

Workplace Parking Licensing

Briefing Summary

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 introduced a discretionary power for local authorities to create Workplace Parking Licensing (WPL) schemes in Scotland. This could result in companies paying an annual charge based on the number of parking spaces they make available for employees and business visitors. WPL is seen as a new tool in Scotland's mission to eradicate our contribution to climate change by encouraging more people to use public transport or active forms of travel like walking and cycling. Transport Scotland has launched a consultation on the regulations and guidance which will oversee how any new WPL schemes are implemented by councils.

What is Workplace Parking Licensing?

Workplace Parking Licensing (WPL) was initially described as a 'workplace parking levy' but it has since been renamed as a licensing scheme by the Scottish Government. It has also been dubbed a 'car park tax' in some media coverage. In 2019 MSPs agreed to give local councils the powers to introduce their own schemes which would oblige businesses located within a certain geographical area to register the number of parking spaces they make available to employees, suppliers and other business visitors. Advocates believe that WPL will reduce congestion, tackle air pollution and help Scotland achieve its ambitious net-zero targets by encouraging greater use of public transport and active travel. Critics say it is a 'stealth tax' which will hurt businesses and workers.

How much will it cost?

The charges will be set by each local authority so it could vary across the country. In the UK there is currently only one WPL scheme in place in Nottingham where the levy is set at £415 per parking space per year where a workplace has more than 11 spaces. Local authorities will also have the powers to impose fines on businesses which do not comply with the WPL. Businesses may choose to pass the cost on to individual employees who use parking facilities.

Are there any exemptions?

All NHS premises, GP surgeries, hospices and disabled parking spaces will be exempt from the charges. Each local authority has the ability to specify additional exemptions if they choose to do so, for example based on the particular type of business or class of vehicle.

When and where will WPL come into force?

WPL is not a national scheme and it is up to each individual local authority whether they want to introduce the measures. At the moment Glasgow City Council and Edinburgh City Council are the only local authorities in Scotland to express an interest in using the new powers but it is likely that, if those schemes prove successful, other towns and cities will follow.

What is the Transport Scotland consultation?

It is important to note that the powers to create WPLs has already been agreed by MSPs so Transport Scotland is only consulting on the regulatory framework and supporting guidance which will underpin the creation of future schemes. Local authorities will be required to launch a public consultation on the design and implementation of any proposed town or city-wide WPL schemes.

Useful Links:

Transport Scotland - [Workplace Parking Licensing - Consultation on Regulations and Guidance](#)

CECA Scotland WPL survey - <https://forms.gle/csY6XSjMbV1RbHA66>