

PATROL

WITH



Effectiveness of current civil parking penalty charge levels

English and Welsh local authority survey findings and recommendations

January 2024



Executive summary

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Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London (PATROL), the local government joint committee of over 300 local authorities carrying out civil traffic enforcement in England (outside London) and Wales, has conducted research into how the current civil parking penalty charge levels are impacting its members in managing and enforcing restrictions in their areas. The research has been carried out with the British Parking Association (BPA) and the support of the Local Government Association (LGA).

During May – August 2023, a representative sample of 43 local authorities responded to an online survey and request for financial data covering their experience of enforcing parking restrictions, as well as their authority’s service expenditure over the last seven years. Following analysis of the authorities’ submissions, key findings include:

- **Over a third of authorities’ (34%) parking services no longer pay for themselves (operating costs have increased 29% on average).**
- **More than half of authorities (54%) believe the current levels of parking penalty charges are ineffective as a deterrent.**
- **Over two thirds of authorities (70%) reported individual motorists regularly receiving and paying PCNs in their area.**

Based on the evidence and feedback collected during the research, PATROL, the BPA and LGA present a comprehensive set of recommendations for consideration by the UK Government (Departments for Transport and Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) and Welsh Government. We believe these recommendations align with the recently published *Plan for Drivers*, encouraging responsible, conscientious driving, while ensuring enforcement services are self-funding and not reliant on generating surplus revenue.

Our primary recommendation is for the levels of civil penalty charges in England and Wales enforced under the *Traffic Management Act 2004* to be **increased to £100 (lower level contraventions) and £130 (higher level)**, as appropriate. These proposed charges take into account inflation and are in line with similar traffic and transport penalties set and approved for increase in recent years. We are also asking for English and Welsh authorities to be given the ability to regularly consult on and review civil penalties (for parking and other traffic schemes) as part of PATROL’s statutory function. Such a model is already in place for enforcement in London.

Additionally, our organisations are seeking changes to give local authorities Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) powers for enforcing off-street car parks and to be able to issue statutory enforcement documents digitally, rather than by first-class post. Both these changes would deliver significant efficiency savings, with ANPR powers also boosting detection and, ultimately, compliance of those who contravene the rules.

Background to the research (i)

There has been no formal review of civil parking penalty charges in England and Wales since 2008, with the exception of in London. The Scottish Government enabled local authorities to increase charges to £100 from 1 April 2023.

Outside London, the current higher-level civil parking penalty charge is £70 (reduced to £35 if paid within 14 days) and, for lower-level contraventions, £50 (reduced to £25). Using the Bank of England's inflation calculator for prices as of October 2023, these penalty charges would be £109.05 (discounted: £54.53) and £77.89 (discounted: £38.95) if they had risen in line with inflation – a ~56% increase from the level they are now.



£70

£50



£109.05

£77.89

If today's parking PCN levels had risen with inflation since 2008

The diminishing deterrent of charges last reviewed in 2008 still being in force in 2024 is hard to ignore. A motorist may well decide to simply risk paying the £25 discounted penalty within 14 days after contravening the charges at a seafront car park, where a day's parking costs the same or little more. This situation is regularly encountered by PATROL's authority members.

The reduced value of the penalty charge is also impacting the financial sustainability of local authorities' traffic management operations, generally, with the current inflationary squeeze inevitably impacting the budgets and ability of authorities to properly enforce restrictions and respond to requests from the public.



Background to the research (ii)

Parking penalty charge levels in England and Wales are also now less than a number of other common local authority fines, including those for other traffic penalties, littering and dog fouling. They are also lower than other transport penalties, including those for not having a valid ticket when travelling on the railways.

Despite regular and flagrant abuse of restrictions in areas where demand for parking is high, local authorities that continue to operate enforcement services no longer financially viable will likely begin to reduce enforcement and, as such, complaints about dangerous or irresponsible parking and unenforced restrictions will increase.

Surpluses from parking management and enforcement are now also greatly reduced or non-existent. Contrary to popular perception, few authorities make surpluses that grossly outweigh the cost of operating and delivering their parking service. Where surpluses are generated, they are ring-fenced for transport projects and improvements, such as subsidising bus travel.

The situation is only exacerbated by the significant increase in vehicles on roads in recent years. From 2008 to 2019 (before the COVID pandemic), motor vehicle traffic in Britain had increased by nearly 9%,¹ while between September 2008–2022, licensed car numbers in England and Wales increased 13.7%.² This increase in the number of cars alone means there could be as many as 3.5 million additional parked cars to be patrolled by civil enforcement teams above those parked in 2008.

Survey methodology

Over a period of three months, PATROL distributed an online survey among its local authority members in England and Wales. Survey questions focused on authorities' experience of operating a civil parking enforcement service over the last seven years, as well as the cost of running that service. To support the latter, a spreadsheet template to capture financial data relating to parking service expenditure accompanied the survey. Submissions were received from a diverse and representative group of local authorities, with the resulting question responses and financial data reviewed and analysed to produce this report.



Up to £70



Up to £80



Up to £100



Up to £120



Up to £150

Parking contraventions carry lower penalties than other traffic and transport penalties, as well as local authority fines for dog fouling

Which authorities responded?

