Bargoed - £12,418
- Market Traders, Blackwood - £6,562
- Court House, Blackwood - £6,467

### Excess Charge Notices

4.7.4 The table in Appendix 9 shows the annual income generated from excess charge notices for all car parks for financial years 2010/11 - 2014/15. The fluctuations in income from year to year are partly attributed to a reduction in staffing levels resulting from periods of long term sickness.

4.7.5 The Car Parks Section now has a full compliment of staff and it is anticipated that the level of income generated from Excess Charge Notices will increase.

#### **4.8 Existing Provision and Charging Regime**

4.8.1 Historically parking charges in the form of pay and display have only been applied to the public car parks in Caerphilly, Blackwood, Bargoed and Ystrad Mynach as these towns top the hierarchal order of shopping centres in the County Borough. These towns, along with Risca, are the five town centres covered by the Council's 'Unique Places' model of Town Centre Management.

4.8.2 The current charging regime is not consistent across the borough as parking charges have not been applied to all of the five managed town centres. Different tariffs also apply to some of the town centre car parks where charges have been introduced. Whilst it would be simpler for the same level of charges to be applied to all town centre car parks across the borough, historically this has not been considered appropriate because of the wide range of economic and localised differences that exist between the towns. The locations of all these car parks are shown on the plans in Appendix 4. An overview of the Highway owned off street parking provision in the main towns and villages is below.

##### Bargoed

4.8.3 There are currently 6 Highway owned public car parks in Bargoed town centre, of which 4 are free (196 spaces) and 2 are designated as pay and display (68 spaces). In addition to these facilities there is a park and ride car park (89 spaces) situated on the outskirts of the town plus a large free supermarket car park (390 spaces) located in the centre of the town that the general public are permitted to use for a maximum period of 3 hours when visiting Lowry Plaza.

4.8.4 The park and ride car park is very well used (>90% occupancy on most weekdays) however only 50% of the vehicles that presently use the facility are commuters. The other 50% are owned by workers/traders from the town centre who are likely to be parking there in order to avoid parking charges as well as the 3 hour time restriction in Morrison's car park.

4.8.5 The Morrison's superstore car park has a total of 390 parking spaces (242 on level 1 / 148 on level 2) and its central position within the town is attractive to shoppers using the High Street. Surveys have established that the upper tier car park receives a high level of usage, however the lower tier car park is less well used and generally has a significant amount of free parking space available. Surveys show that approximately 80% of parking spaces are generally available at most times of the day on the lower tier.

##### Blackwood

4.8.6 Blackwood town centre benefits from 14 Highway owned public car parks of which 1 is limited waiting (11 spaces), 1 is free to use (25 spaces), 2 are for residents' only (19 spaces), 1 is for residents and non-residents season tickets (20 spaces), and 9 are designated as pay and display (546 spaces). In addition to these parking facilities there are a number of retail parks situated around the town as well as a superstore that offer a significant amount of free parking. In addition to these, there is a privately managed retail car park located in front of the B&M store that provides free parking for 2 hours and is enforced via ANPR cameras.

4.8.7 The majority of the car parks in Blackwood town centre are situated in close proximity to the High Street and, as such, are both convenient and attractive for shoppers to use. Their good accessibility is considered to be one of the main reasons why they receive such a high level of usage.

4.8.8 High Street, Woodbine Road, Bus Station and Market Trader car parks are located nearest to the town centre and are designated as Short Stay facilities. Court House, Cliff Road, Thorncombe 2 & 3 and Wesley Road car parks are situated further away from the town centre and are designated as long stay facilities.

