

COFNOD O BENDERFYNIAD WEDI'I DDIRPRWYO GAN SWYDDOG
RECORD OF DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION

Penderfyniad Allweddol | Key Decision ✓

Mae'r Penderfyniad Wedi'i Ddirprwyo hwn wedi'i bennu yn 'Benderfyniad Allweddol' gan ei fod yn debygol o:

This Delegated Decision has been established as a 'Key Decision' as it is likely:

a) *arwain at y Cyngor yn ysgwyddo gwariant sylweddol neu wneud arbedion sylweddol;*
to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant;

neu / or:

b) *fod yn arwyddocaol o ran sut mae'n effeithio ar gymunedau sy'n byw neu'n gweithio mewn ardal sy'n cynnwys dwy etholaeth neu adran etholiadol neu ragor.*
to be significant in terms of its effects on Communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral wards.

c) Eraill / Other:

PWNC | SUBJECT: DISABLED PERSONS PARKING BAY SCHEME

DIBEN YR ADRODDIAD | PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

This report has been prepared to accompany the intended officer decision of the Director of Social Services

The purpose of this report is to outline proposed amendments to Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's Disabled Persons Parking Bay (DPPB) Scheme following a recent review, and to seek approval to consult on the proposed new scheme.

PENDERFYNIAD WEDI'I DDIRPRWYO | DELEGATED DECISION:

Llofnod y Prif Swyddog



Chief Officer Signature

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Neil Elliott | Director of Social Services | 8 th July 2025 |
| Enw (priflythrennau) Name (Print Name) | Swydd Designation | Dyddiad Date |

Mae'r penderfyniad yn cael ei wneud yn unol ag Adran 15 o Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol 2000 (Swyddogaethau'r Corff Gweithredol) ac yn y cylch gorchwyl sy wedi'i nodi yn Adran 5 o Ran 3 o Gyfansoddiad y Cyngor.

The decision is taken in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act, 2000 (Executive Functions) and in the terms set out in Section 5 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

YMGYNGHORI | CONSULTATION

| | | |
|--|---|---------------------------|
|  | Cllr Gareth Caple | 8 th July 2025 |
| LLOFNOD YR AELOD YMGYNGHOROL O'R CABINET CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE | ENW A SWYDD NAME AND DESIGNATION | DYDDIAD DATE |

| | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| | | |
| LLOFNODSWYDDOG YMGYNGHOROL CONSULTEE OFFICER SIGNATURE | ENW A SWYDD NAME AND DESIGNATION | DYDDIAD DATE |

A FYDD Y PENDERFYNIAD YMA'N CAEL EFFAITH AR Y WARD?
WILL THIS DECISION HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE WARD?

BYDD | YES ✓ **NA FYDD | NO**

Unrhyw sylwadau pellach/Oes angen rhoi gwybod i'r Aelod Lleol:
Any further comments/Need for Local Member to be informed:

RHEOLAU'R WEITHDREFN GALW-I-MEWN | CALL IN PROCEDURE RULES.

A YW'R PENDERFYNIAD YN UN BRYN A HEB FOD YN DESTUN PROSES GALW-I-MEWN GAN Y PWYLLGOR TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU?:

IS THE DECISION DEEMED URGENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

YDY | YES

NAC YDY | NO ✓

Rheswm dros fod yn fater brys | Reason for Urgency:

Os yw'n cael ei ystyried yn fater brys - llofnod y Llywydd, y Dirprwy Lywydd neu Bennaeth y Gwasanaeth Cyflogedig yn cadarnhau cytundeb fod y penderfyniad arfaethedig yn rhesymol yn yr holl amgylchiadau iddo gael ei drin fel mater brys, yn unol â rheol gweithdrefn trosolwg a chraffu 17.2:

If deemed urgent - signature of Presiding Member or Deputy Presiding Member or Head of Paid Service confirming agreement that the proposed decision is reasonable in all the circumstances for it being treated as a matter of urgency, in accordance with the overview and scrutiny procedure rule 17.2:

.....
(Llywydd | Presiding Member)

.....
(Dyddiad | Date)

DS - Os yw hwn yn benderfyniad sy'n cael ei ail-ystyried yna does dim modd galw'r penderfyniad i mewn a bydd y penderfyniad yn dod i rym o'r dyddiad mae'r penderfyniad wedi'i lofnodi.

NB - If this is a reconsidered decision then the decision Cannot be Called In and the decision will take effect from the date the decision is signed.

AT DDEFNYDD Y SWYDDFA YN UNIG | FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

DYDDIADAU CYHOEDDI A GWEITHREDU | PUBLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATES

CYHOEDDI | PUBLICATION

Cyhoeddi ar Wefan y Cyngor | Publication on the Council's Website:- _____ 8th July 2025 _____

DYDDIAD | DATE

GWEITHREDU'R PENDERFYNIAD | IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

Nodwch: Fydd y penderfyniad hwn ddim yn dod i rym nac yn cael ei weithredu'n llawn nes cyn pen 3 diwrnod gwaith ar ôl ei gyhoeddi. Nod hyn yw ei alluogi i gael ei "Alw i Mewn" yn unol â Rheol 17.1, Rheolau Gweithdrefn Trosolwg a Chraffu.

Note: This decision will not come into force and may not be implemented until the expiry of 3 clear working days after its publication to enable it to be the subject to the Call-In Procedure in Rule 17.1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

Yn amodol ar y drefn "Galw i Mewn", caiff y penderfyniad ei roi ar waith ar:

Subject to Call In the implementation date will be:

_____ 12th July 2025 _____
DYDDIAD / DATE

WEDI'I GYMERADWYO I'W GYHOEDDI: ✓ | APPROVED FOR PUBLICATION :✓

Rhagor o wybodaeth | Further Information:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Cyfadran Directorate: | Community and Children's Services |
| Enw'r Person Cyswllt Contact Name: | Mari Ropstad |
| Swydd Designation: | Head of Access Enablement & Early Intervention |
| Rhif Ffôn Telephone Number: | 01443 425001 |

DELEGATED DECISION

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO ACCOMPANY A DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

7th JULY 2025

DISABLED PERSONS PARKING BAY SCHEME

AUTHOR: Mari Ropstad, Head of Access Enablement & Early Intervention

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to outline proposed amendments to Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's Disabled Persons Parking Bay (DPPB) Scheme following a recent review, and to seek approval to consult on the proposed new scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1. Approval is given to undertake an 8-week public consultation on the proposed new DPPB Scheme, as set out in Section 5 of this report.
- 2.2. Subject to 2.1 above, agrees to feedback the outcomes of the public consultation to inform the final proposed version of the DPPB Scheme for consideration by a future Cabinet.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. Proposals to make changes to the current DPPB Scheme requires public consultation to ensure that their views can be considered when a final decision is made.
- 3.2. A further report following the conclusion of the consultation, if agreed, is recommended to ensure that the Cabinet is fully informed of the outcome of the consultation, when it decides on the future of the DPPB Scheme.

4. BACKGROUND

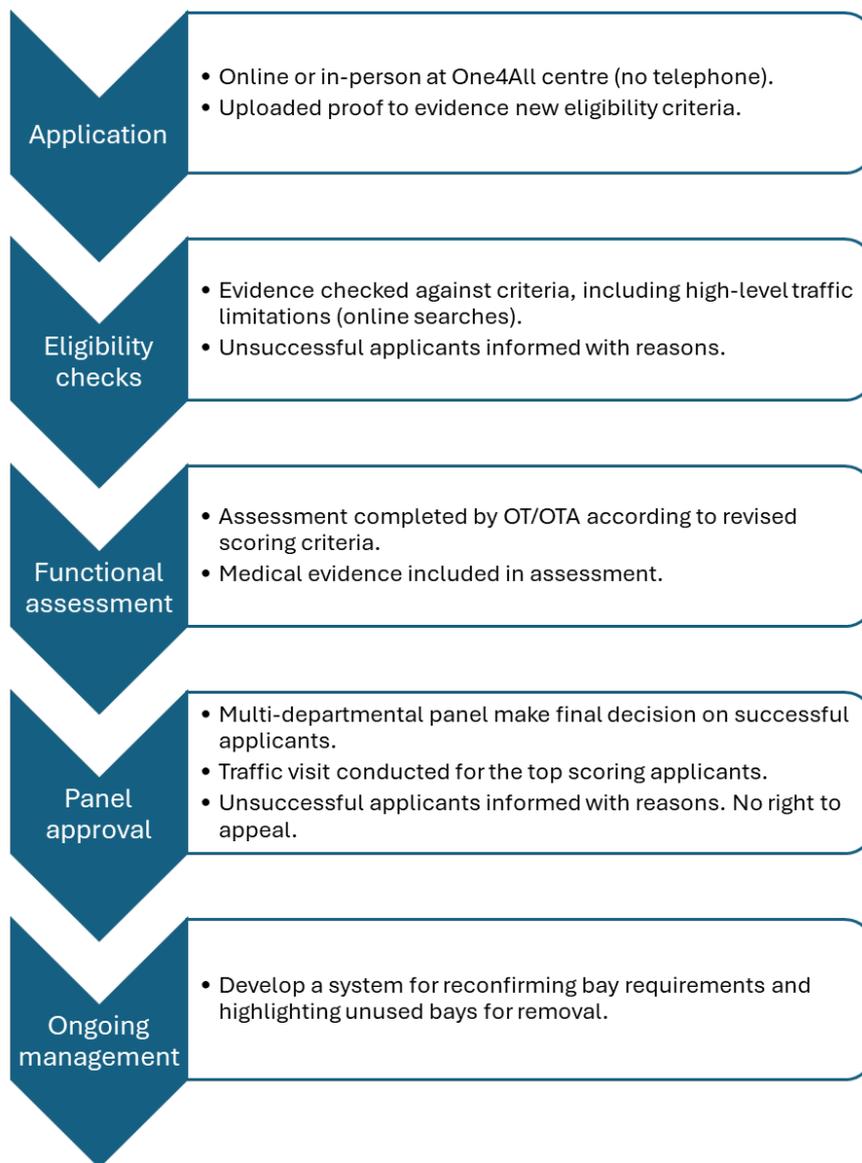
- 4.1. The existing DPPB Scheme was introduced in 2004 and subsequently amended in 2015 following a review. Since its introduction the number of people applying for a parking bay has increased significantly, with 193 applications received during the last round in 2022/23.
- 4.2. Historically, 12 parking bays have been awarded each year based on applicants meeting some basic eligibility criteria and a scored functional assessment from an Occupational Therapist/Occupational Therapy Assistant based within Adult

Services (attached at Appendix 4). There is no right of appeal, but applicants can re-apply during the next round.

- 4.3. Since its introduction, 269 disabled parking bays have been installed across the County Borough. Of these, 115 have been removed, leaving around 154 disabled parking bays in situ. Each bay is installed under the Traffic Regulation Act and therefore has its own traffic regulation order, enforceable by the Council. Currently, anyone with a Blue Badge can utilise the bays.
- 4.4. The current scheme levies a £10 non-refundable one off application fee for all applicants. It was thought that the levying of a fee would discourage unwarranted applications. This has not happened and, as already reported, the number of applications received annually have remained high, in excess of the number of available bays for allocation each year.
- 4.5. The current scheme was suspended in September 2023 pending a full independent review.
- 4.6. Practice Solutions were commissioned by the Council to undertake the independent review during the autumn/winter of 2024 and the final report (attached at Appendix 1) supplied in February 2025. The review recommended that the Council continue to offer a DPPB Scheme and eligibility criteria to meet the recommendations from the review, including:
 - Develop a clear and more transparent process for applicants.
 - Introduce more robust criteria and information required to determine eligibility to ensure the best use of limited funds.
 - Introduce comprehensive guidance containing the stages of the process, timescales and information about traffic prohibitions for the applicant.
 - Introduce a more efficient screening process at the outset.
 - Introduce a system to review the use/abuse of disabled parking bays, including removal of bays no longer in use.
 - Consider removing the application fee and replacing with a new charging strategy.
 - Provide clear written reasons for refusal of a disabled bay to unsuccessful applicants.
- 4.7. As evidenced in the Practice Solutions report, Local Authorities across Wales operate various charging models with most not charging at all, some requiring permits to be paid for annually or an administration fee. Two Local Authorities charge successful applicants £250 and £689 respectively. However, many applicants are retired or unable to work and may not be financially able to meet a higher one-off charge.

5. PROPOSED NEW MODEL

- 5.1. A schematic drawing of the proposed model is set out below. Applications will be online or in-person via a One4All Centre, the telephone application option currently available will be removed.



5.2. The proposed new eligibility criteria are:

- Individual must possess a valid permanent Blue Badge.
- Individual must have a car registered at their address and the registered owner must live there.
- Individual must not have access to off-road parking.
- There are no traffic prohibitions on the road directly outside the main entrance to the property and it would be safe to install a disabled parking bay.
- Individual must supply medical evidence from a Consultant, Specialist Nurse or Physiotherapist specifically addressing their difficulties related to mobility and parking.
- Individual must be in receipt of one of the below benefits:
 - Higher Rate Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA).
 - War Pension Mobility Supplement.
 - Attendance Allowance.

- 5.3. The eligibility criteria will need to be evidenced by people uploading or supplying relevant documents, including medical evidence and this will be checked early in the process. Similarly, high-level traffic checks will be completed earlier in the process before a full functional assessment is completed. The highest scoring applicants following assessment will require an on-site traffic assessment to ensure a bay can be safely installed.
- 5.4. The functional assessment will be based on the existing scored criteria, which will be reviewed to take account of the new process and amended eligibility criteria. The medical evidence supplied will inform and support the assessment.
- 5.5. In order for an application to progress through the process, the eligibility criteria must be met by the applicant and supporting evidence provided. All unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing of the reasons for this decision and, as is currently the case, due to the discretionary nature of the scheme, there will be no right of appeal. However, applicants could apply again during the next round.
- 5.6. Any costs associated with gathering the required application documents, including medical evidence will need to be funded by the applicants and no costs incurred will be reimbursed through the DPPB Scheme by the Council. As a result, it is proposed that the current £10 admin charge is removed, and the Council no longer applies a charge for the DPPB Scheme.
- 5.7. Whilst the new proposed model clearly defines a tightened criteria to determine eligibility for providing a DPPB, it is proposed that the existing limit for allocating up to 12 disabled parking bays only per year is retained as a practical constraint but with a commitment to keep this under review.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 6.1. An EIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Policy and guidance. Some potential negative impact has been identified affecting one or more of the target equality groups. A full EIA has been carried out and the summary and recommendations are included below. The completed EIA is attached as Appendix 2 of this report.
- 6.2. A potential negative impact of managing applications online without offering a telephone option could have a disproportionate impact on older people. This will be mitigated by the option of applying via One for All Centres – a process which is the same as the one operated for housing benefit applications.
- 6.3. Positive impacts were identified for the protected characteristic of Disability, and for unpaid carers, with the new eligibility criteria clarifying the requirements to allow people to gauge their personal circumstances before applying and the process being more streamlined with further transparency.
- 6.4. Potential negative impacts may occur for people from lower socio-economic backgrounds in relation to any future costs and charges levied for the new

proposed Scheme, disproportionately affecting racial minorities and disabled people who are more likely to experience financial hardship.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE

- 7.1. A full Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) has been carried out and the summary and recommendations are included below. The completed WLIA is attached as Appendix 3 of this report.
- 7.2. The Council will promote the option of assessments in Welsh and ensures that bilingual services are available, this could enhance the visibility and usage of the Welsh language among people.
- 7.3. It also creates an opportunity to enhance the use of the Welsh language, provided that adequate support and resources are made available. By providing a less complex option for individuals and families, it may encourage more individuals to pursue the DPPB Scheme. This increase in requests could lead to a higher demand for services in Welsh, as individuals and families may prefer to communicate in this language.
- 7.4. Continue to support adult services provide an opportunity for our staff in social care to learn and improve their Welsh in order to deliver services in Welsh where required in line with their statutory duties with particular focus on feedback from any Occupational Therapists who are involved in both the assessment of the DPPB Scheme and Cwrs Codi Hyder. Any such learning will also benefit the community as whole and increase the number of Welsh speakers in the area.
- 7.5. The Council will ensure that information about the change and the option to receive services in Welsh is clearly communicated to the public. This will help ensure that Welsh speakers are aware that they can access these services in their language, thereby supporting compliance with the statutory requirements.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1. As part of independent review completed by Practice Solutions, consultation with the public and other key stakeholder, including telephone interviews of previous successful and unsuccessful DPPB Scheme applications to inform the findings and review recommendations.
- 8.2. Subject to approval, Adult Services will undertake an 8-week public consultation on the proposed new model for the DPPB Scheme, starting in July 2025.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1. The current cost of running the DPPB scheme is estimated to be around £43,000 per annum. The cost can be broken down for each Council Department involved in the current process as follows:

| Department | Cost per annum |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Contact Centre | £14,000 |
| ACE | £14,000 |
| Highways | £15,000 |
| TOTAL | £43,000 |

9.2. There are currently no resources dedicated to operating the DPPB Scheme and all work is absorbed within core budget allocations.

9.3. The Practice Solutions review estimated the cost of each parking bay for the last 3 years the Scheme was operating to be £1,159 per bay, which includes the legal notices, erection of signs, road markings and traffic management, but excludes the costs incurred from management time, assessments or the application process and as such, based on the total cost from each Department in the table above, the real cost of each bay is around £3,583.

9.4. The removal of unwanted bays also come at a cost and as such the cost of running the scheme can vary from year to year depending on how many bays require removal.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

10.1. There are no direct legal implications of this proposal. Local Authorities have no statutory duty to provide a scheme for disabled parking bays, and it is a discretionary service. However, the external review completed by Practice Solutions (Appendix 1) suggests that section 149 (4) of the Equality Act 2010 should be considered, in particular “the effect of a lack of parking spaces near [disabled people’s] residences and their freedom of movement and travel”. As such a DPPB Scheme could be considered a public sector duty.

11. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP.

11.1. Although discretionary, the proposed model for the DPPB Scheme will support the Council to meet its public sector equalities duties under the Equality Act 2010.

11.2. The scheme will also broadly support the People and Communities priority in the Council’s corporate plan in terms of supporting residents to live independent and fulfilling lives.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1. The DPPB Scheme provides a valued opportunity for people in RCT to access readily available parking close to their home to mitigate some of the impacts of their disability. Although a discretionary scheme, it can contribute positively to the way in which the Council meets its public sector duty to uphold the principles of the Equality Act.

12.2. The new proposal model suggest tightening the eligibility criteria and changing the process to ensure more efficient use of resources, whilst improving the experience and feedback to applicants.

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays

A report for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Practice Solutions Ltd
Author: Valerie Connors
Date: January 2025

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1. Executive Summary

This report assesses Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's (RCTCBC) Disabled Person's Parking Bay (DPPB) scheme and proposes options for its future. The review examines the scheme's effectiveness, considering especially the high application volume versus limited annual allocations (12 bays).

Most local authorities in Wales are clear that the main aim in providing DPPB's is to help those disabled drivers whose mobility impairment mean that they cannot walk any significant distance and therefore need help in parking close to their homes. Like most of them, RCTCBC is struggling to manage the demand for bays.

In undertaking this review, the focus has been very much on gathering and analysing a range of information and data to address the following issues:

- Whether the existing DPPB service is fit for purpose and should remain
- Whether the Council should cease providing DPPBs for residents
- Whether the Council should continue to offer a DPPB scheme but with a revised policy which is fit for purpose, to ensure that the limited resource available is allocated to meet those most in need.

The report analyses public and staff feedback, revealing significant dissatisfaction among unsuccessful applicants due to unclear eligibility criteria, lengthy processing times, and lack of transparency. Methods used for the review included a desktop review of key documents from the Council and other Local Authorities in Wales; interviews and discussions with a range of staff, including OTs and Highways personnel; discussions with Disability Forum Members and members of Carer's Project; telephone interviews with successful and unsuccessful applicants; and a survey of residents. A key finding from this work is the need for transparency, improved communication, efficiency, better resource allocation, and a more need-based approach. By focusing on these issues, the Council could achieve a fairer and more effective scheme. It is acknowledged that blue badges can be issued for many reasons, not all of which involve mobility impairment. The findings from this review suggest that it would be unreasonable and unrealistic for the Council to provide DPPB's for all blue badge holders.

Addressing the Core Issues

Lack of Resources: The report highlights that the current budget allows for only 12 bays per year, while demand is much higher. A key area for change should be exploring options for increasing resources or managing demand more effectively.

Inefficient Processes: The existing process involves multiple stages and can take a long time, with many applications ultimately being unsuccessful. The report notes that over 90% of applications that progress to OT assessment result in no further action. Streamlining the application and assessment process is vital.