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England

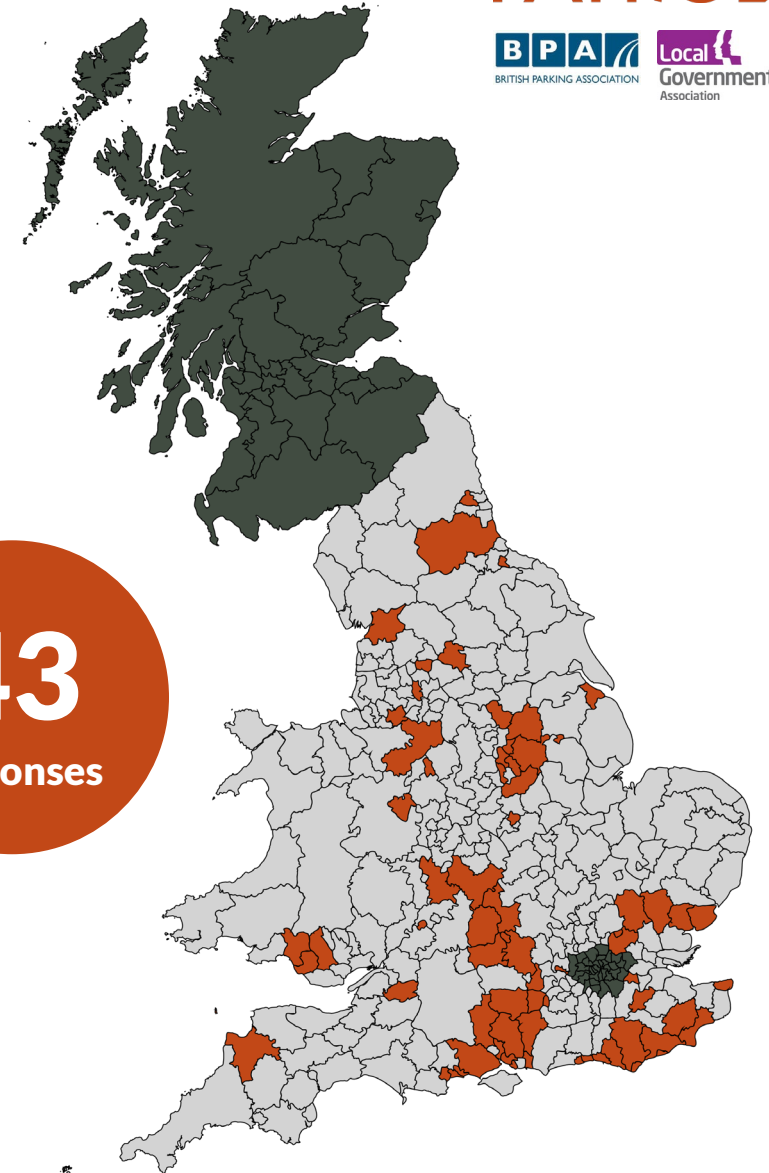
- Adur District Council
- Ashford Borough Council
- Bath & North East Somerset Council
- Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole (BCP) Council
- Bradford Council
- Brighton & Hove City Council
- Burnley Borough Council
- Bury Council
- Cheshire East Council
- Dartford Borough Council
- Durham County Council
- East Sussex County Council
- Fareham Borough Council
- Folkestone & Hythe District Council
- Gloucester City Council
- Hampshire County Council
- Lancaster City Council
- Leicester City Council
- City of Lincoln Council
- Middlesbrough Council
- Newcastle City Council

- North East Lincolnshire Council
- North Essex Parking Partnership
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- Rutland County Council
- Slough Borough Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Stratford-on-Avon District Council
- City of Stoke-on-Trent Council
- Thanet District Council
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
- Torridge District Council
- Vale of White Horse District Council
- Warrington Borough Council
- Wokingham Borough Council
- Worthing Borough Council
- Wychavon District Council

Wales

- Bridgend County Borough Council
- Neath Port Talbot County Council
- Rhondda Cyn Taff Borough Council
- Telford & Wrekin Council

43
responses



Representative authority sample

The authorities that responded to the survey constitute an authoritative, representative sample* of towns and cities across England and Wales, being among the...

Top 20 most-visited cities

Oxford, Brighton/Hove, Bath,
Newcastle, Nottingham, Leicester³

Top-10 congested cities

Nottingham, Leicester⁴

Authorities that issue the most parking PCNs

BCP, Bradford, Brighton,
Leicester, Newcastle⁵

Locations with Premier League football teams

Newcastle, Brighton,
Bournemouth,
Nottingham, Burnley⁶

Largest UK urban agglomerations

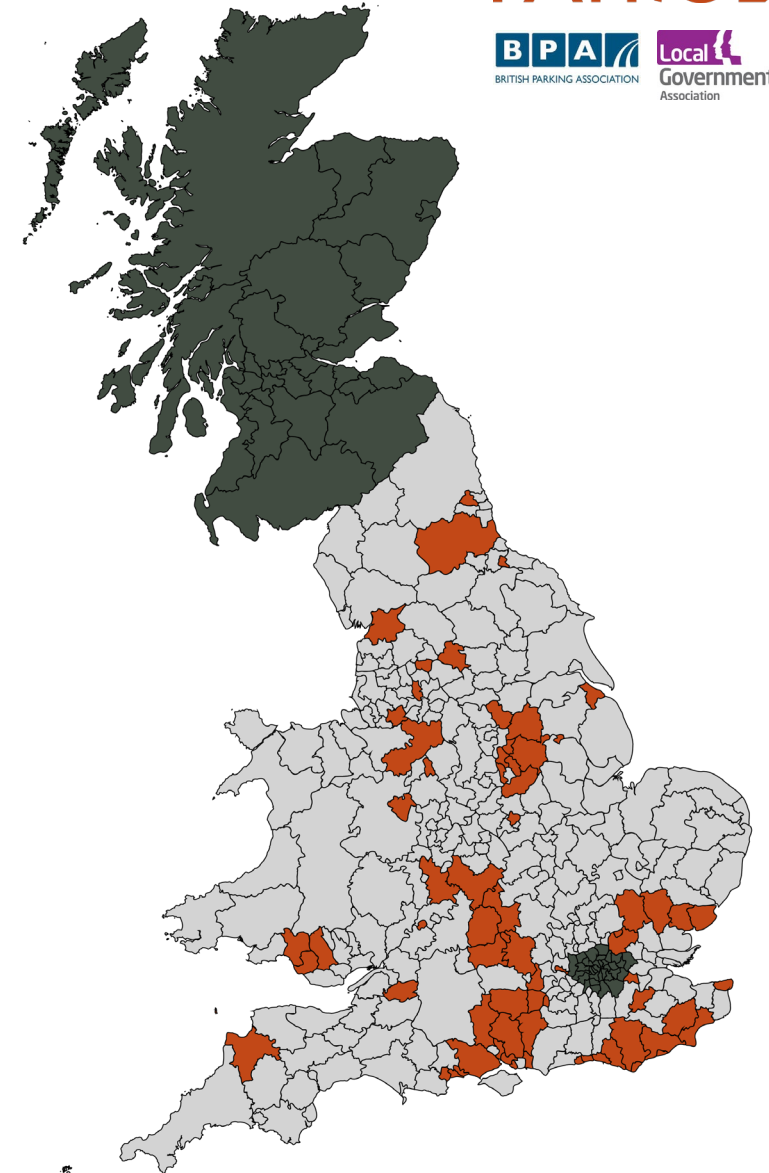
Newcastle, Brighton,
Leicester, Middlesbrough,
Bournemouth / Poole,
Stoke-on-Trent⁷

