

RAC Foundation for Motoring

Local Authority Parking Finances in Wales 2017-18

1. Introduction

This note covers parking finances for the 22 local authorities in Wales. As in England and Scotland, local authorities are required to submit details of all their finances to the Welsh Government in a standard format. They are normally published in October, seven months after the financial year end. This report looks at the section on parking income and expenditure from 2013-14 to 2017-18.

The published data¹ is less comprehensive than in England and does not split out on- and off-street parking or show penalty income separately. The figures do not include any commercial off-street parking. In 2017-18, 19 councils showed surpluses and three showed deficits (the same three councils as 2016-17). All councils are now receiving income from parking, although councils such as Blaenau Gwent (Ebbw Vale and Abertillery) and Torfaen (Pontypool and Cwmbran) offer free parking but still issue penalty charge notices.

2. Summary

Table 1 Summary of parking accounts for Wales

	£million	2013-4	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2017-18 on 2016-17
Parking	Income	32.3	33.9	35.8	37.4	38.5	2.9%
	Expenditure	22.5	21.8	22	23.4	24.1	3.0%
	Surplus	9.8	12.1	13.8	14.0	14.4	2.9%
All transport	Net cost	306.8	278.9	271.2	270.5	265.3	-1.9%
	Parking surplus as % of all transport costs	3.2%	4.3%	5.1%	5.2%	5.4%	

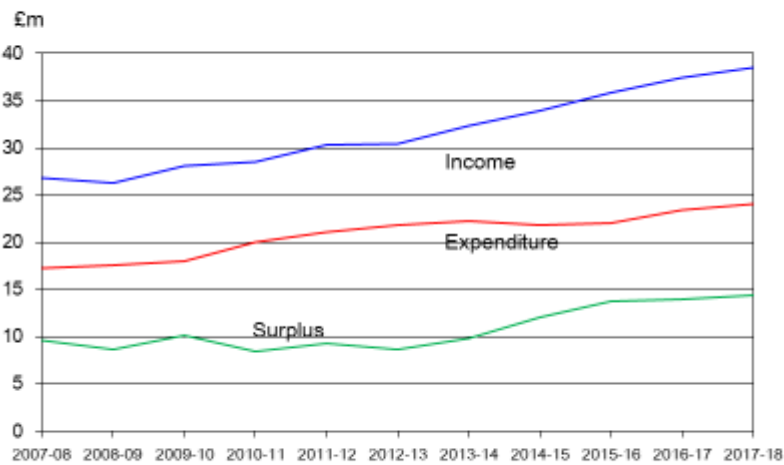
Source: Welsh Government

Table 1 above shows the summary accounts for local authorities in Wales. Income (parking charges and penalty income both for on- and off-street parking), expenditure and net surplus have all risen by around 3%. Total transport expenditure² has fallen by 1.9 % so the surplus now represents 5.4% of transport costs. Parking makes a much smaller contribution to overall transport costs in Wales compared with England where it is around 12% of total transport.

¹ Full tables: <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Local-Government/Finance/Revenue/Transport/RoadsAndTransportRevenueExpenditure-by-authority>

