

# CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

**Report to:** Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny  
**Committee**

**Date of meeting:** 11 July 2024

**Title:** Off Street Pay and Display Car Park Review proposals  
June 2024

**Purpose of the report:** To set out proposals to meet the Council's approved budget additional income requirement from the Council's Off Street Pay and Display Car Parks

## **Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:**

This report is a Highways and Environment Services initiated report setting out proposals to meet the Cabinet approved budget additional income requirement in relation to the Council's Off Street Pay and Display Car Parks provision.

## **Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:**

Cllr Keith Henson - Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services and Carbon Management

## **Background**

On 29 February 2024 Council approved the budget for 2024/25. This budget included an expectation that additional income is generated from the Council's Off Street Pay and Display Car Parks to achieve a balanced budget. This included an expectation that £1,700,000 (net) in income is generated from existing Pay and Display car parks.

This report sets out a package of proposals which aim to achieve this income expectation, as well as to simplify current charges and arrangements. The majority of the proposals will require amendments to the existing Off Street Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), which would be subject to a public consultation process and approval by Cabinet prior to implementation. Where an amendment to the TRO is required to implement the proposal, this is noted by TRO in the proposal title.

Due to the significant financial challenges that the Council is facing, a failure to achieve the income expectation will result in a requirement for further budget savings to be found within Highways and Environmental Services beyond those already identified in the 2024/25 budget. It is on this basis that the package would need to be accepted in its entirety, and it would not be possible for some of the measures e.g. reduced season ticket prices to progressed without the other proposals also being progressed.

## **The proposals**

### **1. Changes to Season Ticket offering (TRO)**

It is proposed, in relation to cars, motorcycles and vans (up to 3.5t but excluding motorhomes and campervans) to:

- Remove the current car park specific season ticket options which restricts the holder to parking in the designated car park noted on the season ticket and remove the current Ceredigion Wide Long Stay Car Park Season Ticket.
- Establish a new Ceredigion Long Stay Car Park Season Ticket (excluding North Road Car Park, Aberystwyth) which will give holders the flexibility to park in any of the Council's Long Stay Pay and Display Car Parks, excluding North Road Car Park. This will be available to any member of the public to purchase.
- Establish a North Road and wider Ceredigion Long Stay Car Park Season Ticket which, will be restricted to 40 season tickets at any one time and will only be available to residents and people employed at properties within the area noted in the map contained in Appendix 1. This will give holders the flexibility to park in any the Council's Long Stay Pay and Display Car Parks. This is deemed to be necessary given the limited capacity in North Road Car Park (54 spaces) and its relative significance as a car park for those attending appointments at North Road Clinic. Uptake of this season ticket will be monitored and reviewed and, if it is oversubscribed, entitlement may revert to being limited to residents within the zone only in the future.

It is proposed in relation to the Heavy Vehicles (HGV / Bus / Coach) season ticket arrangements to:

- Remove Heavy Vehicles from Bath House Car Park which, is not suited for this type of vehicle. This car park does not have designated parking spaces for these types of vehicles and its size and layout would make the provision of dedicated spaces impractical. In addition to this, access to Bath House Car Park can be challenging for larger vehicles.

Other than this change, Heavy Vehicle Season Tickets will remain car park specific due to the limited number of car parks which are suitable for, and permit, this type of vehicle.

Alongside the above, it is proposed to revise the scale of charges for Season Tickets in line with Table 1. This would see a standardisation of charge across the County and a reduction on the cost of the current season tickets available, making such an option more affordable to residents.

Season Ticket Type	3 months	6 months	9 months	12 months
Cars, motorcycles and vans up to 3.5t ( <i>excluding motorhomes and campervans</i> ).				
Ceredigion Long Stay (excluding North Road)	£90	£165	£240	£295
Ceredigion Long Stay (including North Road) – <i>restricted to residents and those employed within defined area</i>	£90	£165	£240	£295
Heavy Vehicles (HGV / Bus /Coach) – Car Park Specific - <i>one to be select from the following 6 car parks:</i>				
Aberystwyth – Lower Park Avenue Cardigan – Fairfield, Mwdan or Quay Street Lampeter – Rookery New Quay – Church Road	£180	£330	£480	£600

Table 1

The overall rationale for the above proposal is that it will simplify the current offering and provide greater flexibility to holders should there be limited capacity at a particular car park at any given time or, if they wish, to visit another area of Ceredigion. This will also be of particular benefit to holders who may live in one town and work in another and who may want to make use of Council Pay and Display Car Parks for parking at both locations.