### Caerphilly

- 4.8.9 There are currently 6 Highway owned public car parks within Caerphilly town centre (296 spaces), of which 4 are pay and display (272 spaces) and 1 is free to use (6 spaces). In addition to these facilities is a large park and ride car park that provides 270 spaces (185 spaces CCBC / 85 spaces ATW) plus a large privately managed car park namely Castle Court Shopping Centre (540 spaces) which has a maximum stay of 3 hours on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and 2 hours on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. This is currently under review.
- 4.8.10 Twyn car park is very well used due its central location within the town centre and close proximity to the castle and is designated as a short stay facility. Crescent Road car park is situated some distance from the town centre, however there are a number of business premises adjacent the car park. In order to cater for the different types of user, the facility offers short stay and long stay tariffs as well as season tickets. The car park also provides a coach parking facility.

### Risca

- 4.8.11 There are 4 Highway owned public car parks in Risca town centre all of which are currently free to use. The car parks provide a total of approximately 124 spaces (including the unmarked area for lorry parking in Raglan Street car park).
- 4.8.12 Risca is one of the managed town centres. All of the public car parks within Risca town centre are presently free to use. It should be noted that this charging regime is not consistent with the other towns that make up the Town Centre Management Group i.e. Blackwood, Caerphilly, Bargoed and Ystrad Mynach.
- 4.8.13 Longbridge and Tredegar Street car parks are attractive for shoppers as they are situated in close proximity to the town centre. Longbridge car park receives a high level of usage (>75% full for most of the day) and Tredegar Street car park is less well used (>50% full for most of the day). There is a Lidl supermarket located in Commercial Street that has 2 hours free car parking and its location is attractive for shoppers in the town centre.
- 4.8.14 Raglan Street and Rifleman Street car parks are located some distance from the town centre and are considered to be too remote for shoppers/workers within the town to use.
- 4.8.15 A park and ride car park is provided on the outskirts of the town. The facility currently receives a very low level of usage (owing to the limited hourly service) and its remote location is not attractive to shoppers.

### Ystrad Mynach

- 4.8.16 There is only 1 Highway owned public car park (64 spaces) located in the town centre and this facility presently operates under pay and display. The car park is very well used (>90% full during weekdays). There is also a park and ride car park (93 spaces) located on the outskirts of the town. The park and ride car park is very well used by commuters, however its remote location is not attractive to shoppers.
- 4.8.17 There is a proposal to extend the existing P&R car park for Ystrad Mynach rail station by approximately 125 spaces. The proposal would use Network Rail land to provide a car park with access off Cedar Way over Council land (currently playing fields). The scheme is being promoted and funded by the Welsh Government and is in the final design stages with a planning application expected in the near future.

### Nelson

- 4.8.18 There is 1 Highway owned car park (35 spaces) located within the town centre that receives a high level of usage (>85% full during weekdays).

## Newbridge

- 4.8.19 There are a total of 5 Highway owned public car parks (67 spaces) provided in the town centre (High Street, Panside Cottages, Meredith Terrace, Victoria Terrace and West View). There is also a relatively large Park & Ride car park (75 spaces) in close proximity to the town centre that receives a relatively low level of usage (30-50% full on weekdays).

## 4.9 Comparison of parking provision between town centres

- 4.9.1 The table below shows the total number of Highway owned public car parking spaces currently provided in each town/village and provides a percentage comparison of free and pay and display spaces. Privately managed car parks and park and ride facilities that are remotely located from the town centres are not included as part of the data.

