



**ENVIRONMENT, REGENERATION AND STREETSCENE SERVICES
CABINET BOARD**

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

FRIDAY 28 JULY 2023

**MULTI-LOCATION MEETING – COUNCIL CHAMBER PORT TALBOT
AND MICROSOFT TEAMS**

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Part 1

1. Appointment of Chairperson
2. Chairpersons Announcement/s
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Public Question Time
Questions must be submitted in writing to Democratic Services, democratic.services@npt.gov.uk no later than two working days prior to the meeting. Questions must relate to items on the agenda. Questions will be dealt with in a 10 minute period.

For Decision:

5. Commercial Property Grant: 14 Orchard Street, Neath (*Pages 3 - 16*)
6. Parking Review Options Report 2023 (*Pages 17 - 52*)
7. Urgent Items
Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Regulation 5(4)(b) of Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2290 (as amended).

K.Jones
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

Monday, 24 July 2023

Environment, Regeneration and Streetscene Services Cabinet Board
Members:

Councillors. J.Hurley, W.F.Griffiths and S.Jones



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Environment, Regeneration and Streetscene Services Cabinet Board

Friday 28th July 2023

**Report of the Head of Property and Regeneration
– S. Brennan**

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: Neath North

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY GRANT: 14 ORCHARD STREET, NEATH

Purpose of the Report:

To obtain authority under the Commercial Property Grant scheme, to grant aid external improvement works to the commercial property named above.

Executive Summary:

The proposal is to part fund external improvements to the front elevation of this derelict and decaying, two-storey, mid-terrace, former hairdressing salon, situated on a main town centre shopping street within close proximity of The Gwyn Hall, the former Neath Constitutional Club and St David's Church

The overall scheme will improve the streetscene of this part of Neath Town Centre, by giving a fresh new appearance to an empty and unsightly building. The refurbished commercial floor space will be let to accommodate a small local business, potentially continuing it's use as a hairdressing salon, while attracting footfall and so enhancing the vibrancy and vitality of Neath Town Centre.

This work will improve the quality of the built environment to attract further economic investment to the town centre, while safeguarding this supply of retail/employment floor space in to the future.

Background:

Historically the Commercial Property Grant initiative has been part funded by the Authority under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, with provision made within the Neath Port Talbot Regeneration Capital Programme for borough-wide projects that target specific commercial centres, Communities First areas and Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.

Provision of £315,875 is available for Commercial Property Grant schemes within the 2023/24 Regeneration Capital Programme.

Conditions applicable to the following project will be issued in accordance with the agreed terms for the scheme.

PROPOSAL

Property Address:

14 Orchard Street
Neath
SA11 1DU

Location Plan:



Brief Description of works

Current condition of the building:

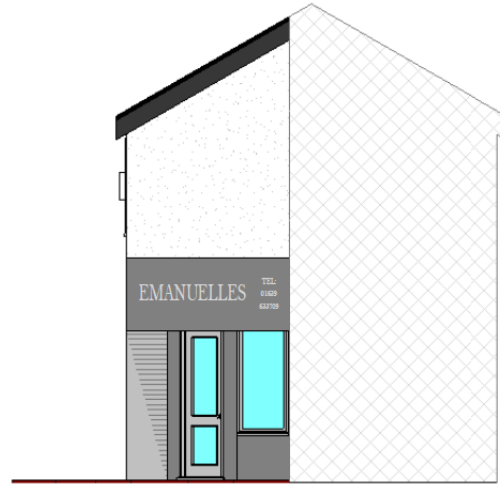


Proposed elevations:



PROPOSED ELEVATION (FRONT)

SCALE 1:50



PROPOSED ELEVATION (SIDE)

SCALE 1:50



PROPOSED 3D ISOMETRIC

SCALE

- Planning consent is not necessary as the building works constitute like-for-like repair/replacement

- The Commercial Property Grant eligible elements of the scheme include the repair/replacement of the timber shopfront, the repair and redecoration of the render to the front wall, the replacement of the two front first floor uPVC windows, roof fascia and rainwater goods, as well as the replacement of the roof covering to the front pitch of the roof, with repair work to the rafters and purlins
- As the applicant is not registered for VAT, they are able to claim the VAT as an eligible cost
- Project cost
(inc eligible works, fees & VAT): £22,236 (inc VAT)
- Proposed Grant Offer
(50% intervention rate): **£ 11,118**

Financial Impacts:

Grant approval, subject to this report = £11,118

There is sufficient allocation within the Regeneration Capital Programme from which to fund this project.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The first stage assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below.

In line with the Neath Port Talbot EIA screening form guidance we have determined that a full EIA is not relevant.

The proposed scheme involves visual enhancements to a single building. Though some of the end users of the building will be the general public they will only use the building should they choose to

engage with the commercial use that occupies the shop. Due to the small size of the building the proposed scheme will have low impact on the general public of the County Borough, however accessibility will be an integral part of the development.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications

Workforce Impacts:

The overall scheme will provide an improved working environment for those working from the building

Legal Impacts:

The Commercial Property Grant initiative has been part funded by the Authority under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000

Risk Management Impacts:

Risks associated with implementing the proposed recommendations:

The Council will not be responsible for any aspect of control of the Works (including for example, design, related investigations, implementation and supervision). The Applicant alone is responsible for everything relating to the Works, including all health and safety matters and for any financial losses. The Council has no legal responsibility for such matters, even if they require approval under the conditions in this manual or Grant Offer Letter.