Most popular English seaside resorts

Brighton, Bournemouth⁸

* Quantitative user study best practice: 20 users or more allows for response figures that are statistically significant / have a tight confidence interval (Nielsen Norman Group)

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Key research findings (i)

Local authorities were asked a number of survey questions relating to the operation and effectiveness of their parking service over the last seven operating years (2016–2023), as well as to provide a series of financial data points on how spending had been impacted in the period.

- 1. Authorities' overall operating costs have increased by an average of 29%, with some reporting much higher increases (up to 57%)**
 - Technology and software spending has increased by 47% on average.
 - Spending relating to Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) activities (including hourly pay, uniforms and other equipment) has increased by 39% on average (this also reflects costs that didn't exist in 2016, including body worn cameras and lone worker devices).
 - Spending on payment processing is up 145% on average.
 - Spending on postage is up 72% on average – the use of first-class post is mandated by the Regulations.
- 2. Over a third of authorities' parking services (34%) no longer pay for themselves, with ancillary costs (e.g. set-up, maintenance and repair of restrictions) needing to be drawn from separate funds. Surpluses are now greatly reduced or non-existent**
 - Transport schemes, such as subsidised public transport, can no longer be paid for from enforcement surpluses.
 - The COVID pandemic swallowed up entire accrued reserves in some cases.
 - Situation is compounded by recent increases in staffing and energy costs.
 - Maintenance and repair of restrictions (e.g. signage and painting) is no longer being kept up.
- 3. More than half of authorities (54%) believe the current levels of parking penalty charges are not an effective deterrent**
 - Only as many believe the charges are 'Effective' as 'Not effective at all'.
 - None believe charges are 'Very Effective'.

Key research findings (ii)

- 4. Over two thirds of authorities (70%) reported individual motorists regularly receiving and paying PCNs in their area**
 - Such 'persistent offenders' reported as a particular problem in areas of high tourism and during seasonal / 'surge' periods; for example, at seafront locations and during sporting events.
 - Short-stay car parks, business premises and high socioeconomic areas also reported as hotspots.
 - Change in driver behaviour suggests receipt of a penalty is now regarded as an additional parking amenity, irrespective of the danger caused by the vehicle being parked in contravention of the restrictions.
- 5. Nearly half of authorities (47%) reported an increase in motorists contravening the following parking restrictions:**
 - No stopping / loading areas.
 - Resident's parking areas.
 - Disabled parking bays.
 - 'Zig Zags'.
- 6. Payment at the discounted rate (50% of the penalty charge within 14 days) is the norm across authority areas**
 - This means that the deterrent penalty charge is only £25 (lower) or £35 (higher) in real terms.
- 7. Nearly half of authorities (46%) have increased parking charges to offset increases in enforcement costs**
 - Compliant motorists in these areas are, in effect, subsidising the cost to enforce against those who don't comply.
 - Parking in town / city centres may be seen as less attractive if charges continue to rise, potentially impacting the local economy.
- 8. Over two thirds of authorities (68%) have taken on new traffic enforcement schemes in the last seven years, including:**
 - Resident's parking areas; Red Routes; Use of cameras / camera cars; Bus lane restrictions; Clean Air Zones; Moving traffic restrictions.

Survey responses can be viewed in full on Pages 11–17, with notes relating to authorities' anecdotal comments as an Appendix (from Page 24).
A summary of the submitted financial data is on Page 18 and four 'Parking Service Personas' – based on the research findings – can be found on Pages 19–22.

Recommendations (i)

Based on the evidence and feedback collected during this research, PATROL and the BPA, with the support of the LGA, present a comprehensive set of recommendations. These recommendations aim to mitigate the ineffectiveness of current parking penalty charge levels and the impact they have on the ability of local authorities to manage restrictions.

It is essential to emphasise that these recommendations and the issues they address will exclusively impact motorists who violate restrictions. Law-abiding motorists, and even those who unintentionally find themselves in violation on occasion, will remain unaffected, protected by the effective safeguards that already exist within the civil enforcement scheme.

By adjusting penalty charges to reflect today's money and ensuring that authorities can maintain an effective traffic management and enforcement service, the three organisations anticipate improved compliance from those motorists who currently disregard the rules. This will result in a better funded, fairer system, with an enhanced user experience for all.

Recommendation 1: Increase civil penalty charges under Traffic Management Act 2004 to £130 (where higher rate applies) / £100 (where lower rate applies)

- These proposed charges are based on the current levels set in 2008 (£70 / £50) tracked to the Bank of England's inflation calculator as of October 2023, while also taking into account:
 - Allowable penalty charge levels for Clean Air Zones in England, which are set at £120, given that this level of civil penalty charge was set in the last six years and takes into account '*...the behaviour change needed to deliver the ambitions for the zone; the local economic and social factors of the zone and surrounding areas; and the operational costs of running a scheme.*'⁹
 - Allowable charge levels for English authorities' Littering from Vehicles schemes, which are set at up to £150.¹⁰
 - The five-fold increase in fines for rail passengers travelling without a valid ticket in England (from £20 to £100) introduced by the DfT in October 2022, which acted on the basis that: '*The £20 value has not increased since 2005. In real terms, this means that this penalty has decreased from £20 to around £14 (in 2005 prices). In light of this real-terms reduction, the department believes that Penalty Fares are no longer fulfilling their deterrent function.*'¹¹
 - The recent rise in parking penalty charge levels in Scotland to £100.
 - Recommendations for private parking penalty charges submitted by the BPA (£100 / £130) to the DLUHC's recent consultation into charges. Consistency between the private and civil schemes would benefit the motorist user experience.