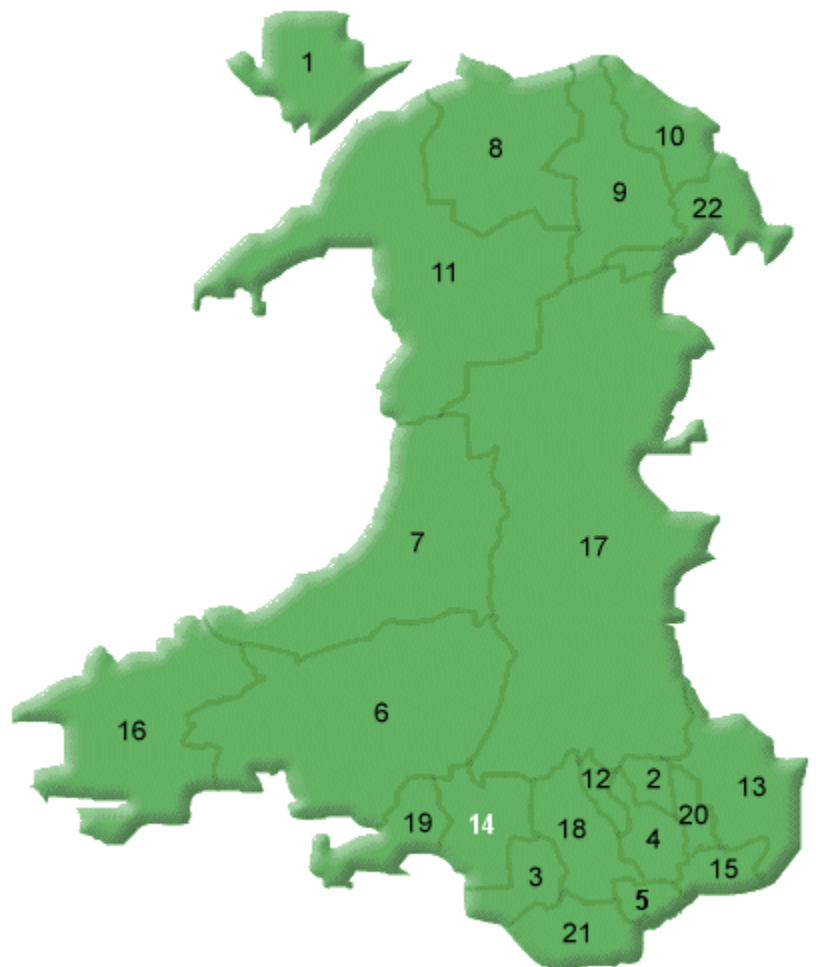
² Ibid

Parking Revenues -Wales



Source: Welsh Government

1. Anglesey*
2. Blaenau Gwent #
3. Bridgend*
4. Caerphilly #
5. Cardiff
6. Carmarthenshire
7. Ceredigion*
8. Conwy
9. Denbighshire*
10. Flintshire*
11. Gwynedd*
12. Merthyr Tydfil
13. Monmouthshire #
14. Neath Port Talbot
15. Newport #
16. Pembrokeshire*
17. Powys*
18. Rhondda Cynon Taff
19. Swansea
20. Torfaen #
21. Vale of Glamorgan*
22. Wrexham*



* These councils participate in the Wales Penalty Processing Partnership

On-street parking controlled by Gwent Police who are planning to transfer it to the councils

October 2018

Total council parking income from all sources in 2017-8 was £38.5m, 2.9% higher than 2016-17. Note that this includes penalty income, which is not shown separately, but does not include off-street income received by commercial off-street parking facilities. Eleven councils increased their income over the past year and a similar number decreased their income. Merthyr Tydfil saw income increase by 19% while Cardiff and Wrexham increased by 14%. The largest falls were Rhondda Cynon Taf (18%) Denbighshire (11%) (excluding Torfaen where the income is very low).

Cardiff, Swansea and Carmarthen account for 46% of Welsh parking income (2016-17 44%), although the authorities only represent 25% of Wales's population.

As a rough measure of parking intensity, the 2017-18 income has been divided by the 2017 population estimate for each authority, although this does not allow for any commuters³. The average is £12 per head but the two larger cities are double this. For comparison, in London the equivalent figure is £73, the rest of England £20 and Scotland £15 (2016-17 figures).

Table 2 Parking income

		INCOME							
	£,000	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change 2017-18/ 2016-17	Population '000 (2017)	Income per '000 pop
1	Cardiff	6,613	6,900	7,257	7,599	8,629	14%	363	24
2	Swansea	4,618	5,171	5,446	5,666	5,932	5%	246	24
3	Carmarthenshire	2,448	2,815	3,106	3,092	3,035	-2%	187	16
4	Gwynedd	2,097	2,027	2,538	2,490	2,539	2%	124	21
5	Pembrokeshire	1,360	1,521	1,783	1,867	1,916	3%	125	15
6	Conwy	1,392	1,419	1,886	1,935	1,903	-2%	117	16
7	Powys	1,196	1,363	1,602	1,684	1,653	-2%	133	12
8	Monmouthshire	1,183	1,250	1,421	1,522	1,535	1%	94	16
9	Denbighshire	1,300	1,251	1,300	1,711	1,517	-11%	95	16
10	Neath Port Talbot	1,507	1,494	1,376	1,375	1,500	9%	142	11
11	Bridgend	1,357	1,268	1,220	1,127	1,139	1%	144	8
12	Wrexham	889	1,045	896	974	1,113	14%	136	8
13	Rhondda Cynon Taf	1,384	1,410	1,291	1,322	1,090	-18%	239	5
14	Ceredigion	1,123	1,150	980	1,109	1,055	-5%	73	14
15	Vale of Glamorgan	955	788	686	764	737	-4%	131	6
16	Merthyr Tydfil	832	745	690	608	725	19%	60	12
17	Caerphilly	702	721	702	675	641	-5%	181	4
18	Isle of Anglesey	388	456	523	605	639	6%	70	9
19	Newport	605	621	640	643	591	-8%	152	4
20	Flintshire	296	450	439	599	571	-5%	155	4
21	Blaenau Gwent	30	38	30	30	30	1%	70	0.4
22	Torfaen	9	12	5	15	4	-73%	92	0.04
	Total	32,283	33,915	35,817	37,410	38,494	3%	3126	12