Town Centre	Total no. of parking spaces	No. of free spaces	% of free spaces	No. of pay & display/season ticket spaces	% of pay & display/season ticket spaces
<b>Bargoed</b> Emporium Bus Station St Gwladys Bristol Tce Gateway Hanbury Rd Park & Ride	<b>338</b>	264	<b>78%</b>	74	<b>22%</b>
<b>Blackwood</b> Court House Thorncombe 2 & 3 High Street Cliff Road Red Lion Wesley Road Woodbine Road Bus Station Libanus Road Highland Tce Gordon Road Market Traders	<b>650</b>	11	<b>1.7%</b>	639	<b>98%</b>
<b>Caerphilly</b> Bedwas Road Twyn Station Tce Crescent Rd White Street	<b>304</b>	6	<b>2%</b>	298	<b>98%</b>
<b>Ystrad Mynach</b> Oakfield Street	<b>68</b>	68	<b>0%</b>	68	<b>100%</b>
<b>Risca</b> Longbridge Tredegar Street	<b>103</b>	103	<b>100%</b>	0	<b>0%</b>
<b>Nelson</b> Dynevor Tce	<b>40</b>	40	<b>100%</b>	0	<b>0%</b>
<b>Newbridge</b> High Street Meredith Terrace Newbridge Station Panside Cottages Victoria Terrace West View	<b>142</b>	142	<b>100%</b>	0	<b>0%</b>

- 4.9.2 The data shows that Bargoed and Risca have a disproportionately high percentage of free parking spaces compared to the other managed town centres. Caerphilly and Bargoed have a similar number of parking spaces, however 78% of spaces in Bargoed are currently free to use compared to 2% of the spaces in Blackwood and Caerphilly.



- 4.9.3 There are a number of complex localised factors that need to be taken into consideration when developing a charging regime for the public car parks, however it is apparent that under the current operating arrangement significant disparities exist between the towns.

#### Scope of Review

- 4.9.4 The review will need to consider:

- Is the current level of provision across the towns and villages still appropriate?
- Is the current parking regime and parking tariffs across the towns and villages still appropriate to meet the Council's requirements?

### **4.10 Concessions and Restrictions**

#### Concessions for Traders

- 4.10.1 The town centre public car parks are primarily intended to provide parking opportunity for shoppers and visitors. A concession for traders already exists in the form of Long Stay car parks which have a lower tariff. Loading Only bays are also provided on-street to assist traders with their operational activities.

#### Possible Free Parking Concessions

- 4.10.2 The table in Appendix 8 shows the income generated from ticket sales against each tariff, a summary of which is provided below:

1 hour tickets	- £233,506	(34% of total income)
2 hour tickets	- £171,451	(25%)
3 hour tickets	- £107,045	(16%)
4 hour tickets	- £53,140	(8%)
Daily tickets	- £85,519	(13%)
Weekly tickets	- £3,084	(<1%)

- 4.10.3 The information shows that the sale of 1 hour tickets generates the highest level of income. The sale of 2 hour tickets generates the second highest level of income. The combined sales of 1 and 2 hour tickets accounts for approximately 60% of the total income generated.
- 4.10.4 The introduction of any free parking concessions would reduce the income generated by the respective amounts shown in the table in Appendix 8.
- 4.10.5 In the near future a concession that will allow disabled badge holders to park for an additional hour from the expiry time shown on the pay and display ticket is to be introduced. It is estimated that this will reduce the level of income generated from ticket sales by £20k per annum.

#### Transferrable Tickets

- 4.10.6 Parking tickets are not transferable between car parks within the County and experience shows that there appears to be little demand for this as a very limited number of contraventions of this nature have been observed in recent years. With different tariffs being applied to the long stay and short stay car parks and tariffs varying between towns, it is considered that allowing the transfer of tickets has the potential to cause confusion.

#### Residential / Business Permits

- 4.10.7 Residents' permits are currently offered for Highland Terrace, Gordon Road and Libanus car parks in Blackwood and will shortly be offered for Bedwas Road car park in Caerphilly. The cost of a permit is £75 per annum for all car parks. Currently only one residents' permit per eligible property is allowed and a second permit can be issued with the Council's discretion depending on availability.
- 4.10.8 Business permits are not presently offered, however some businesses have purchased multiple season tickets for their staff and works vehicles.