Dissatisfaction: Many applicants, particularly unsuccessful ones, are dissatisfied with the process due to a lack of clarity, poor communication, and a perceived lack of fairness.

Lack of Transparency: There is a lack of clarity regarding eligibility, the points system, and the reasons for unsuccessful applications. The report suggests that more information should be provided to applicants.

Limited Understanding: The report shows a general lack of knowledge about the scheme among the public. It is important to provide better information through the website and other communication channels.

Misuse and Lack of Enforcement: There are concerns about the misuse of allocated bays by non-eligible individuals and a lack of enforcement. The report notes that even though the bays are designated for disabled use, any blue badge holder can park in them.

Specific Recommendations for Change

Revised Eligibility Criteria: The report indicates a need for more robust eligibility criteria that prioritise those with the greatest need, considering factors like mobility impairment, specific benefits, and exceptional circumstances. Currently the scheme can give a sense of entitlement to any blue badge holder.

Clearer Guidance: The report suggests the introduction of clear and comprehensive guidance for applicants that explains the process, time scales, and traffic prohibitions.

Effective Screening: The report notes that more effective screening is needed at the beginning of the process to reduce the number of unnecessary assessments. This could involve early input from traffic management to identify properties where bays are not feasible.

Review of the Application Charge: The report states that the £10 charge for all applicants, regardless of success, is a source of annoyance. The report suggests a review of the current charge, including the possibility of a higher charge for successful applicants only.

Transparent Communication: The report proposes that more comprehensive information should be provided to unsuccessful applicants. This includes providing the number of points and the reasons for the unsuccessful application.

Monitoring and Enforcement: The report indicates a lack of review for installed bays, with no monitoring or enforcement for misuse. A system to address these issues is needed.

Options for the Future

The report outlines three potential options.

NB There may be other options which should not be precluded from any discussion about the future of the service.

Option 1 - Maintain Existing Scheme: This option would not address any of the problems identified.

Option 2 - Cease the Scheme: This option has significant risks, including public backlash and potential legal challenges under the Equality Act.

Option 3 - Revise the Scheme: This would involve amending the policy with revised criteria, better processes, and more transparency.

2. Introduction

Rhondda Cynon Taff's process for providing individual Disabled Person's Parking Bays (DPPBs) faces significant challenges. Despite receiving nearly 200 applications annually, only 12 bays are allocated each year. Occupational Therapists (OTs) assess and prioritise these applications, often leading to dissatisfaction among those who do not receive an individual disabled parking bay allocation. Additionally, public concerns about the allocation process persist. The process involves not only OT assessments but also coordination with traffic authorities for installation and maintenance. This complexity coupled with a level of public dissatisfaction highlighted the need for a review to explore the potential to refine the assessment and eligibility processes and the wider mechanisms involved in the delivery of the parking bay allocation scheme. The review of the Council's current policy for residential disabled parking bays was undertaken to inform the options available regarding the future provision of residential disabled parking bays. The findings of the review are outlined in this report for consideration by the Council.

3. Background and Policy Context

The current system by which disabled residents of RCTCBC can apply for a

disabled person's parking bay on the highway outside their homes was originally introduced in 2004 and subsequently amended following a review in 2015. Since the introduction of the scheme, the number of people applying for a DPPB each year has increased significantly.

The current scheme was suspended in August 2023 after the Council agreed that full and proper review of the Individual Disabled Parking Bay Scheme was necessary. The following reasons were given:

- The increasing high number of applications being received annually in comparison to the available resources.
- The effective use of occupational therapy resources at a time of increased demand following the pandemic.
- The length of time taken = an average of 12 to 16 months to process applications and install individual bays.
- Over 90% of applications progressed to occupational therapy assessment resulted in no further action. This raises the applicants' expectations of a parking bay and leads to a disappointing outcome for a significant majority of applications each year.

Social Services manage the initial application to determine eligibility and Highways manage the installation, removal and funding. The application process for the scheme usually starts on 1st September each year and runs for 8 weeks before closing and commencement of assessment process.

In August 2014, the decision was made, under the Officers Scheme of Delegation, to suspend the Individual Disabled Parking Bay Scheme pending a review of the current policy and procedures. Following the review, Cabinet agreed in September 2015 to reinstate the scheme, subject to a change of eligibility criteria and introduction of a £10 administration charge per application.

Since the implementation of the scheme a total of 269 parking bays have been installed across Rhondda Cynon Taf. Of the bays installed, 115 have been removed, leaving 154 individual disabled parking bays in place. Each one has its own traffic regulation order, installed under the Traffic Regulation Act and thereby enforceable by the Council.

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

The table below provides a summary evaluation of the scheme for 2022/23, the previous year and when it was reviewed last in 2013/14.

| Application Stages | 2013/14 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Number of application packs sent out | 142 | 173 | 196 |
| Applications returned | 135 | 172 | 193 |
| Applications not returned | 7 | 1 | 3 |
| Applications returned but unsuccessful | 9 | 5 | 3 |
| Applications cancelled prior to assessment | 1 | 12 | 9 |
| Applications passed to OT for assessment | 125 | 155 | 181 |
| Applications not recommended | 113 | 143 | 168 |
| Applications recommended for installation | 12 | 12 | 13 |

The provision of Residential disabled parking bays is a "discretionary service" therefore the Council has a choice whether or not to provide the service at all.

The Council's current Disabled Person's Parking Bay Policy provides the following information on the eligibility criteria for obtaining a Residential Disabled Parking Bay (RDPB).

- Both the driver and the parking bay applicant (if not the driver) MUST live at the same address and the car is kept permanently at this address.
- The applicant MUST hold a current and valid Blue Badge (temporary Blue Badge holders are NOT eligible to apply).
- A parking bay can only be installed directly outside the property in question and will not be approved where there are traffic prohibitions, paved areas or other obstacles directly outside the home such as a junction.
- You must not have accessible off-road parking at your property (e.g., hard standing, drive, garage etc.)

These criteria do not guarantee that a DPPB will be provided only that the application will be assessed for suitability.

Since the scheme was suspended, the Council reports that the Customer Feedback Team has received a considerable number of complaints or concerns. These can be broken down as follows:

From 21/04/2023 – 10/10/2024

- 10 contacts from individuals who were not successful in their previous application and were unhappy that they were unable to reapply because the scheme had been suspended.
- 20 contacts from MPs or Elected Members enquiring about the scheme on behalf of their constituents.

From 21/04/22 – 31/03/23

- 5 contacts from applicants who had been unsuccessful or wanted to apply.

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

- 19 enquiries from MPs or Elected Members on behalf of constituents either wanted to appeal a decision or complain about the limited number of bays given out.

Legal Context

There is no statutory obligation for the Council to provide Disabled People's Parking Bays and the provision of DPPBS is discretionary. It should be noted that while there is no specific mention of a requirement as to the provision of parking in the Equality Act 2010, public bodies must not, in the exercise of their functions, "do anything that constitutes discrimination, harassment or victimisation." (section 29(6)).

Section 149 provides that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions "have due regard to the need to" among other things, "advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it". This involves having due regard to the need to "take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it". Section 149(4) states how this applies to the treatment of disabled persons: It says: *the steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.*

This would likely involve considering, for example, the effect of a lack of parking spaces near their residences and their freedom of movement and travel. The most common way for public authorities to evidence their fulfillment of the duty is by way of equality impact assessments.

Financial Implications

The average cost for an individual disabled bay over the last 3 years that the scheme was operating, was £1,159 and this includes the cost of legal notices as well as the costs of the erection of signs, the laying of road markings and appropriate traffic management. This figure excludes the cost of occupational therapy assessment and other management time.

The cost of installing and revoking these bays has historically been met annually from the Highways Department capital programme budget and, in 2022/23, the Council spent approximately £13K. The cost to the Council if it had approved all 181 applications received during 2022/23 would have been £209,779.

Other Local Authority DPPB Schemes in Wales

A desktop review of what other Local Authorities in Wales offer in terms of DPPB schemes was undertaken, the results from this are shown in the table below:

| LA | DPPB scheme on Website | Eligibility Criteria | Charge | Application process | Comments |
|---------------|------------------------|--|-----------|---|--|
| Blaenau Gwent | Yes | Driver, Blue Badge + permanent Wheelchair user unless exceptional circumstances No Access to off road parking | No charge | Declaration to show that you meet current eligibility criteria. Medical evidence to be sought in exceptional cases. Website specifies no right to appeal | County Borough's Engineer and Surveyor assesses whether bay would be suitable – subject to TROs. No right to appeal. No specific numbers allocated - based |

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | | | on need and safety. |
| Bridgend | No DPPB scheme. Blue Badge Scheme only | | | | Blue Badge holders can park for free in any space in a car park. |
| Caerphilly | Yes | Blue Badge + permanent wheelchair user (indoors and outside) prescribed by a professional and experiencing significant parking difficulties No access to off road parking | No charge | 2-part application process: Social Services and Highways. Highways advertise applications online. Online applications sent to COT. | It can take up to 2 years to obtain. 21 applications in the last year. Policy states that 6 spaces available. |
| Cardiff | Yes | Blue Badge Over 65 years or if under in receipt of enhanced rate of mobility: PIP or getting War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement or have exceptional circumstances | No charge | Online application. Can apply at any time during the year. | Can take up to 18 months – subject to TRO/ and availability of funding. Visit to see how busy traffic is or if parking is available within 25 meters of the house. |
| Carmarthenshire | Yes | Blue Badge + Higher rate of DLA/PIP (mobility component) or Wheelchair User | £250.00 fee if application approved | Online application available. | Consultation with neighbours 4 x surveys undertaken to assess the level of parking on different days/times. Ranking assessment based on points. Lengthy process - only reviewed 1 per year. |
| Ceredigion | No Blue Badge. | | | | |

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

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|------------------|----------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| | Scheme only | | | | |
| Conwy | Yes | Blue Badge + cannot or almost unable to walk and in receipt of PIP (higher rate of mobility) or higher rate of AA | £689.76 fee once the bay has been completed | Application to the Single Point of Access Team OT Assessment – if eligibility met Environment, Roads and facilities assess suitability in terms of traffic restrictions | TROs in 2023 and 2024 indicated 9 DPPBs given out in each year. May request further advice and support from OT if a DPPB not provided. Can take 6 – 18 months. |
| Denbighshire | No. Blue Badge Scheme only | | | | |
| Flintshire | No. Blue Badge Scheme only | | | | 2015 Parking Strategy refers to improving quality and provision of off- street car parks in accordance with EA Act requirements. |
| Gwynedd | Yes | Blue badge holder – only cases in the most need because of poor health and severe impairment will qualify. Medical evidence may be sought | No charge | Applications by email or phone - processed and prioritised at panel 2 x yearly. Provision to appeal/ complain if application is refused. | Website states only small number of those who are most severely disabled qualify each year and the making of a TRO can take up to a year before a bay is installed. |
| Isle of Anglesey | No. Blue Badge Scheme only | | | | |
| Merthyr Tydfil | No. Blue Badge Scheme only | | | | |
| Monmouthshire | No scheme advertised | | | | * Some examples where a DPPB has |

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| | on website. Blue Badge Scheme only | | | | been granted following an application from a resident. Although this seems to be in exceptional circumstances and granted on the basis that it is not for an individual but for all blue badge holders who park on a particular road where parking difficulties have been reported. |
| Neath Port Talbot | Yes | Permanent & Substantial Mobility problems, or exceptional circumstances supporting medical evidence to be provided by consultant, physiotherapist or specialist nurse | No charge | Applications initially assessed by Customer Services followed by face-to-face meeting at a one-stop shop. If eligibility is in doubt, further assessment by OT and then assessment by Traffic Section if deemed suitable. Appeals process in place. | Policy document on website - scheme only for those in greatest need – public consultation before application agreed. |
| Newport | Yes | Very little information on website as scheme is under development. Policy amendment in 2017 tightened eligibility criteria to include higher rate mobility component of DLA or PIP | Not known | Applications accepted between 1 Nov – 31 January Applications sent to Contact Centre for screening and on to SS if further assessment required. Street scene undertake site appraisal re: highway related matters. | Can take up to 18 months subject to TRO. |
| Pembrokeshire | Yes Working group | Permanent Blue Badge holder + registered | £20 charge for successful applicants | Applications accepted between 15 Jan – | Only 10 spaces are available per year. |

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

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|-------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|---|--|
| | suggested offering scheme on a trial basis for 24/25 | vehicle | £13 for any replacement permit | 5 April Unsuccessful applicants who meet the criteria to be kept on a waiting list | Process can take a minimum of 6 months, Meeting eligibility criteria is no guarantee of getting a DPPB. |
| Powys | Yes | Blue Badge holder + support from GP/OT/ Health Practitioner/ Social Worker. Policy also states that support from local Elected Member also needs to be demonstrated | No | Applications are a self-assessment questionnaire found under Roads/ Transport and Parking section of website and go directly to Traffic Management. | Advisory Bays only - this means that the use of the bays by non-blue badge holders cannot be policed or enforced. |
| Rhondda Cynon Taf | Yes | Permanent Blue Badge holder+ severe mobility impairment, often unable to park and no access to off-road parking | £10 admin fee for all applicants | Assessment visit + decision making by Panel | Assessment period can take a number of months to complete. No right to appeal. |
| Swansea | Yes | Blue Badge + need to be severely disabled/ unable to walk unaided or at all. Doctors' letter required if no traffic restrictions prevent application going forward | No Charge | A very brief application form returned directly to Parking. | Parking survey involving at least 4 visits on different days/times of the week to assess the availability of parking spaces within 25 metres of applicant's home. No information about whether these are advisory bays or subject to TRO. |
| Torfaen | No Blue Badge Scheme only | | | | |
| Vale of Glamorgan | Yes | Blue Badge + higher rate of | No charge | Application forms sent directly to Highways and | 5 parking surveys undertaken to assess the level of |

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

| | | | | | |
|---------|----------------------------|--|--|--------------|---|
| | | mobility component of DLA with evidence if not the driver of the vehicle | | Engineering. | parking with 25 metres of applicant's home. |
| Wrexham | No. Blue Badge Scheme only | | | | |

There is no consistent approach to offering Disabled Person's Parking Bays across Wales, with Councils operating different eligibility criteria and systems for dealing with applications.

The table above shows that 8 out of the 22 Local Authorities in Wales do not provide any information about DPPBs on their Council website and do not appear to offer a DPPB scheme. All Councils in Wales operate a Blue Badge Scheme.

Monmouthshire does not advertise any scheme on their Council website but appears to occasionally consider applications from disabled residents, via Social Services, for very exceptional circumstances. They seem to do so on the basis that the bay is not for the individual but, to improve the number of disabled bays on the highway for use by any blue badge holder.

All of the remaining 13 Councils that provide a DPPB scheme specify on their websites that the applicant must be a blue badge holder with significant mobility issues, although this is expressed in a variety of different ways. Most make clear that the scheme is aimed at drivers with significant mobility issues, although, most Councils also give instances of exceptional circumstances where a passenger can be the applicant (e.g. children with disabilities under 16 or an adult who relies on driver for mobility or requires constant attention). While information about the cost, or number of bays given out each year wasn't always available, it was evident that other Councils are struggling with the volume of applications and had various mechanisms in place to try and manage demand in relation to resources. Several websites stated that the schemes were only for those in greatest need; that only a small number of badges are given out; or that meeting eligibility criteria wasn't a guarantee of being allocated a DPPB. 5 Councils set out the need for applicants to be in receipt of other benefits such as the enhanced mobility component of the Personal Independent Payment (PIP) or higher rate of mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA). Others require medical evidence to support the application and others such as Caerphilly have strict rules about applicants needing to be wheelchair users both indoors and outdoors, with the wheelchair having been prescribed by a professional.

All Councils who operate a DPPB scheme apply similar traffic prohibitions to RCTCBC and reference the fact that an applicant would not be eligible if they have any accessible off-street parking facility at their home such as a garage, driveway or hard standing or space to provide such a facility. Other traffic prohibitions which would result in the application being refused include:

- Single yellow lines
- Double yellow lines
- Resident only parking permit area
- Limited waiting time area
- Bus stop
- Zebra/Pelican crossing
- Junction.

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

Many state that the process can take a long time (from a few months up to 2 years). Some have similar arrangements to RCTCBC whereby people can only apply for a limited period during the year, while others allow people to apply at any time. In some authorities the process is managed by Highways or Traffic Management with very little input from Social Services. These usually involve a number of visits from a surveyor to assess the availability of parking spaces on the street, how busy the road is or whether other traffic restrictions would deem a bay unsuitable. A number, like RCTCBC have a 2-stage process involving an OT assessment followed by a further assessment from Highways/Traffic Department. Some Councils gave information about the right to appeal, others provided no information or (like RCTCBC) specify that there is no right to appeal once the decision had been made.

RCTCBC charges a £10 non-refundable administrative fee at the point of application for a DPPB. Only 3 other Councils in Wales charge residents for their DPPB schemes - Pembrokeshire charge successful applicants £20, Carmarthenshire charges successful applicants £250 and Conwy charge a fee of £689.76 once the bay has been completed.

Some other Councils have made amendments to their DPPB policies in recent years. Newport tightened the eligibility criteria in 2017, and Pembrokeshire recently introduced a scheme on a trial basis for 2024/25. In 2006, Caerphilly put an option to Cabinet to cease the provision of DPPB's altogether, which was withdrawn after a negative report from the Ombudsman regarding a complaint from a resident whose application for a DPPB had been refused. The Ombudsman made the following comments regarding the Council's proposal to discontinue the provision of DPPB's:

"I have to say that a decision to do so would in my view be an unlawful fettering of the Council's discretion. It is a tenet of administrative law that, where legislation gives a discretionary power to a public body, it is unlawful for that body to adopt a blanket policy of refusing to exercise it irrespective of the individual merits of the case. I have no doubt that in giving council's discretionary power to provide DPPPs, Parliament had in mind, as should the Council, the vast improvement they can make to the quality of life for disabled people."

4. Methodology

As part of the review, a range of activities were undertaken. These included:

- A desktop review of key documents from the Council and a review of DPPB schemes in other Local Authorities in Wales.
- Interviews and discussions with a range of staff including Head of Service; Service Manager, Prevention and Early Intervention; Team Manager, ACE Team; Temp Head of Traffic and Transportation; Carer Development Workers; Diversity and Inclusion Manager; Contact Centre Manager; Older Person's Co-ordinator; ACE Team members.
- Discussions with Disability Forum Members (Cynon).
- Discussions with Members of the Carer's Project.
- Telephone interviews with successful and unsuccessful applicants of the DPPB scheme.
- A survey was undertaken to gather residents' views on the provision of DPPBs. The survey did not cover other parking locations for disabled people, such as in the town centres or on car parks. The survey was promoted online on the Council's website, although paper copies of the questionnaire were also made available to those who preferred to complete the survey in this way. 314 responses were received.

5. Key Findings

Overview of existing process to allocate DPPBs in RCT

Before it was suspended in August 2023, the Council's DPPB policy operated as follows. The scheme allows applications from residents during an 8-week period commencing on 1st September each year. Initial requests are managed via the Council's First Response Team, who reported a very high volume of calls regarding the scheme during the 8-week period but particularly on the first day. The Contact Centre Manager told me that the Team found the process challenging due to the volume of calls from people who want a DPPB and who thought the process was based on a 'first come, first-serve basis. Staff helped complete applications over the telephone for people who were unable to apply online. Although staff screened applicants in terms of asking whether they were a blue badge holder and therefore met the basic criteria, it was felt that this was not a robust screening process, and most applications were sent to the Adaptations and Community Equipment Team (ACE) Team for allocation to an Occupational Therapist (OT) or Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA).

Although there is guidance on how to complete the online application form, a number of staff felt that this could be improved. For instance, neither the guidance that supports the self-assessment form nor the Council's website provide a complete list of traffic prohibitions. The guidance states - "If there are any traffic prohibitions in place which prevent parking outside the property (eg double yellow lines) then it will not be possible for a Parking Bay to be provided". Similarly, the Council's website states: "A parking bay can only be installed directly outside the property in question and will not be approved where there are traffic prohibitions, paved areas or other obstacles directly outside the home such as a junction". It is clear from many of the comments from interviews and the survey that many residents do not have sufficient information about the traffic prohibitions, and this can increase the level of frustration when their application is refused.

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All applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful, are charged an administrative fee of £10. Again, this is a source of considerable annoyance for unsuccessful applicants who feel strongly that they should not pay a charge if they are unlikely to be allocated a DPPB.