If the project fails to complete, or does not complete in accordance with the grant terms and conditions, the grant money cannot be claimed. If the project slips over to the next financial year then it is possible that there will not be sufficient funds and the claim process will be complicated.

Risks associated with failing to implement the proposed recommendations:

If the grant is not approved the proposed refurbishment will not be carried out and the locality will not benefit from the resulting regeneration impacts. In it's current state of deterioration the building may soon pose a safety risk to members of the public.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item

Recommendations:

Having given due regard to the Integrated Impact Assessment and a description of the report, it is recommended that the grant be approved.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To implement the provisions of the Commercial Property Grant scheme in accordance with the criteria and terms of administration of the grant, in order to contribute to the regeneration of Neath Town Centre.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period

Appendices:

- CPG – 14 Orchard Street, Neath – IIA

List of Background Papers:

None

Officer Contact:

Name: Nicola Jane Bulcraig

Designation: Strategic Development Officer

Email: n.bulcraig@npt.gov.uk

Direct dial: 01639 686683

Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary:

Commercial Property Grant to part fund external improvement works to the front of 14 Orchard Street, Neath a derelict and decaying, two-storey, mid-terrace, former hairdressing salon. Works include the repair/replacement of the timber shopfront, the repair and redecoration of the render, the replacement of the two first floor uPVC windows, roof fascia and rainwater goods, as well as the replacement of the roof covering to the front pitch of the roof, with repair work to the rafters and purlins. The proposed works will improve the appearance of the building and therefore Neath Town Centre, as well as bringing a vacant building back in to use while improving the commercial floor space of the town centre.

Service Area: Property & Regeneration

Directorate: Environment

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users		X
Staff		X
Wider community	X	
Internal administrative process only		X

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age		X				Proposal is to improve the external appearance of building and improve the quality of the supply of commercial floor space within the town centre. This

						benefits all users of Neath town centre, as well as the people that use the building, without discrimination.
Disability		X				As above
Gender Reassignment		X				As above
Marriage/Civil Partnership		X				As above
Pregnancy/Maternity		X				As above
Race		X				As above
Religion/Belief		X				As above
Sex		X				As above
Sexual orientation		X				As above

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language		X				Proposal is to improve the external appearance of building and improve the quality of the supply of commercial floor space within the town centre. This benefits all users of Neath town centre, as well as the people that use the building and has no impact on the use of language
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English		X				As above

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		X				Proposal is to improve the external appearance of building and improve the quality of the supply of commercial floor space within the town centre. This benefits users of Neath town centre, as well as the people that use the building and has no impact on local biodiversity.
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.		X				Proposal is to improve the external appearance of building and improve the quality of the supply of commercial floor space within the town centre. This benefits users of Neath town centre, as well as the people that use the building and has no impact on the resilience of ecosystems.

6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people	X		The proposed improvement to the external appearance of 14 Orchard Street will improve the appearance of Orchard Street and so Neath Town Centre in the long-term and so improve the quality of life for those that use it.
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives	X		The proposed work supports business to grow the local economy and attract new investment to the area. (NPTCBC Corporate Plan 2019-2022 3.1.3)

Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative		X	The design of the building will not change, the materials will be repaired, redecorated and replaced like-for-like where necessary to improve the appearance of the building and extend it's longevity. It is a privately owned property and so no-one beyond the owner have been involved in developing the initiative
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions		X	The project is not of sufficient scope or scale to require the involvement of other services or organisations.
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse	X		The proposal will reduce the rate at which the building will deteriorate in condition and appearance and so prevent it from becoming a safety risk. It will also contribute towards reducing the rate at which the overall appearance of Orchard Street and Neath Town Centre deteriorates in condition and appearance. Potentially the people that use an area will treat it better, in terms of reduced rates of vandalism, graffiti and litter, if they consider the quality of their environment to be good or improving. By providing refurbished commercial space the scheme will support the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre, encouraging it's use

7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	√
Reasons for this conclusion	
The proposal is to grant fund part of the cost of external improvement to a single building. The initiative embraces sustainable development by improving the condition, appearance and energy efficiency of the built environment, supporting business to grow the local economy and attract new investment to the area. The initiative does not, however, have a significant impact on any specific group of people so a full impact assessment is not required.	

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A full impact assessment (second stage) is required	
Reasons for this conclusion	

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Nicola Jane Bulcraig	Strategic Development Officer		17.7.2023
Signed off by	Simon Brennan	Head of Service		19.7.2023

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Environment, Regeneration & Streetscene Services Cabinet Board

28th July 2023

Report of the Head of Engineering & Transport – David W. Griffiths

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Parking Review 2023

Purpose of the Report:

For members to consider the task and finish groups recommendations and officers feedback on the parking review options paper, in order to aid recovery following the pandemic with the aim of producing a balanced budget within parking services.

Executive Summary:

This report is to recommend changes to free car parking arrangements over the Christmas period, current car parking charges, permits charges and the introduction of a charging regime along Aberavon Seafront.

Background:

Members will be aware that there is a significant amount of anecdotal evidence, opinion and speculation over the relationship between car parking provision and town centre prosperity. Somewhat paradoxically this ranges from arguments suggesting that 'greater accessibility for cars on the high street will increase the viability of town centres by improving trading for business' to 'restricting accessibility for cars will increase the viability of town centres by cutting congestion and pollution whilst making the high street more pedestrian friendly and increasing dwell time'.

