



## ***DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE***

***2.00 PM MONDAY, 22 JULY 2024***

***HYBRID - COUNCIL CHAMBER PORT TALBOT/MICROSOFT TEAMS***

**All mobile telephones to be switched to silent for the duration of the meeting**

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1. Declarations of Interest
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 3 - 6*)
  - 8 April 2024
3. Member Car Parking Scheme Proposals (*Pages 7 - 24*)
4. Verbal update on Task and Finish Group Progress
5. Forward Work Programme Consideration (*Pages 25 - 28*)
6. Urgent Items  
Any urgent items at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Section 100BA(6)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

**K.Jones**  
**Chief Executive**

**Civic Centre  
Port Talbot**

**16 July 2024**

**Committee Membership:**

**Chairperson: Councillor S.Rahaman**

**Vice  
Chairperson: Councillor N.Goldup-John**

**Councillors: J.Hale, M.Harvey, J.Henton, C.Lewis,  
A.R.Lockyer, A.Lodwig, P.A.Rees, S.H.Reynolds,  
P.Rogers and C.Williams**

## Democratic Services Committee

(Hybrid - Conference Room, Port Talbot Civic Centre and Microsoft Teams)

**Members Present:**

**8 April 2024**

**Chairperson:** Councillor S.Rahaman

**Vice Chairperson:** Councillor N.Goldup-John

**Councillors:** W.Carpenter, J.Hale, M.Harvey, J.Henton, A.Lodwig, P.A.Rees, S.H.Reynolds and P.Rogers

**Officers In Attendance** C.Griffiths, S.Curran and P.Chivers

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1. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.

3. **Forward Work Programme**

Officers advised members that this meeting was the last in the cycle of meetings for the current civic year. New meeting dates and forward work programme would be advised following the Council Annual General Meeting in May.

The Forward Work Programme was noted.

4. **Independent Remuneration Panel Wales Final Report**

Officers provided members with a brief overview of the report contained within the agenda pack.

This item was noted.

5. **Democratic Services Committee Annual Report**

Resolved: That the Democratic Services Committee note and endorse the Annual Report 2023/24 attached at Appendix 1 and commend the same to Council.

6. **Task and Finish Scoping; Dealing with Harassment and Intimidation and Diversity in Democracy**

The committee agreed at the meeting held on 27th November, to establish two Task & Finish Groups in relation to Dealing with Harassment and Intimidation and Diversity in Democracy.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services outlined details of the Dealing with Harassment and Intimidation scoping document as contained in the agenda report pack, focusing on the key questions, intended outcomes and potential group membership. It was suggested that the first meeting should take place during the latter half of May, where a round table discussion could be held to identify member's issues. It was noted that a Diversity in Democracy Action Plan was published in 2021 prior to the Local Government Elections in 2022. The aim of the Task and Finish Group would be to review the action plan and identify ways that it could be promoted by Council. It was noted that meetings of both Task & Finish groups could be held concurrently.

Members stated that it may be appropriate to open up the invitation to partner agencies and noted that Crime Prevention Officers within South Wales Police were available to provide advice on home security and personal safety to members. Members felt that discussions on both topics were timely, and it would be helpful to discuss diversity in advance of the next local government elections. There needs to be a focus as a Council, on what actions can be

taken to address the change in culture and identify the routes that intimidation and harassment can take.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services confirmed that this can be included as a fourth question in the scoping document.

Members questioned the potential size of the Task & Finish groups.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services confirmed that there was no plan to limit the size of the groups, but this was dependent on the level of interest received. If a large number of members expressed an interest, the committee may need to consider alternative methods of facilitation; if unmanageable the scope may need to be narrowed.

The Chair questioned whether the meetings would be held as hybrid or face to face meetings. Members commented that the topic matter was more suited to face-to face discussion.

The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that as the Task & Finish meetings are not convened under legislation, the Chair may request that members attend in person, but the meetings would be offered as hybrid meetings at a time that was suitable to the majority of members.

The Democratic Services Committee agreed to extend an invitation to all interested Council Members to participate in the Task and Finish Groups. Arrangements will be made to capture feedback from all members not only those who are part of the Task & Finish Groups.

## 7. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

**Cllr. S. Rahaman  
CHAIRPERSON**

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## Democratic Services Committee

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024

### JOINT REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND HEAD OF ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT

#### Revised Member Car Parking Scheme

**Matter: For Decision**

#### Purpose of Report

To agree revised arrangements in relation to the Member Car Parking Scheme.