It should be noted that there have been changes to the scheme in recent years to improve the consistency of the process. Prior to 2020/21, any Occupational Therapist (OT) in the ACE could undertake assessments. However, an internal review in 2020/21 found that some inconsistencies were evident in the assessment process regarding the allocation of points and a number of changes were recommended to provide a more consistent approach. A check point spreadsheet, overseen by the Team Manager, was introduced to ensure the issues around "points failure" did not reoccur during the 2021/22 scheme. To improve consistency, it was recommended that only one OTA work on the scheme. This was aimed also at ensuring that there would be no direct impact on the ability of the ACE team to continue with its main priority of reducing waiting lists.

The assessment process starts once the 8-week deadline is over and all applications have been received. These are allocated to the designated OTA, and the assessments are undertaken on an area basis across six zones. Due to the volume of applications, the assessment process can take up to 6 months to complete, depending on the number received.

An OTA visits all eligible applicants to complete a functional assessment using agreed documentation. There is guidance for staff about completion of the functional assessment and the scoring system. The functional assessment includes observation of the client accessing their vehicle or, if the car is not accessible, then an assessment of mobility within the property. The outside environment, access and location are all taken into consideration. Should the OTA find on arriving at the property that there are particular hazards or restrictions on the road which would deem the applicant ineligible for a bay, then it is expected that the applicant would be advised accordingly at this point.

Business Support forwards a completed and typed version of the functional assessment to the applicant who then has an opportunity to add any additional information they feel is relevant, sign the assessment and return it to business support. It is only on receipt of the signed assessment that the points will be determined using a prescribed scoring system. The points document contains statements for the assessor to consider. The maximum number of points available is indicated to the right of each statement. The assessor must use the information provided on the application document and from the functional assessment to inform their clinical reasoning in the allocation of points on a sliding scale. The guidance states that "comments MUST be added to the points sheet to explain / justify the score given."

On completion of all documentation, the points total is entered into a database in preparation for the final stages of the process - a panel decision on provision. At the close of the scheme, a panel meets to evaluate the scores from all the assessments. The panel consisted of members from the following teams.

- Team Manager from the Adaptations and Community Equipment team
- Business Support
- Highways
- Equality and Diversity team.

The Council has provided mainly 12 bays a year since the scheme's inception. There have only been a couple of occasions when an additional space has been provided because of very exceptional circumstances. For example, in 2020/21, 12 were agreed at Panel and one by Highways outside panel because of a mistake leading to a very high scoring application not being presented at panel.

The Panel usually meets during June for one/two days and go through the top 20 assessments in terms of the scores given to each applicant. These assessments are looked at in detail to see whether there is consistency in approach and whether any adjustment needs to be made to the scores given by the OTA. A decision about the top twelve applicants who should be allocated a bay is reached, with up to 10 others

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kept on a reserve list in case any of the initial 12 bays are in areas where traffic restrictions apply. A surveyor from Traffic and Transportation would then assess whether there are any highway restrictions in respect of the 12 shortlisted applicants. If so, the next person on the reserve list would be considered until all 12 spaces have been allocated.

It should be noted that the overall scores awarded to applicants have been increasing in recent years and this is shown in the table below.

| Year | The applicant with highest number of points |
|---------|---|
| 2019/20 | 325 |
| 2020/21 | 333 |
| 2021/22 | 355 |
| 2022/23 | 420 |

In 2022/23, before the scheme was suspended, the top 15 scoring applicants were awarded between 300 and 420 points. 43 applicants had scores of over 250 points which would suggest high levels of disability. The lowest number of points awarded was 55 with the majority of applicants receiving scores of under 200 points.

Traffic Management installs a DPPB, and this is subject to a legal process known as a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). The TRO process can be lengthy. It involves writing to potentially successful applicants, other residents in neighbouring properties and formal public notices. Traffic management may receive a number of comments, complaints, and objections regarding the installation of a DPPB which need to be considered. Objections or complaints are not generally upheld as they are not usually considered to be valid.

The designation of a DPPB under the Road Traffic Regulation Act does not make provision for the exclusive use of the bay by a particular disabled resident. This means that, once a bay is installed, it is available for use by anyone who has a valid blue badge not just the person who has applied for the bay to be installed.

Standard letters are sent to successful and unsuccessful applicants. Successful applicants are told that they have met the Social Care criteria and prioritised for a DPPB and that their details have been passed on to Traffic Management to progress the assessment. The letter to unsuccessful applicants refers to the fact that the scheme is oversubscribed, only 12 bays a year are allocated, a points system is used and only those in greatest need are successful. The letters do not provide information about the number of points received by the unsuccessful applicants compared to those who were successful. Nor does it explain whether there were any traffic prohibitions that would mean the applicant did not meet the eligibility criteria.

The Council does not operate an appeals system. The letter to unsuccessful applicants states: "As there are opportunities to provide us with all the information relevant to your application during the assessment process, we do not operate an appeals process for the scheme".

The Council does not review DPPBs once they've been installed, and they are considered to be self-regulatory in terms of reporting when a bay is no longer required. Notifications are received from members of the public, relatives, neighbours, or friends in a variety of ways, through the Customer Contact Centre, Social Services or directly to Traffic Management. It was reported that 3-4 bays are removed each year as they are no longer in use, and this is an additional cost to the Council. During the review, people raised concerns about the numbers of misused/ unused bays where it was suggested that people had passed away and relatives had failed to report this. These issues are discussed in more detail below.

Feedback from discussions with Staff, Disability Forum and Carer's Project

Of the staff interviewed as part of this review, most felt that the Council's existing DPPB scheme was extremely challenging, resource intensive and not necessarily targeting those in greatest need.

Many Social Services staff felt that there should be stricter eligibility criteria, clearer information on the website and clearer guidance accompanying the application form. Some felt that the entire process needed streamlining with more effective screening at the outset to reduce the number of assessments undertaken. Some thought that there should be more up front involvement from Traffic Management to assess whether a property would meet the various traffic prohibitions prior to an OT assessment. They felt that this would reduce the number of unnecessary assessments undertaken by the ACE team and the high levels of dissatisfaction from unsuccessful applicants whose expectations had been raised.

Members of the ACE team who had undertaken assessments in the past reported circumstances where they had met with a great deal of hostility from applicants and their families, particularly those who had previously applied and been unsuccessful. They were often told that, if applications were not successful, complaints would be made to local Councillors or they were provided with numerous examples of other DPPB applicants who were misusing the scheme. While staff understood the emotive nature of parking issues for people who have genuine disabilities, they felt the current eligibility criteria gave a sense of entitlement to anybody who was a blue badge holder and made it difficult to target the service on those with the greatest need. They also highlighted competing demands for assessments, the current waiting lists for aids and adaptations for people with palliative care or double handling needs and how these competing priorities require the Council to make very difficult decisions in the light of limited resources.

The guidance states that the assessing COT/ OTA will be included on the panel in an advisory capacity but will take no role in the final decisions on provision. The OTA, who had completed all the assessments in 2022/23 (before the scheme was suspended) did not attend the panel and did not have any knowledge about who the successful applicants were. Most staff felt that the process should be more transparent and that applicants should be given more information about why their applications had been unsuccessful.

Despite the difficulties associated with the scheme, most staff recognised that the provision of DBBPs could make a huge difference to the lives of disabled people and they gave a number of examples where having a bay had reduced social isolation, enabled independence, reduced the impact of a serious mobility issue, or provided essential support to families with children who have severe physical disabilities or conditions such as autism which enable them to more easily access education, work, hospital appointments or the community in general. OTs and OTAs who had undertaken assessments for DPPBs stated that the process identified those applicants with the most complex needs and disabilities quite quickly and these people were usually successful on their first application. This view is borne out by the small number of repeat applications that are successful. In the last five years of the scheme (from 2018/19 – 2022/23), only 7 people were successful following a repeat application. Six of these were successful the second time of applying while one successful applicant had applied three times previously. During this period, the Council received a further 136 applications from people who had previously applied and remained unsuccessful on their second, third and fourth attempts.

83% of successful applicants in the last three years were already known either to the ACE team or another Social Services team (73% over the past 5 years). Some staff felt that assessments for a DPPB under the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014 could potentially offer an alternative approach as it would enable discussions about a range of needs and internal referral to Highways if a Parking Bay is deemed appropriate. This would require a change in policy and a different approach to funding.

Feedback from meetings with the Disability Forum and Carers Project

As part of the review, people who attend the Disability Forum (Cynon) and the Carer's Project were asked to provide feedback. Unfortunately, neither group was well attended during the review and so discussion was

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limited, although further opportunities for views to be expressed were provided through the survey. Members of the Disability Forum who did participate had very limited knowledge of the DPPB scheme and none had a bay themselves. Most thought that, given there was a £10 fee for each application, a DBBP should only be available for the person who applied for it and not for other Blue Badge holders to use. Similarly, people who attended the Carer's Project felt that there should be dedicated bays with the household number on them. A number of people felt that more DPPBs should be made available and that more priority should be given to disabled passengers. They spoke of the difficulties in double parking when picking up or to setting down their disabled passenger/ person they cared for, particularly on a busy road. A number had experienced "lots of hassle" from other drivers who were kept waiting.

Feedback from telephone interviews with successful and unsuccessful applicants

Successful applicants who had been allocated a DPPB over the last 5 years and who were interviewed as part of the review spoke of the enormous difference a bay had made to their lives. Most had been allocated a bay the first time they applied and found the application and assessment process fairly straightforward, although they all remarked on the length of time it took from the original application to when the bay was installed. Below are examples of the impact of a DPPB on the lives of successful applicants.

Person X – is a female wheelchair user spoke about the sense of freedom having a bay has given her as it means she can access a parking space outside her house regardless of the day or time of day and meant she could be independent in traveling to work and accessing social activities. X reported that, once she was able to drive and had her own car, she had found the process of applying very straightforward and well communicated. However, she also spoke about having a lifelong disability and the difficulties her parents had experienced with parking and transporting her when she was younger as their application to the Council for a DPPB had been unsuccessful. X felt strongly that more consideration should be given to passengers who have substantial mobility needs and that the current eligibility criteria should be tightened so that only those in greatest need would be able to apply.

Person Y - is the father of 4 autistic children, 2 of whom have no traffic/ road awareness and would run out into the road in front of buses or other traffic. He spoke about the massive difference a DPPB had made to their lives and the difficulties and chaos they had experienced beforehand as they lived on a main road and often couldn't find a parking place in their street. Person Y had applied successfully first time and while he thought the scheme was marvelous, said the whole process had taken about 2 years. He felt that people who were most impacted by disability should be eligible for a DPPB.

Person Z - has significant mobility issues because of a long-term health condition and uses elbow crutches. He had a bay at a previous house but had been unable to apply at his new address as the scheme has been suspended. He said that having a bay gives peace of mind as he worries about falling. It had meant that he could go out in the evening, go out with friends (for a meal) and being able to park by his house made these social activities possible. He was worried now that, if he went out, he would not get back to park in the street as it fills up with cars in the evenings. "If it's raining, I have to park away from the house and as I'm slow and tired by the time I get to the house I am soaking. I really want to continue to do things that are important to me and I worry as my good days are decreasing".

Most unsuccessful applicants interviewed as part of the review stated that they had only applied once for the scheme, although one person reported that she had applied unsuccessfully every year for 8 or 9 years. While most said that they had found the OT staff very helpful, they all felt extremely frustrated about the lack of explanation/reason for their application not being granted. Some said they had never received a letter telling them the outcome of their application and most felt that the process was unfair and that the eligibility criteria should be made clearer.

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"We need to know WHY we've been unsuccessful – is it that my disability is not enough or was it due to traffic restrictions as we live on a one-way street?"

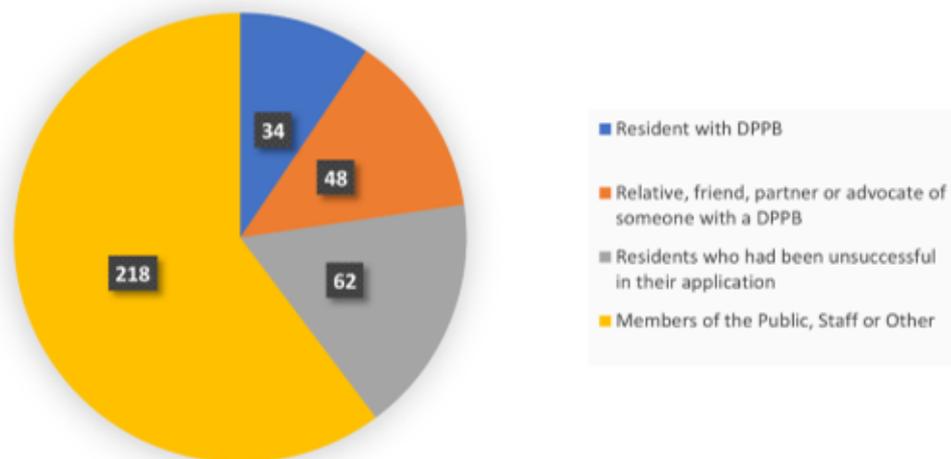
"I don't think the criteria is clear enough, I thought I had enough ailments to qualify, but the Council needs to say if it's just for wheelchair users only as I wouldn't have applied!"

"I just had a letter saying I was unsuccessful with no explanation given or reason why."

Survey Responses

A survey conducted as part of the review received 314 responses and these responses are summarised below under relevant topic headings.

Categories of Respondents



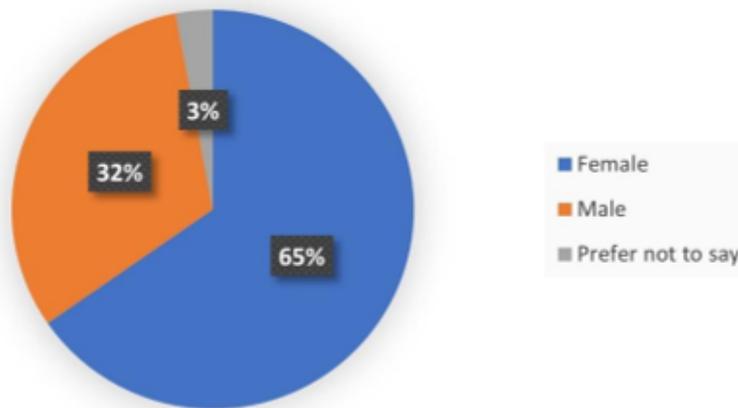
Of the people who responded:

- 34 were residents who had been allocated a DPPB.
- 48 were a relative, friend, partner or advocate of someone with a DPPB.
- 62 were residents who had been unsuccessful in their application.
- The 218 remaining respondents identified as Members of the Public, Staff or Other.

NB Some respondents referred to themselves as both Members of the Public as well as one of the other categories; hence the figures shown add up to 362 not 314.

Of the 203 respondents that answered optional questions:

Sex of Respondents



- 66% they were female, 32% were male with a further 3% preferring not to say.

Regarding other optional questions

- Only a third of respondents answered the question about their age category, of these, the majority (57%) were over 55 years of age.
- 71% considered themselves to be disabled.
- 53% stated that they had caring responsibilities.

The survey responses show that only 43% of respondents got to know about the scheme from the Council's website with others reporting that they heard about the scheme from relatives, friends or partners, staff members, elected members or through the Disability or Older Person's Forum. 21% of respondents reported a variety of other means including, Facebook and other social media, social worker, NHS or "seeing them on the roadside."

General questions about the DPPB scheme

All respondents were asked some general questions about the DPPB scheme in terms of the information provided on the website, information about eligibility criteria and information about traffic restrictions. The majority (70%) were either neutral (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) or satisfied/highly satisfied with the information, with 27% stating they were dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied. Some people who expressed dissatisfaction made comments that suggested a lack of knowledge about the scheme:

"Hardly any information available and no one has been able to apply for a bay for 2 years!"

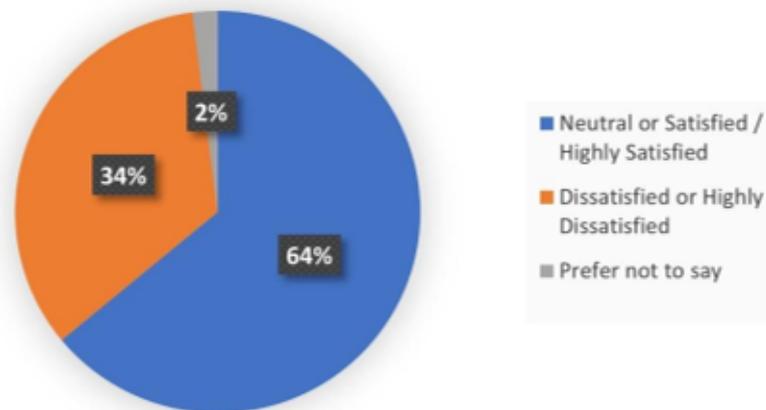
"I didn't know this existed. I can't find much information about it."

"No information until this survey".

"Without access to the internet this information is not easily available, it would require a face-to-face appointment at a One 4 All Contact Centre."

Information about eligibility for the scheme

Eligibility Criteria



Regarding information about eligibility for the scheme, a majority of respondents (64%) were neutral or satisfied/ highly satisfied with 34% dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied.

Information about traffic regulations

Similarly, 69% were neutral or satisfied/highly satisfied with the information about traffic regulations, with 30% dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied with this information. Not surprisingly, there were many negative comments about these aspects, mostly from residents who had previously been unsuccessful in their application for a DPPB, or had not been able to apply since the scheme has been suspended:

Comments

"I understand that if you have a disabled parking space granted outside your home anybody who is disabled in your street can use it. That's unfair. I understand that if you have a hardstanding area in your garden you are not entitled to a disabled parking space. Also unfair. I can't get from the hardstanding to the house."

"The scheme is ineffective and useless. It's not currently open and not taking applications with no news on why it when it will re open. Also it's only focuses on people with a mobility issue whereas some people have a blue badge and disability for cognitive reasons/impairments which are equally as debilitating yet are not considered which under the equality act is discrimination."

"More clarity on who the scheme is for is needed!"

"I think the information is fair but doesn't seem to be sympathetic to people's changing needs. Just because someone has a dropped kerb doesn't mean they wouldn't need a DPPB too. Often off-road parking cannot be used because the designated space is no longer large enough for a modern car because of their increasing sizes in recent times. Also, the disabled person may be unable to use their off-road parking space because it is not big for them to get in/out of the vehicle. They may also live with someone who would benefit from the off-road parking and therefore to remove the dropped kerb would put their household at a disadvantage and also the street because it may mean there's another car on the street that otherwise wouldn't be. And lastly, dropped kerbs are essential for wheelchair users, so they would need there to be a DPPB as well as a dropped kerbs for them to access their property. This information you have provided does not seem to take these things into consideration, nor the dynamic and progressive conditions that people suffer with."

"The scheme deals solely with physical problems and doesn't consider other disabilities which entitle a person to a blue badge under the Equality Act. Mental health issues such as autism and ADHD may

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

preclude people from leaving the house where the person gets really anxious about parking. We have a garage but it is already full and I am unable to take my vehicle which is too large for it. I would love a parking bay outside the house and even if the scheme were open it would only apply to physically disabled people and not those with mental health conditions where they get anxious about parking."

"Tighten up criteria. They should be for people with poor mobility- not every disabled person has poor mobility."

Specific questions about DPPB for successful or unsuccessful applicants

For people who had applied for a DPPB, either successfully or unsuccessfully, the survey included specific questions about their experience of the application and assessment process.

Regarding the question about the online application form, 40% of the 87 respondents were satisfied/highly satisfied, with 32% dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied. A further 20% were neutral on this question.

"Overall, the system worked well for me but maybe wouldn't be so good for people who have difficulty with online info etc."

"I found it a nice straight forward and quick process."

"The application process is only open for a very short time each year and some years is not available at all."

There was an even split between people who were satisfied (39%) and dissatisfied (38%) with the information and communication provided before the assessment, although more people (36%) stated that they were dissatisfied with the OT/OTA assessment compared to 30% who were satisfied. Respondents who were unsuccessful were more likely to be dissatisfied with the outcome of the assessment with regard to the information and communication about the decision to allocate a DPPB. Of the 88 people who responded to this question, 54% were dissatisfied/ highly dissatisfied compared to just 24% of people who said they were satisfied/ highly satisfied. This in part reflects the fact that there are more unsuccessful applicants who responded to this question than successful applicants and the comments received clearly demonstrate their frustration with the process.

"Useless! Refused my application due to having a garage at the bottom of my garden which is over 50 meters from my home."

"I have applied three times for a disabled parking bay and three times I have been disallowed they don't give you a reason to why you have been disallowed one, and the criteria is so high that you need to be dying before you get one, I believe the criteria shouldn't be so strict."

