

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD



Report subject	Key Lines Of Enquiry (KLOE) relating to parking pressure in high season
Meeting date	23 March 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	Response to questions raised by the Key Lines Of Enquiry (KLOE) relating to parking related items across the BCP Council area
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: The content of this report is noted by Overview & Scrutiny Board
Reason for recommendations	This report is for information only and so no recommendations are included.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Richard Herrett, Cabinet Member for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations Councillor Andy Hadley, Cabinet Member for Climate Response, Environment and Energy
Corporate Directors	Glynn Barton, Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Richard Pincroft, Head of Transportation Including Sustainability Transport Alexis Edwards, Transport Development Management & Policy Manager Helen Taverner, Head of Parking Operations and Enforcement
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Information

Background

1. Following a motion considered at Full Council in July (agreed in the September adjourned meeting) a request to the Overview and Scrutiny Board was registered regarding parking in response to high visitor numbers in the summer. The following

key lines of enquiry (KLOE) were subsequently captured and communicated to officers for a response:

- a. What were the responses from the public consultation on parking zones?
 - b. What work has been done to assess the viability of a park and ride scheme?
 - c. What parking restrictions could be imposed to limit overnight parking in areas like Boscombe Overcliff?
 - d. Can we undertake an assessment of vacant and underused council-owned land?
 - e. What further measures can be introduced against illegal and antisocial parking?
 - f. Can increased signage be introduced to direct visitors away from congested roads?
 - g. What is the BCP strategy to tackle seasonal parking pressures?
2. There was also a request as part of the KLOE for data and information as below:
- a. The results of the public consultation
 - b. The data from the government trial on parking fines
 - c. Current and projected income from parking enforcement.

Officer responses to each element of the KLOE Appraisal

Public consultation on Parking zones

3. The public consultation on proposals to introduce paid for parking on some roads near our seafront ran from 24 June 2025 to 1 August 2025.
4. In total 7,656 valid responses were received.
5. Due to the volume of responses external support was sourced to review and analyse the responses.
6. The analysis is not yet complete and therefore cannot be shared at this time.

Viability of park and ride scheme

7. The provision of Park and Ride in the BCP context remains a challenging one due to the conurbation's particular physical characteristics, namely the lack of a single core destination, and relatively high levels of affordable parking provision. This is a fundamental difference between BCP and cities where Park and Ride is particularly successful, for example in Oxford which in-effect has a 1km² destination at its centre as opposed to multiple centres and 12+miles of beach plus more within the natural harbours.
8. Technical work was undertaken in 2019 to assess the viability of Park and Ride and this concluded that it was unlikely to be viable without significant annual subsidy.

Since then, further work has been undertaken to review this position, and this has found that the conclusions remain valid post-Covid.

9. A seasonal Park and Ride was trialled at both Kings Park (serving Boscombe) and Poole Civic (serving Sandbanks) as mitigation measures to manage congestion and inconsiderate and illegal parking along the seafront in the summer peak period. However, the trial found that demand for such an offer was relatively low, weather dependent and unlikely to be viable without significantly strengthened restrictions, tariffs and enforcement. Both sites operated at a loss and were/are therefore considered unviable.
10. There continues to be potential for specific event-based Park and Ride to support major events.

What parking restrictions could be imposed to limit overnight parking in areas like Boscombe Overcliff?