Recommendations (ii)

Recommendation 2: Grant English and Welsh authorities the ability to publicly consult and review civil penalties (for parking and other traffic schemes) as part of the PATROL Joint Committee's statutory function

- This would bring parity with powers already existing in London (through the Transport and Environment Committee).
- Ministers could retain the right of veto in relation to any proposed increase and the Department for Transport (DfT) / Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) / Welsh Government could provide a framework for how PATROL undertakes its new function to ensure consistency.
 - **Please note:**
 - English and Welsh ministers would need to agree to this approach to ensure consistency outside of London is maintained.
 - Differing penalties for England and Wales would have unintended financial and administrative consequences for technology providers, as well as the courts and tribunals involved in the PCN enforcement / appeals process. Such a situation may also confuse motorists, especially as London and Scotland already have differing penalty levels, as does the private scheme.

Recommendation 3: Give local authorities powers to issue penalties for off-street car parks using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)

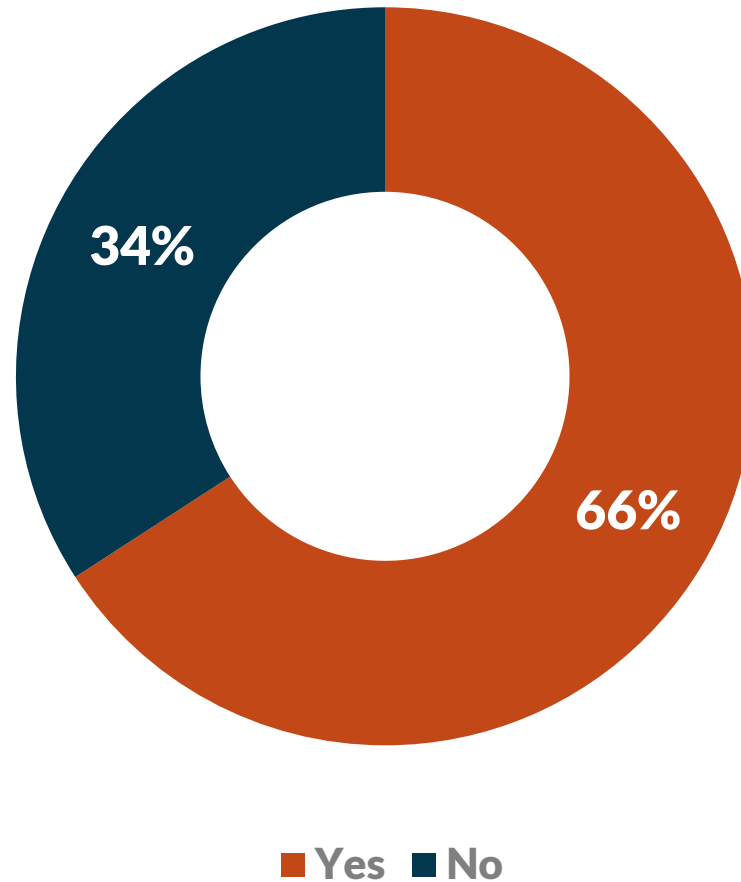
- These powers would drive efficiencies in off-street car park enforcement, with significantly reduced staffing costs, and improve the detection of non-compliance. ANPR has been shown to bring high adherence with car park terms and conditions in the private scheme.
- The move would also bring the civil scheme in line with the private, 'normalising' the use of ANPR for car parks, generally.
 - The same protections for Blue Badge holders could be carried over from the private parking Code of Practice.

Recommendation 4: Allow local authorities to issue statutory enforcement documents (post-PCN), digitally

- Parking service postage costs were shown to have increased by 72% since 2016, so this simple change would bring significant savings.
- The change would also complete the digitisation of the enforcement / appeals process:
 - Most local authorities already have an online portal to challenge / make representations against PCNs, and the Traffic Penalty Tribunal provides an end-to-end online appeals service for England (outside London) and Wales.
- The option to post documents / correspondence could remain those who choose, but issuing digitally would become the default.

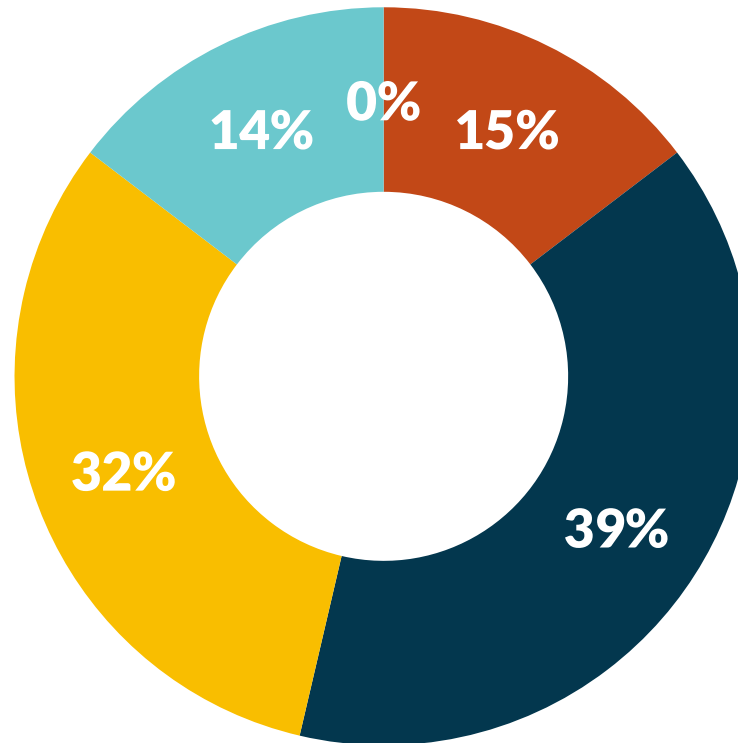
Survey responses:

1. Does your parking service pay for itself?



Survey responses:

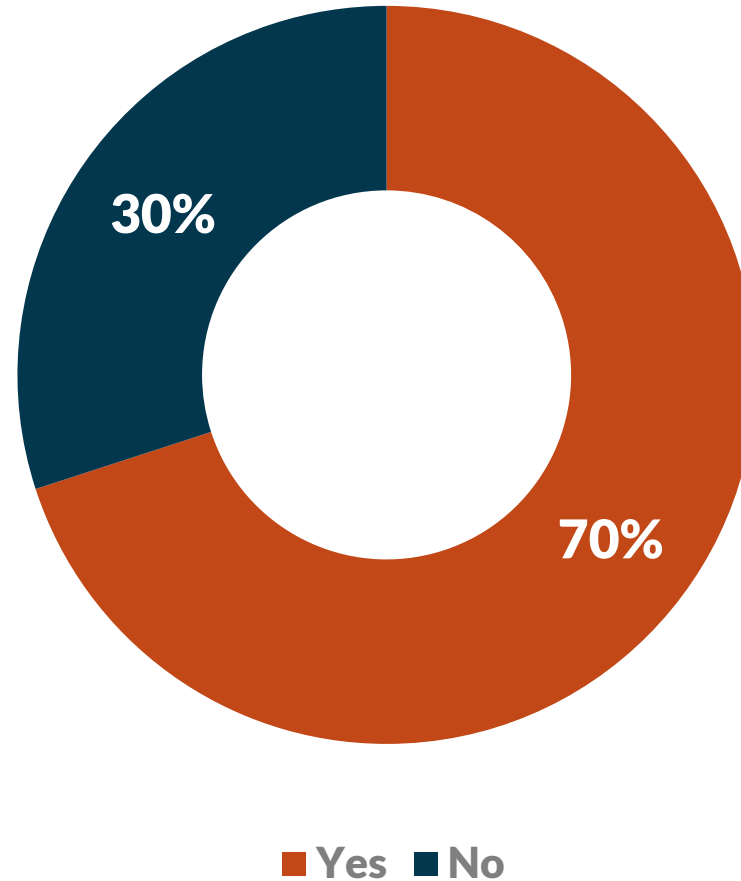
2. How effective a deterrent are the current levels of civil parking penalty charges?



■ Not effective at all ■ Not very effective ■ No strong opinion either way ■ Effective ■ Very effective

Survey responses:

3. Are you aware of individual motorists receiving multiple PCNs and regularly paying them in your area?



Survey responses:

4. Have any of the following contraventions increased in prevalence in your area over the last seven years? Select all that apply.

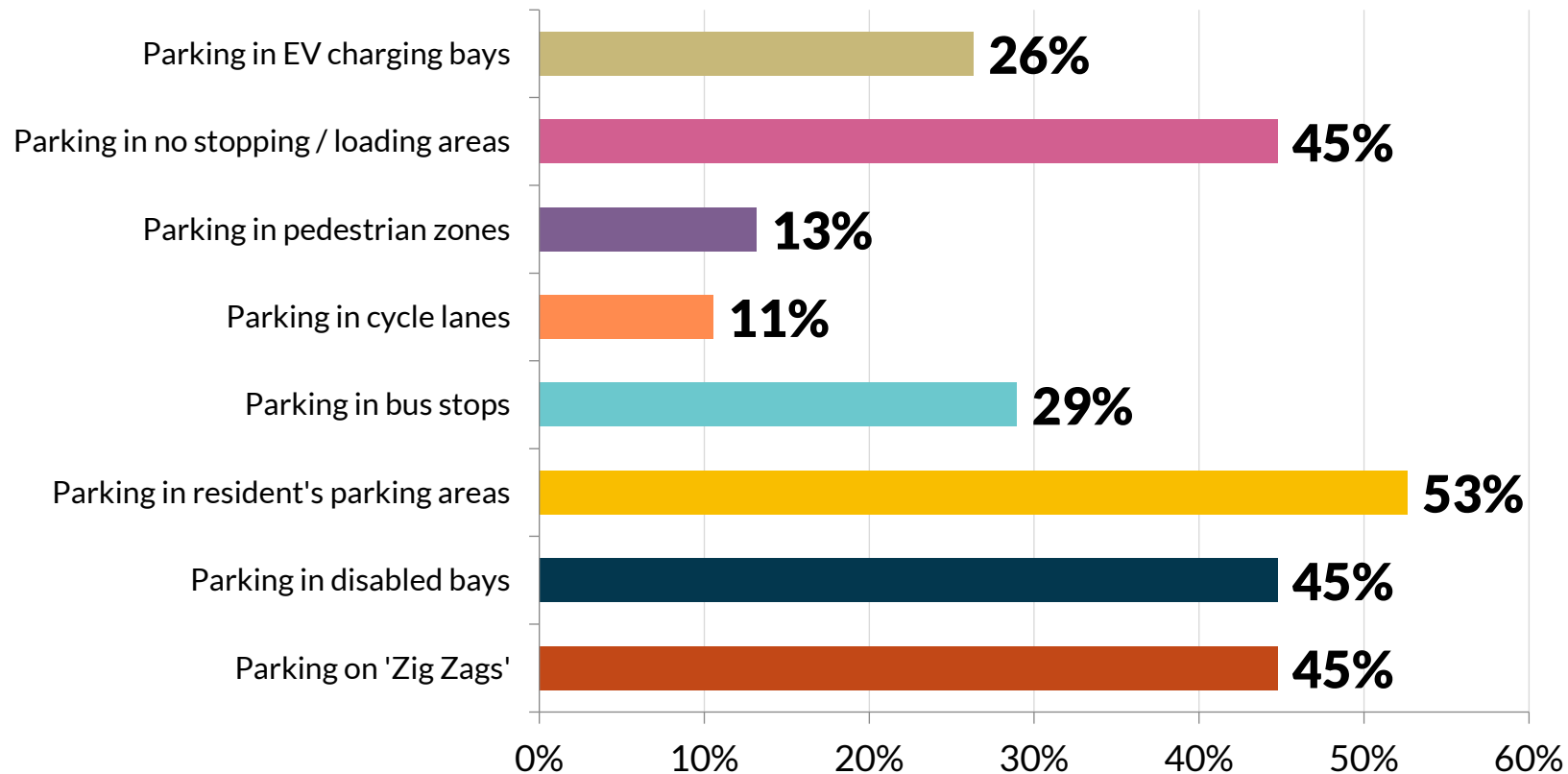
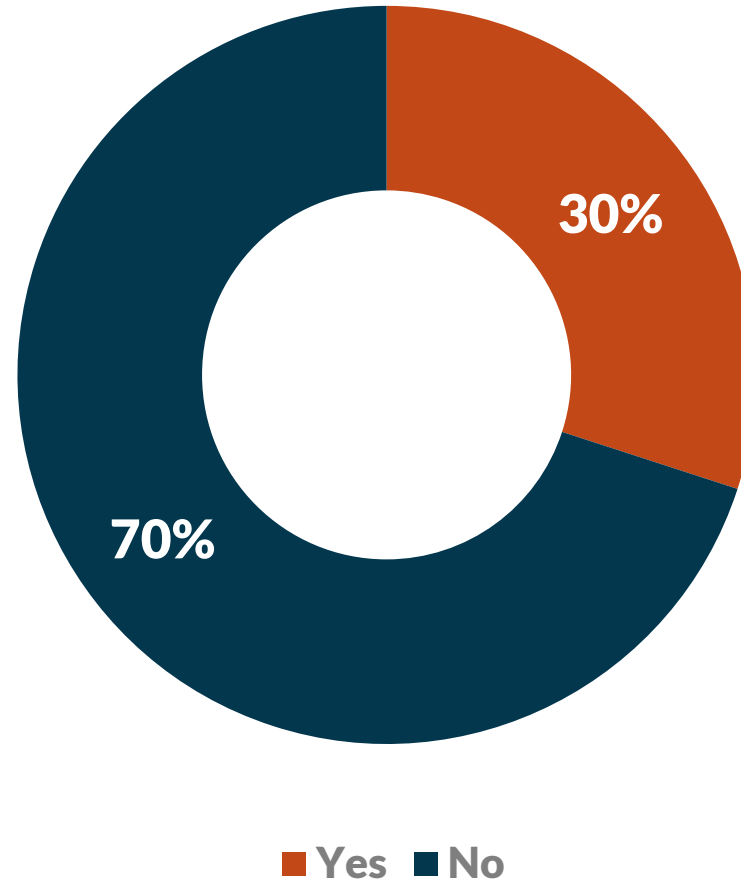