"Applied three times and refused every time. Bearing in mind that I am in a wheelchair constantly other than when I'm in bed."

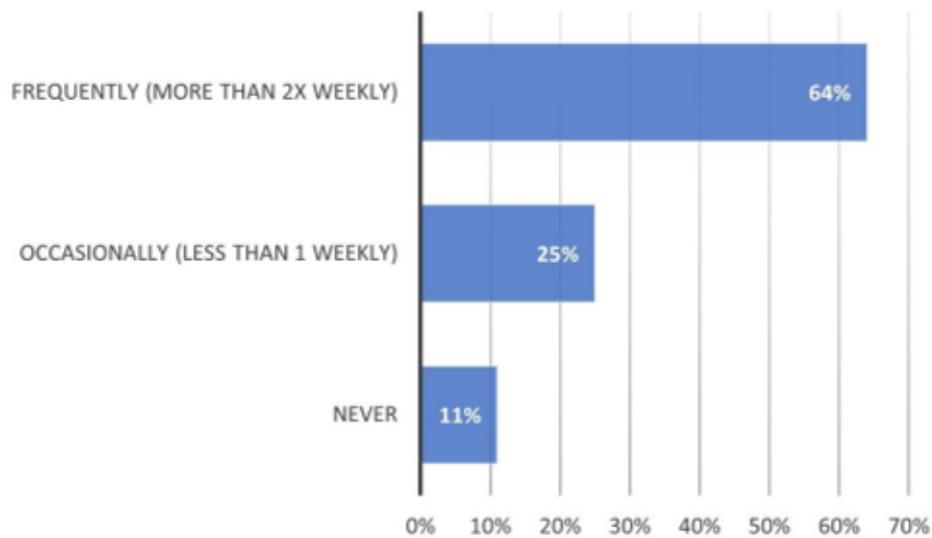
"Totally unfair being denied, after being diagnosed with a lifelong health condition, which will progress and get worse and has done since being denied a few years ago."

"Desperately needed a parking bay as we're both disabled and have one Motability car Most neighbours got 3 or 4 I have no chance most days and have to park away from home."

"My mother will be housebound without a parking bay or have to risk an accident by blocking the main road outside her house. It's an absolute disgrace that the council are not giving her a parking spot when she is wheelchair bound."

"We applied for a permit for our disabled son a few years ago, we were called and told we were a viable candidate for one, but the allocations that year had gone to others in a wheelchair, despite it being a serious safety concern with our son, and that our neighbour already had one was going against us as they took up too much room on the street."

Issues with allocated spaces (DPPB holders):



People allocated a DPPB were asked how often they were unable to use their allocated bay because someone else had parked in it. The majority who responded (64%) stated that this was a frequent occurrence which happened more than twice a week, with 25% reporting it happened less than once a week and 11% reporting that it had never happened.

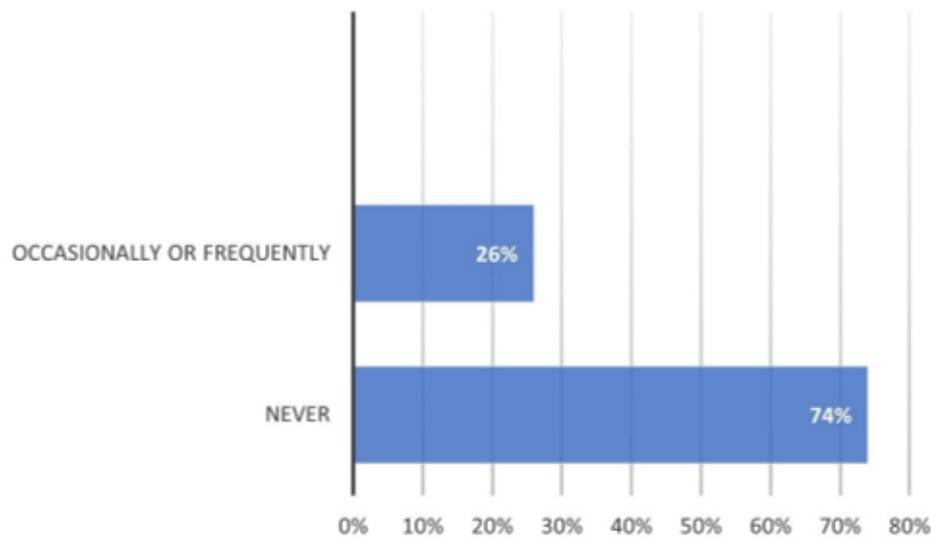
Comments:

"The people without mobility will park in the bay as they said that it not signed as disabled parking."

"Once in about 5 years. Asked the driver to move on and they did."

Despite the problems, most people (88%) said that they had not made a complaint, although all those that answered yes to this question reported being dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint.

Issues with allocated spaces (General Residents):



A more general question was included in the survey asking other residents if they ever had problems with a DPPB on their street. The majority of respondents (74%) stated that they never had a problem, with 26% reporting an occasional or frequent problem. The comments below highlight some of the issues experienced.

Comments

“My neighbour who has a dedicated DPPB, but feels it causes more negatives than positives as there is nothing legally to stop anyone parking in her dedicated bay (as regularly happens). The traffic wardens have no power to book anyone parking in her space etc.”

“Our neighbour has a space next door, it is ignored by parents collecting children from School, the poor lady's husband parks on the curb opposite as she cannot walk far, then gets a load of verbal from the ignorant parents when he points out their parked in a disabled pay. It is not clearly marked, the signs are small and the paint the same color on the floor, pointless them having it if it's never free when they come back.

“As a neighbour of a DPPB I have seen many vehicles using the bay without looking at the sign. I have tried to explain to some drivers and have been threatened with violence by some. One woman driver said she had a disabled blue badge and was entitled to use the space. I have seen and have photographs of the RCT wardens parking in this bay, so if they don't know it's a restricted bay then it proves the signage is useless.”

Complaints

Most people (76%) said that they had never made a complaint about a DPPB in their street. Of the 24% who said they had complained, 94% stated that they were dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint.

Comments:

“Confirmed what I knew. No authority can stop anyone parking in my neighbours dedicated DPB.”

“Nothing ever gets done.”

Satisfaction with the Council's DPPB Scheme

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

Only 18% of people responding to the survey expressed satisfaction with the Council's current DPPB scheme, with the majority (58%) stating that they were dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied. Again, there were many comments from people who had been unsuccessful in their application for a bay and felt very strongly that there was an insufficient number of bays, inadequate funding and that the system was unfair. This is illustrated by the comments below.

Comments

"Highly dissatisfied with the number of spaces allocated to the area. Rhondda Cynon Taff council could allow disabled people to purchase a parking permit annually."

"My husband has applied on 3 separate occasions & been unable to apply this past year. We were told by the assessor that only 12 spaces in the whole of RCT were awarded each year which as expected is vastly oversubscribed, but happy to take the £10 from each applicant. Consequently, my husband's condition is worsening each year & our road is getting busier & busier, with neighbours with multiple vehicles."

"It is very difficult for disabled residents who live in streets where neighbours have multiple vehicles."

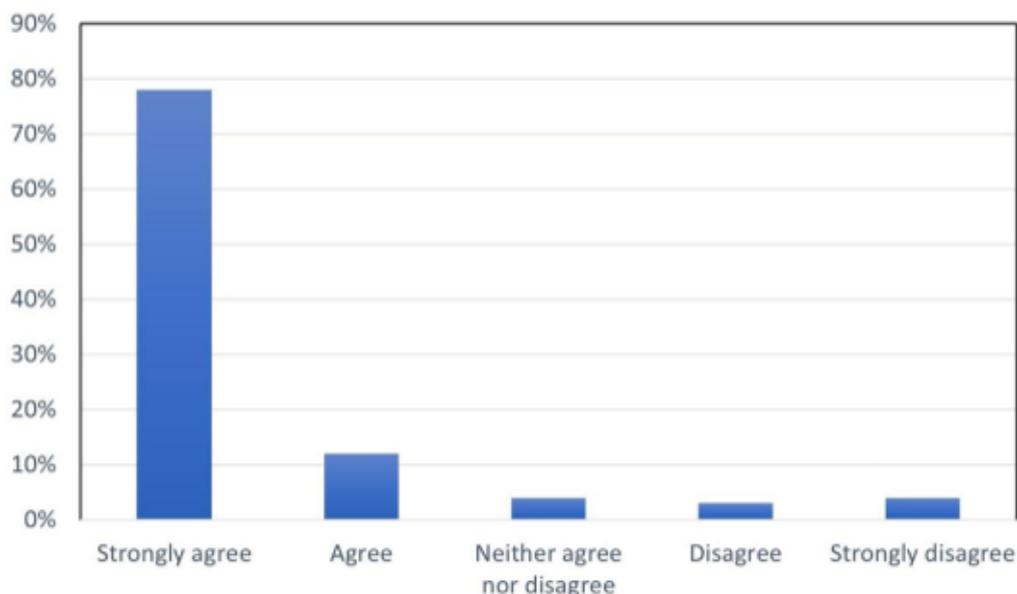
"Not made official complaint but have been told the council only allocate 12 per year. The amount of bays still outside houses where the disabled person has passed away years ago is a joke."

"For the size of RCT nowhere near enough bays are allocated for the year, and as I cannot walk more than 25 ft and tend to lose my balance very easily, 12 bays allocated for the year is ridiculous."

"It's ridiculous that only a few applications are approved. And not based on need."

"There is a very limited amount installed a year. I qualified and was told I should have one, but I won't based on a point score as only so many are installed a year—around one a month, which is ridiculous."

Should RCTCBC continue to offer DPPB's to eligible residents?



Despite the range of issues associated with the current DPPB scheme, a significant majority of respondents (78%) strongly agreed that the Council should continue to offer them to eligible residents. A further 12% agreed and 4% of respondents were neutral (neither agreed nor disagreed). Only a small minority of respondents said that they disagreed (3%) or strongly disagreed (4%) that the Council should continue to provide a DPPB scheme.

Comments

"This can mean the difference between a disabled person to socialise or remain isolated."

"Without the facility, I would be trapped in my house and my standard of wellbeing would be virtually zero."

"Absolutely they should be allocated. When there is a genuine need these bays are invaluable."

"It would be disastrous for disabled residents if the scheme were to be stopped. Whilst I appreciate that no-one should expect to be able to park directly outside their house, it can be essential for residents to try and live as normal a life with disabilities."

"Unless you live with a disability or live with a family member who has a disability, it can be very difficult to understand how your life is affected on a daily basis and how it can be impacted by simple things like a nearby parking space. Please keep this in mind when deciding whether to continue with this scheme."

"I think you need to do something different. Offer the bays only to those who absolutely need them for independence, and for those who are applying for other reasons look for alternatives."

"As long as they are for residents with severe mobility problems."

"Either enforce the residents parking permits better, or ensure the DPPB's are distributed correctly."

"Scheme should stop as it's not cost effective for the Council and no system for review."

Additional Information

A final question gave participants the option of raising other issues that they felt were important to the review. The responses were similar to many of the comments already highlighted above and included:

- That not continuing with a DPPB would penalise or further disadvantage disabled people.
- That bays or blue badges are abused or used by people who are not eligible.
- That bays remain when they are no longer in use.
- That there should be better monitoring of used and unused bays and more enforcement to ensure bays are used correctly.

6. Conclusion and Options Appraisal

There are a few issues that can inflame an entire community more than parking provision and the inadequacies of it. Parking problems manifest themselves in various ways, such as causing tensions between neighbours, obstruction of driveways and access routes. Trying to balance the parking needs of all residents while having regard to resources, safety and traffic management issues can be among the most contentious issues that local authorities across Wales and the rest of the UK must tackle. Within this challenging context, it is widely recognised that, for many disabled people, the ability to park their vehicle outside their property is necessary for them to be able to fully participate in the community, allowing them to work or to socialise in the knowledge that they will be able to park within close proximity to their home.

The detailed findings set out in this report suggest that while there is evidence that the current DPPB scheme provides a valued benefit to those disabled persons who have been allocated a bay, it is neither cost effective nor sustainable in the longer term given all the issues identified in this report. These include:

- The Council is unable to meet demand within existing resources. The current budget of £13K pa only provides for 12 bays a year to be installed. The cost to the Council if it had approved all 181 applications received during 2022/23 would have been £209,779.
- Members of the public have little knowledge about the scheme.
- A lack of effective gatekeeping in the initial stages means high numbers of people are assessed although they are unlikely to be successful in their applications.
- The scheme diverts resources away from other priorities such as OT waiting lists for people with palliative care or other urgent needs.
- Residents whose applications are unsuccessful (often repeatedly) express considerable dissatisfaction from
- Making all applicants pay the current £10 charge whether successful or not is potentially unfair.
- There is a lack of clarity about eligibility for the scheme and perceived unfairness in the way that the DPPB's are allocated.
- Having a set number of bays available detracts from adopting a needs-led approach,
- There is limited understanding about traffic prohibitions and how these may impact on whether someone is eligible for a bay or not.
- People are unaware that, under national road traffic legislation, all DPPBs on the highway are available for use by other Blue Badge holders.
- Because of limited transparency about the points system and insufficient information provided to unsuccessful applicants about why their application was refused, informed discussion is difficult to achieve.
- The entire process from application through to installation is long and complex.
- There is no review process in place to ensure that bays are still in use or are being used correctly.
- Monitoring or enforcement when spaces are abused or complaints are made is problematic.
- There are reports that numerous bays are not being removed when they are no longer in use.

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

Like most other Councils in Wales, RCTCBC is struggling to manage the demand for disabled parking bays. Most Councils are clear that the main aim in providing DPPB's is to help those disabled drivers whose mobility impairment mean that they cannot walk any significant distance and so need help in parking close to their homes. It is acknowledged that blue badges can be issued for many reasons, not all of which involve mobility impairment. Hence, it would be unreasonable and unrealistic for the Council to provide DPPB's for all blue badge holders.

In undertaking this review, the focus has been very much on gathering and analysing a range of information and data to address the following issues:

- Whether the existing DPPB service is fit for purpose and should remain.
- Whether the Council should cease providing DPPBs for residents.
- Whether the Council should continue to offer a DPPB scheme but with a revised policy which is fit for purpose to ensure that the limited resources available are allocated to meet those most in need.

Set out below are potential options for the Council to consider. Together with the findings from this review, these are intended to support decisions about the future provision of DPPBs in RCTCBC.

NB There may be other options which should not be excluded from any discussion about the future of the service.

Potential Options

Option 1 – Do nothing and retain the existing scheme.

The Council would continue to operate the existing policy and current processes for dealing with applications.

Benefits

- Public and staff awareness of current scheme.
- No additional budgetary costs.
- No changes required to existing process.
- The scheme remains open to all Blue Badge holders.
- Some provision for those in greatest need.
- The scheme could restart quickly, minimising further delays for new applicants.

Risks

- Does not address any of the issues highlighted in this review and summarised above.
- Widespread dissatisfaction from unsuccessful residents.
- The number of applicants will continue to increase because of:
 - an increase in car ownership, and multiple cars in many households,
 - rising numbers of older people who are seeking to carry on driving at an older age.
 - increasing numbers of blue badge holders and people with disabilities.
 - the demand for parking in a street will continue to outstrip the supply.
- A lack of resources to meet either existing or growing demand.

Option 2 - Cease the provision of DPPB's altogether.

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

The Council would not reopen the scheme to new applicants and, over time, seek to phase out the scheme altogether.

Benefits

- Budgetary savings to the Council of around £13k per annum.
- Significant efficiency savings in terms of officer time taken to administer the scheme.
- The ACE Team would have more time to focus on reducing waiting lists to meet priority needs.

Risks

- Likely to be a considerable backlash from disabled residents who are struggling with parking - see survey responses above.
- Potential for legal challenges under the Equality Act (2010). Also, see the Ombudsman's report (2006) and comments referred to earlier regarding Caerphilly's proposal to withdraw their DPPB scheme.
- Negative media attention.

Option 3 - Continue the provision of a DPPB scheme with the introduction of an amended policy and revised eligibility criteria.

In the absence of any additional funding, the Council should seek to adopt an amended policy in respect of the provision of DPPBs that contains revised eligibility criteria which are objective, fair, clear, workable and provide a rational basis for prioritising eligible applications in circumstances where these exceed the number of spaces that the Council has the resources to provide. Potentially, this will involve the following:

- A clear and more transparent process for applicants.
- The introduction of more robust criteria and information required to determine eligibility and ensure the best use of limited funds so that provision is focused on those with the greatest need. The Council will need to consider whether eligible applicants should be in receipt of specific benefits such as the enhanced mobility component of PIP (under 65's) or higher rate Attendance Allowance (over 65's) but, in doing so, it will also need to allow for exceptional circumstances for those (adults and children) whose disability means they cannot be left alone as they require constant supervision and care.
- The introduction of comprehensive guidance which sets out the stages of the process, timescales and important information about traffic prohibitions to inform the applicant and reduce any ambiguity.
- A more effective screening process at the outset including the earlier involvement of Traffic Management to screen out applicants where traffic restrictions would prohibit the installation of a DPPB.
- The introduction of a system to review the use/abuse of DPPBs and introduce appropriate measures to combat identified problems including the removal of bays that are no longer in use.
- A review of the current £10 charge for all applicants and whether there should be an increased charge levied at successful applicants only with the potential for raising funds which could be used to provide more spaces.
- Clear written information provided to unsuccessful applicants about why the Council did not approve their application for a DPPB.

Benefits

- The Council continues to recognise the value of providing DPPBs for those in greatest need.
- A robust and transparent written policy and guidance to reduce any ambiguity around eligibility.
- A more streamlined and effective process for managing applications.

Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays for RCT CBC

- No significant increase in resources required.
- A reduction in the number of unsuccessful applicants.
- Reduced demands on the ACE Team, who would have more time to focus on reducing waiting lists to meet priority needs.
- More robust systems to review the use/abuse of DPPBs and the speedy removal of bays that are no longer in use.

Risks

- Negative response from blue badge holders no longer able to apply under revised criteria.
- Still unlikely to meet all the demand within the resources available.
- Some investment required to provide a revised written policy, procedures, and guidance.
- Further public consultation required regarding any amendments to eligibility and charges.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM INCLUDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

(Revised March 2021)

Please refer to the current Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this document. If you would like further guidance, please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team on 01443 444529.

An equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

This document will also contribute towards our duties to create a More Equal Wales within the

- Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

The '[A More Equal Wales – Mapping Duties](#)' guide highlights the alignment of our duties in respect of the above-mentioned legislation.

SECTION 1 – PROPOSAL DETAILS

Lead Officer: Mari Ropstad

Service Director: Sian Nowell

Service Area: Adult Services

Date: 14/05/2025

1.a) What are you assessing for impact?

| Strategy/Plan | | Service Re-Model/Discontinuation of Service | Policy/Procedure | Practice | Information/Position Statement |
|--------------------------|--|---|------------------|----------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | <input type="checkbox"/> | √ | √ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

1.b) What is the name of the proposal?

Revision to Disabled Person’s Parking Bay Arrangements.

1.c) Please provide an overview of the proposal providing any supporting links to reports or documents.

The existing Disabled Persons Parking Bay scheme was introduced in 2004 and subsequently amended in 2015 following a review. Since its introduction the number of people applying for a parking bay has increased significantly, with 193 received during the last round in 2022/2023.

Historically, 12 parking bays have been awarded each year based on applicants meeting some basic eligibility criteria and a scored functional assessment from an Occupational Therapist/Occupational Therapy Assistant based within the Adaptations and Community Equipment team. Since its introduction, 269 disabled parking bays have been installed in the County Borough. Of these, 115 have been removed, leaving around 154 disabled parking bays in situ.

