

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 23RD MARCH, 2020

REFERENCE FROM CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 3RD MARCH, 2020

“ CAR PARKING – GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CHARGES (REF) –

Cabinet had, on 24th February, 2020 referred the report to both the Corporate Performance and Resources and Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committees for their consideration prior to a decision being taken by Cabinet on Car Parking – Guiding Principles and Charges for 2020/21.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration introduced the report, stating that this was a joint report from both the Education and Regeneration and the Neighbourhood Services and Transport Cabinet portfolios due to parking management and charges being a multi-faceted issue and not having a ‘one size fits all’ solution as this covered many areas such as parks, residential parking and businesses, shoppers and other users having very different needs.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration went on to say that this new report on the matter had taken time in order to carefully review the results of public consultation, Scrutiny Committee minutes and quantitative data in relation to the Car Parking Policy.

The Cabinet Member added that there would be new options in terms of the parking enforcement and that they were nearly there in achieving outcomes around the Car Parking Guidelines that would benefit the public. It was therefore important to refer this report to the relevant Scrutiny Committees before a final decision would be made by Cabinet. She added that the issue around resident parking would be looked at through a further report to be presented to Cabinet in the near future.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport stressed that the report was more to do with the management side of parking. He emphasised that there would be in most instances little or no changes or in fact no charges/additional charges for parking in various areas within the Vale. The emphasis here was on more effective parking enforcement in order to create what he termed as “churn” in parking which would mean increased turnover and therefore increased footfall for residents and others to park within the Vale of Glamorgan.

A Committee Member stated that the removal of some of the previous proposals from the parking report was to be welcomed – although he felt that some of the areas targeted were not used significantly and therefore enforcement would not be greatly required. The Member was also concerned that no economic assessment had been done in relation to the town centre and how the Parking Guidelines would

impact here. He was also interested to hear what consideration the Cabinet Members had made regarding this. He also added that clarification was needed on the opening times for the multi-storey car parks in the Vale. He finally wanted to say that it was good to see free Sunday parking being implemented on Wyndham Street and the reduction of car parking charges elsewhere, ensuring that this be monitored in order to see if there was increased footfall as well as the need to ensure that Barry Island Car Park machines were working adequately.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration replied that this represented a different report from a different Administration. In terms of an economic assessment this was not about income generation, rather a new system employed to offset costs and increase turnover in car parking with any money accrued through this being used for further investment in parking facilities. The designation of two car parks as “shopper” car parks was intended for people to locate these easily. These car parks would have an initial two hour free period with charges thereafter. In the consultation with local shop keepers etc. around these car parks, no concerns had been raised about the implementation of these measures.

A Member raised a concern around displacement as currently in certain car parks these would be completely full relatively early in the day forcing other users to try and park elsewhere. He did however state that Members needed to wait and see what the effects of the new Parking Guidelines would be.

Another Member stated that these were much better proposals and it was good to see the introduction of charging in certain car parks and it would have to be accepted that there would be some ‘hiccups’ along the way as part of the implementation of these Guidelines.

Also, a Member commented that this could have been an opportunity for a season ticket to be provided for certain car parks and to look at stretching the reduced charges at Barry Island over the winter.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration replied that the local Barry Island Traders had been consulted regarding winter charges. She also wanted to stress that the parking Enforcement Teams would be deployed where most needed. It was important to look at Barry Island Resort as a year round operation and not simply a seasonal one. If you were a regular visitor to Barry Island then you could potentially buy a season ticket which would cover Barry Island and other resorts.

A Committee Member pointed out the need to be careful around social media – noting that there were persons using this in order to let others know about various means of not paying parking charges. Ultimately car park users would need to pay in some way in order to support services.

The Leader stated that with regard to query raised by a Member concerning opening times for the multi-storey car park that this would remain 7.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. He stated that overall, this was a balanced, very reasonable report. He added that increasing parking permits could potentially stop the “churn” effect that the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport had previously mentioned. The Leader also stated that some displacement in terms of parking would be inevitable

from the Guidelines, but it was essential that these were applied and to look in due course at the results produced in order to see if there were any issues raised. He stressed however that measures to deter displacements such as the raising of signs in various parking areas would be used. The Leader also reiterated that parking permits could be bought, which would cover various parts of the Vale. Finally, he wished to add that he was in talks with the Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Town Councils regarding the potential issue of parking displacement.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport also stated that currently some drivers had the view that they would not be caught or only be caught once or twice a month parking in areas where there were charges, but this would be only a minimal occupational cost. By taking enforcement back in-house and using measures such as a 'camera car' touring around the Vale of Glamorgan, raising signage around parking regulations, etc., this would deter inconsiderate parking and drivers, for example by local schools.

The Chairman asked if a report could be brought back to Scrutiny Committee in approximately a year's time in order to get an update on how the changes in parking and charges had impacted the Vale of Glamorgan. This was agreed by the other Committee Members. The Leader also agreed but stated that due to the need to keep on top of issues such as displacement, an earlier or preliminary review or update would also be required.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport added that there would be a need to look at Traffic Regulation Orders in light of these changes, which was echoed by the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport.

It was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the Scrutiny Committee's views be referred back to Cabinet in order that the proposed Car Parking – Guiding Principles and Charges 2020/21 and Equality Impact Assessment at Appendices 1 and 2 can be further considered by Cabinet.
- (3) T H A T a further report be received by the Committee providing an update on the implementation of the proposed Car Parking – Guiding Principles and Charges in the middle half of 2021.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) In view of the content of the report.
- (2) To ensure that the views of the Scrutiny Committee are considered prior to a decision being taken by Cabinet on the final Car Parking – Guiding Principles and Charges for 2020/21.

(3) To ensure that the Scrutiny Committee is updated on the implementation and progress of the proposed Car Parking – Guiding Principles and Charges for 2020/21.”