

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 March 2026 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Aitkenhead – Vice-Chairman in the Chair

Present: Cllr J Beesley, Cllr P Canavan, Cllr C Goodall, Cllr S Mackrow,
Cllr L Northover, Cllr T Trent, Cllr O Walters, Cllr G Wright and
Cllr A Keddie (In place of Cllr K Salmon)

Present virtually: Cllr C Weight and Cllr F Rice

Also in attendance: Cllr R Herrett, Cllr R Burton (virtually), Cllr S Carr-Brown
(virtually) and Cllr A Hadley (virtually)

107. Apologies

Apologies were received from the Chair, Cllr K Salmon, Cllr Dedman and Cllr C Weight.

108. Substitute Members

Cllr A Keddie substituted for Cllr K Salmon.

109. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

110. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2026 were approved as a

111. Recommendation Tracker

The recommendation tracker was noted. The Board was advised that the feedback from the Consultation Framework recommendations was due to be reported to the June meeting due to the full agenda for the May meeting.

112. Public Issues

There were no public issues submitted for this meeting.

113. Parking Around Schools

The Chair introduced this item and outlined the format for discussion. The Chair initially invited the O&S Board Member rapporteurs to address the Board and outline their findings. They reported on a number of issues including:

- Driver behaviour around schools had deteriorated over time. Increased vehicle numbers and parental time pressures were considered contributing factors.
- Hazardous environments have been created due to dangerous or inconsiderate parking including blocking access, parking on zigzags, pavement parking and stopping in unsuitable locations. Education was considered essential as many drivers appeared not to understand parking restrictions.
- The imminent pavement-parking ban was noted.
- School Streets schemes had proven highly effective where implemented.
- Issues were also compounded by differing enforcement powers between civil enforcement and police, making responsibilities unclear to parents, schools and councillors.

Following the update from the rapporteurs a Head Teacher provided detailed insight into persistent and long-standing parking issues that have worsened since the pandemic. It was reported that the school's two entrances intensified the challenge. Problems included illegal parking, blocked access for residents and emergency vehicles, confrontations between adults, damage to verges and idling engines. The Head Teacher emphasised strained relationships with residents and the significant burden imposed on school staff. The Head Teacher advised that additional road markings, particularly zigzags at the second entrance, would be beneficial. Enforcement presence was infrequent and did not effectively deter parents. Volunteering for School Streets had been unsuccessful due to low engagement. The Board then heard from a representative from the local bus operator who outlined the impact of inconsiderate parking on bus reliability, journey times and safe access to bus stops. It was reported that poor parking outside school zones often displaced problems onto bus routes. Reduced pupil bus use since the pandemic was noted. Bus travel was recognised as part of the long-term solution, dependent on funding and appropriate routing. The Chair thanked those attending for sharing their experiences with the Board.

Cabinet Portfolio Holders highlighted constraints including limited enforcement staffing and increasing aggression experienced by officers. Budget pressures limited the expansion of the School Streets programme, although it remained a priority. Officers reiterated the importance of the three E's: Education, Engineering, Enforcement, these were generally prioritised in this order. Officers advised that they could provide geographical and numerical data on penalty notices on request. The Board raised a number of issues in the ensuing discussion including:

- **Unsafe parking** – Concern was raised about unsafe and inconsiderate parking around schools, with it being reported that behaviour had worsened since the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing risks to pupils, disrupting residents and leading to more frequent conflict and aggression.