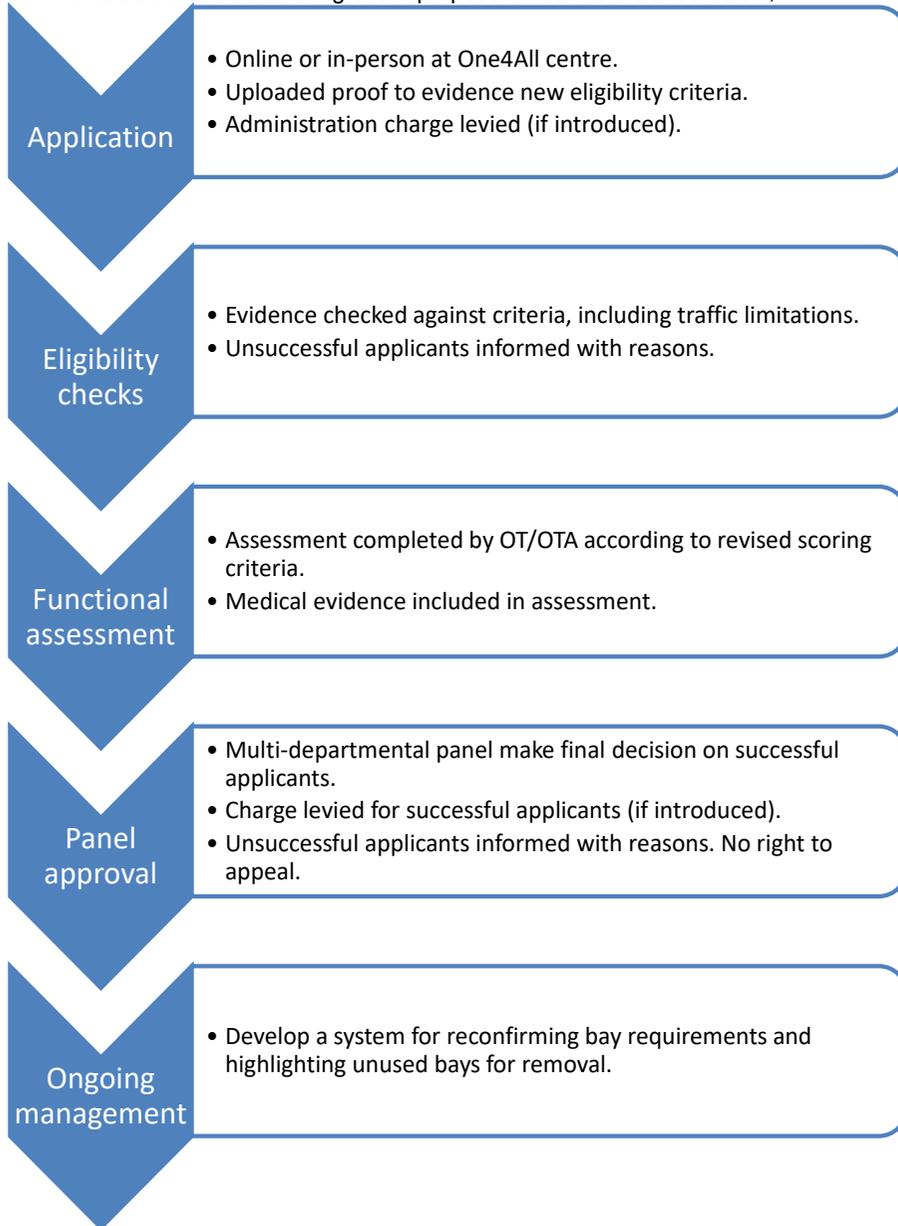
Rhondda Cynon Taff's process for providing individual Disabled Person's Parking Bays (DPPBs) faces significant challenges. The current scheme levies a £10 non-refundable application fee for all applicants. There is no right of appeal, but applicants can reapply during the next round. Occupational Therapists (OTs) assess and prioritise these applications, often leading to dissatisfaction among those who do not receive an individual disabled parking bay allocation. Additionally, public concerns about the allocation process persist. The process involves not only OT assessments but also coordination with traffic authorities for installation and maintenance. This complexity coupled with a level of public dissatisfaction highlighted the need for a review to explore the potential to refine the assessment and eligibility processes and the wider mechanisms involved in the delivery of the parking bay allocation scheme. The current scheme was suspended in September 2023 pending a full external review of the Council's current policy for residential disabled parking bays to inform the options available regarding the future provision of residential disabled parking bays.

The findings of the review by Practice Solutions, dated January 2025, recommended RCT Council continue to offer a scheme for disabled parking bays with revised policy and eligibility criteria to meet the recommendations from the review, including:

- Develop a clear and more transparent process for applicants.
- Introduce more robust criteria and information required to determine eligibility to ensure the best use of limited funds.
- Introduce comprehensive guidance containing the stages of the process, timescales and information about traffic prohibitions for the applicant.
- Introduce a more efficient screening process at the outset.
- Introduce a system to review the use/abuse of disabled parking bays, including removal of bays no longer in use.
- Consider removing the application fee and replacing with a new charging strategy.
- Provide clear written reasons for refusal of a disabled bay to unsuccessful applicants.

As evidenced in the Practice Solutions report, Local Authorities across Wales operate various charging models with most not charging at all, some requiring permits to be paid for annually or an administration fee, and two local authorities charging successful applicants £250 and £689 respectively. The review carried out by Practice Solutions estimated the cost of each parking bay for the last 3 years the scheme was operating to be £1,159 per bay, which includes the legal notices, erection of signs, road markings and traffic management, but excludes the costs incurred from management time, assessments or the application process and as such, based on the cost from each department in the table above, the real cost of each bay is around £3,474.

The basic schematic drawing of the proposed model is included below,



The proposed new eligibility criteria are:

- Individual must possess a valid permanent Blue Badge.
- Individual must have a car registered at their address and the registered keeper must live there.
- Individual must not have access to off-road parking.
- There are no traffic prohibitions on the road directly outside the main entrance to the property and it would be safe to install a disabled parking bay.
- Individual must supply medical evidence from a Consultant, Specialist Nurse or Physiotherapist specifically addressing their difficulties related to mobility and parking.
- Individual must be in receipt of one of the below benefits:
 - Higher Rate Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA).
 - War Pension Mobility Supplement.
 - Attendance Allowance.

The eligibility criteria will need to be evidenced by people uploading or supplying relevant documents and this will be checked early in the process. Similarly, traffic checks will be completed earlier in the process before a full functional assessment is completed for those who meet the criteria and pass the traffic checks.

The functional assessment will be based on scored criteria, which will be reviewed to take account of the new process and amended eligibility criteria. The medical evidence supplied will inform and support the assessment. Any costs associated with gathering this evidence will need to be funded by people and no costs incurred will be reimbursed by the disabled parking bay scheme.

A panel will make the final decision on successful bays with any planning and Traffic Regulation Order requirements to follow. As such it could take up to 2 years from application before a disabled bay is installed.

The decision about charging for the disabled parking bays (refer to Section 8) will impact on whether the bays are installed via a Traffic Regulation Order for anyone with a Blue Badge to use, or as a resident permit parking bay. This in turn will determine how the ongoing management of the bays in terms of use and continuing need can be best organised.

Due to the discretionary nature of the scheme and the difficulties inherent in managing an appeals process alongside a live application scheme it is suggested there be no right of appeal to the panel's decision, however applicants could apply again during the next round.

| Option | Cost to applicant | Benefits | Risks |
|--|--|--|---|
| Option 1: No charge | £0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable to applicants. No need to consider permit bays as opposed to TRO. Problems with non-payment avoided. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No income generation to support the scheme. |
| Option 2: A £10 administration charge at the point of application. | £10 for all | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some income generation to support the scheme. Fee is affordable. Fee has been levied for several years. No need to consider permit bays as opposed to TRO. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People may not appreciate paying just to apply. Payments require processing. External review suggested this charge should be reconsidered. |
| Option 3: A 10% charge of the cost of bay installation for successful applicants | £115 (currently) if successful | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some income generation to support the scheme. A percentage charge would move in line with installation costs each year. Mobility benefits received (see eligibility criteria) could reasonably be expected to be used to cover the cost. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be unaffordable for some. Would need to consider resident permit parking bay as opposed to TRO. Payments require processing. |
| Option 4 (preferred option): A £10 administration charge at the point of application, plus a 10% charge of the cost of bay installation for successful applicants. | £10 for all + £115 (currently) if successful | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some income generation to support the scheme. Changing bays to permit bays would make ongoing management easier by requiring reapplication for permit. Admin fee is affordable to all. Admin fee has been levied for several years. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A higher fee could act as a deterrent to apply, affecting socio-economic equality. Fee might be unaffordable to some. Might be challenging to establish a rationale for the fee charged. Bays likely need to be permit bays rather than general use disabled bays. People may not appreciate paying twice. Payments will require processing. External review suggested admin charge should be reconsidered. |

Links to documents are provided below:

[insert here](#)

[Include fia version here](#)

Plan to Inform

We will inform people about the changes and consult with them through surveys, drop ins, letters and FAQ.

We will promote the Active Offer to encourage the use of Welsh Language throughout this.

We will produce materials in a range of accessible formats such as Easy Read, large print.

We will tell individuals, carers, families and staff what we intend to do.

Future consultation

Initiate an 8-week targeted consultation starting on June 16th 2025 to seek the views of staff, members of the public and other key stakeholders on the proposed new model, focusing upon asking people:

- what matters to them in respect of the changes, including:
 - what they think of our intentions
 - what they need us to tell them
 - what haven't we thought of
-
- Following this a further report will be submitted to Cabinet in the autumn of 2025 detailing the outcome of the proposed targeted consultation prior to any final decision being made regarding service changes.

1.d) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

There is no statutory duty on Local Authorities to provide a scheme for disabled parking bays and it is a discretionary service. However, external review completed by Practice Solutions suggests that section 149 (4) of the Equality Act 2010 should be considered, in particular “the effect of a lack of parking spaces near [disabled people’s] residences and their freedom of movement and travel”. As such a DPPB scheme could be considered a public sector duty.

Each bay is installed under the Traffic Regulation Act and therefore has its own traffic regulation order, enforceable by the Council. Currently, anyone with a Blue Badge can utilise the bays.

Wider Legislative and Regulatory requirements that govern our work including specifically for adult services include:

- Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out our responsibilities as a local authority for improving the wellbeing of people who need care and support, and unpaid carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.
- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- A Healthier Wales, Our Plan for Health & Social Care, 2020.
- People and Communities priority in the Council’s corporate plan to support residents to live independent and fulfilling lives.

1.e) Please outline who this proposal affects:

- Service users
- Employees
- Wider community

SECTION 2 – SCREENING TEST – IS A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?

Screening is used to determine whether the initiative has positive, negative or neutral impacts upon protected groups. Where negative impacts are identified for protected groups then a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups. Please take an intersectional approach in recognising an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

| <u>Protected Characteristics</u> | Does the proposal have any positive, negative, or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---------------------------------|----|-----------|-------|-----|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-----|---|
| Age (<i>Specific age groups i.e. young people or older people</i>) | Positive and negative | Individuals of all ages, including young individuals and their families, will be influenced by this proposal. However, it is expected to particularly impact on older adults, especially those aged 50-59, due to the rising number of elderly in our population. This increase highlights the general effects of aging on mobility and disability, as mentioned in the adjacent column. Around a third of the people who responded to the survey Practice Solutions undertook gave their age, with 57% of these being over 55 years of age. The survey found strong support for bays to continue to be | As of May 20, 2025, RCT WCCIS data indicates that there are 45 individuals with active parking bays, with the majority being between 50 and 79 years old. <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Total Clients with Parking Bays</td> <td>45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Age Group</td> <td>Total</td> </tr> <tr> <td><18</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18-29</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30-49</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50-59</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60-69</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>70-79</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>80+</td> <td>2</td> </tr> </table> | Total Clients with Parking Bays | 45 | Age Group | Total | <18 | 6 | 18-29 | 2 | 30-49 | 4 | 50-59 | 11 | 60-69 | 10 | 70-79 | 10 | 80+ | 2 |
| Total Clients with Parking Bays | 45 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Age Group | Total | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <18 | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18-29 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 30-49 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 50-59 | 11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 60-69 | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 70-79 | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 80+ | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | | <p>offered (80%).</p> <p>Positive Impacts As the proposal both clarifies and accelerates the process, it is likely to be better understood by individuals who are considering whether to apply and those who submit an application</p> <p>Negative Impact As the application will be managed online, there may be people in the older age group with less technical experience and confidence in such a system.</p> <p>To mitigate this, we will offer people the opportunity to make their application and produce supporting documents at the One for All Centres in our communities.</p> <p>On a wider note, there are 9 mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion modules on the Source (RCTCBC's staff learning hub) that seek to improve the awareness and cultural competence of our workforce. This training will raise awareness and enable staff to effectively support people with protected characteristics, not just in relation to age, rather across all groups considered in this</p> | <p>The Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's Corporate Plan 2043-2030 suggests that by 2030 there will be a 11.7% increase in population of aged 65+ (52,884) of which 6,573 are of aged 85+ (21.5% increase) – <i>population projections by Local Authority and year 2018-based, StatsWales</i>. This historical data suggests a consistent demand for support services within these age ranges, aligning with the projected increase in the older population by 2030 in Rhondda Cynon Taf.</p> <p>Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays, A report for RCTCBC, Practice Solutions Ltd, January 2025.</p> <p>The policy is influenced by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's Corporate Plan 2043-2030 priority of 'People & Communities'- to safeguard our most vulnerable residents of all ages providing protection, care and support when they need it most so they can maximise their potential.</p> |
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Commented [MW1]: Use historical data as evidence - what age range for people that have applied/granted in the past

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| | | Impact Assessment. | <p>The CPA rapid review (2016) of diversity in older age identifies the challenges faced by older people particularly with regards to wellbeing and access to positive support.</p> <p>The RCT Adult Social Care Strategy (2024-2030) acknowledges that we will experience increased demands relating to older people. This demographic picture includes an increase in people living with complex needs. One of the Council's priorities focuses our effort to facilitate joined-up services for people which will particularly benefit people with complex needs.</p> <p>Current data of individuals in receipt of a service in adult services (WCCIS 24/6/24Age Group and Gender for all Individuals in receipt of Care and Support:</p> |
|--|--|--------------------|---|

| | | | <p>Age Group and Gender for all Care and Support service users</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Female</th> <th>Male</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>18-30</td> <td>215</td> <td>318</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31-40</td> <td>200</td> <td>230</td> </tr> <tr> <td>41-50</td> <td>197</td> <td>202</td> </tr> <tr> <td>51-60</td> <td>274</td> <td>266</td> </tr> <tr> <td>61-70</td> <td>257</td> <td>266</td> </tr> <tr> <td>71-80</td> <td>470</td> <td>345</td> </tr> <tr> <td>81-90</td> <td>759</td> <td>392</td> </tr> <tr> <td>91+</td> <td>366</td> <td>85</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Female | Male | 18-30 | 215 | 318 | 31-40 | 200 | 230 | 41-50 | 197 | 202 | 51-60 | 274 | 266 | 61-70 | 257 | 266 | 71-80 | 470 | 345 | 81-90 | 759 | 392 | 91+ | 366 | 85 |
|---|----------|---|--|--|--------|------|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| | Female | Male | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18-30 | 215 | 318 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 31-40 | 200 | 230 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 41-50 | 197 | 202 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 51-60 | 274 | 266 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 61-70 | 257 | 266 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 71-80 | 470 | 345 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 81-90 | 759 | 392 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 91+ | 366 | 85 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Disability <i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i></p> | Positive | <p>This proposal is likely to affect approximately 10 individuals with a disability who have active parking bays.</p> <p>Positive Impact The revised criteria, as follows, clarifies the medical and benefit requirements making it easier for people to gauge their personal circumstances before applying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals must possess a valid permanent Blue Badge. • Individuals must supply medical evidence from a Consultant, Specialist Nurse or | <p>The RCT Data Library denotes that 23.6% of the population within RCT in 2021 were classed as disabled under the Equality Act.</p> <p>The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out our responsibilities as a local authority for improving the wellbeing of people who need care and support, and unpaid carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.</p> <p>By proactively addressing potential barriers and ensuring</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| <p>Disability (people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</p> | | <p>Physiotherapist specifically addressing their difficulties related to mobility and parking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individual must be in receipt of one of the benefits below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher Rate Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA). - War Pension Mobility Supplement. - Attendance Allowance. <p>The above seeks to prioritise those with greatest need which feedback raised concerns over when Practice Solutions Ltd sought views on the current approach:</p> <p><u>Feedback from staff</u></p> <p><i>Of the staff interviewed as part of this review, most felt that the Council's existing DPPB scheme was extremely challenging, resource intensive and not necessarily targeting those in greatest need.</i></p> | <p>that support structures are in place, RCTCBC can promote fair and equitable access to necessary services, supporting the rights and autonomy of those with mental health conditions. In line with Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's Corporate Plan 2043-2030 priority of 'People & Communities'</p> <p>Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays, A report for RCTCBC, Practice Solutions Ltd, January 2025.</p> |
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| | | | |
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| <p>Disability <i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i></p> | | <p><u>Feedback from telephone Interviews with successful applicants</u></p> <p><i>Successful applicants who had been allocated a DPPB over the last 5 years and who were interviewed as part of the review spoke of the enormous difference a bay had made to their lives.</i></p> <p>Of those who responded to the survey Practice Solutions undertook, 71% said they were disabled.</p> <p><u>Feedback from telephone Interviews with unsuccessful applicants</u></p> <p><i>While most said that they had found the OT staff very helpful, they all felt extremely frustrated about the lack of explanation/reason for their application not being granted. Some said they had never received a letter telling them the outcome of their application and most felt that the process was unfair and that the eligibility criteria should be made clearer.</i></p> <p>Looking to the future, RCTCBC aims</p> | <p>Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays, A report for RCTCBC, Practice Solutions Ltd, January 2025.</p> |
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| | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|--|
| <p>Disability <i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i></p> | <p>Negative</p> | <p>to implement clear communication strategies regarding the new process. By ensuring that information is accessible and available in multiple formats, individuals and families, including those from diverse backgrounds will be better equipped to understand the process. This inclusive approach can create a supportive environment that informs the wider community and individuals with disabilities about challenges faced and support available.</p> <p>Negative</p> <p>Some people may be charged for the medical evidence supplied by a Consultant, Specialist Nurse or Physiotherapist while others could receive it free of charge as part of their ongoing treatment. The Cabinet paper states that any charges incurred will not be refunded or met by the LA. This could have a negative financial impact on a group that already faces financial hardship.</p> <p>Obtaining this evidence will depend a lot on the individual's personal situation. Some people, particularly with degenerative conditions, will have</p> | <p>https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/2023/1s%20Wales%20Fairer%20Equality%20and%20Human%20Rights%20Monitor-%20English-%20accessible%20PDF.pdf</p> |
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| | Positive | <p>a specialist nurse attached to them who works with them long term. It would be possible to see a physio privately to obtain this letter. A consultant might be tricky unless they happen to be seeing one at the time.</p> <p>The change aims to ensure that the limited spaces are assigned to the people most in need. These people are more likely to have a close working relationship with their health professionals. The evidence will also compliment the functional assessment and provide additional medical evidence, which we do not currently gather, to evidence the need for a parking bay.</p> <p>The impact of requiring evidence would potentially be that people will require clear communication months before the application window opens to enable as many as possible to gather this evidence. The intention will be for a promotional phase about 3 months before applications open to give people enough time to arrange any appointments, ask their health</p> | |
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| | Positive | <p>professionals and plan ahead financially if costs are incurred.</p> <p>Those with more significant health conditions will be in a stronger position to apply due to their regular contact with these health professionals, thereby helping to manage demand for spaces and the number of unsuccessful applicants. Costs may be prohibitive for some, however as mobility-related benefits are a requirement to apply, people may use such funds to cover this cost.</p> <p>Another impact will be the robustness of the assessments and the increased amount of evidence from different sources will strengthen the panel's decision-making on successful bays.</p> | |
| <p>Gender Reassignment <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth including non-binary identities)</i></p> | Neutral (Not possible to determine at this stage) | <p>The introduction of this has no direct actions that will affect Gender Reassignment as a characteristic. However, we recognise that we work with trans and non-binary individuals, and numbers will potentially increase in future so we will consider and review this accordingly.</p> | <p>Across Rhondda Cynon Taf, according to the ONS (2021b), 0.36% of people aged 16 years and over have a gender identity different from their sex registered at birth.</p> <p>We currently work with a small number of trans and non-binary individuals. Exact numbers aren't reported due to potential of identification. (Source:</p> |