Chart shows % of authorities answering that the given contravention type had increased in their area

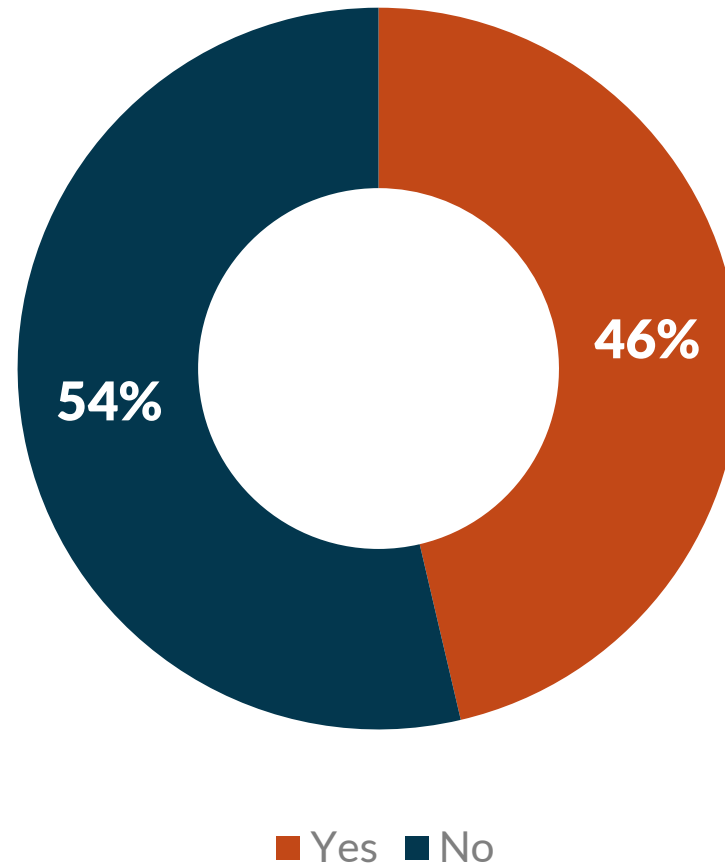
Survey responses:

5. Has the percentage of motorists paying at the early / discounted (50%) rate increased in your area over the last seven years?



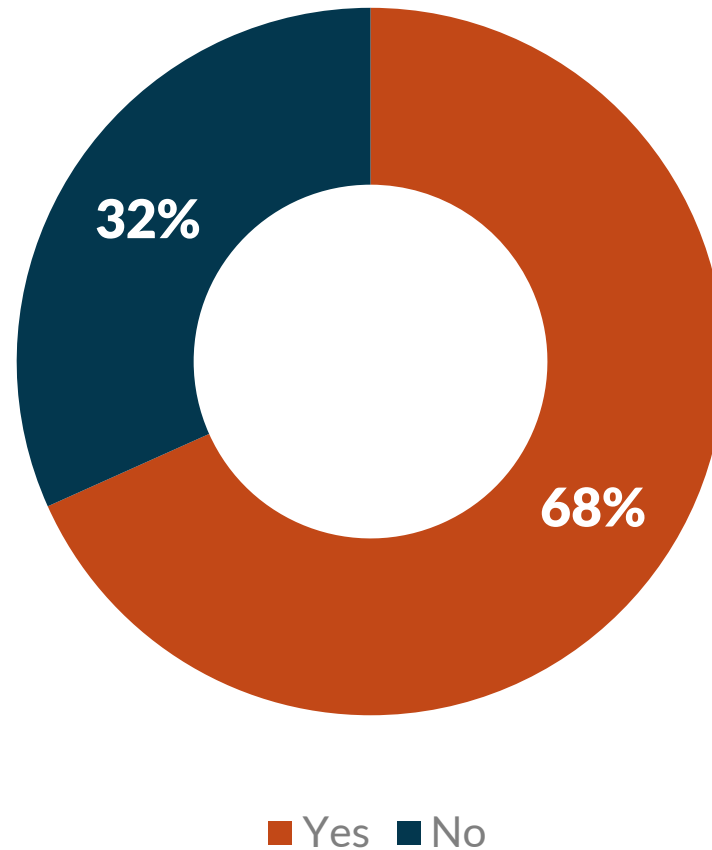
Survey responses:

6. Has your authority increased parking charges (e.g. Pay & Display) to offset any increase in enforcement operating costs?



