



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

13th November 2024

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

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: Sandfields West and Sandfields East

(Revocation) (Prohibition of Waiting, Loading, Unloading at any time) (Pay by Phone parking place) and (Disabled only parking) Order 2024

Purpose of the Report:

To consider the correspondence received following the advertisement of the (Revocation) (Prohibition of Waiting, Loading, Unloading at any time) (Pay by Phone parking place) and (Disabled only parking) Order 2024, as indicated in Appendix A and Appendix B.

Executive Summary:

The report outlines the traffic regulation orders which were formally advertised resulting in objections being received.

Background:

It is proposed to introduce Pay by Phone parking places which consist of Limited Waiting, 8.00am to 8.00pm, 1st April to 30th September with payment via the MiPermit Application or Pay by Phone for a Maximum

Stay of 2 Hours and Disabled Badge Holders Exempt Traffic Regulation Orders on The Princess Margaret Way, Sandfields, Port Talbot.

The proposals will ensure adequate turnover of vehicles which will improve and allow the local environment and amenities to be enjoyed by future generations on Aberavon Seafront.

The proposed scheme is indicated in Appendix A and Appendix B.

Financial Impacts:

The scheme is to be funded by Parking Services.

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, attached at Appendix C, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below: -

A full impact assessment is not required as the revocation of the traffic regulation order will provide a safe environment for all highway users.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

There are 'No Implications' associated with this report.

Workforce Impacts:

There are 'No Implications' associated with this report.

Legal Impacts:

The proposal was advertised for a 21-day between 9th July 2024 and 30th July 2024.

Risk Management Impacts:

There are no risk management impacts associated with this report.

Consultation:

This item has been subject to external consultation.

A consultation exercise was undertaken between 9th July 2024 and 30th July 2024.

Following a three-week consultation exercise, 9 statements of objection, 1 petition of objection and 2 general comments were received on the proposals.

A summary of the objections received are given below: -

Objections: - *Any officer observations/comments are illustrated in italics in response to the points raised.*

- a) A number of residents object to the proposed scheme to introduce pay by phone parking on the grounds of discrimination as not all people have a smart phone. Surely a cash payment option would be easy enough to implement?

Cash type systems for payment to park charges will not apply in this case. Payment by card and cash is still available in some of the adjacent car parks.

- b) A number of residents object to the proposed scheme to introduce Pay by Phone parking on the grounds of discrimination as not all people use bank cards.

- c) A resident has suggested an alternative proposal which would be the time limit for the car parks and would like to see the option to pay for 1 hr parking.
- d) A resident has stated that the introduction of parking meters will mean that they are no longer able afford to go to the beach.
- e) To impose parking charges in this area would prohibit any potential for economic regrowth on the Seafront.
- f) To impose parking meter services for the sole generation of income for the Council would be a retrospective step to say the least.
- g) Your proposal for payment parking along Aberavon Seafront will surely make people stay away from the beach.
- h) The Council are not interested in the thoughts of locals and the proposals will result in beach visitors parking in residential streets.
- i) A resident has expressed disappointment and utter disgust regarding the council's recent decision to implement an app-only approach for paying for parking at the beach. This decision is not only elitist but also deeply insensitive to the needs of many residents and visitors who do not possess smartphones or are uncomfortable using such technology. In an age where inclusivity and accessibility should be paramount, it is shocking that the council has chosen a path that alienates a significant portion of the population. Many elderly individuals, those with limited technological skills, and people who simply cannot afford a smartphone are effectively being excluded from accessing parking facilities. This is a glaring example of the council being completely out of touch with the realities faced by the community it serves. Moreover, this policy sets a dangerous precedent for a cashless society. Cash is a legitimate and widely accepted form of currency. By enforcing a system that requires a smartphone,

the council is undermining the value of cash and pushing us towards a future where the simplest of transactions are increasingly complicated and restricted by technology. This shift disregards the preferences and needs of many individuals who either choose to use cash or have no other option. Adding insult to injury, there is an additional 20p charge for using the app. This is an outrageous and unjustifiable expense, especially in the current economic climate where every penny counts. Families, already burdened by the rising cost of living, will feel the pinch even more during the summer holidays—a time meant for relaxation and enjoyment, not for grappling with unnecessary and exorbitant fees. The council's decision displays a profound disconnect from the daily struggles of ordinary citizens. It seems you have forgotten that local governance exists to serve the people, not to impose arbitrary and exclusionary measures that add to their hardships. This app-only approach is a glaring example of poor decision-making and an egregious lack of empathy.

The proposals are not App only and allow for the use of a non-smart phone to phone the number and pay over the phone. The App is just an option for those that choose to use it. It costs an administration charge of 10p to use the App and 20p if you require a reminder before the time has expired.

Visitors have the option to use the adjacent car parks that have machines capable of using contactless and chip and pin card systems. There are some cash machines in the adjacent car parks but these may be phased out over time.

- j) A resident feels that making all the current lay-bys disabled only is complete discrimination of those without disabled status and completely not fair especially for users of the beach that like early morning or late evening walks / runs / dips all year round when there are few people about. So if these laybys are made disabled only, people without badges cannot park there even if they are empty laybys!

The proposed traffic regulation order is not Disabled only. There are a certain amount of Disabled badge holders spaces. The remaining bays or spaces are for all users.

- k) A resident objects to the proposed parking charges and restrictions at Aberavon Beach as outlined by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council. As a resident of Port Talbot and a frequent visitor to the beach, believes these proposals will have a profoundly negative impact on our community.

Petition:- *Any officer observations / comments are illustrated in italics in response to the points raised.*

- a) A petition was received with 1,168 signatures against the proposal, along with the petition 69 objections were also received which are broken down into 5 categories below:-
- b) 24 people objected to paying by smart phone.

The original proposal did not mention paying by smart phones. If members of the public wish to use the Mlpermit app then they can do so, however, a phone number will be displayed at the location for people to phone a non-automated call centre.

- c) 22 people objected to any form of payment.
- d) 8 people wanted to pay by cash.

Cash payment is being phased out due to the initial purchase costs and ongoing maintenance costs.

- e) 1 person objected to charges within the car parks.

This is not relevant to the advertised traffic regulation order.

- f) 14 objections were unspecified.

The Local Members have been consulted on the feedback received and do not support the advertised order for Pay by Phone parking

place. The Local Members wish for the objections to be up held to the Pay by Phone parking place order.

Recommendations:

Having had due regard to the integrated impact assessment it is recommended that the objections are overruled to the (Revocation) (Prohibition of Waiting, Loading, Unloading at any time) (Pay by Phone parking place) and (Disabled only parking) Order 2024 (as detailed in Appendix A and Appendix B to the circulated report).

That the traffic regulation orders are to be implemented as advertised including the Pay by Phone parking place (Limited Waiting, April 1st – September 30th, 8am -8pm, Maximum stay 2 hours).

The objectors will be notified of the decision of the Cabinet accordingly.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The proposed traffic regulation orders will ensure adequate turnover of vehicles which will improve and allow the local environment and amenities to be enjoyed by future generations.

Implementation of Decision:

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

Appendices:

Appendix A – Plan – Princess Margaret Way – Aberavon – Parking Layby’s – Proposed Traffic Order – Sheet 1 of 2

Appendix B – Plan - Princess Margaret Way – Aberavon – Parking Layby’s – Proposed Traffic Order – Sheet 2 of 2

Appendix C – Integrated Impact Assessment.

List of Background Papers:

None.

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