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| | | <p>We will ensure that all individuals have equitable access to necessary services without facing additional barriers related to their gender identity. Ongoing monitoring of the policy's impact will be essential to ensure that it remains fair and equitable for all. Although we can't determine the impact at this moment, we will continue to monitor the situation closely and update impact assessments when needed.</p> | <p>service user data, WCCIS.)</p> <p>The RCT Adult Social Care Strategy (2024-2030) aims to support people with eligible needs, achieve what matters to them in their lives this is in addition to ensuring our staff have appropriate training and leadership so that we are able to support people positively, and ensure our services and information are accessible to everyone.</p> |
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| <u>Protected Characteristics</u> | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|---|---|--|--|
| Marriage or Civil Partnership <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i> | Neutral (Not possible to determine at this stage) | Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that this group will be disproportionately affected by the changes to this policy. However, this will be monitored and and if a disproportionate/negative/a diverse impact arises, needs will be addressed, and this Equality Impact Assessment updated accordingly. | |
| Pregnancy and Maternity <i>(women who are pregnant/on maternity leave)</i> | Neutral | <p>Currently, while there is no evidence to suggest that this group will be disproportionately affected by the introduction of new arrangement, we will remain sensitive to the needs of families who may be managing multiple responsibilities, including caring for children or pregnant individuals.</p> <p>We will provide clear communication about the change, ensuring that all families are aware of their options and if a disproportionate/negative/a diverse impact arises, needs will be addressed, and this Equality Impact Assessment updated accordingly.</p> | |

| <p>Race (ethnic and racial groups i.e. minority ethnic groups, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</p> | <p>Neutral</p> | <p>Families from lower socio-economic backgrounds may struggle to adjust to the new arrangements, which could disproportionately affect racial minorities who are statistically more likely to experience financial hardship. There may be also disparities in awareness and understanding of the process among different racial and socio-economic groups including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unequal access to education and resources • Systemic inequalities and biases in information dissemination • Historical discrimination leading to distrust in systems • Language barriers and cultural differences <p>The barriers for this group include systemic discrimination, language differences, and lack of representation. These can be mitigated by implementing supportive measures/policies that promote inclusiveness, providing language support services, and ensuring diverse representation in decision-making.</p> <p>The Council can work towards ensuring that all individuals have</p> | <p>In 2021, a total of 96.7% of RCT residents were white according to the RCT Data Library.</p> <p>As of May 20, 2025, RCT WCCIS data indicates that the majority of those with active parking bays are White British:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1285 571 1655 718"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ethnicity</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Any White Background, including Welsh, E</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chinese</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Information not obtained</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not stated (inactive)</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>White British</td> <td>29</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Data from the WCCIS database demonstrates that individuals in receipt of a service and carers are predominantly white British (80.9%) there are 8.13 reporting as white other and 1.02% reporting a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. 9.95% have no ethnic background reported.</p> <p>Families from lower socio-economic backgrounds often face intensified challenges due to various intersecting factors, as highlighted in the Welsh Government's 2021 report, "Implementing the Socio-</p> | Ethnicity | Total | Any White Background, including Welsh, E | 8 | Chinese | 1 | Information not obtained | 6 | Not stated (inactive) | 1 | White British | 29 |
|---|----------------|--|--|-----------|-------|--|---|---------|---|--------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|---------------|----|
| Ethnicity | Total | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Any White Background, including Welsh, E | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chinese | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Information not obtained | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Not stated (inactive) | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White British | 29 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | | <p>equitable access to necessary services, regardless of their racial or ethnic background.</p> <p>By proactively addressing the identified concerns and implementing supportive measures, the Council can work towards ensuring that all individuals have equitable access to necessary services, regardless of their racial or ethnic background.</p> <p>Impact upon specific groups will be monitored and if a disproportionate/negative/ diverse impact arises, needs will be addressed, and this Equality Impact Assessment updated accordingly.</p> <p>As referred to in the Age section above, 9 mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion modules seek to improve the awareness and cultural competence of our workforce. This training will enable staff to effectively support people with protected characteristic.</p> | <p>economic Duty: A review of evidence on socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome.” It showed racial minorities are more susceptible to financial difficulties, which restrict their access to essential resources. Data from the RCT Data Library shows that the average ranking for access to services on the WMID for all RCT is 1,105 out of 1,909, suggesting limited resources and exacerbating their struggles. Overlapping social categories such as race and class create interconnected systems of disadvantage, impacting access to services and involvement in public life.</p> <p>The Well-being of Wales 2023: Ethnicity and Well-being report has found people from ethnic minority backgrounds face many disparities including access to resources.</p> <p>Notably, the ADSS report (2023) "Delivering Social Care in an Anti-Racist Wales" presents recommendations that must be addressed. Our RCT</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

| | | | Adult Social Care Strategy 2024-2030 addresses these priorities in their service plans. This is especially important for effectively managing the communication needs of individuals from ethnic minorities, drawing on the insights from those with lived experience. | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--------|-------|--------|----|------|----|
| Religion or Belief <i>(people with different religions and philosophical beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i> | Neutral (Not possible to determine at this stage) | There is no evidence to suggest that this group will be disproportionately affected by the introduction of this change. However, if a disproportionate/negative/ diverse impact arises, this will be addressed, and this Equality Impact Assessment updated accordingly. | | | | | | | |
| Sex <i>(women and men, girls and boys)</i> | Neutral (Not possible to determine at this stage) | 66% of people who responded to the survey Practice Solutions undertook Were female, 32 % male, 3% preferred not to say. The survey found strong support for bays to continue to be offered (80%). WCCIS data shows there are more males than females with active parking bays in RCT. Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that this group will be disproportionately affected by the introduction of this change. | The proportion of females to males within RCT appeared to be equal in 2021, as the RCT Data Library recorded that there 51.1% of residents were females and 48.9% of residents were male. WCCIS Data on Active Parking Bays (May 2025): <table border="1" data-bbox="1285 1139 1655 1214"> <thead> <tr> <th>Gender</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>27</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> Sex by Age Group (RCT) as a % of the population of 237654 | Gender | Total | Female | 18 | Male | 27 |
| Gender | Total | | | | | | | | |
| Female | 18 | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 27 | | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | | <p>However, if a disproportionate / negative / diverse impact arises, needs will be addressed, and this Equality Impact Assessment updated accordingly</p> | <p>people that completed the census 2021</p> <p>Male: Aged under 15 19.2%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aged 16 to 24 years 11.5% - Aged 25 to 34 years 12.9.0% - Aged 35 to 49 years 18.2% - Aged 50 to 64 years 20.3% - Aged 65 years above 18.5% <p>Female:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aged under 15 17.7% Aged 16 to 24 years 10.1% Aged 25 to 34 years 13.1% Aged 35 to 49 years 18.4% Aged 50 to 64 years 20.1% Aged 65 years above 20.7% <p>Review of Disabled Person's Parking Bays, A report for RCTCBC, Practice Solutions Ltd, January 2025.</p> |
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| <p>Sexual Orientation (<i>bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight</i>)</p> | <p>Neutral (Not possible to determine at this stage)</p> | <p>Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that the introduction of this change will disproportionately affect any specific group, including those identifying as bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight, or LGBTQ+.</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, have equitable access to necessary services without encountering additional barriers. It is our responsibility to create an inclusive environment where everyone feels supported and valued.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring of the impact of this policy will be crucial to ensure it remains fair and equitable for all individuals. If we identify any disproportionate or negative impacts on our LGBTQ+ individuals in receipt of a service or any other group, we will take immediate action to address these needs. The Equality Impact Assessment will be updated accordingly to reflect any necessary changes, ensuring that the proposed change does not unintentionally disadvantage individuals based on their sexual orientation.</p> | <p>According to the RCT Data Library, in 2021 the percentage proportion of residents that identified as Straight/Heterosexual, Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Other sexual orientation within RCT compared to Wales did not differ, with 1.5%.</p> |
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In addition, due to Council commitments made to the following groups of people we would like to consider impacts on them:

| | Does the proposal have any positive, negative, or neutral impacts | Provide details of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Armed Forces Community <i>(anyone who is serving, has served, family members and the bereaved)</i></p> | <p>Neutral</p> | <p>The proposal is not anticipated to impact disproportionately on this group of people.</p> <p>It includes War Pension Mobility Supplement in its criteria.</p> <p>For those in the armed forces community who may be adjusting to civilian life including accessing and paying for services, RCTBC has a dedicated Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer / Veteran Officer to provide support and advice to this group of people.</p> | <p>According to the RCT Data library, in 2021 only 4.1% of RCT residents are serving/have served in the UK Armed forces. This is slightly proportionately less than the percentage of those across Wales that are currently/have served (4.5% of residents).</p> <p>Armed Forces Covenant: annual report 2022 to 2023 – one of the recommendations of this document is to ensure Veterans mental health treatment in Wales is meeting current need</p> <p>The Armed Forces Act 2021 places a legal duty on specified public bodies to have due regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when exercising certain statutory functions in the fields of</p> |

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| | | | healthcare, education and housing. |
| <p>Carers <i>(anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i></p> | Positive | <p>Only 3 individuals with Active Parking Bays are carers.</p> <p>The proposal aims to provide a streamlined process with greater clarity and speed.</p> <p>The simplified process may reduce anxieties around applications therefore some carers may be relieved and reassured by this, particularly if they are already facing stressors due to caregiving responsibilities.</p> <p>Figures in the table show that: a higher percentage of carers in the area are female.</p> <p>a high proportion sit within the older age group of 51 yrs +</p> <p>Over a quarter of unpaid carers (UK), identify as having a disability, which is higher than the non-carer population, furthermore almost a third of</p> | <p>According to the RCT Data Library, 11.1% of the population of RCT provide between 9 – 50+ hours of unpaid care a week.</p> <p>As of May 20, 2025, RCT WCCIS data indicates that 42 individuals with active parking bays are not carers, while 3 individuals are.</p> <p>RCT WCCIS Data (June 2024) - Age Group and Gender for carers with Carers Support Plan:</p> |

| | | <p>carers in Wales identify as having a disability.</p> <p>Therefore, the cumulative effect will be monitored and this Impact Assessment updated accordingly.</p> | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Female</th> <th>Male</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>18-30</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>41-50</td> <td>6</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>51-60</td> <td>13</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>61-70</td> <td>17</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>71-80</td> <td>24</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>81-90</td> <td>11</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>91+</td> <td></td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>73</td> <td>44</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>State of Caring 2022 report / Carers UK 27% of unpaid carers consider themselves disabled.</p> <p>Census Day 2021 more unpaid carers in Wales were disabled (29.8%) than non-carers (21.4%)</p> | | Female | Male | 18-30 | 2 | 2 | 41-50 | 6 | 3 | 51-60 | 13 | 8 | 61-70 | 17 | 7 | 71-80 | 24 | 14 | 81-90 | 11 | 9 | 91+ | | 1 | Total | 73 | 44 |
|--------------|-----------|---|--|--|--------|------|-------|---|---|-------|---|---|-------|----|---|-------|----|---|-------|----|----|-------|----|---|-----|--|---|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| | Female | Male | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18-30 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 41-50 | 6 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 51-60 | 13 | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 61-70 | 17 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 71-80 | 24 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 81-90 | 11 | 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 91+ | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 73 | 44 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

If the initial screening test has identified negative impacts, then a full equality impact assessment (section 4) **must** be undertaken. However, if after undertaking the above screening test you determine a full equality impact assessment is not relevant, please provide an adequate explanation below:

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision? Yes No

Name: Mari Ropstad

Position: Head of Service

Date: 07/05/25

Please forward a copy of this completed screening form to the Diversity and Inclusion Team.

PLEASE NOTE – there is a separate impact assessment for Welsh Language. This must also be completed for proposals.

Section 3 Socio-economic Duty needs only to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. Definition of a 'strategic nature' is available on page 6 of the [Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty](#) Welsh Government Guidance.

SECTION 3 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (STRATEGIC DECISIONS ONLY)

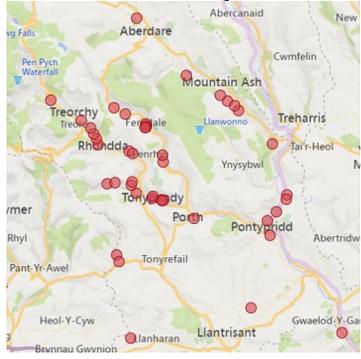
The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single parents and vulnerable families• Pensioners• Looked after children.• Homeless people• Students• Single adult households | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People living in the most deprived areas in Wales.• People with low literacy and numeracy• People who have experienced the asylum system.• People misusing substances.• People of all ages leaving a care setting• People involved in the criminal justice system |
|---|--|

| | | | |
|--|----------|--|---|
| | | Regular monitoring of the uptake and drop off to help ensure equitable access to services. | |
| <p>Low and / or No Wealth <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i></p> | Negative | <p>Negative Impacts:</p> <p>The new process may discourage individuals and families to consider applying for a Disabled Person's Parking Bay if the charge to successful applicants is introduced. This may disproportionately affect disabled people and those from racial minority groups who are statistically more likely to experience financial hardship.</p> <p>Mitigations:</p> <p>Regular monitoring of uptake and drop out can help ensure equitable access to services.</p> | <p>Data may be found in the RCT Data Library: https://app.powerbi.com/groups/me/reports/aa284455-2774-485b8b54-046ede17b614/ReportSectionc14d042d5d44a55c5193?experience=power-bi https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/2023/Is%20Wales%20Fairer%20Equality%20and%20Human%20Rights%20Monitor-%20English-%20accessible%20PDF.pdf</p> |

| | | | |
|--|----------------|--|--|
| <p><u>Material Deprivation</u> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i></p> | <p>Neutral</p> | | <p>The RCT Data Library notes that RCT has an average overall Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) ranking of 743/1909 (1 being the most deprived and 1909 being the least deprived). The average ranking for access to services specifically for all of RCT is 1105/1909.</p> |
|--|----------------|--|--|

| <u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u> | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Area Deprivation <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport))</i></p> | <p>Positive</p> <p>Negative</p> <p>Negative</p> | <p>Individuals and caregivers residing in deprived areas may be disproportionately impacted by the revised arrangement either positively with the removal of the £10 administration charge under Option 1 or negatively should this charge remain and a further charge for 10% / currently £115 be sought for successful applications under Options 3 and 4.</p> <p>Lack of reliable Wi-Fi and/or broadband for the new digital process may impede timely and hassle-free application causing frustration or anxiety for the person.</p> <p>People who are not tech savvy may have reservations and / anxiety around trusting certain ways of applying for a Disabled Person's Parking Bay. Travelling to One for All Centres for support may be costly, unsuitable and off putting</p> <p>To mitigate such impacts, we will monitor complaints and update Impact Assessments accordingly.</p> | <p>As noted above, the RCT Data Library notes that RCT has an average overall Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) ranking of 743/1909 (1 being the most deprived and 1909 being the least deprived). Furthermore, the average ranking for physical environment specifically for all RCT is 802/1909.</p> <p>RCT WCCIS data (May 2025) shows the location of the 45 individuals with parking bays across Rhondda Cynon Taf:</p>  |

| | | | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Location</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Abercynon</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Aberdare</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Beddau</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Brynna</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Cilfynydd</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Cwm Clydach</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>Ferndale</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>Gilfach Goch</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Maerdy</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Mountain Ash</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Penrhiwceiber</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Pentre</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>Pontypridd</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Porth</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Taffs Well</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Tonypandy</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>Trallwng</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Trealaw</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Treherbert</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Treorchy</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Tylorstown</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Ystrad</td><td>2</td></tr> </tbody> </table> | Location | Total | Abercynon | 1 | Aberdare | 2 | Beddau | 1 | Brynna | 1 | Cilfynydd | 2 | Cwm Clydach | 3 | Ferndale | 4 | Gilfach Goch | 2 | Maerdy | 1 | Mountain Ash | 2 | Penrhiwceiber | 2 | Pentre | 3 | Pontypridd | 1 | Porth | 2 | Taffs Well | 1 | Tonypandy | 3 | Trallwng | 2 | Trealaw | 5 | Treherbert | 1 | Treorchy | 2 | Tylorstown | 2 | Ystrad | 2 |
|---|----------|---|--|----------|-------|-----------|---|----------|---|--------|---|--------|---|-----------|---|-------------|---|----------|---|--------------|---|--------|---|--------------|---|---------------|---|--------|---|------------|---|-------|---|------------|---|-----------|---|----------|---|---------|---|------------|---|----------|---|------------|---|--------|---|
| Location | Total | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Abercynon | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aberdare | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Beddau | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Brynna | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cilfynydd | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cwm Clydach | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ferndale | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gilfach Goch | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Maerdy | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mountain Ash | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Penrhiwceiber | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pentre | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pontypridd | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Porth | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Taffs Well | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tonypandy | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trallwng | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trealaw | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Treherbert | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Treorchy | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tylorstown | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ystrad | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Socio-economic background (social class i.e. parents' education, employment and income)</p> | Negative | <p>People from specific socio-economic backgrounds such as those on low income may be disproportionately impacted by the introduction of the new approach.</p> <p>Many people increasingly rely on mobile phones to remove the need for line rental costs so additional costs may</p> | <p>According to the RCT Data Library, in 2021 10% of the usual residents aged 16 and over in RCT have never worked/ are long-term unemployed. This is 1 percent higher than the average across Wales of 9%. In addition, in 2021 RCT has a higher percentage proportion of people</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|---|--|
| | | <p>be incurred should applications be made online via a variable tariff for data.</p> <p>People who are not tech savvy may feel the on-line way of applying is beyond their capabilities or have anxieties around learning to use the new system.</p> <p>To mitigate this, complaints and representations should be collated and monitored to identify negative trends and remedy these.</p> | <p>without qualifications 24.2%, compared to 19.9% across Wales (RCT Data Library).</p> |
| <p>Socio-economic disadvantage <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i></p> | <p>Negative</p> | <p>Disabled, older people including carers and notably female carers may face a cumulative negative impact of the changes due to financial implications, broadband / Wi-Fi access to online applications, taking time away from caring responsibilities to go to the One for All Centre if applying in person.</p> <p>To mitigate this, complaints and representations should be collated and monitored, recognising protected characteristics in keeping with mandatory EDI training, in order to identify negative trends and remedy these.</p> | <p>According to the RCT Data Library, in 2021 43.5% of RCT residents were economically inactive, which was the same proportion as across Wales. 7.6% of this total were economically inactive due to long term sickness or disability, and 5% due to being full-time students. Notably, 23.2% of those were retired, which is expected to increase with the trajectory of an ageing demographic.</p> |

SECTION 4 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative/adverse impacts and clearly identify which groups are affected.

- 4.a) In terms of disproportionate/negative/adverse impacts that the proposal may have on a protected group, outline the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate the impact for each group identified. **Attach a separate action plan where impacts are substantial.**

The Council aims to minimise any negative impacts of the proposed changes on individuals by regularly monitoring barriers faced by people impacted by this change to address the challenges they face including those with:

- less technical experience and confidence in such a system.
- Financial and / or practical considerations including caring responsibilities, deterring access to One for All Centres,
- Protected characteristics statistically linked to specific challenges such as financial hardship experienced by ethnic minority groups and disabled people.

To address the potential disproportionate, negative, or adverse impacts that the proposal may have on individuals with disabilities, the following steps will be taken to reduce or mitigate these impacts:

Training for Staff: The Council currently Provide training for staff involved to recognize the unique needs of individuals with disabilities. This training will be beneficial when offering appropriate support during the process.

Maintain Existing Disabled Person's Parking Bays. Ensure that existing bay holders are reassured they will keep their current bay on the basis of their historic application and current needs.

Inclusive Communication: Ensure that all communications regarding the charges are clear, accessible, and provided in multiple formats includes using plain language to accommodate individuals with varying disabilities.

4.b) If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.

4.c) Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users/staff:

- RCT WCCIS Data (May 2025) offers a detailed overview of the characteristics of individuals with parking bays in RCT, covering aspects such as:
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Disability
 - Language
 - Ethnicity
 - Caring responsibilities
 - Location

This data gives us a comprehensive snapshot of the community we serve, enabling us to customise our services to effectively address the diverse needs of individuals.

- The recommendations aim to ensure the key findings from the external review are implemented whilst taking account of the limited human and financial resources available to the Council in operating this scheme.
- As evidenced in the Practice Solutions report, Local Authorities across Wales operate various charging models with most not charging at all, some requiring permits to be paid for annually or an administration fee, and two local authorities charging successful applicants £250 and £689 respectively. The review carried out by Practice Solutions estimated the cost of each parking bay for the last 3 years the scheme was operating to be £1,159 per bay, which includes the legal notices, erection of signs, road markings and traffic management, but excludes the costs incurred from management time, assessments or the application process and as such, based on the cost from each department in the table above, the real cost of each bay is around £3,474. Section 149 (4) of the Equality Act 2010 has been considered, in particular “the effect of a lack of parking spaces near [disabled people’s] residences and their freedom of movement and travel”. As such a DPPB scheme could be considered a public sector duty. Each bay is installed under the Traffic Regulation Act and therefore has its own traffic

regulation order, enforceable by the Council.

- **Administrative Efficiency and Resource Allocation:** The proposal seeks to streamline the administrative process and OT assessments to protect resources and has 4 options, 3 of which retaining the £10 administration charge and 2 of which seeking at 10% contribution (= £115 at present) for successful applications to contribute towards the cost of the bay.

4.d) Give details of how you engaged with service users/staff on the proposals and the steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group. Explain how you have used feedback to influence your decision.

An independent consultation facilitated by Practice Solutions has taken place in the Autumn / winter 2025.