Survey responses:

7. Has your authority taken on any new traffic enforcement schemes in the last seven years?



Financial submissions (2016 – 2023):

Aggregated data table on costs / spending impact

Budget line	Average spend increase 2016–2023
Overall headline cost (annual)	+28.5%
Headline technology / software costs (annual)	+46.9%
<i>Other itemised costs *</i>	
Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) hourly pay	+30.4%
CEO Uniform (standard per officer)	+48.6%
PCN roll (each)	+67.1%
CEO handheld (each)	+4.4%
Notice Processing Costs (annual)	+38.7%
Postage costs (annual)	+71.6%
Traffic Enforcement Centre fees (per referral)	+28.6%
Payment processing software or maintenance costs, e.g. P&D machines, online transactions (annual)	+159.7%

* Data based on submissions that were complete and in specified format, so these figures do not necessarily reflect averages for headline costs

Parking Service 'Persona' 1:

Locations with budget deficits

15 authority respondents stated their parking service no longer pays for itself

Locations: Ashford; Durham; Folkestone & Hythe; Leicester; Middlesbrough; Neath Port Talbot; North Essex; Nottinghamshire; South Oxfordshire; Telford & Wrekin; Tonbridge & Malling; Torridge; Vale of White Horse; Wokingham; Wychavon.

Data trends for these locations:

- Parking service not paying for itself (All locations).
- Current PCN levels deemed not / not at all effective deterrent (11/15 locations).
- Increased parking contraventions over last 7 years in:
 - Zig Zags (9/15 locations)
 - Disabled bays (8/15 locations)
 - Resident's bays (8/15 locations)
 - No stopping / loading areas (8/15 locations).
- Parking charges increased to offset enforcement operating costs (10/15 locations).

Key issues reported for these locations:

- Any margin or surplus has all but been eroded.
- Even if enforcement is covered, set-up, maintenance and IT costs have to be drawn from other income.
- Post-pandemic shock and rising staff / energy costs have put budgets into deficit.

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'Where the budget is being spent on increased salaries for front-line staff, it cannot be spent on maintenance – to the detriment of the entire system.'

- CEO starting wage in 2021: £10.80
- CEO starting wage in 2022: £13.06



£1.1m spent on COVID TROs at one authority over two years; current budget: £140,000/yr

Parking Service 'Persona' 2:

Locations with 'surge' parking activity

14 authority respondents represent locations that see regular instances of 'surge' traffic and parking activity for sporting and seasonal occasions

Locations: Bath, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP); Brighton & Hove; Burnley; Durham; Folkestone & Hythe; Gloucester; Leicester; Middlesbrough; Newcastle; Nottingham; Rotherham; Stoke-on-Trent; Warrington.

Data trends for these locations:

- Current PCN levels deemed not / not at all effective deterrent (7/14 locations).
- Motorists receiving multiple PCNs and regularly paying at discounted rate (10/14 locations).
- Parking charges increased to offset enforcement operating costs (8/14 locations).

Key issues reported for these locations:

- Repeated disruptive parking outside and around sporting venues
 - PCNs being paid at discounted 50% rate (close to cost of, or sometimes cheaper than, days parking).
- Full car parks spill-out on to carriageway / highway at seafront locations in summer months
 - Public transport and emergency service vehicles among local vehicles impacted (see image right).
- Prevalence of 'persistent offenders'.

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'As the cost difference is very small'[between a day's parking charge and the 50% PCN discount amount], they simply dump their vehicles and go off for the day.'

'...they even tell the officers they don't mind getting a PCN.'



Parking Service 'Persona' 3:

Locations with 'persistent offenders'

29 authority respondents reported problems relating to 'persistent offenders', with such motorists in these areas regularly receiving multiple PCNs and paying at the 50% discount.

Locations: Adur & Worthing; Bath; BCP; Bradford; Brighton & Hove; Bridgend; Burnley; Cheshire East; Dartford; Folkestone & Hythe; East Sussex; Hampshire; Lancaster; Neath Port Talbot; Newcastle; North Essex; Oxfordshire; Nottingham; Rhondda Cyon Taf; Rotherham; Rutland; Stoke-on-Trent; Stratford-upon-Avon; Thanet; Tonbridge & Malling; Torridge; Warrington; Wokingham; Wychavon.

Data survey trends for these locations:

- Current PCN levels deemed not / not at all effective deterrent (18/29 locations).
- Motorists receiving multiple PCNs and regularly paying at discounted rate (All locations).

Key issues reported for these locations:

- Beyond sporting and coastal locations, short-stay car parks and outside business premises reported as particular problem areas.
- Motorist with 30 PCNs paid at discount level reported by one authority; several authorities show motorists with 20+ PCNs, and many show motorists with 5+
 - Instance of multiple PCNs being built up before motorist seeks payment plan.
- Persistent offenders reported in greater numbers in affluent areas / high-value vehicles.

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'This problem needs to be resolved as a matter of urgency...the amount of time spent on this issue means we would never cover costs.'

Motorist with
30 PCNs
(paid at 50%)
reported at
one authority



Parking Service 'Persona' 4:

Locations among the UK's most-visited cities

Six authority respondents represent cities that are in the UK Top-20 for staying visits by inbound visitors (Source: Visit Britain, 2023).

Locations: Bath, Brighton, Leicester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford.

Data trends for these locations:

- Current PCN levels deemed not / not at all effective deterrent (4/6 locations).
- Motorists receiving multiple PCNs and regularly paying at discounted rate (5/6 locations).
- Increased parking contraventions over last 7 years in:
 - Disabled bays (3/6 locations)
 - Resident's bays (3/6 locations)
 - Cycle lanes (3/6 locations)
 - No stopping / loading areas (3/6 locations).