Reducing and standardising the charges will also provide greater value for money with, a significant reduction on most current charges. The proposed charges would effectively mean that, based on purchasing a 12-month season ticket, the cost to park per day would be just 81p per day.

Less frequent customers would also benefit from a reduction in the cost of season ticket charges with this revised proposed charging regime. For example, a customer who only uses Ceredigion Car Parks 3 days a week that purchases a season ticket, would see their cost of parking be equivalent to £1.89 a day, less that the proposed cost of parking for 2 hours in both the Coastal and Inland proposed bands.

## **2. To extend Maesyrafon Car Park in Aberystwyth into the former Arriva Site (TRO and Planning Permission requirement)**

It is proposed, subject to planning permission being granted, to extend the current Maesyrafon Car Park into the former Arriva site adjacent. This proposal will increase the number of available parking spaces by approximately 150 spaces, thereby

increasing overall parking capacity within Aberystwyth. The proposal will also provide improvements including:

- Reconfiguration and the provision of a turning lane into the current main entrance to the car park).
- To the general aesthetics of the car park.
- Closure of an access to prevent the use of the car park as a short cut which will improve road safety and, reduce traffic flows within the neighbouring residential streets and along an existing active travel route.
- Active travel measures in the form of a shared use path through the site that will link the existing Ystwyth Cycle Path more directly with Boulevard St Briec.

An indicative plan of the proposal can be found in Appendix 2.

The terms and conditions, including vehicle types permitted will align with the wider Maesyrafon Car Park. The charges applicable will also align to the fees and charges which will apply to the existing Maesyrafon Car Park.

### **3. To change the designation of Gloster Row / Red Lion Car Park, Cardigan (TRO)**

It is proposed to change the designation of Gloster Row / Red Lion Car Park in Cardigan from a Pay and Display Car Park to a Season Ticket holder only car park. This proposal is made for the following reasons:

- Access to the car park is significantly restricted and it is not considered appropriate to actively direct visitor traffic to this location.
- It is a small car park which has a limited number of spaces.
- The car park is predominately used by residents of the surrounding streets with limited use by other types of visitor / customer.
- It is not considered to be cost effective to install and maintain a new pay and display machine for the limited number of day visitors / customers that use the car park.

### **4. To change the designation of Pendre Car Park, Cardigan (TRO)**

Whilst Pendre Car Park had historically been utilised as a Permit Holder only car park prior to COVID, it is considered that it would be better utilised moving forward as a short stay Pay and Display car park (2 hour max stay, 3 hour max for blue badge holders in line with the proposed additional hour being afforded as part of the proposed

changes to Blue Badge Holder arrangements). This view is held on the basis of the following:

- The car park is in a prime location in Cardigan and is the closest car park to the main shopping areas. Introducing a short stay (2 hour max stay, 3 hour max for blue badge holders with the proposed additional hour being afforded) Pay and Display car park will increase short stay parking provision within Cardigan. The car park would support those wishing to park and shop / access services located on the high street and provide a turnover of spaces during the day.
- A short stay car park at this location would provide level access to the high street for those with mobility issues. Access for Blue Badge Holders to the high street from the current short stay Greenfield Car Park is via College Row which is a steep incline and has no footway provision.
- When last utilised as a permit holder only car park in 2019/20, an income of £1,925.98 was generated from lease payments. There is potential for a short stay car park, at the same rates as charged at Greenfield car park to exceed the income that would be achieved by any permit or season ticket arrangement.

The charging hours for the car park, as with other town centre car parks would be 08:00-18:00. Thus, affording free parking outside these hours which, would positively support the town centre nighttime economy.

## **5. Simplification of charges / tariffs across the County (TRO)**

Currently the charge / tariffs for parking varies between and, in some cases, within towns. It is proposed that a further simplified charging structure is implemented across the County's pay and display car parks which include:

- All types of vehicles paying the same rate in a car park.
- Two bands of charges being applied, these being:
  - Ceredigion Coastal (Aberaeron, Aberystwyth, Cardigan and New Quay)
  - Ceredigion Inland (Lampeter, Llandysul and Tregaron)
- Standardising the tariffs available across all car parks to 2 hours, 4 hours, and 24 hours (with the exception of Greenfield Square Short Stay Car Park which will retain a 3-hour tariff).
- Removing the weekly ticket tariff option at long stay car parks (with the intention that the option to purchase multiple day tickets will be facilitated as part of an additional payment by phone / app option).
- Providing consistency with:
  - All current seasonal car parks reverting to charging all year round.
  - All current seasonal car parks reverting to charging hours of 8am – 6pm (in line with the standard Pay and Display Car Park charging period).

