

# CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

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

**Date of meeting:** 20/01/2025

**Title:** Proposed Ceredigion County Council Off-Street Parking Places Order 2025

**Purpose of the report:** To report responses to the consultation process to proposals put forward 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:**

To enable Scrutiny to review the proposed orders and consultation process

**Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:**

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

**Background**

Proposals related to Parking Places managed under the auspices of the Ceredigion County Council Off Street Parking Places Orders were presented to the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11/07/2024 (*Off Street Pay and Display Car Park Review proposals - Scrutiny Jul.24*) and Cabinet on 03/09/2024 (*Off Street Pay and Display Car Park Review proposals - Cabinet Sept.24*).

Following the Cabinet decision to amend the proposals to include exempting Blue Badge Holders from payment of Pay and Display parking charges, which included amending the proposed charge structure to add an additional 50p to each tariff, the revised proposals were subject to the consultation process prescribed for Traffic Regulation Orders.

This included a Formal Consultation stage between 19/09/2024 and 11/10/2024 where the Statutory Consultees noted in Appendix 1 were invited to comment on the proposals.

Following consideration of those responses in relation to the proposals presented, this was then followed by a Public Notice period inviting objections to proposals between 12/11/2024 and 4/12/2024. (*Ceredigion County Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2025 Public Consultation*)

**Formal Consultation responses**

During the Formal Consultation stage 5 responses providing comments on the proposals were received within the prescribed period, as follows:

- Aberystwyth Business Club

- Aberystwyth Town Council
- Cardigan Town Council
- Ceredigion Disability Forum
- Llanwenog Community Council

Details of the 5 responses to the Formal Consultation as well as, where appropriate, responses sent in relation to queries raised are contained in Appendix 2.

A Communication from Menter Aberystwyth was also received during the consultation period, but this did not set out any views on the proposals.

A further 3 communications were received from statutory consultees these were deemed '*out of time*' as they were received after the close of the consultation period.

### Public Notice Stage

As part of the Public Notice stage, notices were placed on site at the locations identified within the proposals, and in the Cambrian News and Teifi Side publications.

Paper copies of the proposals and supporting information were available to view during normal opening hours at the following Council Offices / Libraries:

- Penmorfa, Aberaeron;
- Canolfan Alun R Edwards, Queen's Square, Aberystwyth;
- Council Offices, Morgan Street, Cardigan; and
- Council Offices, Market Street, Lampeter

and full details were also presented on the Council's website.

Details of the Public Notice and supporting information could be found via the following link:

*Proposed Ceredigion County Council (Off-Street - Ceredigion County Council)*

Objections could be made in writing via email, letter or the online form that was provided specifically for the purpose.

During the Public Notice stage 228 '*in time*' submissions were received.

2 of these submissions were deemed not to be relevant as they were objecting to proposals that were not part of the consultation e.g. objections to charge increases in Car Parks in Newcastle Emlyn which are not in Ceredigion and objections to On-Street charges on Aberystwyth Promenade, which is the subject of a separate consultation.

A further 3 objections were deemed '*out of time*' having been received after the close of the Public Notice Period.

Details of the 226 '*in time*' and relevant objections received during the Formal Consultation are contained in Appendix 3.

Given the volume of objections, and that:

- most submissions included more than one grounds of objection;
- some submissions included comments that were not relevant to the proposals being consulted on in addition to ones that were relevant;
- in some cases grounds for objections were not explicit / specific.

the following provides only an approximation of the number and percentage of objections during the Public Notice stage falling into each of the following categories, which have been provided in order of decreasing number:

|    | <b>Category</b>   |            |               |
|----|---|------------|---------------|
| 1  | <b>Objects on the basis that the charges will have an impact on footfall and viability of businesses / the high street and / or tourism and / or the length of stay and / or value / amount of their spend.</b>                         | <b>107</b> | <b>47.35%</b> |
| 2  | <b>Objects on the basis that charges at Mwldan and / or Bath House car parks are too expensive and this will impact on Mwldan Theatre directly, their own personal attendance of the theatre or on others attending the theatre.</b>    | <b>105</b> | <b>46.46%</b> |
| 3  | <b>Objects generally on the basis that charges proposed were too high and / or that the minimum charge for 2 hours was too expensive.</b>   | <b>83</b>  | <b>36.73%</b> |
| 4  | <b>Objects on the basis that they feel that a charge of maximum charge of £2 for 4 hours or, £2 for 3 hours, should be applied.</b>   | <b>48</b>  | <b>21.24%</b> |
| 5  | <b>Objects on the basis that parking in Carmarthenshire or Pembrokeshire or more generally that parking in other counties is cheaper than in Ceredigion.</b>  | <b>30</b>  | <b>13.27%</b> |
| 6  | Objects on the basis that there should be an option for 2 hours, 1 hour or 30-minute free parking in car parks.   | 19         | 8.41%         |
| 7  | Objects to proposed charges on the basis that it will encourage people to park either illegally, in residential areas or specifically in Cardigan Health Centre Car Park to avoid the charges.  | 11         | 4.87%         |
| 8  | Objects on the basis that there should be a 3 hour parking option for Mwldan Car Park as 2 hours is not enough time to see a film and / or 2 simply that 2 hours is not enough time to attend a performance in Mwldan and shop in town. | 10         | 4.42%         |
| 9  | Objects on the basis that all parking should be free.   | 7          | 3.10%         |
| 10 | <b>Objects on the basis that they consider that charges of £7 per day are extortionate for people working or business owners in towns.</b>  | <b>5</b>   | <b>2.21%</b>  |
| 11 | <b>Objects on the basis that the charge for 4 hours at Mwldan Car Park will only see a saving of 10p on the current single option of 24 hours parking and that a stay of over 4 hours will cost £1.90 more than the current charge</b>  | <b>4</b>   | <b>1.77%</b>  |
| 12 | <b>On the basis that they considered that the Council is being 'greedy'.</b>  | <b>4</b>   | <b>1.77%</b>  |
| 13 | Objects on the basis that parking should be free, or that lower fees should be applied in Mwldan Car Park, in the evening.  | 3          | 1.33%         |
| 14 | Objects on the basis that there should be a 30 minute or 1 hour charged for parking option.   | 3          | 1.33%         |
| 15 | Objects to seasonal car parks in New Quay charging all year round due to impact on business during the off-peak season.   | 3          | 1.33%         |

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|----|---|----------|--------------|
| 16 | Objects to seasonal car parks in New Quay charging all year round due to impact on those attending the Doctor's surgery and / or pharmacy.  | 3        | 1.33%        |
| 17 | <b>Objects to Pendre changing to a Short Stay Car Park on the basis that they want business owners to return to be able to have allocated / permit spaces to guarantee parking spaces for them to conduct business related activities and for convenience.</b>  | <b>3</b> | <b>1.33%</b> |
| 18 | Objects on the basis that residents already pay Council Tax and that Council Tax payers should get free parking.  | 2        | 0.88%        |
| 19 | Objects on the basis that the proposed Season Ticket charges are too high for those on low incomes and / or that the current admin fee and requirement to pay 3 months upfront is prohibitive.  | 2        | 0.88%        |
| 20 | Objects to charging in New Quay Car Parks all year round on the basis that the car parks will be quite over the winter period and therefore the cost of monitoring and enforcing payment would outweigh the income received.  | 2        | 0.88%        |
| 21 | <b>Objects to any charges or season ticket requirements for Gloster Row / Red Lion Car Park on the basis that they feel that residents should have free parking in the car park either generally and / or due to tidal flooding effecting the highway outside their home and that cars are safer in the car park.</b> | 2        | 0.88%        |
| 22 | <b>Objects to there being two bands of charges 'Coastal' and 'Inland' and feels that that there should be a single charge structure across all Pay and Display Car Parks.</b>   | <b>2</b> | <b>0.88%</b> |
| 23 | Objects on the basis that they feel that simplifying and rationalising charges across the County benefits the Council and not the user.   | 1        | 0.44%        |
| 24 | <b>Objects on the basis that the minimum charge on the Inland Band of £3 for 2 hours adversely affects those who need to use car parks in Llandysul for short visits.</b>   | <b>1</b> | <b>0.44%</b> |
| 25 | Objects to charges on the basis that the car park in Llandysul is convenient for taking children to the playground and to sports practice which are beneficial to their health and wellbeing and that they will penalise those with children in Llandysul that live away from the town centre.                        | 1        | 0.44%        |
| 26 | <b>Objects on the basis that the income already generated is enough.</b>  | <b>1</b> | <b>0.44%</b> |
| 27 | Objects to the requirement for those using EV charges to pay for parking in addition to the cost of charging the vehicle as charging can be slow and it will discourage people from stopping to charge their vehicle.   | 1        | 0.44%        |
| 28 | Objects to charging at all in Llandysul on the basis that they feel that the Council has not studied the impact of reintroducing of charging for parking on businesses and the wider community.   | 1        | 0.44%        |
| 29 | Objects on the basis that the charges in Cardigan are more expensive than Aberystwyth and Aberaeron.  | 1        | 0.44%        |
| 30 | Objects on the basis that paying anything more than £3 to pay to take their mother who has a blue badge to attend Theatre Mwldan would impact on their attendance and therefore her mother's mental health.   | 1        | 0.44%        |
| 31 | On the basis that tickets to Theatr Mwldan should include parking for free and / or should entitle people to discounted parking.  | 1        | 0.44%        |
| 32 | Object on the basis that the charges will affect the ability of homeowners without private parking to sell their properties.  | 1        | 0.44%        |