#### Trading / Markets / Events

- 4.10.9 The Council's Off-Street Car Parking Places Orders prohibits trading from within the car parks. Consideration will generally only be given to a temporary closure of the car park for Council supported events, during which the Order would be suspended and trading would be permitted.
- 4.10.10 All charitable events will be considered on their merits and any decision would be based on the level of impact and health and safety implications for the car park and surrounding area. Historically the following activities have been permitted in the car parks:
- Parking of film crew vehicles (subject to charge)
  - Parking of mobile cancer screening units (free of charge).
- 4.10.11 Requests have previously been received for private markets to be held in The Crescent car park in Machen, however these have been refused on highway safety grounds. A mobile butcher presently operates from Victoria car park in Rhymney one day a week, however this car park is not currently subject to an Off-Street Car Parking Places Order.
- 4.10.12 If Members were minded to accommodate trading and/or non-corporate/non-charitable events within the car parks then some criteria would need to be agreed for officers to manage any requests.

#### Concessions for Schools

- 4.10.13 An historic informal concession has been applied to Crescent Road car park in Caerphilly that allows parents of Ysgol-y-Castell to park free of charge between 08:50am-09:10am and 3:20pm-3:40pm. This concession was introduced to alleviate congestion on the residential roads surrounding the school. The informal arrangement is not advertised on the signs within the car park and has caused confusion with parents on a number of occasions and has attracted criticism from other users.
- 4.10.14 Such concessions are not offered for other Highway owned car parks near schools elsewhere in the County and it is recommended that this arrangement be reviewed.

#### Disabled Users

- 4.10.15 In 2013 a review of the pay and display car park provision in the borough was carried out that focussed on the needs of disabled users. In order to better meet the needs of disabled users the following recommendations were identified as part of the review and officers are currently in the process of implementing the recommended measures:
- Additional disabled parking bays to be provided in 12 pay and display car parks (changes already implemented).
  - A number of existing disabled parking bays are to be increased in size in 9 pay and display car parks (changes already implemented).
  - Concession to allow disabled badge holders to park for an additional hour from the expiry time shown on the pay and display ticket (changes will be implemented before end of current financial year)
  - On-street parking exemptions for blue badge holders to be better publicised/promoted (publicity material to be released in conjunction with above Order being made).

#### Scope of Review

- 4.10.16 The review will need to consider:
- Are the current concessions for traders still appropriate?
  - Should free parking concessions be introduced?
  - Should tickets be transferable?
  - Does the current use of resident and business permits remain appropriate?
  - Is the current approach to trading, markets and events still appropriate?
  - Should there be concessions for schools?
  - Is the current proposal for a concession for disabled users still appropriate?

#### **4.11 Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)**

- 4.11.1 Whilst CPE has not been proposed as part of this review it is recognised that the level of on-street parking enforcement can have a direct impact on the turnover of on-street parking spaces, usage of public car parks and consequently the overall vitality of town centres. Previous reports to Members advised of the need to commission specialist consultants to develop a business case based to better understand the implications of the Council taking on these powers to enforce the existing on street parking restrictions.
- 4.11.2 A working group has been set up between the Council and Gwent Police (with Members participating) to discuss these issues. At the time of writing this report it had not met but a summary of the meeting will be reported to the Committee.

#### **4.12 Payment Methods**

- 4.12.1 At present all P&D machines accept coin cash payment only. Payment by card is a possibility but would require the upgrading of the P&D machines and supporting software and telemetry with the necessary implementation and operational costs. This option would offer more flexibility to car park users and avoid any overpayment, but given the low tariffs there has not been much request for this and take up is expected to be low. Therefore the benefits it would offer for the cost of introducing the service may not offer value for money.
- 4.12.2 Payment by phone (i.e. mobile) is another possible option that would offer more flexibility to car park users. In addition to the issues raised for card payment, there would be back office changes required and possibly an additional fee to users that may discourage take up.
- 4.12.3 The optimum time to consider introducing these options would be when the P&D machines are due to be replaced but, this is unlikely to be for at least five years given the they were last replaced in 2010.

##### Scope of Review

- 4.12.4 The review will need to consider:

- Is the current payment method still appropriate?
- What alternative/additional options should be considered for the future?