This proposal will:

- Move closer towards customers paying the same charge for the same service across the County.
- Provide a simplified charging structure which is easier to communicate and understand.
- Further simplify the use of pay and display machines for customers due to fewer options being available to select.
- Provide enhanced free parking opportunities at seasonal car parks after 6pm which will support the evening / nighttime economy and leisure activities after traditional working hours.
- Enable a revised fees and charges structure which, in some cases, will see a reduction on the cost of current comparative tickets.
- Enable season ticket costs in general to be reduced in line with the proposals as set out in point 1.
- Reduce the costs to implement changes to pay and display charges in relation to advertising and software update costs.

The proposals should also, from modelling activities undertaken, support achieving the additional income expectations set as part of the budget setting process for 2024.

The proposed charging bands are set out in Table 2 below.

Zone	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours	24 hours
Ceredigion Coastal – <i>Aberaeron, Aberystwyth, Cardigan and New Quay</i>	£3.50	£4.00* <i>*Greenfield Square only</i>	£4.50	£6.50
Ceredigion Inland – <i>Lampeter, Llandysul and Tregaron</i>	2.50	n/a	3.50	4.50

Table 2

## **6. Reducing the frequency of changes to fees and charges**

Currently fees and charges applicable to pay and display car parks are changed on an annual basis as part of the fees and charges setting process. To enact and communicate these changes involves costs related to public notices and software updates.

It is proposed that changes to fees and charges for the car parks reverts either to a 3 yearly or 5 yearly cycle, rather than on a yearly basis. Or, if this is not supported, that the proposed fees and charges, as set out in this package of measures are at least maintained, once implemented (implementation is expected to be late 2024 to early 2025), until April 2027.

The benefits of this approach include:

- A reduction in the costs related to advertising and changing pay and display machine software which, are in the region of £15k annually.
- A reduction in administration required to implement changes.
- Longer term consistency which supports the ability to market and promote the offering.
- Providing greater certainty for customers around the costs of parking.
- Enabling the setting of round figure fees which, are not subject to percentage increases that result in associated rounding.
- Providing a period of price stability which will allow for the impact of the changes to be monitored.

## **7. To change the approach to Blue Badge Holder charging (TRO)**

Currently free parking is afforded only to Blue Badge Holders in vehicles that pay £0 Vehicle Excise Duty due to specific criteria that entitle them to an exemption by virtue of disability. All other Blue Badge Holders are required to pay to park. The number of customers that this exemption applies to is small, and it can be difficult to communicate to customers who is and who isn't eligible for the exemption. It is proposed that the current charging arrangement are changed as follows:

- Charges apply to all Blue Badge Holders irrespective of the Vehicle Excise Duty status of the vehicle they are travelling in.
- That all Blue Badge Holders will receive 1 additional hour of free parking on top of the period paid for e.g., a ticket purchase for 2 hours will entitle parking for up to 3 hours.

This change will:

- Treat all Blue Badge Holders more equitably, with the same charges applicable irrespective of their vehicle Road Fund Licence status.
- Provide additional time of up to 1 hour over and above the period paid for which, acknowledges that mobility impairments may impact on the time required to access services / facilities once parked.
- Align Ceredigion with the approach taken in neighbouring Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Powys County Council Pay and Display Car Parks.
- Make it easier to communicate the position to customers.
- Remove current challenges with identifying who is eligible for the exemption where a vehicle is displaying a Blue Badge but, has failed to pay following the removal of paper tax discs.

## **8. Administrative / housekeeping activities (TRO)**

More generally, as part of these proposals an administrative activity will be undertaken to consolidate previous TRO amendments which have taken place since 2012, where these remain relevant, into any new order facilitating the package of proposals set out e.g. previous changes to the type of vehicle permitted in some car parks or additions / removal of car parks to the original orders implemented.

### **Wellbeing of Future Generations:**

**Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.**

No. This report seeks to establish the general, in principle, view of the Committee on the package of proposals above prior to further detailed proposal development and implementation. An integrated impact assessment will be prepared where applicable / appropriate once the in-principle position is known. It is not anticipated that any of the proposals above will have a negative overall impact.