The Council currently supports a number of parking initiatives which include first hour free and a reduced tariff structure in Pontardawe, and a reduced tariff at the seafront car parks over the winter and summer period.

It is well recognised that people are prepared to pay for good customer service and quality parking facilities. They do not like to pay for poor service and facilities and funds are needed to facilitate this. The British Parking Association of whom the Council are members believe that the people who use the facilities should pay to help to maintain the assets and increasing energy and maintenance costs.

On-street Parking Permits

Permits currently cost £20.00 per annum, and have not been subject to a review since implementation. The current charge no longer covers the admin cost of producing and supplying a permit due to increased software, postage, materials and staff cost.

- It is proposed that as a minimum, permits are increased from £20.00 to £25.00 to stay at a cost neutral position.
Or alternatively,
- That permits are increased from £20.00 to £30.00 to future proof admin costs and contribute to the council's budget pressures.

Permit costs across neighbouring authorities.

Authority	12 Months	Replacement
Neath Port Talbot	£20	£5
Swansea	Free	£25
Bridgend	Free	Free

Shown below are all the current permits on issue together with the current income taken, plus the potential income if permits increase to £25.00 or £30.

<u>Permit Type</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Income</u>
Care Worker	£20	39	£780	£25	£975	£30	£1,170
Dispensation	£20	14	£280	£25	£350	£30	£420
Family Parking	£20	95	£1,900	£25	£2,375	£30	£2,850
Health Board Carer	£20	177	£3,540	£25	£4,425	£30	£5,310
Health Visitor	£20	5	£100	£25	£125	£30	£150
Holiday Visitor	£20	2	£40	£25	£50	£30	£60
Loading	£20	63	£1,260	£25	£1,575	£30	£1,890
Neath Traders Dispensation	£20	42	£840	£25	£1,050	£30	£1,260
Resident	£20	1865	£37,300	£25	£46,625	£30	£55,950
Temporary Resident	£20	21	£420	£25	£525	£30	£630
		2323	£46,460	+25%	£58,075	+50%	£69,060

After Vat the increases to income are £12,000 to £23,000

Off-Street Parking

The Council car park income funds the maintenance upkeep of car parks to appropriate standards of safety, lighting and equality issues and security standards. The parking income account has spent £4 million over five years running and maintaining the council car parks and car parking machines. £201k of this cost was for the purchase and maintenance of pay and display machines.

In 2022/23, £127,400 has been spent so far on building maintenance in Port Talbot and Neath MSCP's alone, while the income from parking across both car parks is just under £227k.

There are outstanding maintenance issues that will require funding of circa £750k based on the last condition survey to carry out concrete repairs, electrics repair and painting in Port Talbot MSCP and a further £60k to resurface St. Mary's Car Park in Port Talbot.

The income received over the last five financial years is set out below, along with operational costs including utility bills, maintenance, staff costs, insurance, rates, rent and pay and display equipment. **This illustrates the income received before VAT.** Off-Street income from the Authority's pay and display car parks is subject to VAT @ 20% and the VAT is payable to HMRC.

Further to note, during the financial years 2020/21 and 2021 /22, the council received monies from WG to offset losses from Covid 19, this ceased in April 2022, and the amounts below include the monies received from Welsh Government.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Operational Costs</u>	<u>Balance</u>
2021/22	£1,135,242	£892,191	£243,121

2020/21	£1,038,995	£769,990	£269,005
2019/20	£1,169,619	£1,002,107	£167,482
2018/19	£1,117,517	£1,079,367	£38,150
2017/18	£874,650	£720,730	£153,920

- **Option 1a: - Increase all parking charges due to budget pressure to one of the new tariffs set out below.**

Set out below is the current off-street tariff structure together with options for tariff increases. The potential increased revenue is based on the income from 2021/22.

Current Tariff Option	Current Tariff Price	5% Increase	10% Increase	15% Increase
1 Hour	£1.50	£1.55	£1.65	£1.75
2 Hours	£2.00	£2.10	£2.20	£2.30
3 Hours	£2.50	£2.65	£2.75	£2.85
4 Hours	£3.00	£3.15	£3.30	£3.45
All Day	£3.80	£4.00	£4.20	£4.40
Potential Increased Revenue		£50,000	£100,000	£150,000
After VAT		£41,667	£83,333	£125,000

- **Option 1b: - Increase some parking charges due to budget pressure to the new tariffs set out below.**

Any increase to all day parking charges will mostly affect people who work in town centres, a lot of whom will be on the minimum wage. The following option proposes tariff increases on shorter term parking only.

Current Tariff Option	Current Tariff Price	Proposed Tariff Price
1 Hour	£1.50	£1.75
2 Hours	£2.00	£2.30
3 Hours	£2.50	£2.85
4 Hours	£3.00	£3.30
All Day	£3.80	£3.80

Potential Increased Revenue	£100,000
After VAT	£83,333

There is a risk that an increase in tariffs will result in an income loss, if people choose not to use the car parks due to increased cost.

- **Option 2: - Reduce parking tariffs to align ourselves with neighbouring authorities and try to attract further footfall into town centres.**

Set out below are the comparable tariff structures for neighbouring authorities.

