

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 21ST SEPTEMBER, 2020

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 27TH JULY, 2020

"C314 CAR PARKING DISPLACEMENT – COASTAL AREAS AND OTHER LOCATIONS WITH HIGH VISITOR NUMBERS (NST) (SCRUTINY – ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION) –

Councillor King presented the report, which sought to inform Members that the Council had several residential areas where its residents were suffering from extraneous parking.

One of the ways that residents could be supported in such cases was to introduce resident parking schemes aimed at giving residents priority over on street parking in their streets.

The Council (and its predecessors) had not introduced any new residential parking schemes since 1996.

At its meeting in March 2019 Cabinet considered a new Resident Parking Policy but this was rejected largely due to the costs proposed for permits but also as Members felt the Policy did not address all the issues that residents were experiencing.

The report proposed a new 'Resident Parking Controls Policy' aimed at providing a new opportunity to address current and future residential parking concerns, taking account of previous comments made both by Elected Members and the public when Cabinet previously considered this matter.

The Policy featured two options for residential parking schemes, both at no additional costs to residents; one based on the existing scheme in place in a number of town centres, and a new arrangement primarily aimed at addressing parking problems in housing estates and cul-de-sacs.

In addition to historical considerations, the new Policy took full account of the parking issues experienced recently by residents during the COVID-19 emergency.

The report proposed consideration of the following specific areas in the first tranche of residential parking assessments, which would be conducted in line with the Policy:

- Barry Island,
- Ogmore-by-Sea,
- The Knap,
- Cosmeston

- Llandough and
- Middlegate Court, Cowbridge.

The report proposed delegating certain authorities to the Director of Environment and Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport and use of the Council's urgency procedures for decision making, due to the need to promptly progress a conclusion to some of the parking displacement issues currently being experienced.

There were several ways of mitigating parking displacement problems in residential areas, such as increased off street parking capacity, promoting increased use of other forms of transport and the introduction of 'on street' parking restrictions, such as residential parking schemes, which provided a parking advantage to residents over visitors.

Introducing additional off street parking capacity was an expensive option and did not fit with the Council's strategic plan to increase active travel and reduce reliance on the private motor car. Also, whilst promoting a shift away from the use of private motor cars was a constant, excessively high parking demands at certain locations in the Vale was set to continue for the foreseeable future.

The report therefore concentrated on the possible introduction of on street parking restrictions aimed at providing greater parking opportunities for residents over those whom may be visiting the area to attend an attraction nearby.

As this Council had not introduced any new residential parking-based schemes since Local Government Reorganisation in 1996, the report recommended the introduction of a new Resident Permit Parking Policy, aimed at addressing the resident parking issues currently being experienced and those that could be in the future.

As previously advised the main objection to the Resident Permit Parking Policy previously proposed was the cost to residents. Whilst this may not be such an issue for new resident parking permit applications, there were 1,923 existing permits for residential parking in our town centres (1,596 in Barry and 327 in Penarth Llandough) and it was felt that any charges could cause hardship for those residents; this point could be considered as being particularly relevant now as the country eased out of the COVID-19 emergency phase.

Elected Members also raised concerns that the previous draft policy did not apply in streets where there was private off street parking available.

Officers had been reviewing the position on residents parking since the March 2019 meeting, considering the points raised, looking at ways of modernising such controls to make them more fit for purpose and cost effective for the residents such schemes aim to protect.

Attached at Appendix A to the report was a new draft Resident Parking Controls Policy which addressed many of the issues that had been raised in the past.

The Policy proposed two types of residential parking controls; 'Parking Permit Areas', which were essentially controlled zones, where the presence of a 'resident only' parking arrangement would be evident as you drove into an area via the entrance signage, where there would be no marked parking bays; and 'Resident Parking Permit Bays', which was essentially the system that currently existed in many of the Vale's town centres and involved lengths of the highway being specifically marked as bays for residential parking.

The new suggested addition of 'Parking Permit Areas' allowed the Council to restrict visitor parking at relatively low infrastructure cost and the absence of highway line markings and excessive repeater signage assists with protecting the aesthetics of the residential environments.

They also provided the Council with an opportunity to address many existing, and some long standing, excessive parking demand issues for residents living in locations such as Barry Island, Ogmore-by-Sea, the Knap, Cosmeston, Llandough and Middlegate Court, Cowbridge.

As any new controls would be enforceable by the Council's own Civil Parking Enforcement staff it also lessened the burden on the Police and ensured for timelier and directed enforcement, should any of the new controls be breached.

The Policy proposed that responsibility for determining which areas be considered for either of the 'control options', be delegated to the Director of Environment and Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport, which ensured prompt consideration of applications up to and including the Traffic Regulation Order public consultation stage. As was currently the case if any objections were received to this formal stage, they would need to be considered by Cabinet and a decision then taken as to whether to proceed with the Order or not.

