



CABINET – 13TH JANUARY 2021

SUBJECT: CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL CAR PARKS
TASK AND FINISH GROUP

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND
CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The attached report was considered by the Joint Scrutiny Committee (Environment & Sustainability and Housing & Regeneration) on 15th December 2020. The report outlined the findings of the Caerphilly County Borough Car Parks Task and Finish Group and the recommendation supported by the Joint Scrutiny Committee. To seek consideration support by Cabinet on 13th January 2021.

2 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

- 2.1 This report attached at Appendix 1 outlines the findings and recommendations of the joint scrutiny task and finish group established to consider car parks in the Caerphilly county borough. This was considered and debated by the Joint Scrutiny committee who have supported some of the recommendations as shown in section 3, other recommendations by the task and finish group were either deferred or not supported.
- 2.2 The joint scrutiny committee were supportive of a same hourly rate at all car parks across the county borough. There was a suggestion that this should be the same as the 70p starting tariff which is mostly the same across most car parks with the exception of Oakfield street in Ystrad Mynach and The Twyn in Caerphilly, these are shown in appendix 1of the report from the task and finish group. Members were supportive of the free use of car parks close to schools for a limited time to relieve congestion and improve safety. In addition the joint scrutiny committee endorsed the removal of parking charges at the 5 country parks and agreed that Cwmcarn be excluded and continue to charge for parking.
- 2.3 There were some recommendations that the joint scrutiny committee did not support, these included offering reduced parking permits for local businesses as it was felt that the existing reduced permits were sufficient. Members did not support the introduction of charges at park and ride car parks due to concerns that this would result in increased parking in residential areas. Finally the joint scrutiny committee did not support that the surplus car park income be ring fenced solely for improvement of car parks due to the potential impact upon

budget available to the Infrastructure Department for maintenance in other areas, such as main roads.

- 2.4 The joint scrutiny committee agreed that some of the recommendations should be deferred until the outcome and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is known. These refer to removal of Sunday charges at the Twyn in Caerphilly, non-enforcement of charges on St Davids Day and introducing charges at free car parks. There were two recommendations that were deferred for a report to return to the relevant scrutiny committee on zoning and residential parking areas. The recommendation regarding ceasing locking of the two car parks at night in Blackwood was also deferred for further discussion with ward members when appropriate. Members also agreed to remove the recommendation on extending free parking across the county borough due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as that had already been agreed by Cabinet on 9th December 2020.
- 2.5 Members sought an update on the replacement of pay and display payment machines and were advised that more modern machines would allow card payments etc. and there is circa 50% of the funding already available (£170,000 via WG TRI grant). Members agreed to make an additional recommendation to Cabinet asking that the council proceed with the purchase of the new machines.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Following consideration of the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, and having agreed the inclusion of an additional recommendation, the Scrutiny Committee supported the following recommendations and recommended, by the majority present to Cabinet that:
- 3.2 The current hourly tariffs at publicly available pay and display highway owned car parks be standardised across the county borough for long term and short-term parking respectively. It is suggested that charges are set at a current lower level.
- 3.3 Parking charges at the 5 country parks agreed in 2014 be removed in order to recognise the significant health benefits to residents.
- 3.4 Where there are car parks in close proximity to schools, that are having parking issues during school drop off and pick up times, Officers be given discretion to allow a free parking concession to parents/carers for a limited time and in consultation with local ward members.
- 3.5 The current approach to the use of car parks for trading and events be allowed to continue and Officers be permitted to continue to use discretion in respect of applications that have community benefit.
- 3.6 Opportunities to improve existing CCTV be explored where grant funding or match funding is available.
- 3.7 A programme to upgrade pay and display machines across the county borough be agreed and implemented.

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Appendix: Report to Joint Scrutiny Committee 15th December 2020 – Agenda Item 3