This took the form of discussions with Staff, Disability Forum and Carer's Project and telephone interviews with successful and unsuccessful applicants. Key extracts directly from the report are as follows:

Feedback from staff

Of the staff interviewed as part of this review, most felt that the Council's existing DPPB scheme was extremely challenging, resource intensive and not necessarily targeting those in greatest need.

Feedback from meetings with the Disability Forum and Carers Project

As part of the review, people who attend the Disability Forum (Cynon) and the Carer's Project were asked to provide feedback. Unfortunately, neither group was well attended during the review and so discussion was limited, although further opportunities for views to be expressed were provided through the survey.

Feedback from telephone Interviews with successful applicants

Successful applicants who had been allocated a DPPB over the last 5 years and who were interviewed as part of the review spoke of the enormous difference a bay had made to their lives.

Feedback from telephone Interviews with unsuccessful applicants

While most said that they had found the OT staff very helpful, they all felt extremely frustrated about the lack of explanation/reason for their application not being granted. Some said they had never received a letter telling them the outcome of their application and most felt that the process was unfair and that the eligibility criteria should be made clearer.

A survey was also conducted as part of the review received 314 responses of the people who responded:

- 66% were female, 32% male, 3% preferred not to say
- 71% were disabled
- Of the third who gave their age, 57% were over 57 years of age
- 53% had caring responsibilities
- 34 were residents who had been allocated a DPPB.
- 48 were a relative, friend, partner or advocate of someone with a DPPB.
- 62 were residents who had been unsuccessful in their application.
- The 218 remaining respondents identified as Members of the Public, Staff or Other.

Views were sought by Practice Solutions to inform the review on:

- Eligibility criteria
- Application process
- Use of spaces for bay holders
- Future of Disabled Person's Parking Bays, notably 90% agreed the Council should continue to offer these

4.e) Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the Statutory Equality and Socio-economic Duties?

Yes

No

SECTION 5 – MONITORING AND REVIEW

5a) Please outline below how the implementation of the proposal will be monitored:

- Regular comparison of the number of applications received under the new process compared to the previous one.
- Feedback collection from individuals, families, care managers and One for All staff regarding their experience with the process and the associated charge.
- Monitoring split of digital versus in person applications
- Collating complaints and representation

5b) When is the evaluation of the proposal due to be reviewed?

This will likely be reviewed within 24 months after its implementation. This timeline allows for a sufficient data collection period to assess the effectiveness and impact of the charge(s).

5c) Who is responsible for the monitoring and review of the proposal?

The responsibility for the monitoring and review of the proposal lies with the Adult Services management team, in collaboration with Highways and One for All staff. Designated officers will be assigned to oversee the tracking of requests and the financial and wider resource implications of the proposal.

5d) How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

The results of the monitoring will be used to inform the development of future proposals by identifying trends in demand, assessing the delivery of the service, and gathering insights from stakeholder feedback. This information will guide potential adjustments to the process, and any additional support that may be needed for individuals.

SECTION 6 – REVIEW

As part of the Impact Assessment process all proposals that fall within the definition of ‘Key Decisions’ must be submitted to the Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your proposal is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Decision, please forward your impact assessment to Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for a Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. The EqIA guidance document provides more information on what a Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that you can demonstrate how you have considered equality and socio-economic outcomes. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below.

| Officer Review Panel Comments | Date Considered | Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| | | |
| Consultation Comments | Date Considered | Brief description of any amendments made following consultation |
| | | |

SECTION 6 – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSAL

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the equality and socio-economic impact section of the Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

SECTION 7 – AUTHORISATIONS

Lead Officer:

Name: Mari Ropstad

Position: Head of Service

Date: 14/05/25

I recommend that the proposal:

- Is implemented with no amendments.
- Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined.
- Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on protected groups or socio-economic disadvantage.

Head of Service/Director Approval:

Name: Sian Nowell

Position: Head of Adult Services

Date: 14/05/25

Please submit this impact assessment with any SLT/Cabinet Reports.

: WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIS) tool enables RCT Council to consider the principles and requirements of the [Welsh Language Standards \(No.1\) Regulations 2015](#) to ensure compliance with the [Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#).

| Stage 1 – Information Gathering | |
|---|---|
| NOTE: As you complete this tool you will be asked for evidence to support your views . Please see Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance for more information on data sources. | |
| Proposal Name: | Revision to Disabled Person’s Parking Bay |
| Department | Adult Social Care |
| Service Director | Sian Nowell |
| Officer Completing the WLIA | Mari Ropstad |
| Email | mari.ropstad@rctcbc.gov.uk |
| Phone | 07812 137529 |
| Brief Description | <p>What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language</p> <p>The existing Disabled Persons Parking Bay scheme was introduced in 2004 and subsequently amended in 2015 following a review. Since its introduction the number of people applying for a parking bay has increased significantly, with 193 received during the last round in 2022/2023.</p> <p>Historically, 12 parking bays have been awarded each year based on applicants meeting some basic eligibility criteria and a scored functional assessment from an Occupational Therapist/Occupational Therapy Assistant based within the Adaptations and Community Equipment team. Since its introduction, 269 disabled parking bays have been installed in the County Borough. Of these, 115 have been removed, leaving around 154 disabled parking bays in situ. Rhondda Cynon Taff’s process for providing individual Disabled Person’s Parking Bays (DPPBs) faces significant challenges. The current scheme levies a £10 non-refundable application fee for all applicants. There is no right of appeal, but applicants can reapply during the next round. Occupational Therapists (OTS) assess and prioritise these applications, often leading to dissatisfaction among those who do not receive an individual disabled</p> |

parking bay allocation. Additionally, public concerns about the allocation process persist. The process involves not only OT assessments but also coordination with traffic authorities for installation and maintenance. This complexity coupled with a level of public dissatisfaction highlighted the need for a review to explore the potential to refine the assessment and eligibility processes and the wider mechanisms involved in the delivery of the parking bay allocation scheme. The current scheme was suspended in September 2023 pending a full external review of the Council's current policy for residential disabled parking bays to inform the options available regarding the future provision of residential disabled parking bays.

The findings of the review by Practice Solutions, dated January 2025, which will have no impact on existing Disabled Person's Parking Bay holder, recommended RCT Council continue to offer a scheme for disabled parking bays with revised policy and eligibility criteria to meet the recommendations from the review, including:

- Develop a clear and more transparent process for applicants.
- Introduce more robust criteria and information required to determine eligibility to ensure the best use of limited funds.
- Introduce comprehensive guidance containing the stages of the process, timescales and information about traffic prohibitions for the applicant.
- Introduce a more efficient screening process at the outset.
- Introduce a system to review the use/abuse of disabled parking bays, including removal of bays no longer in use.
- Consider removing the application fee and replacing with a new charging strategy.
- Provide clear written reasons for refusal of a disabled bay to unsuccessful applicants.

As evidenced in the Practice Solutions report, Local Authorities across Wales operate various charging models with most not charging at all, some requiring permits to be paid for annually or an administration fee, and two local authorities charging successful applicants £250 and £689 respectively. The review carried out by Practice Solutions estimated the cost of each parking bay for the last 3 years the scheme was operating to be £1,159 per bay, which includes the legal notices, erection of signs, road markings and traffic management, but excludes the costs incurred from management time, assessments or the application process and as such, based on the cost from each department in the table above, the real cost of each bay is around £3,474.

The basic schematic drawing of the proposed model is included below,

Application

- Online or in-person at One4All centre.
- Uploaded proof to evidence new eligibility criteria.
- Administration charge levied (if introduced).

Eligibility checks

- Evidence checked against criteria, including traffic limitations.
- Unsuccessful applicants informed with reasons.

Functional assessment

- Assessment completed by OT/OTA according to revised scoring criteria.
- Medical evidence included in assessment.

Panel approval

- Multi-departmental panel make final decision on successful applicants.
- Charge levied for successful applicants (if introduced).
- Unsuccessful applicants informed with reasons. No right to appeal.

Ongoing management

- Develop a system for reconfirming bay requirements and highlighting unused bays for removal.

The proposed new eligibility criteria are:

- Individual must possess a valid permanent Blue Badge.
- Individual must have a car registered at their address and the registered keeper must live there.
- Individual must not have access to off-road parking.
- There are no traffic prohibitions on the road directly outside the main entrance to the property and it would be safe to install a disabled parking bay.
- Individual must supply medical evidence from a Consultant, Specialist Nurse or Physiotherapist specifically addressing their difficulties related to mobility and parking.
- Individual must be in receipt of one of the below benefits:
- Higher Rate Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA).
- War Pension Mobility Supplement.
- Attendance Allowance.

The eligibility criteria will need to be evidenced by people uploading or supplying relevant documents and this will be checked early in the process. Similarly, traffic checks will be completed earlier in the process before a full functional assessment is completed for those who meet the criteria and pass the traffic checks.

The functional assessment will be based on scored criteria, which will be reviewed to take account of the new process and amended eligibility criteria. The medical evidence supplied will inform and support the assessment. Any costs associated with gathering this evidence will need to be funded by people and no costs incurred will be reimbursed by the disabled parking bay scheme.

A panel will make the final decision on successful bays with any planning and Traffic Regulation Order requirements to follow. As such it could take up to 2 years from application before a disabled bay is installed.

The decision about charging for the disabled parking bays (refer to Section 8) will impact on whether the bays are installed via a Traffic Regulation Order for anyone with a Blue Badge to use, or as a resident permit parking bay. This in turn will determine how the ongoing management of the bays in terms of use and continuing need can be best organised.

Due to the discretionary nature of the scheme and the difficulties inherent in managing an appeals process alongside a live application scheme it is suggested there be no right of appeal to the panel's decision, however applicants could apply again during the next round.

| Option | Cost to applicant | Benefits | Risks |
|---|--|--|--|
| Option 1: No charge | £0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable to applicants. No need to consider permit bays as opposed to TRO. Problems with non-payment avoided. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No income generation to support the scheme. |
| Option 2: A £10 administration charge at the point of application. | £10 for all | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some income generation to support the scheme. Fee is affordable. Fee has been levied for several years. No need to consider permit bays as opposed to TRO. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People may not appreciate paying just to apply. Payments require processing. External review suggested this charge should be reconsidered. |
| Option 3: A 10% charge of the cost of bay installation for successful applicants | £115 (currently) if successful | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some income generation to support the scheme. A percentage charge would move in line with installation costs each year. Mobility benefits received (see eligibility criteria) could reasonably be expected to be used to cover the cost. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be unaffordable for some. Would need to consider resident permit parking bay as opposed to TRO. Payments require processing. |
| Option 4 (preferred option): A £10 administration charge at the point of application, plus a 10% charge of the cost of bay installation for successful applicants. | £10 for all + £115 (currently) if successful | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some income generation to support the scheme. Changing bays to permit bays would make ongoing management easier by requiring reapplication for permit. Admin fee is affordable to all. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A higher fee could act as a deterrent to apply, affecting socio-economic equality. Fee might be unaffordable to some. Might be challenging to establish a rationale for the fee charged. |

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| |  | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin fee has been levied for several years. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bays likely need to be permit bays rather than general use disabled bays. • People may not appreciate paying twice. • Payments will require processing. • External review suggested admin charge should be reconsidered. |
| | | | <p>Links to documents are provided below: insert here</p> <p>Include fia version here</p> | |
| <p>Date</p> | <p>07/05/25</p> | | | |
| <p>Please outline who this proposal affects?</p> | <p>Individuals, carers, staff and wider community.</p> | | | |

1.a) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

There is no statutory obligation for the Council to provide Disabled People's Parking Bays and the provision of DPPBS is discretionary. It should be noted that while there is no specific mention of a requirement as to the provision of parking in the Equality Act 2010, public bodies must not, in the exercise of their functions, "do anything that constitutes discrimination, harassment or victimisation." (section 29(6)).

Section 149 provides that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions "have due regard to the need to" among other things, "advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it". This involves having due regard to the need to "take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it". Section 149(4) states how this applies to the treatment of disabled persons: It says: the steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities. This would likely involve considering, for example, the effect of a lack of parking spaces near their residences and their freedom of movement and travel.

Wider Legislative and Regulatory requirements that govern our work including specifically for adult services include:

- Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out our responsibilities as a local authority for improving the wellbeing of people who need care and support, and unpaid carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.
- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- A Healthier Wales, Our Plan for Health & Social Care, 2020.
- Mwy Na Geiriau 2022 -2027 ('More than Just Words') requirements

1.b) Please outline who this proposal affects:

Service users



Employees



Wider community



What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?

The aim is to make the Disabled Person's Parking Bay process clearer, quicker and more transparent.

Plan to Inform

- We will inform people about the changes and consult with them through surveys, drop ins, letters and FAQ.
- We will promote the Active Offer to encourage the use of Welsh Language throughout this.
- We will produce materials in a range of accessible formats such as Easy Read, large print.
- We will tell individuals, carers, families and staff what we intend to do.

A consultation on the proposal and its accompanying Welsh language and equality impact assessment will take place during 2025.

It will be conducted in Welsh and English, following the guidelines of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. All communication will be presented in an easy-to-understand format. In all interactions, materials will be available in both Welsh and English.

Future consultation

Initiate an 8-week targeted consultation starting on June 16th, 2025, to seek the views of staff, members of the public and other key stakeholders on the proposed new model, focusing upon asking people:

- what matters to them in respect of the changes, including:
- what they think of our intentions
- what they need us to tell them
- what haven't we thought of

Following this a further report will be submitted to Cabinet in the autumn of 2025 detailing the outcome of the proposed targeted consultation prior to any final decision being made regarding service changes.

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| <p>Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.</p> | <p>Welsh-speaking individuals will continue to have the option of communicating with the Council in Welsh to maintain consistent service delivery. Mwy Na Geiriau 2022 -2027 ('More than Just Words') requirements will remain unchanged with regards to the protection of the Welsh language within social care.</p> <p>All documents associated with the policy and the process will be available in both Welsh and English and in easy-to-read formats, ensuring that language is no barrier to participation. By prioritising bilingual communication, we aim to ensure that all voices are heard and valued. This would ensure that Welsh-speaking individuals and families can navigate the process without language barriers.</p> <p>Consultation sessions will be offered in Welsh or English with bilingual staff present to facilitate this as required.</p> <p>People visiting the One for All Centres at the libraries to make a Disabled Person's Parking Bay application will benefit by seeing Welsh literature and materials at the venue including wider opportunities for people to access Welsh classes, conversational groups, cultural activities and events. Learners and Welsh speakers may also hear Welsh spoken by fellow members of the public when at the library and in the community. They will also see Welsh place names on street signs as they make their way to the One for All Centres.</p> |
| <p>Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned</p> | <p>RCT WCCIS data from May 2025 indicates that most individuals with an active parking bay were English-speaking, with 36 out of 45 identifying this language. The remaining 9 did not record their spoken language.</p> <p>The 2021 Census figures regarding the Welsh language show a decrease in the percentage of Welsh speakers across Wales to 17.8%. There was, however, a small increase in RCT – the percentage of the population of the county borough who can speak Welsh increased from 12.3% to 12.4%. Numerically, RCT saw a 2.8% increase in the number of Welsh speakers in the county borough, from 27,779 speakers to 28,556 speakers. RCT was also one of only four LAs in Wales to see an increase in the percentage of Welsh speakers – the others were Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Merthyr Tydfil. All of these are neighbouring county boroughs, which could demonstrate that our region is seeing some positive trends in terms of increases in Welsh speakers, and that there may be a resulting increase in demand for services through the medium of Welsh. Detailed data from the Census is now available for RCT showing that in certain areas, especially those in the south of the County Borough, we have a relatively high number of Welsh speakers (around 25% in some cases), so this might appeal to them and will also impact upon the planning and delivery of services/ policies we provide. Children of school age comprise our highest group of Welsh speakers in RCT with percentage</p> |

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| | <p>figures in the mid to upper 20s, this is in contrast to those aged 70 -80 years where figures are below 5%. This is significant to how we plan our future services and recruit a workforce with the capacity to assess and deliver in keeping with peoples preferred language.</p> |
| <p>Other relevant data or research</p> | <p>Mwy Na Geiriau 2022 -2027 ('More than Just Words') is the Welsh Government's strategic framework for improving and promoting Welsh language services in health, social services and social care. The aim of the framework is to ensure that organisations recognise that language is an intrinsic part of people's care and the offer of Welsh language services to people is so important. Ensuring positive well-being outcomes for individuals, is something which underpins the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. The Codes of Practice under the Act require local authorities to ensure Welsh language services are built into service planning and delivery and that services are offered in Welsh, to Welsh speakers, without them having to request it as required by the 'Active Offer'.</p> <p>Legislation and policy in Wales require that Welsh language services in social care are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the same standard and are as easily and promptly available as English medium services • As wide-ranging and thorough • Organisations shouldn't assume English as the default languages when providing their services. <p>We are committed to ensuring that Welsh speakers should not be required to ask for a service in Welsh and complement the existing Welsh language services already in place across the Council. This will support strength based, solution focussed discussion on Disabled Person's Parking Bay with individuals and their carers in their language of choice across several different Divisions of the Council, informing respective workforce plans in respect of training and recruiting staff to build our capacity to reflect the local population and their preferred language as required by A Healthier Wales, Welsh Government 2020.</p> |

Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals.

Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

Previous Welsh Language Impact Assessments can be found on Inform by [clicking here](#).

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

| | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts? | Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language. | What evidence do you have to support this view? | What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts? |
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| Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language e.g. staff, residents and visitors. The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work | Positive | The requirements of the Mwy Na Geiriau 2022 -2027 ('More than Just Words') strategic framework for improving and promoting Welsh language services in health and social care will continue to be implemented. | Welsh language Level 1 skills/ training forms part of the Social Care Wales Induction Framework and is also incorporated into the Social Care Wales registration process. Welsh Language Level 1 is also mandatory for all council staff, undertaken | To pro-actively offer Welsh language services to ensure that people's needs are understood and met, and those who access and work in our services can rely on being treated with dignity and respect they deserve. As outlined in Mwy Na Geiriau 2022 -2027 ('More than Just |

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| | | <p>While the proposed change may present some financial benefits and efficiencies for the Council, it also creates an opportunity to enhance the use of the Welsh language in service delivery, provided that adequate support and resources are made available. By providing a less complex option for individuals and families, it may encourage more individuals to Disabled Person's Parking Bay applications. This increase in requests could lead to a higher demand for services in Welsh, as individuals and families may prefer to communicate in this language.</p> <p>For the wider community who are Welsh speakers, the availability of services in their language can foster a stronger sense of community and inclusion. This might encourage more Welsh speakers to actively engage with the Council and its services.</p> | <p>through the induction programme. Whilst level 1 is a requirement we will also offer further support to those who wish to progress to further levels which in turn will support our service provision.</p> <p>The first Adult Services Workforce Strategy, approved 2024, includes Ambition 5: giving our staff access to good quality opportunities for education and training which features 5.1, Addressing linguistic inclusivity for Welsh language and speakers. This priority and the associated workplan detail the actions, benefits and monitoring of our commitment to increasing Welsh learners, speakers and presence in our services and workplace.</p> | <p>Words') is the Welsh Government's strategic framework for improving and promoting Welsh language services in health and social care.</p> <p>Adult services encourage assessment staff to develop their verbal skills and confidence by meeting informally in groups to chat - usually according to levels of fluency. Staff are also informed of and encouraged to access training opportunities Corporately by email and Source and also by line managers in team meetings, supervision sessions and Individual Performance Reviews.</p> <p>Ambition 6 of the Adult Services Workforce Strategy 2024 is to 'Plan for succession and build our workforce capacity to meet the demands of the population'.</p> |
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| | | <p>The mandatory staff training with 9 modules on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion available on The Source will improve the awareness and cultural competency of staff to support people effectively and suitably.</p> | | <p>Data from the Census is now available for RCT showing that in certain areas, especially those in the south of the County Borough, we have a relatively high number of Welsh speakers (around 25% in some cases), making training existing staff and recruiting Welsh speaking social care workers in the future a priority to ensure Welsh speakers are available within the workforce at all times to make a proactive offer of services in Welsh.</p> |
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Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

| | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts? | Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language. | What evidence do you have to support this view? | What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts? |
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| <p align="center">Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers</p> <p>e.g. Welsh Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy / RCTCBC Five Year Welsh Language Strategy</p> | <p>Positive</p> | <p>The change will not have any negative effect on the use of the Welsh language among staff, residents, or wider community.</p> <p>The Council will promote the option of assessments in Welsh and ensures that bilingual services are available, this could enhance the visibility and usage of the Welsh language among service users.</p> <p>The proposal aligns with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy, which aims to increase the number of Welsh speakers across Wales. By ensuring that Welsh language services are maintained and promoted, the Council can</p> | <p>RCT WCCIS data from May 2025 indicates that most individuals with an active parking bay were English-speaking, with 36 out of 45 identifying this language. The remaining 9 did not record their spoken language.</p> <p>All new staff who don't already meet Level 1 Welsh requirements undertake online Level 1 training, (2-hour online course). This process is incorporated into our Employee Induction Framework. Whilst level 1 is a requirement we will also offer further support to those who wish to progress to further levels which in turn will support our service provision.</p> <p>Individuals, parents/carers, staff, and all stakeholders who are</p> | <p>To continue to support staff training to enhance learners' bilingual skills.</p> <p>In line with the Adult Services Strategy priority of 'We want people to benefit from a well-trained, engaged workforce' we will ensure we fulfil our commitment to provide social care services in the preferred language of individuals, offer opportunities and support for our workforce to learn Welsh by discussing the time commitment needed by staff to develop and practice linguistic skills and agreeing the split of</p> |