Authority	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours	4+ Hours
Neath Port Talbot	£1.50	£2.00	£2.50	£3.30	£3.80
Swansea	£1.00	£2.00	N/A	N/A	£7.00
Bridgend	70p	£1.50	£2.50	£4.00	£6.00

It is noted that the current subsidies for car parking in Swansea will cease from April 2023 and Swansea have announced that they plan to raise an additional £700k per year from parking charges.

If the option to reduce parking charges to try to attract further footfall into town centres is progressed it is not possible to model the financial implications as we do not have any comparable data to base it on. However, to maintain current revenue we would need to attract 750,000 users into our car parks per year, which is not feasible in town centres of our size.

- **Option 3: - Pontardawe car parking charges be brought into alignment with Neath and Port Talbot town centres.**

Currently there is a different tariff structure in Pontardawe; the structure gives the first hour free and reduced charges after that, including free parking on a Sunday.

It is proposed that the free one hour is kept and that all other parking tariffs including Sunday parking is brought into line with the other town centres.

- **Option 4a: Season permits increase from the current tariffs to the new tariff set out below.**

Currently the Authority operates a season permit system whereby the member of the public purchases a season permit and displays the permit in the front window of the vehicle.

Set out below are the season permit charges for neighbouring Authorities in their off-street car parks as well as this Authority's charge. Bridgend only offer a 3 months and above permit.

Authority	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	9 Months	12 Months
Neath Port Talbot	£50	£130	£235	£325	£410
Swansea	£75	£220	£440	N/A	£735
Bridgend	N/A	£151.20	£302.40	£453.60	£604.80

It is clear from the above that the charges in NPT are significantly lower than in neighbouring authorities. Below are the current season permits offered to members of the public together with the income, proposed revised charges and projected income.

Permit Duration	Current Season Permits		Income	Daily Rate
	£	Number		
Season Permit 12 months	£410	67	£27,470	£1.13
Season Permit 9 months	£325	1	£325	£1.20
Season Permit 6 months	£235	35	£8,225	£1.30
Season Permit 3 months	£130	46	£5,980	£1.44
Season Permit 1 month	£50	6	£300	£1.66
Total number of permits on issue		155	£42,300	

Permit Duration	Proposed		Income	Daily Rate
	Season Permits			
Season Permit 12 months	£500	67	£33,500	£1.39
Season Permit 9 months	£400	1	£400	£1.48
Season Permit 6 months	£300	35	£10,500	£1.62
Season Permit 3 months	£200	46	£9,200	£2.22
Season Permit 1 month	£70	6	£420	£2.33
Total number of permits on issue		155	£54,020	

The potential increased revenue with this option is £11,720 and the charges would still be lower than those charged by neighbouring authorities. This increase is £10,000 after VAT

- **Option 4b - Season permits increase from the current tariffs to match the tariffs in Bridgend.**

Permit Duration	Proposed		Income	Daily Rate
	Season Permits			
Season Permit 12 months	£605	67	£40,535	£1.65
Season Permit 9 months	£453	1	£453	£1.65
Season Permit 6 months	£302	35	£10,570	£1.65
Season Permit 3 months	£151	46	£6,946	£1.65
Season Permit 1 month	£70	6	£420	£2.33
Total number of permits on issue		155	£58,924	

The potential increased revenue associated with this option is £16,624 and match those in Bridgend which remain lower than those charged in Swansea. This increase is £13,853 after VAT.

- **Option 5: - To decide if the current practice of providing free parking should continue as is, (free parking in town centres for three weeks at a cost of £50,000 in lost revenue) or be amended following feedback and engagement with traders.**

For a number of years the council has provided free car parking in the run up to and over the Christmas period. When the press release was published advertising free car parking over Christmas 2022/23 approximately 54,000 social media accounts were reached, comments noted on social media were mainly supportive.

There were however, some comments from traders that they *“would prefer that the free car parking was over the first few weeks of January in Pontardawe to tempt members of the public to go shopping as the period after Christmas is very quiet.”*, and *“that a lot of people have done their Christmas shopping when the offer starts.”*

Neither Bridgend nor Swansea offer any free parking over the Christmas period. Carmarthen do not offer any free parking in Carmarthen town. They do however, offer free parking in Llanelli on the weekends from mid-November to Christmas to encourage people into the town. (Members will recall that this was mentioned at the Board meeting on the 2nd of December 2022).

The benefit of this is that the people receiving the free parking are shoppers rather than people who work in or close to the town centre between Mondays to Fridays.

Our current offer on free parking at Christmas offers 23 days free parking.

If we replicated what happens in Llanelli which is more comparable to our towns than Swansea, we would be offering 15 days free parking for Christmas trade. Members if so minded, could offer a further 5 days free parking, the dates of which could be agreed following consultation with the traders by the town centre manager. The preferred dates will subsequently be implemented by parking services.

In order to ensure that all residents of Neath Port Talbot benefit from this scheme. Passenger Transport Colleagues have investigated the cost of free travel on the local bus network within the County Borough for the six Saturdays and Sundays leading up to Christmas. For Christmas 2023, those dates would be November 18th, 19th, 25th, 26th and December 02nd, 03rd, 09th, 10th, 16th, 17th, 24th and 25th. The estimated cost of providing free travel on the local bus network for those days will be £80,000.