|    |  |   |       |
|----|--|---|-------|
| 33 | Objects to charging all year round at seasonal car parks on the basis that they have very little use between November and March.   | 1 | 0.44% |
| 34 | Objects to charging in New Quay Car Parks all year round on the basis that it will impact on New Quay Fireworks event and other community events.  | 1 | 0.44% |
| 35 | Objects to changing the period of charging at New Quay Car Parks from 8am – 10pm to 8am – 6pm on the basis that there will be a higher risk of overnight camping.  | 1 | 0.44% |
| 36 | Objects on the basis that charging at Church Road Car Park New Quay will displace vehicles during the winter period on to Church Road.   | 1 | 0.44% |
| 37 | <b>Objects to Pendre changing to a Short Stay Car Park on the basis that they want the car park to offer both short stay and Permit holder parking to guarantee parking spaces for them to conduct business related activities and for convenience as well as provide some short stay parking.</b> | 1 | 0.44% |
| 38 | Objects to extending Maesyrafon Car Park as it would have a detrimental impact on Aberystwyth Farmers' Market  | 1 | 0.44% |
| 39 | <b>Objects to Gloster Row / Red Lion Car Park changing to a Season Ticket only car park on the basis of the impact on customers of and consequently on the Red Lion Inn.</b>   | 1 | 0.44% |
| 40 | <b>Objects to Gloster Row / Red Lion as a Season Ticket only car park on the basis that it floods and that it risks damage to vehicles.</b>  | 1 | 0.44% |
| 41 | On the basis that being in receipt of a Blue Badge goes not mean that Blue Badge holders are unable to pay.  | 1 | 0.44% |

It should be noted that during the Public Notice Stage, a communication from Theatr Mwldan in Cardigan to its members/visitors in relation to the proposals which resulted in significant numbers of objections submitted related to charges at Mwldan Car Park specifically. A copy of this communication can be found in Appendix 4.

Suggested responses to the grounds for objection noted above are provided in Appendix 5.

In the case of items 17, 21, 37, 39, and 40 (shown in bold above) however, Officers suggest that based on the reasoning put forward in the objections, Scrutiny may wish to give consideration to whether to proceed with the proposals relating to making Pendre Car Park a Pay and Display Car Park, and instead retain it as a permit holder only car park, and whether to proceed with the proposals to make Gloster Row / Red Lion Car Park a Season Ticket only Car Park or retain it as a Pay and Display Car Park.

In the case of items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 22, 24 and 26 (shown in bold blue text above) Scrutiny may wish to give consideration as to whether to proceed with the proposals related to the Coastal and Inland parking charges.

Potentially, as a result of the communications circulated by Theatr Mwldan, a significant proportion of the respondents indicated that they considered a charge of £2 for 4 hours to be a reasonable charge.

An alternative charging structure of £1 for 2 hours, £1.50 for 3 hours (Greenfield Square only), £2 for 4 hours and £4 for 24 hours could be adopted across the County however, it is estimated that this would reduce the anticipated annual income from parking charges by approximately £1 million. This would either necessitate reductions in service / cost savings being identified and agreed by Council equal to £1 million, or an additional Council Tax increase of circa 2% over and above any current proposals for Council Tax increases in order for the Council to achieve a balanced budget for 2025/26.

**Wellbeing of Future Generations:**

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

Yes – See Appendix 6

**Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:**

**Long term:** The proposal is seen as a means of ensuring the availability of parking, including turnover of spaces, in towns where off-street pay and display car parks are located. Income derived contributes to the overall Council budget and supporting the continued delivery of services to the public.

**Collaboration:** It is not considered that there are opportunities to work with other partners to deliver Off-Street Parking provision at this time. However, the Council remains open to approaches from other organisations should they wish to discuss taking over management of any facilities.

**Involvement:** The proposal has been through the relevant Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet for consideration prior to Public Consultation and is subject to further Scrutiny consideration following the Public consultation, before being subject to final consideration by Cabinet and before any implementation may take place.

**Prevention:** Off-street parking is not a preventative service.

**Integration:** It is not considered possible / appropriate to include the integration of the service with activities undertaken by other stakeholders and / or partners.

**Recommendation(s):** To note the content of the public consultation, consider the proposals for the charging structure and Pendre and Gloster Row/Red Lion car parks based on the consultation responses, and to support the package of proposals put forward.

**Reasons for decision:** N/A

**Contact Name:** Katy Spain

**Designation:** Service Manager Transport Services

**Date of Report:** 30 December 2024

**Acronyms:** N/A