

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 04 December 2025
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Place Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Review of Winter Car Parking charges at Penarth Cliff Walk, Cold Knap, and Bron-y-Mor (Barry) Car Parks.
Purpose of Report:	To consider immediate changes and the temporary, seasonal suspension of current charges at the Penarth cliff walk, Cold Knap, Barry and Bron-y-Mor, Barry car parks that were introduced in early September 2025.
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Building Services
Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	This is an item that covers multiple wards, and as a result there has been no ward member consultation. Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services Head of Finance / S151 officer Head of Neighbourhood Services
Policy Framework:	The matter is within the Policy Framework and is a matter for the Executive.
Executive Summary: - Car parking charges were introduced for the car parks at the Penarth Cliff walk, Cold Knap, Barry and Bron-y-Mor, Barry in September of this year following a consideration of all relevant matters by Cabinet on 6th March 2025 and a consideration of Traffic Regulation Order objections on 3 July 2025. The charges were only introduced at the clifftop, Penarth and at Bron-y-Mor following resurfacing of areas of the car parks in question. - The report also referenced charging at Portobello car park (Ogmore by Sea) and West Farm (Southerndown), although charges are yet to have been imposed in these car parks. - Since the introduction of charges, work has progressed on consulting on Traffic Regulation Orders for on-street charges at various locations (Penarth seafront and Barry Island) and a report is due on this issue in early 2026. - This report considers the current position in relation to the car parks at Penarth cliff walk, Cold Knap and Bron-y-Mor and takes into account various factors, including the fact that charges were introduced at a challenging time of year for businesses, with shorter daylight hours, changeable	

weather and a decline in trade due to decreasing visitor numbers normally associated with an end to school summer holidays. This report and the stance being recommended also reflects the comments made by businesses and residents in their communication with the Council.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet notes the current position relating to the recently introduced car parking charges at Penarth Cliff Walk, Cold Knap and Bron-y-Mor, Barry and agrees to temporarily suspend the charges currently in place with immediate effect up to and until Spring 2026.
2. That a further report be brought back to Cabinet to consider further the need or otherwise for a seasonal approach to the charging regime introduced at the Penarth Cliff Walk, Cold Knap and Bron-y-Mor, Barry car parks.
3. That use of the Council's urgent decision procedure, as set out at section 15.14 of the Council's Constitution, be agreed in order for the recommendations of this report to be implemented with immediate effect.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To respond proportionately to the seasonal decline in visitor numbers and the concerns raised by local businesses and residents regarding the impact of charges during the autumn/winter period.
2. To enable the Council to temporarily suspend parking charges already authorised within the existing Off-Street Parking Traffic Regulation Order at these locations.
3. To enable charges to be suspended temporarily without delay so that seasonal impacts on businesses, residents and visitor activity are addressed promptly.

4. Background

- 4.1 A report on Car Parking was presented to Cabinet on 9th January 2025 which proposed to introduce off-street and on-street parking charges at several coastal locations, advise of future proposals for residential parking and determine the future of the Court Road Multi-Storey Car Park in Barry.
- 4.2 At this meeting Cabinet resolved that the introduction of coastal car park charges at Cold Knap Car Park (Barry), Bron Y Mor Car Park (Barry), Portabello Car Park (Ogmore-By-Sea), Cliff Walk Car Park (Penarth) and West Farm (Southerndown) be agreed in principle (Cabinet Minute No. C228 refers).
- 4.3 The Cabinet report was subsequently considered by the Special Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 28th January 2025. The recommendations from Scrutiny Committee were reported back to Cabinet on 6th March 2025 to consider the Car Parking proposals (Cabinet Minute No. C274 refers).
- 4.4 At the Cabinet meeting on 6th March 2025 the following matters were resolved:
 - > T H A T the comments of the Special Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 28th January 2025 be noted
 - > T H A T the decision to charge at Bron y Mor and Cliff Walk coastal car parks once both had been resurfaced would proceed.

- > T H A T the decision to charge at Cold Knap coastal car park would proceed
- > T H A T proposals concerning two coastal car parks located in the Western Vale at Portabello and West Farm would be subject to consultation with the Dunraven Estate and Ogmore Commoners Association before any charging proposals would be considered.