- **Parking enforcement capacity** – The Board queried enforcement coverage at school peak times, and it was explained that limited staffing capacity meant consistent attendance at all schools was not possible, although rotas were being reviewed to improve alignment with drop-off and pick-up periods.
- **Deterrent effect of enforcement** – Concern was expressed that current enforcement lacked deterrent impact, and it was explained that penalty charge notices could not be issued where vehicles were moved on request and that fine levels were nationally set, with proposals to lobby Government for higher penalties.
- **Roles and responsibilities** – Clarification was sought on responsibilities, and it was confirmed that enforcement powers rested with the Council and police, with a need identified for clearer guidance to educational settings and Councillors on roles and limitations.
- **Road markings outside schools** – The importance of road markings in improving safety and enabling enforcement was emphasised, while it was explained that their use was subject to legal and design constraints and required assessment, consultation and funding.
- **Limits of road markings** – It was acknowledged that road markings were necessary but insufficient on their own to change behaviour and needed to be supported by education and enforcement.
- **Camera enforcement** – The use of camera enforcement was discussed, with it being clarified that cameras could only be used for specific contraventions such as school zigzags, and that wider use was constrained by cost and resource requirements.
- **Reliance on schools and volunteers** – It was noted that schemes such as School Streets were effective but limited by funding and volunteer availability, and that alternative enforcement methods could help reduce reliance on school staff.
- **Schools influencing behaviour** – It was reported that schools regularly communicated with parents to promote safer travel, but behaviour change remained difficult due to work patterns, time pressures and travel distances.
- **Active travel measures** – The Board noted that active travel initiatives were in place, but that these had had limited impact on reducing car use at peak school times.
- **Public transport options** – The potential role of buses was discussed, with it reported that pupil bus use had declined post-pandemic, although buses remained part of the wider solution where practical.
- **School expansion and planning** – It was agreed that parking and transport impacts should be considered earlier during school expansion or development, with earlier engagement from relevant teams seen as beneficial.

RESOLVED: The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet:

1. That the parking enforcement team be asked to circulate information to all educational settings and councillors with general guidance around the limitations and responsibilities of parking

enforcement officers and the police including suitable contact details.

2. That a Communications campaign be organised through the 'safer routes to schools' team regarding an emphasis on enforcement going forwards and that consideration be given to using specific information related to educational settings, e.g. levels of fines withing a specific area in order to encourage a decrease in the instances of parking infringements to reduce the overall number of fines.
3. That the relevant Portfolio Holder write to the DfT emphasising the need to increase fines to help with dangerous parking outside schools.
4. That the 'safer routes to schools' team be asked to review if any free resources are available for educational settings, to share with parents to help create a shift in parent driving behaviour including exploring whether Op Relentless Community Funding from Dorset Police could be used for this.
5. That it notes the Board's support for the good work already underway from the Parking Team to look at funding options for camera parking enforcement on school zigzags and the Board's support for the Parking Team's work to increase availability of enforcement officers at key times for school parking issues.
6. That it supports the current review by the Transport Team of road markings at educational settings to ensure that the most appropriate markings are in place.
7. That it agrees that when planning applications are submitted for schools the 'safer routes to schools' team be informed.

Voting: Nem. Con.

- The meeting adjourned at 8:07pm and resumed at 8:21pm -

114. Key Lines Of Enquiry (KLOE) relating to parking pressures in high season

The Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The report outlined responses to questions raised by the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) relating to parking related items across the BCP Council area. The Chair reminded members that some matters raised, particularly those relating to people living in vehicles, were within the remit of the Environment and Place Committee. It was emphasised that discussion should remain within the scope of the Board and that comments would inform the emerging parking strategy.

The Democratic Services Officer clarified that although the report referred to matters involving people living in vehicles, the substantive policy work on this was being carried out by the Environment and Place Committee. This

included an active survey targeting those living in vehicles to gather further insights. Members were encouraged to signpost individuals to the survey. It was confirmed that the Board's task was not to set policy on van-life but to note relevant implications for parking strategy.

The Portfolio Holder explained that several acronyms used in parking policy related to the division of responsibilities between the Department for Transport (on-street parking) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (off-street parking). The report responded to key lines of inquiry raised following a motion approved by Council in September 2025.

The Board was informed that:

- Analysis of the large-scale consultation on parking zones had not yet concluded due to competing workload pressures.
- Park and ride viability had been repeatedly reviewed and remained challenging.
- Existing restrictions along parts of the seafront were complex to enforce, particularly where overnight sleeping prohibitions required officers to wake vehicle users.
- Underused land near car parks had been examined but suitable capacity was limited.
- Peak occupancy in summer 2025 reached approximately 72%, demonstrating strain but not full saturation.
- Variable message signage had been used on key routes to guide visitors to available upper-town car parks, though visitors frequently ignored this in favour of navigating directly to the seafront.
- Enhanced PCN rates trialled in August 2025 had been the single most effective measure to influence behaviour.