Utilising free travel on the Local Bus Network does offer the opportunity for residents to travel out of County. For example, passengers may wish to travel from Glynneath via Neath and onto Swansea, or Blaengwynfi, Glyncoed and Cymmer to Maesteg. These might not benefit the County Borough town centres but does offer a greater option to residents and promote local bus travel in general. It will be important therefore to advise passengers that completely free travel is available only within the County Borough. If residents choose to take advantage of bus services commencing within the County Borough and travelling further afield, for example Swansea or Maesteg then they may well have to pay for their return journey, unless of course the neighbouring local Authority is also operating a similar free travel scheme.

- **Option 6: - Increase the seafront car parking tariffs from the current rate of £2.00 from 1st April to 30th September to either £3.00 or £4.00 and increase the current rate of £1.00 from 1st October to 31st March to either £1.50 or £2.00.**

All day car parking at Porthcawl seafront car parks is either £3.00 or £4.00 depending on which car park you use.

The task and finish group have recommended that the charging hours be altered from 07.00am to 22.00pm to 09.00am until 18.00pm.

After consideration and as a compromise it is proposed to change the off-street seafront car parks charging times to 08.00am to 20.00pm in line with enforcement operational hours.

The increased tariffs could bring in between £47,917 to £95,833 in additional income per year depending on the chosen tariff.

- **Option 7: - Introduce charges to the free parking bays along the seafront**

Currently the on street car parking bays, despite being located closer to the facilities of the seafront offers free parking, while the car parks that are further away incur a cost for motorists. (It should be noted that there are also currently 2-hour limited waiting within the parking bays on Princess Margaret Way). Swansea council have introduced charges at all of their parking bays facing onto Swansea Bay seafront at a charge of £1.50 for 1 hour and £5.00 all day.

Charging could be introduced via Pay by Phone (cashless) parking within the limited waiting parking bays, at a tariff of £1 per hour for a maximum stay of 2 hours.

It is not possible to quantify the potential income this could generate, as we have no data to base calculations on.

The rationale for not having pay and display machines along the seafront to take cash is due to high levels of vandalism to machines along the seafront. There would also be a cost of £75,000 to purchase the required amount of machines plus the costs of civil works.

The downfall to this is that it would restrict access to parking to people who do not have smart phones, therefore possibly discriminating against older and poorer people. We will consult with the neighbouring authorities to establish how they have mitigated this risk.

It is proposed to implement the new charging times to mirror those in the seafront car parks i.e. 08.00am to 20.00pm to align with enforcement operational hours.

Further it is also proposed to introduce the new on-street parking charges at the seafront from 1st April until 30th September. There will be no on-street charge from 1st October until 31st March.

The options above for on street and off-street parking have the potential to generate between £43k and £189k depending on which combination of options are chosen as illustrated in the table below (**these figures exclude VAT**). Car park income is currently under achieving its income target by £100k, any increases in revenue should be used to offset this deficit.

Options	Lower Option	Higher Option
Increase Permit Costs	£12,000	£23,000
Town Centre Car Park Tariffs	£41,667	£125,000
Season Ticket Tariffs	£10,000	£13,853
Seafront Car Park Tariffs	£47,917	£95,833
Totals	£31,583	£177,686

Recommendation from the Task & Finish Group

The task and finish group also recommended that the pedestrianised zone hours of operation in the Neath Town Centre be reviewed to consider closing the pedestrianised zone to vehicles in the evenings as well as the daytime.

Additional recommendations/considerations from the Task & Finish Group

1. Provide an extra hour free on top of current tariffs to blue badge holders.

Due to the current financial pressure faced by parking services budget and as entitlement to a blue badge is based on disability and not financial ability to pay, it is proposed that the existing arrangements continue and that full charges will continue to be applied in off-street car parks.

2. Explore a Visitors Parking Permit that would cover all car parks / attractions in the county (to include country parks).

This will be further explored in conjunction with the authority's relevant sections that operate and maintain the country parks.

3. Review all changes in a year, with an update report in six month's time, to include – data on car park income and usage, town centre/seafront footfall and any other relevant feedback.

That the review be undertaken in October 2024 six months after all recommendations have been implemented during April 2024 to allow time for measureable data to be obtained over the summer period.

Financial Impacts:

Options	Expected Income
Increase Permit Costs	Cost Neutral
Increase Town Centre Car Park Tariffs	*83,333
Increase Season Ticket Tariffs	10,000
Increase Seafront Car Park Tariffs	79,800
Totals	**£173,133

*This equates to an overall increase of 10%.

**These figures exclude VAT.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications

Workforce Impacts:

No implications

Legal Impacts:

Any changes to the Parking charges need a Legal Order to be advertised and any objections and observations will be reported back to Streetscene and Engineering Scrutiny Committee and Streetscene and Engineering Cabinet Board before a final decision is taken.

Risk Management Impacts:

Members need to be aware that there is a risk element to the change in tariff structures should members of the public choose to find alternative parking, this could result further budget pressures, which will be reviewed in 2024.

Consultation:

Consultations will be undertaken when we formally advertise the changes to the off-street car parking order and on-street traffic orders.

Recommendations:

Having had due regard to the first stage Integrated Impact Assessment it is recommended that members agree:

Option 1 On-Street Parking Permits

That the proposed £5 increase across all on-street permits set out in the circulated report be implemented with the exception of care worker permits which will become free of charge.

That charges are introduced for individual disabled parking permits (IDPP) in line with the cost of other on-street permits.

It is proposed that in future years all permits will be increased annually in line with inflation.

Option 1b Off-Street Car Parking

The proposed 15% increase across all tariff structures except for all day parking be implemented as set out below.