Following the decision from Cabinet on 6th March 2025 to progress car park charges at the identified car park sites subject to conditions referred and in accordance with the statutory legal process to create a new Traffic Regulation Order, public notice of the proposal was given on 3rd April 2025, inviting objections in writing, by 25th April 2025. The grounds upon which objections could be made were detailed in the proposal.

- 4.5** During the statutory consultation period 3rd April to 25th April 2025 on the Traffic Regulation Order, a total of fourteen responses were received which comprised formal objections, each containing multiple issues of concern. Full details of the objection responses were detailed in a report to Cabinet on 3rd July 2025 [25-07-03 TRO Car Park Charging](#). Full details of the resurfacing undertaken to the Penarth cliff walk car park at a cost of approaching £50k and the proposals relating to resurfacing part of Bron-y-Mor car park were also addressed in the report on 3rd July.
- 4.6** As a consequence of the consideration outlined above and detailed in earlier reports, charging was introduced at the said car parks in early September, and this was based on the charging regime as discussed previously and as appended to the report of 7th July 2025.

5. Key Issues for Consideration

- 5.1** It is clear that the introduction of car park charges to the car parks at Penarth Cliff Walk, Cold Knap and Bron-y-Mor, Barry has generated considerable interest. The rationale for introducing charges at coastal car parks was clearly set out in earlier reports and is not repeated here, save for referencing the fact that the Council wishes to maintain its car parks, the highway network and coastal destinations and facilities to the highest possible quality. With budget challenges, this is proving increasingly difficult, and in common with other Councils, consideration has to be given to charging for facilities such as coastal car parks. This view remains that this 'user-pays' approach is far more appropriate and fairer than a blanket increase in Council Tax levels to maintain such facilities. It is against this backdrop and context that the report is now presented to Cabinet.
- 5.2** The charges were introduced at the end of the Summer season, as schools were returning after the summer break and as visitor numbers to these popular coastal locations were reducing. It is also the case that since the beginning of September, weather conditions have been challenging with significant number of days of unsettled weather further impacting on visitor numbers and the take up of car parking spaces in these car parks.
- 5.3** In addition, it remains the case that any new charging regime takes time to become established and viewed as such. Anecdotally, the take up of car parking

spaces has been low in all these car parks and there has been an increase in car parking on the adjacent and nearby streets, where unrestricted parking is available.

- 5.4** In Penarth Cliff Walk, in particular, the progression of car parking charges has been undertaken in advance of and prior to the consideration of possible future on-street car parking charges. This consideration will follow early next year.
- 5.5** A number of businesses have raised concerns at the impact of car parking charges on trade, and these concerns are noted and understood. This Cabinet report will not seek to fully analyse the impacts of car parking charging on trade, but it is clear that there can and will be a number of contributory factors to a more challenging trading environment during the off-season, including weather conditions, shorter daylight hours, the school year, less visitors given the off peak period and other factors such as the rent levels for premises, business rates and other costs related to staffing and supplies. Car parking charges and their introduction should therefore be viewed against this context and background and a range of other costs to businesses and their customers and potential customers.
- 5.6** That said, the current position is fully understood and acknowledged, and it is important that we are able to react and respond where necessary. It is clear that the introduction of car parking charges at these additional car parks have caused concern to businesses and local residents. It is also clear in hindsight that they were introduced at a time when trading and business conditions get more challenging during the Autumn and into the Winter.
- 5.7** As a result, we have, as a Council immediately moved to consider the current position and this is something we wanted to undertake in advance of the Christmas period. This is not a full review, but rather a consideration of the current context as set out above and a consideration of the steps this Council can and importantly, should take against that context. As a consequence, it is considered reasonable to immediately suspend the current car parking charges on a temporary basis at Penarth Cliff Walk, Cold Knap and Bron-y-Mor, Barry until the Spring of 2026. This will allow the suspension of charges with immediate effect on this temporary basis. During this period, Cabinet will receive a further report on the consultation undertaken on Traffic Regulation Orders for on-street charges in coastal locations and alongside the consideration of this issue, a further report will be brought back on the future implementation of charges at the Cliff Walk, Cold Knap and Bron-y-Mor car parks and whether this temporary seasonal approach or variations of it are merited for future years. The current thinking suggests that there needs to be a seasonal variation in the charging applied in these car parks where charges were introduced in September of this year.

6. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 6.1** The implementation of the proposed car park charging regime will ultimately safeguard the Council's long-term strategy regarding off-street parking and ensure that its coastal and resort car park facilities are more efficiently and well managed and maintained for the benefit and convenience of the Vale of Glamorgan's residents and visitors.
- 6.2** The intention is to encourage the free movement of vehicles on the public highway and assist in keeping roads free from congestion and, in so doing, assist in addressing climate change implications. That remains the intention, albeit there have been, in hindsight, issues with introducing car parking charges at these car parks during the 'off-peak' season and in advance of the wider consideration, and if appropriate, the introduction of on-street parking charges in key areas.
- 6.3** In terms of the prevention and planning for longer term, the requirement for visitors to pay for parking at our coastal locations better promotes alternatives to the private motor car, including active travel and public transport, encouraging modal shift. The availability of increased revenue helps to ensure that the increased maintenance demands placed on front-line services by the additional visitors are better, and more appropriately funded. Again, this remains valid and continues to be the case, regardless of the current suggestion and the wider need to consider seasonal variations in charges.
- 6.4** The introduction of the proposed car park charging regime requires an integrated and co-ordinated approach to manage the use of the Council's car park infrastructure in conjunction with its local highway network to manage congestion and highway safety issues. It also balances the need to maintain good parking infrastructure whilst contributing to the longer-term policy of reducing future impact on local communities by ensuring appropriate use of the local highway network by reducing extraneous parking. This remains valid, albeit the introduction of car parking charges in advance of a wider consideration of on-street charging, particularly in relation to Penarth seafront has proven problematic.
- 6.5** Finally, the introduction of car parking charges in Cold Knap and the Cliff Walk, Penarth has already contributed to preventing incidents of anti-social behaviour in respect of illegal and overnight parking and if it is agreed to temporarily suspend charges at these car parks, this is something that will require further monitoring.

7. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 7.1** As set out in earlier reports, a managed and co-ordinated approach to car parking (both off and on street) allows for car parking demand to be managed

and will also promote alternative, less polluting forms of transport, including the use of public transport and active travel.

8. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 8.1** The Council's own administrative resources were used to progress the Legal Order relating to establishing charging at the car parks subject to this report. The direct financial implication from this decision is the loss of any income from these car parks between now and the Spring 2026.
- 8.2** That income gain from the implementation of car parking charges is required to be spent in accordance with the provision of Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and this was set out in earlier reports on this matter. The income would support many of the services provided by Neighbourhood Services and Transport, including maintenance of the public highway, the provision or operation of public transport, environmental improvements, improving or maintaining the appearance of amenity land and the provision of outdoor recreation facilities.
- 8.3** It was proposed that any surplus income generated be used to support the provision of front-line services for residents and visitors. That income will, as a consequence of this suspension be impacted and the Council will need to consider this aspect in its budget setting process.
- 8.4** The projected revenue income for charging in the proposed new coastal car park locations can be found in the Cabinet Report of 9th January 2025 by following the link below. The mid-point estimate had assumed the measures could have raised £177K in a full year:

[Car Parking](#)

Employment

- 8.5** Progression of the Traffic Regulation Orders, following the report to Cabinet on 3rd July 2025 was carried out by the Council's Traffic Management team within Neighbourhood Services and Transport and the Legal Department. The installation of the parking signs and new car park pay, and display ticket machines has been managed and undertaken by the Construction and Development Team, within Neighbourhood Services and Transport. The temporary rescinding of car parking charges as set out in the recommendations and the body of the report will have minimal further employment implications.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 8.6** The relevant legal implications have been fully addressed in previous reports on this matter. As this report does not propose any amendment to the existing

Traffic Regulation Order and involves only the temporary suspension of the charge already authorised within the Order, no additional legal implications arise beyond those previously identified.

9. Background Papers

Previous Cabinet reports and Scrutiny consideration as referenced in report.