#### Background

The Staff and Member Car Parking Scheme was first implemented in 2011, as part of several measures agreed under the Workforce Strategy Collective Agreement, and with the aim of avoiding compulsory redundancies. The terms of the Scheme have been updated since 2011. The Scheme states:

“The income generated through the operation of this Scheme will continue to contribute to the safeguarding of the employment of all Neath Port Talbot employees to the maximum extent possible, as part of the Council’s Forward Financial Plan”.

The Scheme sets out a framework for charging council staff and elected members who park in pay and display car parks or Civic Office car parks, either via a purchased parking permit, or using pay and display parking at the appropriate tariff.

#### Suspension of payments

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the Welsh Government introduced a series of measures designed to curb the spread of the Covid 19 virus pandemic and protect the nation. This became known as ‘lockdown’. For a period, many businesses and workplaces were closed, and only key workers could attend their place of work. In June 2020, the instruction changed to ‘those who can work at home must work at home’.

In accordance with the guidance from Welsh Government, the majority of the council’s office-based workforce, approximately 2,000 employees, became home workers in March 2020 and the decision was taken to suspend the payments associated with the car parking scheme for both officers and members. This decision was taken via an Urgency Action dated 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020, to suspend off-street charging and on-street enforcement and the payments have not yet been re-instated. It is important to note that whilst payments have been suspended, carpark permits have continued to be issued, now as a virtual permit via the Mi Permit Application – employees and members must have a valid virtual permit to park without payment in e.g. Neath or Port Talbot multi-storey carparks.

#### Hybrid Working

The introduction of Hybrid working which enables employees and elected members to work in a much more flexible and mobile way, working or undertaking duties where the activity can best be carried out.

As a result of the changes in the workplace, it was proposed at a Personnel Committee on March 11th, 2024, to withdraw the Staff and Member Car parking Scheme, and replace with a permit scheme that would enable employees and elected members to park without payment in a restricted number of carparks associated with their place of work, e.g., Port Talbot and Neath multi-storey carparks and The Quays.

### Member Car Parking

Following the decision and on review of the position in respect of elected it was felt appropriate that a more bespoke policy be put in place for elected members. Their role is significantly different from that of members of staff, requiring specific extensive and varied travel and parking arrangements across the County Borough. There is also a requirement to work outside traditional working hours such as evenings and weekends.

It is also important to note that the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) framework for remuneration sets out that no elected member should incur a financial detriment for carrying out their public duty.

### **Proposal:**

It is proposed to separate the Staff and Member Car Parking Schemes and to introduce a new Member Car Parking Scheme (attached at Appendix 1). The policy provides two options for elected members:

- Option 1- a permit scheme that will enable elected members to park without payment in a restricted number of car parks associated with Council Civic Buildings (those being Neath Civic Centre, Port Talbot Civic Centre and The Quays). Those car parks being Port Talbot and Neath Multi Storey car parks, the Civic Centre Car Park (post barrier) and the Quays.
- Option 2- re-introduce a paid for permit which can be purchased for £250 per annum which will allow members to use those car parks listed in the Scheme. This will equate to £20.80 per month.

In order to afford as much flexibility to members as possible, it would be a personal choice as to the option they would select and an email will be issued to all elected members to ask them to confirm which option they wish to pursue.

### **Financial Impacts:**

Any additional income gained from the parking permits would generate income for the Council.

### **Integrated impact assessment:**

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act, 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, attached at appendix 3 has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below:



“A full impact is not required as there is no impact on any protected group. It also has no negative impact on bio-diversity or the Welsh Language”.

**Valleys Communities Impacts:**

No Impacts.

**Workforce Impacts:**

There will no longer be a requirement for some elected members to pay for car parking in designated council car parks.

Members will be required to hold a valid car parking permit to park in designated car parks set out in the revised scheme.

**Legal Impacts:**

No impact.

**Risk Management Impacts:**

No impact.

**Crime and Disorder Impacts**

No impact.

**Counter Terrorism Impacts**

No impact

**Consultation:**

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item. Informal consultation has been carried out with the political groups and the proposed revisions to this policy have been fully endorsed by the Trade Unions.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that having due regard to the integrated impact screening assessment members approved the Member Car Parking Scheme annexed to this report at Appendix 1.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 - Member Car Parking Scheme

Appendix 2- Integrated Impact Screening Assessment

**List of background papers:**

None.





Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

# Member Car Parking Scheme

*Os hoffech dderbyn gohebiaeth mewn perthynas â'ch cyflogaeth yn Gymraeg, cysylltwch â'ch Swyddog AD dynodedig.*

## 1. Introduction

This Scheme sets out how the Council's Member Car Parking Scheme will operate at all designated locations with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

The role of elected members significantly different from that of members of staff, requiring specific extensive and varied travel and parking arrangements across the County Borough. There is also a requirement to work outside traditional working hours such as evenings and weekends.

It is also important to note that the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales framework for remuneration sets out that no elected member should incur a financial detriment for carrying out their public duty.

## 2. Scope

Members who wish to park in one of the Council's pay and display or civic office car parks will have the option of:

- Applying for a virtual car parking permit, for use within designated car parks (see Appendix A for further details) at no cost and using "Pay and Display" parking, at any other car parks for the appropriate tariff for the car park being used.

**OR**

- Applying for a virtual car parking permit for a cost of £250 per annum, to be paid monthly (£20.80 per month) to cover all car parks included in Appendix B

## 3. Member Permits

Applications need to be sent to [parkingpermits@npt.gov.uk](mailto:parkingpermits@npt.gov.uk) along with the car registration and payroll number of the applicant along with which option members wish to pursue.

Change in vehicle registrations are the responsibility of the permit holder and are done through either the MiPermit App or website. Log in details are provided to the permit holder when the permit is created

Virtual car parking permits will be valid for 20 years from issue unless advance notice is given that the virtual car parking permit is to be cancelled to [parkingpermits@npt.gov.uk](mailto:parkingpermits@npt.gov.uk) .

Members shall be entitled to cancel any permit with the provision of twenty eight (28) days notice to [parkingpermits@npt.gov.uk](mailto:parkingpermits@npt.gov.uk)

## 4. Service Response Centre At the Quays, Briton Ferry

The parking of private cars within the Service Response Centre is **not** permitted, unless authorised to do so by a relevant Head of Service.

## 5. Member who do **NOT** have a car parking permit

Members who do **not** have a car parking permit and who incur charges at a “pay and display” public car park, at The Quays or at any other designated car park **when visiting a location**, to carry out **Council business**, will be reimbursed the actual cost of parking in line with the guidance from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

## 6. Lost Barrier Access Cards

A replacement of a barrier access card will incur a charge of £5.00.

## 7. Extension of Member Car Parking Scheme to Additional Locations

It is intended that the following principles will apply, other than in exceptional circumstances:

- The provision of car parking spaces in operational areas will be minimised;
- Car parking spaces will be suitably surfaced;
- One or more visitor car parking spaces will be provided at each location - these will not be available for use by members;
- A designated motorcycle parking area will be provided;
- Car parking at each such location will be managed by locally based manager/s

Members will be informed in advance about the planned rollout of additional locations for inclusion within this Scheme, following consultation with Group Leaders and Democratic Services Committee

## 8. Non-Compliance with the Member Car Parking Scheme

Any breach of this Scheme will be treated as a potential breach of the Members Code of Conduct.

The practice of “tailgating” at a barrier-controlled car park, whereby a vehicle drives so close to the vehicle in front that the car park barrier is prevented from being lowered following entry / exit by the first vehicle, is strictly prohibited as a means of gaining access to / leaving a car park without charge. It is also a dangerous practice. Such a practice will also be considered as a potential breach of the Members Code of Conduct

## 9. Review

This Scheme will be subject to periodic review.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Monday to Friday - 6am to 11pm**

Neath multi-storey car park

### **Monday to Friday - 7am to 6pm**

Port Talbot multi-storey car park

### **Monday to Friday – 6am to 11pm**

Port Talbot Civic Centre Car Park (Barrier Entry)

### **Monday – Sunday**

The Quays

**APPENDIX B**

<b>Car Park</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Capacity</b>
High Street Car Park	Neath	37
Milland Road Car Park	Neath	450
Neath Multi-Storey Car Park	Neath	600
Rosser Street Car Park	Neath	33
Herbert Street Lower Car Park	Pontardawe	19
Herbert Street Upper Car Park	Pontardawe	37
Pontardawe By-Pass Car Park	Pontardawe	44
Bay View	Port Talbot	68
Bethany Square Car Park	Port Talbot	166
Civic Centre Car Park	Port Talbot	80
Harbourside - Parkway	Port Talbot	111
Ocean Way Car Park	Port Talbot	282
Port Talbot Civic Centre Car Park (Barrier Control)	Port Talbot	
Port Talbot Multi-Storey Car Park	Port Talbot	705
Scarlet Avenue Car Park	Port Talbot	111
St Mary's Car Park	Port Talbot	41
Station Road Car Park	Port Talbot	107
The Quays	Briton Ferry	
Victoria Road Car Park	Port Talbot	20