11. Additional parking restrictions could be introduced by means of new or amended Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs). TROs are statutory instruments that place restrictions on the highway. Any new restrictions would require additional Civil Enforcement Officers to ensure compliance.
12. Parking restrictions could be introduced in Boscombe Overcliff, or similar locations, however, such controls unless accompanied by a wider package of restrictions in adjacent streets would simply result in displacement into them. In the instance of Boscombe Overcliff the nearby streets that overnight parking would be displaced into would include for example Dingle Road, Montague Road, Portman Crescent, Ravine Road etc., which are arguably more residential in nature than the Overcliff. This is why the public consultation on parking zones was across a larger area and not just the roads directly at the seafront.
13. An Experimental Traffic Regulation Order which can be implemented within weeks could be utilised to trial a restriction in a "live" situation for up to 18 months, with the consultation period running alongside the trial. An ETRO is flexible as it allows for immediate feedback and minor changes within the first 6 months, if changes were made, the 6-month consultation period would start again. A decision on making the scheme permanent or removing it would need to be taken within 18 months of the ETRO first coming into force and after a minimum of 6 months following the start of the trial.
14. In the instance of Boscombe Overcliff an ETRO could be utilised to restrict parking on the inland side of it to 'cars and motorcycles only' (this restriction is currently in place on the seaward side of the Overcliff), however, as per above, the same restriction would also need to be implemented in the adjacent roads/streets to prevent displacement. If this were to be progressed, then the recommendation would be for this to be implemented on all roads south of Wentworth Avenue.
15. NOTE: in 'cars and motorcycles only' bays any vehicle designed or adapted for sleeping purposes (campervan or motorhome) can be enforced against by the issuing of a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN), however, any vehicle that has not been designed or adapted for sleeping purposes but that can carry up to 7 passengers (and that does not exceed 3050kg in weight) or a vehicle that can carry goods (a van) up to 3500kg in weight is still permitted to park there.

16. This means for example VW Transporter (2600kg to 3200kg)/Ford Transit (2600kg) vans would still be able to park in these bays provided they have not been adapted for sleeping purposes. If a Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) can take photographs confirming the vehicle has been adapted for sleeping purposes, then a PCN can be issued, this can however, be challenging because unless CEOs can see within vehicles they cannot tell if a vehicle has been adapted. There are also some visitors that use smaller vehicles to sleep in overnight which is also be challenging to enforce against.
17. If these restrictions are implemented, then larger motorhomes would be unable to park here and need to find somewhere else to park without the restriction(s) in place.
18. An alternative option would be to introduce a period of no parking during the overnight period, between agreed hours in the seafront areas. For example, no parking between midnight and 5am. This type of restriction is however, challenging to enforce because it would require overnight CEO patrols. Furthermore, it would also require residents to comply with the restrictions unless a resident's parking zone is implemented.
19. There will be some recommendations because of the seafront paid for parking consultation, these are still emerging.
20. For awareness the council in 2023 also introduced a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) which covers the Boscombe Overcliff and enables the council to enforce against the following:
 - Section 1 – Anti-social Behaviour
 - Section 2 – Reducing the volume of music when asked to do so by an authorised officer
 - Section 3 – Urination and defecation
 - Section 4 – Lighting any fires and BBQs

Assessment of vacant and underused council-owned land

21. Members raised the issue of vacant and underused sites as part of housing motion to Council last Summer and resolved to undertake an “urgent audit of all vacant or stalled development sites across BCP”.
22. Typically, land is vacant until viable to develop, with some sites being cleared to minimise maintenance costs and risks. The majority of vacant sites are subject to planning activity i.e., have an undeveloped permission, and some vacant sites are already allocated for development in an existing Local Plan.
23. In respect to knowing the status of a site, each year the council produces an annual housing monitoring report which records the status of all sites with planning permission and whether or not, these are complete, under construction or not started. In addition, as part of the Local Plan preparation the Council also compile a record of potentially available housing sites (those capable of delivering more than 15 homes) in its Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment. This includes a number of vacant sites both Council and private. Further information on Council owned sites will be held by the Estates Team.

Further measures can be introduced against illegal and antisocial parking

24. Additional measures such as:
 - a. increased use of tow-away capabilities – although this comes at a significant cost to the Council (see increased PCN levels)
 - b. increased CEO patrols including alterations to timings of patrols – this is already under review with ongoing dynamic intervention
 - c. adjustments to traffic orders, which requires statutory consultation
 - d. CCTV enforcement of moving traffic contraventions – there is a project underway to review this implementation following the relevant powers being granted to the Council
 - e. more joint working with Dorset Police to increase awareness to reduce instances of illegal and antisocial parking.

25. Increased PCN levels - The Department for Transport (DfT) authorised a trial issue of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's), and associated additional charges, at a higher rate in the area of shown in Diagram 1 below between 1 August 2025 and 31 August 2025. The full report can be found here [Trial for increased parking fines and penalty charge notices \(PCN\) | BCP](#)

Diagram 1 – PCN trial area



26. Total PCNs in the trial area fell compared to August 2024, reversing the previous year's sharp increase. Forecast models predicted a rise without the trial, meaning the actual outcome represents a headline 16% reversal from expected growth. The PCN data is set out in Table 1.