### **Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:**

**Long term:** NA  
**Collaboration:** NA  
**Involvement:** NA  
**Prevention:** NA  
**Integration:** NA

### **Recommendation(s):**

That the package of proposals is supported by the Committee.

### **Reasons for decision:**

**Contact Name:** Katy Spain

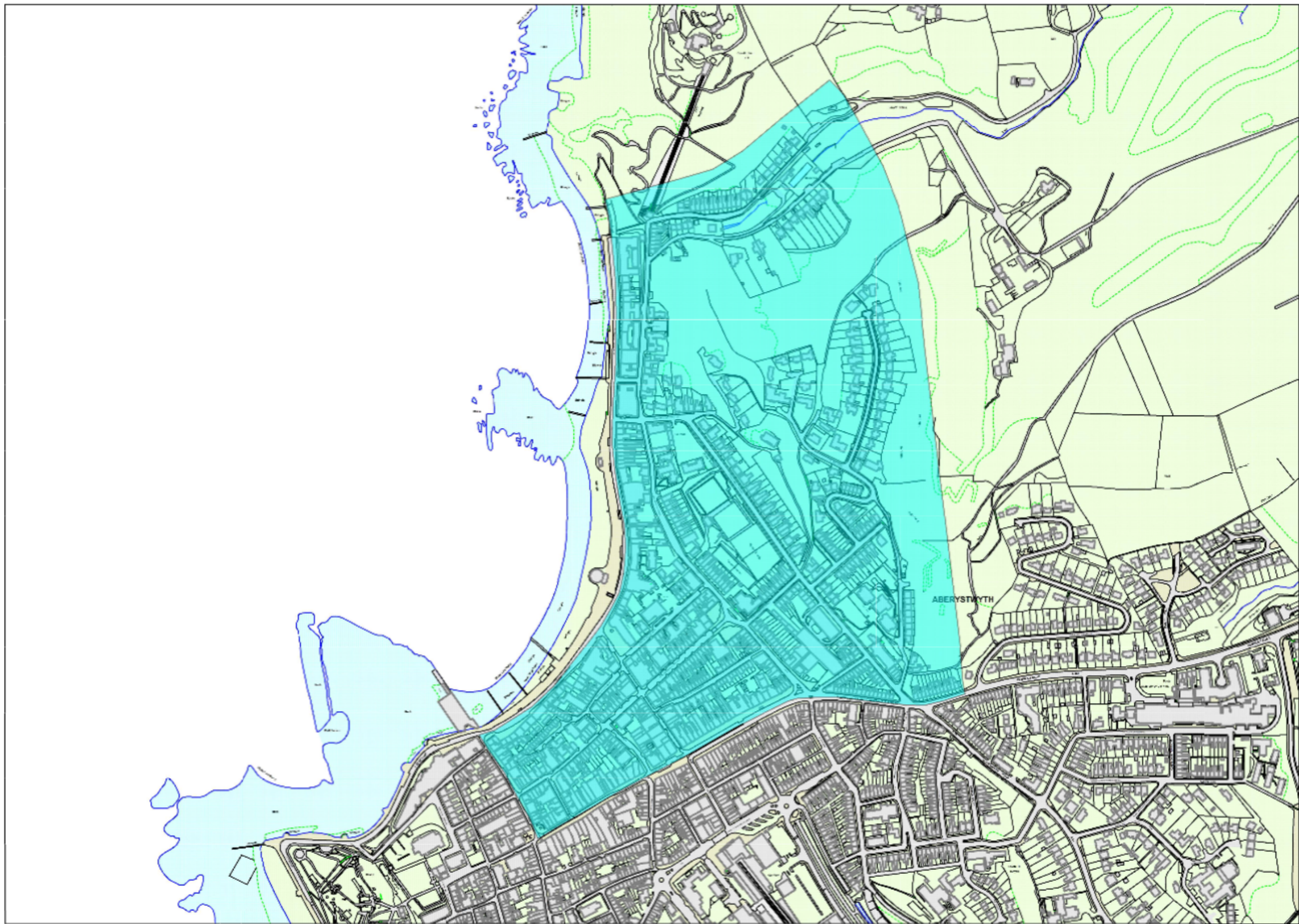
**Designation:** Service Manager Transport Ser

**Date of Report:** 18 June 2024

### **Acronyms:**

TRO – Traffic Regulation Order





**ARDAL CYMHWYSO TOCYN TYMOR MAES PARCIO FFORDD Y GOGLEDD**  
**NORTH ROAD CAR PARK SEASON TICKET ELIGIBILITY AREA**

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