Source: Welsh Government

³ Cardiff's residents account for 62% of commuters in Cardiff according to the Annual Population Survey, 2014

Table 3 Penalty charge notices

This table shows the number of penalty charge notices issued (as published by PATROL⁴ for 2015-16, the latest data available) and the estimated income from them as a proportion of the total parking income (from on- and off- street charges, permits etc.). On average one third (29%) of the total parking income comes from penalty charges. This compared with 42% in London and 12% outside London.

2015-16	Total parking income £,000	PCNs	Est PCN income £,000	PCN as % of total income
Blaenau Gwent		*		
Bridgend	1,220	10,426	469	38%
Caerphilly		*		
Cardiff	7,257	58,046	2,612	36%
Carmarthenshire	3,106	11,032	496	16%
Ceredigion	980	3,304	149	15%
Conwy	1,886	14,459	651	34%
Denbighshire	1,300	9,709	437	34%
Flintshire	439	2,314	104	24%
Gwynedd	2,538	11,147	502	20%
Isle of Anglesey	523	935	42	8%
Merthyr Tydfil	690	4,886	220	32%
Monmouthshire		*		
Neath Port Talbot	1,376	10,607	477	35%
Newport		*		
Pembrokeshire	1,783	13,278	598	34%
Powys	1,602	7,078	319	20%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	1,291	8,886	400	31%
Swansea	5,446	42,347	1,906	35%
Torfaen		*		
Vale of Glamorgan	686	6,807	306	45%
Wrexham	896	4,071	183	20%
TOTAL (excl *)	33,019	219,332	9870	30%

Source: Welsh Government/PATROL

*Does not participate in PATROL as parking is controlled by Gwent Police who are planning to transfer it to the councils⁵.

The calculations in the table assume an equal mix of higher rate (£70) and lower rate (£50) penalties and 75% recovery rate. Latest available data from PATROL.

⁴ PATROL – The Joint Committee of England and Wales for the civil enforcement of Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London - <https://www.trafficpenaltytribunal.gov.uk/Publications/>

⁵ https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/15533520.Concerns_raised_over_future_of_on-street_parking_enforcement/

4. Expenditure

Table 4 below ranks councils in terms of expenditure on parking.

Overall expenditure has risen by £0.6m (3.0%) after a rise of £1.4m last year, with 13 out of the 22 councils having increased and 9 reduced their costs with one unchanged. Cardiff and Carmarthen increased expenditure by a fifth each while Rhondda and Monmouth increased by 13% and 14% respectively. Big decreases were Newport which more than halved its expenditure and by Blaenau Gwent which, after a large increase in 2016-17 showed a 44% decrease to a level more similar to earlier years. Newport's expenditure is likely to rise when they take over parking management from Gwent Police.

The table also shows the proportion of income taken up by costs in 2017-18. Nationally in Wales it is 63% with Cardiff at only 55%.

Table 4 Total expenditure

	£,000	EXPENDITURE					% of income
		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2017-18
1	Cardiff	3,688	3,474	3,763	3,941	4,764	55%
2	Swansea	3,362	3,220	3,044	3,199	3,087	52%
3	Carmarthenshire	1,652	2,026	1,712	1,764	2,115	70%
4	Neath Port Talbot	1,262	1,308	1,168	1,256	1,332	89%
5	Pembrokeshire	984	1,029	1,200	1,270	1,319	69%
6	Gwynedd	1,300	1,100	1,130	1,135	1,157	46%
7	Denbighshire	759	767	842	1,053	1,053	69%
8	Conwy	812	760	828	916	954	50%
9	Rhondda Cynon Taf	991	864	794	791	906	83%
10	Bridgend	861	1,156	988	833	889	78%
11	Powys	761	748	763	789	822	50%
12	Wrexham	583	580	580	838	812	73%
13	Vale of Glamorgan	902	637	578	632	686	93%
14	Flintshire	807	458	862	726	678	119%
15	Monmouthshire	598	510	490	594	671	44%
16	Ceredigion	845	825	964	589	567	54%
17	Caerphilly	491	523	512	658	550	86%
18	Merthyr Tydfil	631	651	519	504	510	70%
19	Blaenau Gwent	274	262	340	866	483	1600%
20	Isle of Anglesey	303	299	337	358	351	55%
21	Newport	589	556	503	633	286	48%
22	Torfaen	77	63	86	87	82	2050%
	Total	22,253	21,816	22,003	23,431	24,074	63%

Source: Welsh Government

5. Surpluses

Table 5 shows the parking surpluses from 2013-14 to 2017-18 and the change from 2016-17 to 2017-18. It also shows the proportion that parking surpluses represent of total transport expenditure.