Up to 1 hour	£1.75
1-2 hours	£2.30
2-3 hours	£2.85
3-4 hours	£3.30
All Day	£3.80

Option 3 Pontardawe Car Parking Charges

That the off-street car parking charges in Pontardawe apart from the first hour free be brought into alignment with Neath, Port Talbot town centres for all tariff bands as set out below:

Up to 1 hour	Free
1-2 hours	£2.30
2-3 hours	£2.85
3-4 hours	£3.30
All Day	£3.80
Sunday	£1.00 all day

Option 4 Season Parking Permits

The revised charge for season parking permits be implemented as set out below:

1 month	-	£75.00
3 months	-	£200.00
6 months	-	£300.00
9 months	-	£400.00

12 months - £500.00

Option 5 Free Christmas Car parking

That free Christmas car parking cease and that 5 free days of parking be offered to Neath, Port Talbot and Pontardawe town centres individually and implemented by parking services following consultation between the traders and the authority's town centre manager.

That free bus travel over the Christmas period as outlined in the circulated report is not practical, as the parking account cannot be relied upon as a guaranteed income stream to fund the initiative.

Members note that bus subsidies will be considered as part of the bus emergency scheme currently being reviewed by Welsh Government, Transport for Wales and local authorities in terms of affordability.

Option 6 Seafront Off-street Car Parks

It is recommended to alter the charging times in the seafront car parks from 07.00am to 22.00pm to 08.00am to 20.00pm to align with enforcement operational hours and be implemented at the end of the current peak period in October 2023.

The proposed date for peak period charging be changed to 1st April until 30th September be implemented in April 2024.

That the proposed charge for all day parking from 1st April until 30th September be £4.00 and from 1st October until 31st March be £2.00 be implemented in October 2023.

Option 7 Seafront On-street charging

That the proposed charge of £1.00 per hour up to a maximum stay of 2 hours be introduced in the on-street limited waiting bays at the seafront from 1st April to 30th September be implemented in April 2024.

It is recommended that the new charging times mirror those in the seafront car parks i.e. 08.00am to 20.00pm to align with enforcement operational hours.

That there will be no charge or time limit in the on-street seafront limited waiting bays from 1st October until 31st March.

Neath Pedestrian Area

Subject to available funding a feasibility study could be undertaken to review the operational hours of the Neath pedestrianised zone which will be considered against all other priorities within the Highways Capital Programme.

Additional recommendations from the Task & Finish Group

1. It is recommended that due to the current financial pressure faced by parking services budget that blue badge holders continue to pay the full parking charge.
2. It is recommended that a visitors parking permit to cover all car parks/visitors attractions within the county including country parks be further explored in conjunction with the authority's relevant sections.

3. It is recommended a review of all the measures implemented be undertaken in October 2024, to allow time for measureable data to be obtained over the summer period.

Reasons for Proposed Decisions:

The new tariff structure will aid recovery following the pandemic with the aim of producing a balanced budget within parking services.

Implementation of Decision:

The decisions are proposed for implementation after the three-day call in period.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Integrated Impact Assessment Screening.

List of Background Papers:

Scrutiny Task and Finish Report

Officer Contact:

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Impact Assessment - First Stage

1. Details of the initiative

Initiative description and summary: Parking Review Off-street Charging, Permits Christmas car parking and Seafront car parking.
Service Area: Parking Services
Directorate: Environment

2. Does the initiative affect:

	Yes	No
Service users	✓	
Staff		✓
Wider community		✓
Internal administrative process only		✓

3. Does the initiative impact on people because of their:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't Know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)/How might it impact?
Age		✓				The impacts will only affect car park users and permit holders
Disability		✓				The impacts will only affect car park users and permit holders
Gender Reassignment		✓				The impacts will only affect car park users and permit holders
Marriage/Civil Partnership		✓				The impacts will only affect car park users and permit holders
Pregnancy/Maternity		✓				The impacts will only affect car park users and permit holders

Race		✓				The impacts will only affect car park users and permit holders
Religion/Belief		✓				The impacts will only affect car park users and permit holders
Sex		✓				The impacts will only affect car park users and permit holders
Sexual orientation		✓				The impacts will only affect car park users and permit holders

4. Does the initiative impact on:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence used) / How might it impact?
People's opportunities to use the Welsh language		✓				We have upgraded all our pay and display machines to conform with the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English		✓				We have upgraded all our pay and display machines to conform with the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015

5. Does the initiative impact on biodiversity:

	Yes	No	None/ Negligible	Don't know	Impact H/M/L	Reasons for your decision (including evidence) / How might it impact?
To maintain and enhance biodiversity		✓				
To promote the resilience of						

ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment, such as air quality, flood alleviation, etc.		✓				
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6. Does the initiative embrace the sustainable development principle (5 ways of working):

	Yes	No	Details
Long term - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people		✓	
Integration - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives		✓	
Involvement - how people have been involved in developing the initiative	✓		We have been involved with a scrutiny task and finish group .
Collaboration - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions	✓		We will be working closely with the authority's traffic and legal services.
Prevention - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse		✓	

7. Declaration - based on above assessment (tick as appropriate):

A full impact assessment (second stage) is not required	✓
Reasons for this conclusion	
There is no reason for a full integrated impact assessment as the initiatives will only car park users residents parking permit holders. There is no obligation on members of public to utilise our car parks or purchase a permit.	