#### **4.13 Summary of the Proposed Scope of the Review**

- 4.13.1 The proposed scope of the review is as identified below:

##### Parking regime and Tariffs

- What are the main objectives for the Council in applying parking charges in the Council's Highway owner car parks?
- Is the current parking regime and parking tariffs across the borough still appropriate to meet these objectives?
- Is the application of current legislation still appropriate?

##### Enforcement

- Is the current enforcement regime still appropriate to meet the Council's objectives?
- Is the current level of provision and use of the CCTV system still appropriate?

##### Existing Provision and Charging Regime

- Is the current level of provision across the towns and villages still appropriate?
- Is the current parking regime and parking tariffs across the town and villages still appropriate to meet the Council's requirements?

##### Concessions and Restrictions

- Are the current concessions for traders still appropriate?
- Should free parking concessions be introduced?

- Should tickets be transferable?
- Does the current use of resident and business permits remain appropriate?
- Is the current approach to trading, markets and events still appropriate?
- Should there be concessions for schools?
- Is the current proposal for a concession for disabled users still appropriate?

#### Payment Methods

- Is the current payment method still appropriate?
- What alternative/additional options should be considered for the future?

#### Process and Timescale

4.13.2 In order to undertake the review it is proposed that a Task & Finish group of the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee be established that would discuss and agree how the review will be undertaken and the timescale within which to complete it.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report is for the information purposes, so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied at this stage but will be considered as part of any recommendations identified.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 None at this time.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 None.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 All comments received have been incorporated in the report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 Members are asked for their views on the proposed scope of the review for the Council's Highway owned off street car parks as set out in 4.13 above.

9.2 Members are asked for their views on the proposal to establish a Task & Finish group to undertake the review and agree the details of how it will be undertaken and the timescale within which to complete it.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 As detailed in paragraph 2.1.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Authors: Dean Smith, Principal Engineer  
Clive Campbell, Transportation Engineering Manager

Consultees: Cllr D T Davies - Chair of Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr E M Aldworth - Vice Chair of Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee  
Cllr T Williams - Cabinet Member for Highways, Transportation & Engineering  
Cllr K James – Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development  
Chris Burns – Interim Chief Executive  
Christina Harrhy – Corporate Director, Communities  
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & S 151  
Terry Shaw – Head of Engineering Services  
Pauline Elliott – Head of Regeneration & Planning  
Andrew Highway – Town Centre Development Manager  
Alan Dallimore – Team Leader, Urban Renewal & Conservation  
Gail Williams – Monitoring Officer/Principal Solicitor  
David A Thomas – Senior Policy Officer  
Mike Eedy – Finance Manager  
Trish Reardon – HR Manager

#### Background Papers:

Management and Enforcement of Highway Owned Public Car Parks; report to Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 17 September 2013.  
Review of the Operation and Parking Charges for Blue Badge Holders in Council Public Car Parks; report to Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 10 December 2013.  
Review of the Impact of Car Parking Charges on Town Centres; report to Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 1 April 2014.  
Proposed Park & Ride for Ystrad Mynach Rail Station; report to Cabinet on 20 May 2015  
Town Centre Parking Strategy for Bargoed; report to Bargoed Town Centre Management Group on 15 October 2015.

#### Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Table showing historic parking tariffs  
Appendix 2 – Table showing 2002 and 2007 parking tariffs  
Appendix 3 – List of Highway owned public car parks  
Appendix 4 – Plans showing the locations of the Highway owned public car parks  
Appendix 5 – Table showing current parking tariffs  
Appendix 6 – Table showing tariffs of neighbouring authorities  
Appendix 7 – Graph showing income from ticket sales for each town  
Appendix 8 – Table showing monthly income from ticket sales  
Appendix 9 – Table showing income from Excess Charge Notices  
Appendix 10 – Table showing income for each tariff