Officers were in the process of modernising the Civil Parking Enforcement function, since taking the service back from Bridgend in April 2020, and this would involve the use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) as a method of determining parking offences. Initially this would be via the camera car and current on street parking controls e.g. double yellow lines, but it was planned to roll-out the digitising of all parking controls within the next 12 months and this would see residential parking controls also included.

It was proposed that there be no charge for the issuing of permits at this time and that income from enforcement in these areas be assessed over time to ensure that this service operated on at least a break-even position.

In terms of funding to undertake the physical works required to introduce either residential parking schemes controls, it was proposed that £20k of the Neighbourhood Services and Transport asset renewal capital budget be used for this purpose and that each scheme be prioritised with schemes unable to be funded in one year passed over to the next. This was similar to the current process for the creation of Individual Disabled Persons Parking Bays.

It was further proposed that suitable residential parking control schemes be designed for Barry Island, Ogmore-by-Sea, (areas most affected by extraneous parking), Llandough (Dochdwy Road area worst affected by Llandough Hospital parking demand), Cosmeston Drive (areas worst affected by overflow parking from Cosmeston Park), The Knap, Barry (side roads currently subject to "no access except for residents Orders", enforceable only by the Police), and Cowbridge (areas worst affected by high parking demand for the Town Hall car park e.g. Middlegate Court). This would be an initial phase of the new policy aimed at addressing the excessive parking demand that already existed at these locations, and that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Environment and Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport to engage with the residents in these areas, to formulate the most suitable design plans for these schemes prior to formally advertising the plans to seek their views and then going forward with a draft Traffic Regulation Order should there be suitable consensus.

Councillor King advised this was a new Policy and was different from all previous incarnations. He believed the report, and associated Appendix, were a comprehensive assessment that aimed to address historic issues from displacement parking that may have been exacerbated by COVID-19 lockdown restrictions and complimented the recent 'Car Parking – Guiding Principles and Charging' Policy that would be implemented more fully when the lockdown situation eases.

The Council had taken account of the significant public consultation responses received on the first time a new resident parking permit policy was mooted in March 2019, and have reflected upon previous objections, specifically that of cost to the affected residents (both existing permit holders and proposed new ones) and believe what was being brought forward addressed that fairly.

Councillor King pointed out that no new zone could, or would, be implemented before consultation with, and obtaining agreement from, the residents of the identified areas. Also, a further report considering the consultation responses to the Traffic Regulation Orders required to implement car park charging would be considered later in the year.

Councillor King advised that the Executive Summary to the report (bullet point 8) omitted Cowbridge, in the vicinity of Middlegate Court, although this was clearly identified in the body of the Report (within paragraph 2.17); for the avoidance of doubt, that area of Cowbridge would be included in initial scoping.

In the case of these measures, Councillor King drew attention to Recommendation (6) which sought the use of article 14.14 (the urgency procedure) to implement Recommendations (1), (2), (3) and (4) as, unlike car parking charges, implementation needed to begin as soon as practicable.

Councillor Burnett referred to historical parking restrictions being considered within working hours of Monday to Friday and 09.00 hours to 17.00 hours / 08.00 hours to 18.00 hours, but it was recognised that evenings and weekends could be bigger problems in some areas so some flexibility was required that took into consideration

different local characteristics, protected local residents and were enforceable by the Council.

The Director of Environment and Housing added it was important to design the schemes to work for the residents and was keen to hold early discussions with residents before proposing an acceptable design to go through the Traffic Regulation Order process.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T the new Resident Parking Controls Policy attached at Appendix A to the report be agreed.

(2) T H A T delegated authority be granted to the Director of Environment and Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport, to design the residential parking schemes for the locations listed in the report (including Middlegate Court, Cowbridge) and any new residential parking schemes that were deemed appropriate in the future.

(3) T H A T £20k of the Neighbourhood and Transport asset renewal capital budget be re-allocated to this project for 2020/21, with the same amount to be committed for future years.

(4) T H A T on implementation of any residential parking schemes, reviews be conducted on an ongoing basis of the comparison between the full costs of the order (revenue and capital) and any enforcement income received, along with any additional socio-economic benefits.

(5) T H A T Cabinet be provided with a further report on this matter in 12 months.

(6) T H A T the use of Article 14:14 (urgency procedure) in respect of Resolutions (1), (2), (3) and (4) be agreed.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To agree the new Policy.

(2) To ensure that the locations indicated and any new residential parking scheme proposals can be promptly considered and determined.

(3) To enable year on year funding for residential parking schemes on a prioritised basis.

(4) To ensure that residential parking schemes remain viable.

(5) To update Cabinet on the outcomes of the Policy.

(6) To enable a prompt introduction of the Policy so that solutions can be considered for those residents suffering most from parking displacement.”