A full impact assessment (second stage) is required	
Reasons for this conclusion	

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Completed by	Steve Cook	Parking Manager		13/06/2023
Signed off by	David W. Griffiths	Head of Engineering & Transport		13/06/2023

Report of the:

**Environment, Regeneration and Street
scene Services Scrutiny Committee**

**A Task and Finish Group to Review
of the Parking Review Options
Report 2023**

May 2023



Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

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CHAIRS FORWARD

The report below is the result of three ‘task and finish’ meetings of the scrutiny committee members and officers, as well as other discussions and member officer meetings. I would like to thank all members and officers for their time in looking at these proposals in detail.

By way of context, the need for this piece of work has arisen mainly due to two factors:

The first being that the parking service income has not recovered since the pandemic and has a £100,000 shortfall in its budget.

Secondly in the 2023/24 budget an additional £200,000 income target was placed upon the parking service by the administration.

A report with options was presented to scrutiny committee to make recommendations on - with the primary aim of raising additional income for the service in line with the budget. The scrutiny committee has no influence at this stage over the previously agreed budget position by the administration.

The scrutiny committee has also previously indicated it wished to explore options for some free bus services, in line with neighbouring councils.

In order to make the income target agreed in the budget many of the options presented to us for increased parking fees are now unavoidable at this stage. Therefore the committee has focussed on how to best mitigate the impact of these proposed increases on our residents and businesses.

We have not made recommendations on every option in the proposals, only those where we feel an amendment will both be beneficial and deliverable given the budget position.

The decision of the final charges and options will be taken by the cabinet board, who will take on board our recommendations contained within this report.

Councillor Sean Pursey

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members of the Environment, Regeneration and Streetscene Services Scrutiny Committee undertook a Task and Finish Group to consider and review the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's ("the Council") Parking Options 2023. The overall purpose of this was to look at options for parking and transport solutions to support the vitality of town centres and support sustainable transport with a view to agreeing a set of recommendations for Cabinet Board to consider ..

The Task and Finish Group met for three workshop sessions to focus specifically within Parking Review Options Report 2023.

The Task and Finish Group held two workshop sessions with officers on the 28th of April and the 10th of May to gather all information required to develop recommendations. Members then had a summary workshop on the 18th of May to pull together their recommendations. A summary of the discussions is included within the report.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Environment, Regeneration and Street scene Services Scrutiny Committee are the appropriate scrutiny committee for the consideration of the Parking Review Options Report 2023.

The Committee were keen to arrange a Task and Finish Group to consider the Christmas Parking options for 2023. Officers had completed a report on Parking Options Review 2023 that included Christmas parking as part of it.

The overall purpose of this Task and Finish group was to look at options for parking and transport solutions to support the vitality of town centres and support sustainable transport with a view to agreeing a set of recommendations for Cabinet Board to consider. .

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Task and Finish Objective	To look at options for parking and transport solutions to support the vitality of town centres and support sustainable transport with a view to agreeing a set of proposals for Cabinet Board to decision.
Membership	<u>Elected Members</u> Cllr. S. Pursey (Chair) Cllr. T. Bowen (Vice chair) Cllr. L. Williams Cllr. W. Carpenter Cllr. C. James Cllr. N. Goldup-John Cllr. S. Grimshaw <u>Advisors/Support Officers</u> Charlotte Davies Tom Rees Alison Thomas David W. Griffiths Steve Cook Ian Rees Brendan Griffiths

	<p>Andrew Collins Laura Webley Chris Saunders</p> <p>Dependent on discussion of the committee, further officers/ external providers be invited at the discretion of the Chair.</p>
The main aims of the Project	To enable the Task and Finish Group to explore and suggest recommendations to the Cabinet Members on the Parking Review Options Report 2023 including Christmas parking options, prior to decision by Cabinet Board.
Scope of the study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enable the Task and Finish group to feed in to the suggested recommendations of the Parking Review Options report • To consider periodic free or subsidised sustainable transport schemes • To provide an effective service for all members of the public. • To ensure that there is an effective and efficient service for the public.
How it will contribute to achieving Corporate/Community Objectives / Priorities.	<p>The proposals suggested aim to aid service recovery, increase income generated and enhance Town Centre footfall, and support the council’s commitment to sustainable transport.</p> <p>Any increases in revenue should be used to offset the £100,000 deficit in income 2022/23 and to generate an additional £200K income target set by the Council for 2023/24.</p>
Initial list of key officers, stakeholders, partners or other agencies to involve	Officers – as stated above

<p>Key issues to be addressed</p>	<p>That the Task and Finish group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that the proposals suggested in the report will aid service recovery, increase income generated and enhance Town Centre footfall and comply with our commitments to promote sustainable transport. • Look at Christmas parking arrangements. • Look at measures that will help offset the combined £300,000 income deficit during 2023/2024 to be achieved by the Council. • Look at measures to introduce free or subsidised sustainable transport schemes. • Has undertaken it's pre-scrutiny duty in relation to Cabinet Board proposals
<p>Timescale for completion of the task</p>	<p>Three day Task and finish group – Any findings to be taken to the Environment, Regeneration and Street Scene Services Scrutiny Committee due to be held on the 2nd June 2023 to commend the Task and Finish Groups views to the Cabinet Board prior to decision in June</p>
<p>Meeting Dates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28th April 2023 • 10th May 2023 • 18th May 2023