The Chair of the Environment and Place Committee reported on ongoing work relating to van-life. The issue had first arisen more than 18 months earlier, and the Committee had since sought to approach it sensitively, recognising both cultural and socio-economic dimensions. Engagement with support organisations and community groups continued, with surveys distributed through partners. The importance of avoiding actions that discouraged participation or caused distress to vulnerable groups was emphasised.

A number of different issues were discussed in consideration of this item:

Alignment with Environment and Place O&S Committee - The need to align forthcoming parking strategy work with Environment and Place's wider programme was highlighted. Members stressed that parking for travellers, van-lifers and holidaymakers required differentiated but coordinated solutions.

Equality and Enforcement - Concerns were raised over the framing of enforcement measures that appeared to target specific locations or vehicle types. Members emphasised the requirement for all enforcement to be applied equitably, irrespective of vehicle value or appearance, and for decisions to avoid discriminatory impacts. Examples were given where entire groups had been moved from areas, raising questions about proportionality.

Types of Vehicle Use - Members discussed the need to distinguish between, people living in vehicles due to homelessness or hardship; members of recognised traveller communities; holidaymakers and recreational vehicle users. It was noted that behaviour patterns, support needs and impacts differed significantly across these groups. A “one-size-fits-all” approach to enforcement was viewed as inappropriate.

Alternative Provision - The Board noted that if overnight parking was to be restricted, alternative provision would need to be available. Members observed that no formal campsites existed within the BCP area, despite increasing numbers of campervan owners and tourist demand. Comparisons were made with other areas where urban-edge campsites allowed easy access to cultural and leisure venues. Members expressed interest in exploring whether such facilities could be delivered via the Local Plan.

Local Plan Designation - Members also raised the need for designated spaces for traveller communities, noting that previous Local Plan work had identified a requirement for such provision and that future national planning guidance was expected to strengthen these duties.

Park and Ride - The Board debated the viability of a park and ride scheme. Historical trials had shown low usage and poor financial return. However, some members argued that park and ride could only succeed if supported by wider measures, such as; reduced availability or higher pricing of central parking; Integrated inclusion within a broader transport and parking strategy;

Recognition that BCP’s polycentric geography made single-point schemes less viable.

Members noted that although challenging, park and ride should remain part of the strategic review.

Parking Zones Consultation - Members requested clarification on the timeline and costs associated with the consultation analysis. Officers advised that external analysis had been completed and internal work was ongoing. Once finalised and approved, the results would be published on the public consultation website.

Resolved that the Overview and Scrutiny Board Recommend to Cabinet:

- 1. That, in the development of the Local Plan and/or parking strategy, consideration is given to the provision of parking spaces for people to park overnight and sleep, including travellers, van lifers and holiday makers, ensuring that the communities affected are appropriately consulted.**
- 2. That, in the development of the local plan consideration is given to the provision of camp sites within BCP.**
- 3. That within the Local Transport Plan the provision of park and ride options are given full consideration.**

Voting: Nem. Con.

115. Work Plan

The Vice-Chair presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The Vice-Chair updated the Board on a number of matters following the Board's work planning exercise. The Board reviewed its work plan and confirmed the approach to scheduling topics based on urgency, resource implications and statutory requirements. It was recognised that items may need adjusting as new priorities emerged. The following changes to the work plan were also agreed:

Licensing Item – It was agreed that the previously included licensing work item be removed from the work plan pending further officer advice on its value to scrutiny.

Community Safety Partnership - That the item labelled 'Local Safeguarding Partnership' be corrected to 'Community Safety Partnership' to reflect the correct terminology.

The Board considered a member request relating to lower gardens, covering planning and environmental matters. The Board agreed that such matters should be directed to the relevant officers rather than escalated through scrutiny, as answers could be obtained directly.

The meeting concluded with agreement on the revised work plan and the next steps for topic scoping.

RESOLVED – That the proposed work plan be agreed subject to the amendments suggested above.

The meeting ended at 9.29 pm

CHAIRMAN