

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10TH JUNE 2015

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES

CAR PARKING MANAGEMENT AND CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise Scrutiny members on progress of the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) within Bridgend and changes to car parking arrangements within Bridgend Town Centre.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1 The issue of illegal and obstructive parking cross-cuts a number of aims in the Corporate Plan. Road safety helps all children and young people to be safe and also forms part of the aims of the Community Strategy to have Strong Communities where there is a reduction in crime and people feel safer in their communities. Whilst parking assists in the economic vitality of a town it must also be tempered against the management of congestion and government targets in the reduction of carbon emissions from sources such as motor vehicles.

3. Background

- 3.1 Civil Parking Enforcement has been implemented in accordance with national requirements as detailed in the relevant statutory instruments and associated guidance documentation. Revenue raised through Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) is first used to off-set the cost of providing the enforcement provision with any surplus having to be used in accordance with the legislative requirements.
- 3.2 Whilst the powers provide for enforcement of offences such as waiting infringements, double parking and obstruction of pedestrian dropped kerb crossings, moving traffic offences such as obstruction in turning heads, and locations such as footways other than marked waiting restrictions remain solely enforceable by South Wales Police
- 3.3 For persons wishing to appeal against an issued Penalty Charge Notice they can do so through the Wales Penalty Processing Partnership who processes payments and appeals on behalf of Bridgend County Borough Council, and is undertaken by Denbighshire County Council, working on behalf of 9 Welsh authorities to support the enforcement operation by dealing with challenges, payments and processing of all Penalty Charge Notices that are issued.
- 3.4 In addition to the Authority's shared appeals service, if an applicant is not satisfied with the outcome from this process they are able to take an appeal to the independent Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT), which is a judiciary service.

- 3.5 The Cabinet member for Communities, Councillor Philip White, was appointed to the TPT Joint Committee which meets on an ad hoc basis, being at least annually, and it is a requirement of the CPE constitution that a Council elected member is nominated to participate.
- 3.6 A report to Cabinet of June 2014 recommended that further to the successful introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement that the Authority may be in a position to advance some of the long awaited residential parking schemes, whereby neighbourhoods which are located near attractions such as town centres or beaches can be affected by significant visitor parking, which can cause significant inconvenience for residents.
- 3.7 In parallel with the management of on street parking, the issue of off street provision within Bridgend Town Centre has been raised due to the changes in Council premises and the forthcoming reduction in parking availability through planned replacement of the Rhiw car park during 2015/2016.
- 3.8 The first of the changes in respect of Council premises has meant a rationalisation of Council offices within Bridgend with the closure and disposal of the Sunnyside office. This transition has taken place under the auspices of the 'making better use' programme of change for Bridgend Council.
- 3.9 The second change is in the replacement of the Rhiw car park a regeneration promoted scheme in partnership with a registered social landlord to both provide housing accommodation as well as a new 244 space car park (currently 320 spaces of which 270 available for use)

4. Current Situation/Proposal

- 4.1 Civil Parking Enforcement has continued to be well received within the County Borough in the management of inappropriate parking and compliance with traffic orders.
- 4.2 In terms of service delivery between the 1st April 2014 and 31 March 2015, 11618 tickets for both On and Off street parking violations were issued within Bridgend County Borough Council. The revenue generated with the ticket issue for the same period was £337,861. Additional budgetary support is provided by the Council of £215,530 reflecting the predicted operational costs of the service.
- 4.5 The business case for the combined service to be self-financing estimated that approximately 14,000 PCN's would need to be issued per year, and the level of infringements both on and off the highway are just short of this level, although there has been a higher payment rate of PCN's than that predicted.

Expansion of enforcement to introduce residents parking schemes

- 4.6 Following a Cabinet report in June 2014 a policy document relating to the introduction of residents parking schemes was refined to enable the determination of schemes. The implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement within Bridgend enables the Council to manage and enforce residential parking schemes, which

was previously reliant upon South Wales Police to resource and enforce such schemes.

- 4.7 Two areas were identified that would both benefit from the introduction of residents parking schemes, and also had funding identified to support their potential introduction. These areas were identified as residential streets adjacent to Bridgend Town Centre and residential streets adjacent to Porthcawl sea front.
- 4.8 In accordance with the residential parking policy document these areas have been surveyed to assess on-street parking congestion in order to determine the extent of any parking zones. At the time of writing an informal engagement is taking place on these proposals with relevant householders and stakeholders, prior to advancing to a formal statutory consultation.

Parking Bridgend Town Centre

- 4.9 Current provision within Bridgend Town Centre comprises of both private and public provision with both free and paid parking. Recent changes to the operation of Council premises, has seen a reduction in accommodation with the closure of the Sunnyside offices and the relocation of staff to both Ravens Court and Civic Centre offices. This change necessitated the rationalisation of parking arrangements for Council employees which was overseen by the Resources Directorate.
- 4.10 From car parking assessment it is considered that there still remains capacity within the Council managed car parks to accommodate this change. However, it is anticipated that the planned replacement of the Rhiw car park will remove any slack capacity during its period of replacement.
- 4.11 The reason for the replacement of the Rhiw car park is well documented and has been the subject to a Cabinet report. The identification of capacity issues within the remaining publicly run car parks in Bridgend during this replacement is recognised by officers and mitigation measures have been considered and currently being implemented.
- 4.12 Specific mitigations include parking temporary provision at the Lorne Stewart site in addition to provision at the former Coed Parc Library site. These locations are within easy reach of Council offices within Bridgend and provide a reasonable level of mitigation pending the reopening of the Rhiw Multi storey car park.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1 There is no effect from the introduction of CPE upon Policy Framework and Procedural Rules

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.1 No specific impact assessment has been used in the production of this status report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The CPE scheme is intended to be self-financing.

The budgeted cost of operating the CPE for Bridgend County Borough was estimated to be around £538,940 for 2014/15, with projected income of £323,410, resulting in an estimated net cost of £215,530.

Actual costs for 2014/15 totalled £478,191 and the recovery of fines and other income amounted to £339,643, which resulted in a net outturn position of £138,547. In accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the Regulations relating thereto, the balance of the account has been carried forward into 2015-16 to meet specific costs as specified in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

8. Recommendation

8.1 That Scrutiny members note the content of this report.

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