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the following recommendations be considered and agreed by Cabinet Board:

1. Care worker on street parking permit cost to stay the same and not increase.
2. Resident Permits – It is proposed that permits are increased from £20.00 to £25.00 to stay at a cost neutral position and increase annually thereafter to cover costs.
3. The middle (10%) option is chosen for Town Centre tariffs, the funding gap over the 15% option funded by Recommendation 4.
4. Remove free Christmas parking offer for town centres, budget used to fund lower increase on Recommendation 3.
5. Introduce free travel on the local bus network within the County Borough for the six Saturdays and Sundays leading up to Christmas.
6. Promote the use of season permits for the regular users of the car parks for residents to access discounted parking.
7. Seafront - Change the seasonal charging start date to 1st of April to capture an extra months income, in line with Bridgend county.
8. Seafront - Change the hours of charging to fall between 9am - 6pm for off and on street car parking.
9. Seafront – Off-season free parking for 2 hours in lay-by/ on street parking to remain.
10. Seafront - Introduce charges to the lay-by/on street parking bays along the seafront (during peak season only)
11. Seafront - Officers should explore overnight campervan parking options.
12. Seafront - Undertake a review of mitigation measures and on street parking restrictions nearby, to mitigate the impacts of the charging increases.
13. That the pedestrianised zone hours of operation in the Neath Town Centre be reviewed to consider closing the pedestrianised zone to vehicles in the evenings as well as the daytime.

Additional Measures/Recommendations:

The Task and Finish Group also propose the following additional recommendations :

1. Provide an extra hour free on top of current tariffs to blue badge holders.
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- | |
|---|
| 2. Explore a Visitors Parking Permit that would cover all car parks / attractions in the county (to include country parks). |
| 3. Review all changes in a year, with an update report in six months time, to include – data on car park income and usage, town centre/seafront footfall and any other relevant feedback. |

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The following Members of the Environment, regeneration and Street scene Services Scrutiny Committee took part in the Task and Finish Group:

Cllr. S. Pursey (Chair)
Cllr. T. Bowen (Vice chair)
Cllr. L. Williams
Cllr. W. Carpenter
Cllr. C. James
Cllr. N. Goldup-John
Cllr. S. Grimshaw

Members were provided with support from the following officers:

Tom Rees
Alison Thomas
David W. Griffiths
Steve Cook
Ian Rees
Brendan Griffiths
Andrew Collins
Laura Webley
Chris Saunders

Members were provided with the Parking Review Options Report 2023 to consider and to ensure that the Scrutiny Committee undertook and discharged their scrutiny role.

On-street Parking Permits

- On-street Parking Permits – Members felt that Care worker permit costs should stay the same and does not increase.

- Resident Permits – Members proposed that as a minimum, permits are increased from £20.00 to £25.00 to stay at a cost neutral position and increase annually.

The Task and Finish Group felt that the Residents Permits Costs be reviewed in a year's time to ensure that the costs are correct and factor in current inflation and costs and to avoid sudden large cost increases.

Off Street Parking

Members decided that there should be an Increase all parking charges due to budget pressure to one of the new 10% Tariff Town Centre Pay and Display Tariffs.

Members felt that there should be a removal of free Christmas parking and instead spread the free parking across the year to maintain the 10% increase.

Task and Finish group members wished to keep free travel on the local bus network within the County Borough for the six Saturdays and Sundays leading up to Christmas. For Christmas 2023, those dates would be November 18th, 19th, 25th, 26th and December 02nd, 03rd, 09th, 10th, 16th, 17th, 24th and 25th.

The Task and Finish Group suggested a review of the free bus travel of Option 5 at a scrutiny meeting in six months time, once the bus service situation regarding routes and funding is settled with Welsh government and Transport for Wales.

Season Permits

Members felt that the authority should promote the use of season permits for the regular users of the car parks.

The Task and Finish Group suggested that Parking should work with the Communications team to promote Season Permits.

Seafront

Members recommended the following;

- Change the seasonal charging start date to 1st of April to capture an extra months income.
- Change the hours of charging to fall between 9am - 6pm.
- Offseason free parking for 2 hours.

The Task and finish group felt that the change from the current seasonal arrangements of May – September to start in April, would fall in line with Bridgend and Porthcawl. The additional month would increase income for the authority.

It was felt that changing the hours to 9am -6pm would take pressure off residents and put emphasis on visitors paying as they are more likely to park during daytime hours.

Task and Finish Group members believe that having free parking for 2 hours in offseason would support businesses.

Seafront

Members also wanted to put forward the following recommendations.

- Introduce charges to the free parking bays along the seafront (during peak season.)
- Officers should explore Campervan Parking options.
- Undertake a review of mitigation measures and on street parking restrictions nearby, to mitigate the impacts of the charging increases.

Additional Measures/Recommendations:

The Task and Finish Group also wished to propose the following considerations:

- Blue badge concessions – provide an extra hour free on top of current tariffs to blue badge holders.
- Visitors Parking Permit that would cover all car parks / attractions in the county –to explore further (to include country parks).
- Review all changes in a year – data car park usage/income etc. and see if they have worked.

Members felt that providing the extra hour for Blue Badge holders would be in line with other neighbouring authorities. It was felt that a visitor parking permit could be lucrative for the authority and should be explored by officers.

Members also felt it was important to review all changes in a year to check if changes have had a positive impact.

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