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| | | <p>contribute positively to these strategic goals.</p> <p>Engaging with Welsh-speaking communities and individuals during the assessments and service delivery can provide valuable insights into how best to support and promote the use of the Welsh language in this context.</p> <p>The change offers an opportunity for the Council to reinforce its commitment to the Welsh language by ensuring that services remain accessible and by promoting the use of Welsh in all communications and assessments related to Disabled Person's Parking Bays.</p> <p>It will continue to support adult services provide an opportunity for our staff in social care to learn and improve their Welsh in order to deliver services in Welsh where required in line with their statutory duties. Any such learning will also benefit the community as whole and increase the number of Welsh speakers in the area.</p> | <p>Welsh speaking will have the option to complete assessments through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>RCTs 5-year strategy requires the Council to increase Welsh language skills of our workforce.</p> <p>The Welsh Government Cymraeg 2050 strategy wants a million Welsh Speakers by 2050.</p> <p>This policy will draw attention to what people can expect from us in Welsh and such awareness will encourage managers to motivate staff to learn and improve their Welsh to enable them to actively offer services in this language where it is peoples preferred option.</p> <p>Promoting opportunities for staff to learn and use Welsh when carrying out their role and in the workplace in general will create an environment where people feel welcome and at ease to speak the language and develop their understanding further both professionally and socially. This will help increase linguistic inclusivity and diversity in the</p> | <p>own time and work time to do so.</p> <p>Adult Services are working with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to provide opportunities for social care staff with Welsh Language skills of level 3 and above to develop their confidence and vocabulary in the workplace. A tutor has been appointed and around 14 staff are due to receive individual support in 2025 /2026. From this group, OT are well represented which is relevant to Disabled Person's Parking Bay assessments. One aim is to see a stepped change in the use of Welsh Language in the workplace and enthuse others to develop their skills further too.</p> |
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| | | | workforce as sought by local and national policy. | |
| <p>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language. e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community</p> <p>Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time.</p> | Positive | <p>By implementing a change to Disabled Person's Parking Bays, there is an opportunity to affirm the status of the Welsh language in administrative processes and service design and delivery.</p> <p>Providing bilingual documentation and support during the process can encourage individuals and families to engage with services in Welsh, thereby enhancing the visibility and use of the Welsh language in legal and administrative contexts.</p> <p>By proactively ensuring that Welsh language services are available and encouraged, the Council can contribute positively to the language's status and use within the community and empower Welsh-speaking individuals to use their language during assessments and related discussions, fostering a more inclusive environment that</p> | <p>Welsh language Level 1 skills/ training forms part of the Social Care Wales Induction Framework, the Council's general induction programme and is also incorporated into the Social Care Wales registration process. (All social care staff must complete the above as part of their registration process, this also applies to staff working for Independent Provider organisation. Given the complexity and legal considerations of this policy, the skills staff require to undertake such an assessment in Welsh are likely to exceed those necessary for many services, making a level 4 /5 appropriate here. Operating in Welsh at such a professional level, will require targeted recruitment in addition to good learning and education opportunities for existing staff in order to meet population needs and preferences.</p> | <p>Individuals, staff and the wider community will be able to use their Welsh language, when they are given the opportunity to express their views on the proposal during the consultation process.</p> <p>When we inform people of the changes, we can also remind them that they have the opportunity to deal with us in Welsh, not just during this consultation but more widely in their communication with us.</p> <p>In line with the Adult Services Strategy priority of 'We want people to benefit from a well-trained, engaged workforce' we will ensure we fulfil our commitment to provide social care services in the preferred</p> |

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| | | <p>respects and promotes Welsh culture and language.</p> <p>Furthermore, by offering support with Disabled Person's Parking Bay applications at the One for All Centres, we are utilising staff who already have to provide services in Welsh which could make this option more readily available to meet language preferences.</p> | <p>language of individuals, offer opportunities and support for our workforce to learn Welsh.</p> <p>Adult Services are working with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to provide opportunities for social care staff with Welsh Language skills of level 3 and above to develop their confidence and vocabulary in the workplace. A tutor has been appointed and around 14 staff are due to receive individual support in 2025 /2026. One aim is to see a stepped change in the use of Welsh Language in the workplace and enthuse others to develop their skills further too.</p> |
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Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

| | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts? | Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language. | What evidence do you have to support this view? | What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts? |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| <p>Compliance with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards e.g. increasing or reducing the Council's ability to deliver services through the Medium of Welsh.</p> <p>Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with the Council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p> | <p>Positive</p> | <p>Legislation places a duty on Council's to consider the Welsh language in accessing, commissioning, and delivering care to individuals to ensure that they experience the best possible outcomes. This obligation would be unaffected by the policy. Similarly, the obligations related to Mwy Na Geiriau 2022 -2027 ('More than Just Words') is the Welsh Government's strategic framework for improving and promoting Welsh language services in health and social care is unaffected.</p> | <p>Welsh Language is embedded into the Social Care Wales Induction Framework. Any meetings with staff or service users that relates to their wellbeing will continue to adhere to Standards 24, 24A, 26 and 26A to ensure an active offer of Welsh is made. These Standards form an integral part of the framework mentioned.</p> | <p>We will continue to monitor and improve systems in place to ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language and promoted through the workforce and through how we do our business via the annual service evaluation.</p> <p>The service supports Welsh speaking staff to communicate with Welsh speaking individuals and carers in their preferred way of communication.</p> |

As the revision may be perceived by many potential Disabled Person's Parking Bay applicants as more straightforward, it could lead to an increase in requests. This could lead to a greater emphasis on providing services in Welsh, thereby enhancing the Council's capacity to comply with Welsh Language Standards. For example:

The proposal will require the Council to maintain compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, ensuring that people can communicate effectively in their preferred language.

The Council will ensure that information about the change and the option to receive services in Welsh is clearly communicated to the public. This will help ensure that Welsh speakers are aware that they can access these services in their language, thereby supporting compliance with the statutory requirements.

Ensure greater consistency in terms of the Welsh language services on offer and improve their quality across the service. Priority will be given to specifically recruit Welsh occupational therapists in the future if no Welsh speakers are available to undertake assessment of need in the language of choice.

We will need to monitor the impact of this charge on the uptake of services in Welsh. Regular evaluations will help to assess whether the proposal is enhancing or hindering the delivery of services through the Medium of Welsh. We will assess whether more Welsh speakers are needed to provide services if the take up in Welsh is higher than expected.

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| <p>Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language</p> | <p>Positive</p> | <p>The policy does not affect this requirement.</p> <p>Careful consideration will be given to the Welsh language to ensure compliance with the principle of treating it no less favourably than English. This includes ensuring accessibility, promoting bilingual services, and engaging with the Welsh-speaking community effectively</p> <p>We will ensure officers facilitating consultation events where people have told us their preferred language is Welsh are able to meet the needs of both English and Welsh attendees.</p> <p>We will provide Welsh speakers / bilingual staff at consultation events where we do not know language choice in advance.</p> | <p>The proposal does not differentiate between languages in its implementation. It focuses on providing a service that can be accessed by all individuals, regardless of their language preference. The policy will ensure that both Welsh and English speakers receive the same level of service.</p> | <p>Ensure consistency in terms of the Welsh language services on offer and improve their quality across the service making sure Welsh speakers do not face delays or disadvantage due to language preference.</p> <p>We will recruit Welsh speaking staff in the future if no Welsh speakers were available to undertake assessments in the language of choice.</p> |
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Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal.

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

| What are you going to do? | When are you going to do it? | Who is responsible? |
|--|--|--|
| As part of the policy and the wider Adult Services Strategy, we will continue to engage with staff, individuals, families, parents and carers, stakeholders and partners through the medium of Welsh and English. | Ongoing | Service Director, Heads of Service, Service Managers |
| The actions to mitigate risks and/or improve the positive impact of this policy depend upon increasing the number of Welsh speaking staff available to carry out assessments in the language, in keeping with demand, to the required standard, through training and recruitment. | The existing Steering Group and Workplan for the Adult Workforce Strategy offer a suitable mechanism for setting and monitoring priorities on a regular basis. | Service Director, Heads of Service, Service Managers |
| The policy aligns with the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 for adults in RCT. There are existing obligations on adult services to promote and support the Welsh language. Currently we have available staff to manage the active offer. Should we find staff are no longer available withing specific assessment areas we will consider recruitment targeted specifically towards Welsh speaking staff. | Ongoing | Service Director, Heads of Service, Service Managers |
| The service will continue to promote Welsh language training for staff and support their Welsh language learning and improvement | Ongoing | Service Director, Heads of Service, Service Managers |

If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.

What was identified?

Why is it not possible?

Stage 4 – Review

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not, you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services – welshlanguageofficer@rctcbc.gov.uk and the Consultation and Engagement team – consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

As part of the Welsh Language, Equalities and Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment Process all proposals that fall within the definition of Significant Key Decision should present at the Officer Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your report is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Strategic Decision please forward your completed (Stage 1>6) impact assessment, policy proposal/report and consultation report to CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for an Officer Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. [See our guidance document](#) for more information on what a Significant Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below in collaboration with the relevant departments.

| Welsh Language Services Comments | Date Considered | Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback |
|---|------------------------|---|
| | | |
| Officer Review Panel Comments | Date Considered | Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations |
| | | |
| Consultation Comments | Date Considered | Brief description of any amendments made following consultation |
| | | |

Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

The impact and effectiveness will be monitored by:

- Regular tracking of the number of requests received for Disabled Person's Parking Bay under the new process compared to the previous one.
- Feedback collection from individuals, families, care managers and staff across the Division's involved in Disabled Person's Parking Bay regarding their experience with the process and the associated charge(s) depending on option approved.

This will likely be reviewed within 12 months after its implementation. This timeline allows for a sufficient data collection period to assess the effectiveness and impact of the new administration and any charge(s).

The responsibility for the monitoring and review of the proposal lies with the Adult Services management team, in collaboration with One for all staff, Highways and the relevant finance department(s). Designated officers will be assigned to oversee the tracking of requests and the financial implications of the proposal.

The results of the monitoring will be used to inform the development of future proposals by identifying trends in demand, assessing the delivery of the service, and gathering insights from stakeholder feedback. This information will guide potential adjustments to the process, and any additional support that may be needed for individuals.

Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment, to include some of the main positive and negative impacts along with an overview of actions taken since the impact assessment to better contribute to more positive impacts. This summary must be included in the Welsh Language Considerations section of the SLT/Cabinet report template. It is not suitable to only write 'please see full report at Appendix x' in the body of the report. The impact assessment must be published alongside the report.

A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings for the proposed changes to Disabled Person's Parking Bay are:

- Opportunities for services to continue to promote the language and upskill Welsh speaking staff will remain a priority.
- By proactively ensuring that Welsh language services are available and encouraged, the Council can contribute positively to the language's status and use within the community and empower Welsh-speaking individuals to use their language during assessments and related discussions, fostering a more inclusive environment that respects and promotes Welsh culture and language.
- The Council will promote the option of assessments in Welsh and ensures that bilingual services are available, this could enhance the visibility and usage of the Welsh language among people.
- It also creates an opportunity to enhance the use of the Welsh language, provided that adequate support and resources are made available. By providing a less complex option for individuals and families, it may encourage more individuals to pursue Disabled Person's Parking Bay. This increase in requests could lead to a higher demand for services in Welsh, as individuals and families may prefer to communicate in this language.
- Continue to support adult services provide an opportunity for our staff in social care to learn and improve their Welsh in order to deliver services in Welsh where required in line with their statutory duties with particular focus on feedback from any OTs who are involved in both the assessment of Disabled Person's Parking Bay and Cwrs Codi Hyder . Any such learning will also benefit the community as whole and increase the number off Welsh speakers in the area.
- The Council will ensure that information about the change and the option to receive services in Welsh is clearly communicated to the public. This will help ensure that Welsh speakers are aware that they can access these services in their language, thereby supporting compliance with the statutory requirements.

Mwy Na Geiriau 2022 -2027 ('More than Just Words') is the Welsh Government's strategic framework for improving and promoting Welsh language services in health, social services and social care. The aim of the framework is to ensure that organisations recognise that language is an intrinsic part of people's care and the offer of Welsh language services to people is so important. Ensuring positive well-being outcomes for individuals, is something which underpins the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. The Codes of Practice under the Act require local authorities to ensure Welsh language services are built into service planning and delivery and that services are offered in Welsh, to Welsh speakers, without them having to request it as required by the 'Active Offer'.

| Stage 7 – Sign Off | | | |
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| Name of Officer completing the WLIA | Mari Ropstad | Service Director Name: | Sian Nowell |
| Position | Head of Service, Access, Enablement and Early Intervention | I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision) | Is implemented with no amendments. |
| | | | Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined. |
| | | | Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language. |
| Signature | <i>M Ropstad</i> | Service Director Signature | |
| Date | 12/05/25 | Date | |

Client: (ID:)

Ref Team:

Ref Worker:



RCT - Individual Parking Bay Eligibility and Points Criteria

A1

He/she is a permanent wheelchair user and the ability to propel the chair outside is reduced to very short distances due to infirmity and/or loss of strength associated with the disabling condition or He/she suffers from substantial and permanent mobility problems which result in severely or significantly restricted mobility.

Social Care DRIVER Criteria

| | | |
|---|---|-----------------|
| <p>He/She is a wheelchair user and where the ability to propel the chair outside is reduced to very short distances due to infirmity and/or loss of strength associated with the disabling condition.</p> | <p>Score Criteria A1:C1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Max - 225</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 169</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 113</p> | <p>Comments</p> |
| <p>OR - Driver is a wheelchair user but is able to self propel the chair for distances over 100 metres or uses an electric wheelchair.</p> | <p>Score Criteria A1:C2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Max - 115</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 86</p> | <p>Comments</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 58 | |
| <p>OR - He/She suffers from substantial and permanent mobility problems e.g. due to muscular, skeletal, respiratory, circulatory or a combination of factors which severely reduce mobility.</p> | <p>Score Criteria A1:C3</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 205 <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 154 <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 103 | <p>Comments</p> |
| <p>Driver who because of carer responsibilities (e.g. has other children under 5 years, or others dependant on them), is not able to leave them unattended. (State dependants)</p> | <p>Score Criteria A1:C4</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 75 <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 56 <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 38 | <p>Comments</p> |
| | <p>Total</p> | |

A2

Disabled passengers will not normally qualify as it is not unreasonable to expect that an able bodied driver should double park if necessary, only as long as is required to pick up or set down the disabled passenger and remove the vehicle afterwards. The passenger permanently relies on the driver, living at the same address, who because of their own infirmity and/or disability cannot manage to transport equipment, wheelchair and the disabled passenger from the nearest available parking area.

Social Care PASSENGER Criteria

| | | |
|--|---|-----------------|
| <p>Passenger is reliant on a wheelchair and they cannot propel the chair outside due to infirmity and/or loss of strength associated with the disabling condition.</p> | <p>Score Criteria A2:C1</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 90 <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 68 <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 45 </div> | <p>Comments</p> |
| <p>OR - Passenger is reliant on a wheelchair where the ability to propel the chair outside is reduced to a very short distance due to infirmity and/or loss of strength associated with the disabling condition.</p> | <p>Score Criteria A2:C2</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 65 <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 63 </div> | <p>Comments</p> |
| <p>OR - Passenger is a wheelchair user but is able to self propel the chair for distances over 100 metres, or uses an electric wheelchair.</p> | <p>Score Criteria A2:C3</p> | <p>Comments</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|----------|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 40 <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 30 <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 20 | |
| OR - Passenger who is reliant on driver to transport them into the house and assist with transfers. | Score Criteria A2:C4 <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 40 <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 30 <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 20 | Comments |
| OR - Passenger is permanently reliant on other mobility equipment (not wheelchair) or has significant mobility problems due to existing condition(s). | Score Criteria A2:C5 <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 60 <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 45 <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 30 | Comments |
| And/OR - Passenger is reliant on heavy/bulky medical equipment e.g O2, feeding equipment etc that need to be with them at all times. | Score Criteria A2:C6 <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 30 <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 23 | Comments |

| | | |
|---|--|----------|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 15 | |
| Driver also in receipt of blue badge. | Score Criteria A2:C7 <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 10 | Comments |
| Driver has a condition that results in severe shortness of breath/restricted mobility which results in an inability to walk any distance and/or manage heavy equipment. | Score Criteria A2:C8 <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 55 <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 56 <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 28 | Comments |
| Driver who because of carer responsibilities e.g. has other children under 5 years/other dependants (not the applicant) is unable to leave them unattended | Score Criteria A2:C9 <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 75 <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 56 <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 38 | Comments |
| Passenger who has behavioural issues that require that they are supervised at all times. | Score Criteria A2:C10 <input type="checkbox"/> Max - 90 | Comments |

| | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 75% - 68 | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 50% - 45 | |
| | Total | |

B - Location Criteria

| Parking conditions must be such that for a major portion of most days, no space is available within a very short distance of the home. | Total | Comments |
|---|-------|----------|
| <p>There are no spaces available between 9.00am and 5.00p.m during weekdays.</p> <p>Max Score - 50</p> | | |
| <p>There were spaces available more than 20 metres away from the property.</p> <p>Max Score - 30</p> | | |
| <p>There were spaces available less than 20 metres from the property.</p> <p>Max Score - 10</p> | | |
| <p>The applicant has a specially adapted vehicle that has a tail lift, requires the use of ramps or additional space is required for transfer.</p> <p>Max Score - 5</p> | | |
| <p>The location immediately outside the property is on a gradient of more than 1:12</p> <p>Max Score - 15</p> | | |
| <p>OR - Access to the property is via steps or an incline that is more than 1:12</p> <p>Max Score - 25</p> | | |
| <p>The property is on a main or busy road that increases the risk of access to/from the vehicle for the applicant. (Please explain point allocation)</p> <p>"A" road (Max Score - 15), "B" road (Max Score - 10), Other (Max Score - 5)</p> | | |
| <p>Total</p> | | |

C - Impact/Quality of Life Issues

| Need for a bay would be largely self reporting | Total | Comments |
|--|-------|----------|
| <p>The applicant uses the car in connection with their work or full time education.</p> <p>Max Score - 30</p> | | |
| <p>The applicant uses the car in connection with social needs - e.g. family, church, club, hobby group etc.</p> <p>Max Score - 20</p> | | |
| <p>The applicant uses the car in connection with tasks of daily living e.g. shopping, pensions etc.</p> <p>Max Score - 15</p> | | |
| <p>Client has had to withdraw from historical/established, activity due to parking issues. (state activity)</p> <p>Max Score - 10</p> | | |
| <p>Client has other planned specific activity which will be adversely affected if a parking solution is not available. (state activity and risk)</p> <p>Max Score - 10</p> | | |
| <p>Driver is Applicant and lives alone</p> <p>Max Score - 20</p> | | |
| <p>Applicant is driver and has family commitments i.e. caring for relatives living elsewhere, transporting family members to work or education where there is no alternative transportation.</p> <p>Max Score - 20</p> | | |
| <p>Applicant is driver but unable to access the car independently at present - would be able with provision of bay</p> <p>Max Score - 10</p> | | |
| <p>Additional requirements accessing car due to specific location e.g. camber, vehicle adaptations, street furniture/obstructions.</p> | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Max Score - 10 | | |
| Other (please state) Max Score - 10 | | |
| Total | | |

Section Score Totals

| Section | Score |
|---------|-------|
| A1 | |
| A2 | |
| B | |
| C | |
| Total | |

Signature:

Date:

Scoring must be completed with reference to application documentation, functional assessment and scoring guidelines

Business Support Section

Date Completed Assessment sent to client:

| | | |
|----|----|------|
| DD | MM | YYYY |
|----|----|------|

Date Signed Assessment received from client:

| | | |
|----|----|------|
| DD | MM | YYYY |
|----|----|------|

Panel Score:

| |
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