Table 1 - PCN Amounts During the Trial Period

Item	Lower		Higher	
	Current	Trial	Current	Trial
PCN Amount	£50	£110	£70	£160
Discounted Amount	£25	£55	£35	£80
Charge Certificate	£75	£165	£105	£240

Debt Registered Stage	£85	£175	£115	£25
Additional Parking Charge	Current		Trial	
Release from Wheel Clamp	N/A		£100	
Release from Car Pound	£105		£280	
Storage Fee (per day)	£12		£55	
Disposal Fee	£50		£100	

27. There are limitations given the short duration of the trial, very constrained preparation time and other variable but it represents a positive indication of the impact of increasing financial penalties as a deterrent to illegal parking. In comparison Christchurch saw an increase in serious contraventions during the same period, reinforcing that standard PCN levels remain ineffective as a deterrent.
28. Behavioural displacement occurred with some motorists shifted from high-risk on-street contraventions to lower-level breaches in car parks.
29. Persistent issues during peak demand (e.g., Bank Holidays) suggest that financial deterrents alone cannot fully mitigate extreme visitor pressure; capacity management and dynamic pricing may be required.
30. No evidence of reduced visitor numbers or negative economic impact was found, supporting the feasibility of adopting higher PCN levels permanently

Increasing signage to direct visitors away from congested roads

31. The council already utilises a suite of Variable Message Signs (VMS) and static signs to highlight to visitors which car parks should be utilised on busy days and to reinforce that illegal parking shall not be tolerated and combated with towaway.
32. The VMS on any anticipated busy day are set from the outset to direct visitors arriving by car to head straight to Avenue Road and Richmond Hill Multi-storey car parks (MSCPs) as opposed to the beach/seafront car parks. The rationale for this is to try and spread the load by encouraging more people to utilise these car parks which have both been proven to have capacity on the busiest of days.
33. The VMS are also utilised dynamically to advise visitors to avoid areas when busy and/or when live incidents are happening, for example fires at Studland, collisions, emergency utility works etc.
34. When visitors queue for full car parks, CSAS (Traffic) Officers direct them away and postcodes are displayed informing visitors where to travel to find available parking.
35. In advance of high season, the traffic team reviews the signage to ensure that it is all in place and operational. This includes signage to highlight very clearly to visitors that inconsiderate parking will not be tolerated and that if they do so they will be towed away.
36. More signage could be added but is not considered necessary and would just create more clutter. It is also not practical to have Variable Message Signs (VMS) at the end of every seafront road. They are expensive to install and maintain. At some point as technology continues to evolve, they will become redundant as in vehicle technology takes over.

Tackling seasonal parking pressures

37. The strategy to tackle seasonal parking pressures is to increase CEO patrols of key locations, deploy CSAS (Traffic) officers to manage car park entrances on predicted high visitor days, continue to operate the tow-away policy to ensure free flowing traffic, provide officer presence within the Traffic Control Centre to direct resources and support interventions with the police as they develop, work with National Highways to broadcast VMS messages on the Strategic Road Network to visitors before they arrive in BCP. There is also wider work being undertaken more locally to make walking, cycling and using public transport more easy and accessible to reduce locally generated congestion where practicable. This is in addition to lobbying government to increase the PCN levels in line with the recent trial.

Parking Strategy

38. A key element of the emerging BCP Local Transport Plan will be the development of a Parking Strategy. It is a deliverable listed in the implementation plan element of the LTP. Parking is central to lots of council priorities - health, economic growth, housing delivery, carbon reduction etc and therefore, a coordinated and refreshed approach is needed to look at parking issues in the round and set out a clear strategy for how parking will be managed.
- The Parking Strategy will outline the council's comprehensive policies and plans for parking. The key themes of the proposed Parking Strategy are referenced in the draft LTP Implementation Plan. These include: Review of capacity and location of council owned car parks
 - Review of strategic approach of council owned car parks, tariffs and products
 - Use of data and technology to improve information to users supporting network management
 - Review of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ) and Residential Parking Zones (RPZ)
 - Exploration of opportunities for rail and bus park and ride