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## Impact Assessment - First Stage

### 1. Details of the initiative

<b>Initiative description and summary: Revised Member Car Parking Scheme</b>
<b>Service Area:</b> Elected members.
<b>Directorate:</b> All

### 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				
Disability		X				
Gender Reassignment		X				
Marriage/Civil Partnership		X				
Pregnancy/Maternity		X				
Race		X				
Religion/Belief		X				

Sex		X				
Sexual orientation		X				

**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				
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English		X				

Page 20

**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				
To promote the resilience of ecosystems, i.e. supporting protection of the wider environment,		X				

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
<b>Long term</b> - how the initiative supports the long term well-being of people	X		This initiative will benefit elected members who have business in Port Talbot and Neath Civic Centre and the Quays as there is an option to not have to pay to park during the working day / week.
<b>Integration</b> - how the initiative impacts upon our wellbeing objectives	X		This initiative impacts positively on wellbeing objective 3 and 4.
<b>Involvement</b> - how people have been involved in developing the initiative	X		The trade unions have been consulted on their views regarding this revised policy and these were fully considered.
<b>Collaboration</b> - how we have worked with other services/organisations to find shared sustainable solutions	X		We have worked in partnership with our recognised trade unions to develop this proposal.
<b>Prevention</b> - how the initiative will prevent problems occurring or getting worse		X	N/A – internal policy

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

A full impact assessment (second stage) <b>is not</b> required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reasons for this conclusion	
A full impact is not required as there is no impact on any protected group. It also has no negative impact on bio-diversity or the Welsh Language.	

A full impact assessment (second stage) <b>is</b> required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reasons for this conclusion	

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
Completed by	<b>Sheenagh Rees</b>	<b>Head of Service</b>	<i>Sheenagh Rees</i>	20 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
Signed off by	Sheenagh Rees	Head of Service	<i>Sheenagh Rees</i>	20 <sup>th</sup> February 2024

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**Democratic Services Committee Forward Work Programme**

**2024/2025**

<b><u>Meeting Date</u></b>	<b><u>Agenda Item</u></b>	<b><u>Type</u></b>	<b><u>Contact Officer</u></b>
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024</b>	<b>Member Car Parking Scheme Proposals</b>  <b>Verbal update on Task and Finish Group Progress</b>  <b>Forward Work Programme Consideration</b>	<b>Decision</b>  <b>Information</b>	
<b>September 2024?</b>	<b>Annual Member Survey/Timing of Meetings</b>  <b>Annual Review of E-Petitions/Public Speaking</b>  <b>Local Democracy Week</b>  <b>Findings from Handling Intimidation and Harassment and Diversity in Democracy Task and Finish Groups</b>	<b>Decision</b>  <b>Monitoring</b>  <b>Decision</b>  <b>Decision</b>	

<p><b>11<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b></p>	<p><b>Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Report</b></p> <p><b>Member Annual Reports</b></p> <p><b>Member Personal Development Reviews</b></p> <p><b>Draft Training Programme for Members</b></p> <p><b>Outcomes of Annual Member Survey</b></p>	<p><b>Information</b></p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p><b>Information</b></p>	
<p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025</b></p>	<p><b>Final Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Report</b></p> <p><b>Assessment of Resources for Democratic Services Committee</b></p> <p><b>Diversity in Democracy Action Plan</b></p>	<p><b>Information</b></p> <p><b>Monitoring</b></p> <p><b>Monitoring</b></p>	
<p><b>28<sup>th</sup> April 2025</b></p>	<p><b>Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 24/25</b></p>	<p><b>Decision</b></p>	

	<b>Draft Charter WLGA (focus for 25/26?)</b>		

- Annual Review of E-Petitions/Public Speaking
- Review Diversity in Democracy Action Plan
- Draft Protocol for research & member support (WLGA)
- Draft charter (WLGA)
- WLGA Democracy Handbook

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