Table 5 Parking surpluses

	£,000	SURPLUS					% change in <i>surplus</i> 2017-18/ 2016-17	% change in <i>deficit</i> 2017-18/ 2016-17	Surplus as % of total transport spending 2017-18
		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18			
1	Cardiff	2,924	3,426	3,494	3,658	3,865	6%		18%
2	Swansea	1,256	1,951	2,402	2,467	2,845	15%		13%
3	Gwynedd	797	927	1,408	1,355	1,382	2%		9%
4	Conwy	580	659	1,058	1,019	949	-7%		11%
5	Carmarthenshire	795	790	1,394	1,328	920	-31%		6%
6	Monmouthshire	585	741	931	929	864	-7%		14%
7	Powys	436	616	839	895	831	-7%		7%
8	Pembrokeshire	376	492	583	597	597	0%		7%
9	Ceredigion	278	325	16	520	488	-6%		4%
10	Denbighshire	541	484	458	658	464	-29%		5%
11	Newport	16	65	137	9	306	3295%		3%
12	Wrexham	306	465	316	136	301	121%		4%
13	Isle of Anglesey	85	157	186	247	288	17%		3%
14	Bridgend	496	111	232	295	250	-15%		2%
15	Merthyr Tydfil	201	93	171	104	215	107%		4%
16	Rhondda Cynon Taf	393	545	497	531	184	-65%		1%
17	Neath Port Talbot	245	186	208	118	168	43%		1%
18	Caerphilly	211	198	190	17	91	435%		1%
19	Vale of Glamorgan	53	151	108	132	51	-61%		1%
20	Torfaen	-68	-51	-81	-72	-78		8%	-1%
21	Flintshire	-511	-8	-423	-127	-108		-15%	-1%
22	Blaenau Gwent	-244	-223	-310	-836	-453		-46%	-7%
	Total	9,751	12,100	13,814	13,979	14,420	3%		5.4%

Source Welsh Government

Total parking *surpluses* amount to £15m between 19 authorities of which Cardiff, Swansea and Gwynedd contribute 56%. Newport increased its surplus significantly because of the sharp reduction in cost. Only three councils made a loss with the total of parking *deficits* falling to £0.6m from £1m last year, mainly because of a reduction in the loss in Blaenau Gwent with its big fall in expenditure.

Cardiff's parking surplus of £3.9m provides 18% of Cardiff's total transport expenditure (contrast Edinburgh where it was 71% in 2016-17) while Swansea's covers 13%. For the rest of Wales, excluding Cardiff and Swansea, parking surpluses/deficits of £7.7m provide only 3% of total transport expenditure.

6. Reporting on Parking

Councils are required to report on the number of PCNs issued and their income and expenditure, preferably by an annual report. Searching the council's websites showed that as at October 2018, two councils, Cardiff, Neath and Port Talbot and Pembrokeshire had published annual reports for 2017-18 while Swansea published limited parking information in its annual statement of accounts. Several councils had published annual reports at some point, often three or four years ago and not subsequently. Neath & Port Talbot also produces a Parking Services Service Report Card which reports on how well they had performed against their objectives as well as giving financial figures.

Table 6 Comparison of Published parking reports and financial data supplied to the Welsh Government

£,000		2017-18			
		Income	Expenditure	Surplus	
Cardiff	Annual Report	7981	-5974		Expenditure includes moving traffic offences
	<i>Finance statistics</i>	8629	-4764	3865	<i>Parking only</i>
Neath Port Talbot	Annual Report	1297	-1329	-32	
	<i>Finance statistics</i>	1500	-1332	168	
Pembrokeshire	Annual Report	509	-580	-71	Statutory on-street only
	<i>Finance statistics</i>	1916	-1319	597	<i>On and off-street</i>
Swansea	Annual Report	4448	-1732	2716	Off-street car parks only
	<i>Finance statistics</i>	5932	-3087	2845	<i>On and off-street</i>