Current and Projected Income from Parking Enforcement

39. The PCN income for the last (2024/25 actual), current (2025/26 forecast) and next (2026/27 projected) financial year is provided below:

Year	PCN Income	Notes
2024/25	£ 2,830,622.28	Actual
2025/26	£ 2,841,300.00	Forecast
2026/27	£ 2,898,126.00	Projection

40. It is noteworthy that PCN income cannot be compared to the PCN's issued in the same year as it can take many months to recover the money owed. The tables below show the monthly number of PCN's issued alongside the income recovered for PCN's issued that month and the payments received regardless of issue date for 2024/25. The average value of a PCN is also included and uses the actual recovery rate for PCN's issued that month for the calculation. It is still possible that the amounts will increase as PCN cases conclude and/or debt is recovered.

Month	PCNs Issued	% of annual PCN total	Amount recovered for PCNs issued in that month	% of annual PCN income total	average PCN £	Payments received for PCNs (regardless of Issue Date)
Apr-24	9,033	9.73%	£264,929.74	9.63%	£ 29.33	£254,493.72
May-24	9,272	9.98%	£270,219.44	9.82%	£ 29.14	£261,213.20
Jun-24	8,797	9.47%	£247,208.66	8.98%	£ 28.10	£252,451.68
Jul-24	9,214	9.92%	£261,971.99	9.52%	£ 28.43	£259,436.12
Aug-24	10,718	11.54%	£311,970.36	11.34%	£ 29.11	£283,580.42
Sep-24	7,025	7.56%	£209,459.47	7.61%	£ 29.82	£241,661.25
Oct-24	7,580	8.16%	£229,138.38	8.33%	£ 30.23	£253,987.80
Nov-24	6,606	7.11%	£202,768.74	7.37%	£ 30.69	£221,037.02
Dec-24	5,569	6.00%	£174,687.51	6.35%	£ 31.37	£192,286.95
Jan-25	5,990	6.45%	£183,187.79	6.66%	£ 30.58	£201,281.59
Feb-25	6,147	6.62%	£190,018.20	6.90%	£ 30.91	£190,588.73
Mar-25	6,923	7.45%	£206,576.21	7.51%	£ 29.84	£218,603.80
Total	92,874		£2,752,136.49		£ 29.63	£2,830,622.28

41. Any surplus income generated from fines, must be spent in accordance with Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
42. Surplus income, should there be any, will need to cover all costs related to enforcement and running the Parking Service. This includes the administration staff involved in collecting the fines, maintenance of equipment and the associated signs and markings together with energy, data and software costs.. Any surplus remaining after deduction of costs may go towards improving parking places, supporting public passenger transport, highway improvement schemes (not general maintenance), and environmental improvements.
43. The regulations do not permit surplus income generated from fines (PCN's) to be used to fund general council activities, nor can enforcement be used to deliberately raise revenue – the aim of enforcement is compliance.
44. In relation to forecasting and estimating income from PCN's within Traffic Management Act 2004: statutory guidance for local authorities outside London it states that:
 - a. *For good governance, enforcement authorities need to forecast revenue in advance. But raising revenue should not be an objective of civil enforcement, nor should authorities set targets for revenue or the number of PCNs they issue.*
 - b. *Enforcement authorities should run their enforcement operations efficiently, effectively, and economically. The purpose of penalty charges is to dissuade motorists from breaking traffic restrictions. The objective of civil enforcement should be for 100% compliance, with no penalty charges.*

Summary of financial implications

45. Not Applicable – this report is for information only

Summary of legal implications

46. Not Applicable – this report is for information only

Summary of human resources implications

47. Not Applicable – this report is for information only

Summary of sustainability impact

48. Not Applicable – this report is for information only

Summary of public health implications

49. Not Applicable – this report is for information only

Summary of equality implications

50. Not Applicable – this report is for information only

Summary of risk assessment

51. Not Applicable – this report is for information only

Background papers

BCP PSPO - [Coastal Area Public Spaces Protection Order \(PSPO\) | BCP](#)

Local Transport Plan - [Joint BCP-Dorset Local Transport Plan 2026 to 2041](#)

Appendices

- a. [Trial for increased parking fines and penalty charge notices \(PCN\) | BCP](#)