Key issues reported for these locations:

- High visitor footfall means resources are spread thinly.
- Significant growth in resident's parking schemes has increased patrols required.
- All locations have taken on new traffic management schemes in recent years, further impacting enforcement resource: 2 x active Clean Air Zones; 1 x Zero Emission Zone; 2 x Moving Traffic locations.

'The inability to enforce restrictions with an effective deterrent requires investment in further highways interventions, such as LTNs, modal filters and increased active travel infrastructure.. [this] requires additional capital expenditure and revenue for maintenance.'



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11. Department for Transport: *Consultation outcome – Rail Penalty Fare value reform* (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/rail-penalty-fare-value-reform/rail-penalty-fare-value-reform>) – Nov 2022

Appendix:

Notes on authority survey question comments

Question 1: Does your parking service pay for itself?

Insights from comments

- There has been a reduced margin / surplus, over recent years particularly.
- Some councils with high visitor numbers can absorb rising costs and continue supporting a healthy surplus, other authorities not in this situation.
 - Though conversely, rising costs cited as impacting areas with high visitor footfall / revenue, due to enforcement being spread more thinly than previously.
- Imposition and maintenance costs of schemes not paying for themselves, even if enforcement services are...If the former costs were included, authorities in question would be at a loss.
- Last year is the first reported as a loss due to increased staff and energy costs (direct cost-of-living crisis factors).
- 'Persistent offenders' and lack of data available at the DVLA takes up significant staff resource... *'the amount of time spent means we would never recover costs'*.
- Reg 9 / 10 does not cover the cost of back-office or any ICT infrastructure / front line service ICT infrastructure.
- Parking fees have been increased to cover the cost of running the enforcement service.
- The COVID pandemic (loss of earnings and schemes installed / altered afterwards) ate up the entire reserve accrued over the last 10 years. Pandemic Income Grant did not cover shortfall. Combined with pay increases, parking account has fallen into debt for the first time ever.

Illustration: £1.1 million spent implementing / reverting TROs for pandemic over two years; current year's budget is £140,000.

Question 2: How effective a deterrent are the current levels of civil parking penalty charges?

Insights from comments

- Off-record conversations between public and Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) indicate public don't care if they are issued with a PCN, as only worth £5–£7 a seat for the day. The convenience is worth more.
 - In other instances, public have commented: *'That's cheap'* when told what the PCN would be for parking on double yellows.
- Charges not a deterrent at any level without the resources / staff / time to actually enforce.
- Parking fees have increased, whereas penalty levels have not, meaning the gap between paying a PCN at discount and the all-day parking charge is decreasing each year – *'They [motorists] consider the fine as a daily parking rate!'*
- Serious issue reported for parking on days where locations have summer visitors (e.g. coastal areas) or major sporting events... motorists happily paying 50% discount PCN rather than a day's parking and towing away not viable due to volume of cars.
- If no discount was offered, would compliance not increase?
- Why have London and Scotland been able to increase penalty levels, whereas England (outside London) and Wales haven't – what's the justification?
- Parking PCNs are now less than any other penalty utilised by a local authority (litter fines, dog fouling, etc.).
- Low levels of parking PCNs impacting plans in some authorities to charge pollutant vehicles more to park – so also an impact on air quality efforts.
- *'High class'* vehicles a particular problem and there are comments regarding area population's disposable income.
 - Example of affluent areas having more of a problem than others in same local authority area...example of public school speech day.

Question 3: Are you aware of individual motorists receiving multiple PCNs and regularly paying them in your area?

Insights from comments

- Short-stay car parks reported as a particular problem.
- Motorist with 30 PCNs paid at discount level reported by one authority, with several at 20+ level and many 5+.
- Paying PCN every few weeks observed at one authority, with vehicle known to park regularly – ‘risk / reward’ approach.
- Regular occurrence outside business premises.
- Trend for motorists accruing high number of PCNs then seeking a payment plan observed by one authority.
- Hundreds / thousands accrued in charges often result in authority accepting less to ensure some payment is made (if the PCN results in a debt, it will be written off most of the time).
- One authority referenced a liveried vehicle parked on double yellows, obstructing passing traffic...owner claimed the PCN works out cheaper than advertising.
- Persistent offenders reported in greater numbers in affluent areas.
- Sporting events and coastal areas worse for persistent offenders.

Question 4: Have any of the following contraventions increased in prevalence in your area over the last seven years?

Insights from comments

- Motorists regularly parking on crossings.
- Pedestrian zone parking becoming an issue...motorists parking near to venues. Bollards have to be installed to improve compliance.
- Parking in bus stops and taxi ranks increased since the pandemic and increase of delivery drivers.
- Increase in staying visitors since COVID pandemic may have contributed to figures in one authority.
- Not covered by research scope: increases in double yellow and limited waiting bay parking contraventions.
- Limited enforcement due to recruitment issues, pay and retention of staff.

Question 5: Has the percentage of motorists paying at the early / discounted (50%) rate increased in your area over the last seven years?

Insights from comments

- Motorists paying at the discounted rates looks to be ~70%+ average in the areas where figures were provided; cited as majority otherwise (anecdotal).
- One authority reported a 78–83% increase in such instances over the period.
- One authority reported an increase for parking but a fall for bus lane PCNs.
- One authority reported a rise over the last twelve months.

Question 6: Has your authority increased parking charges to offset any increase in enforcement operating costs?

Insights from comments

- Increases attributed to inflation – only recently increased (April 2023)...to balance budget, as reported by number of authorities (energy, rent maintenance / repair and service costs, as well as enforcement). Others '*will need to in 2024*'.
 - Electricity charge increases cited as significant factor.
- Number of authorities reported that rises had not occurred for years (some cited political pressures).
- One authority has reduced charges to support the local town centre...inverse factor.
- One authority has commented that charges are linked to private car park operators at stations.
- One authority that doesn't currently charge for on-street parking now seriously considering it.
- Higher rises at beach locations than in town, district and park areas.

Question 7: Has your authority taken on any new traffic enforcement schemes in the last seven years?

Insights from comments

- Between 36 and 45 new parking schemes each year cited by two authorities; 50 to 100 by another.
- Nine authorities referenced that residents parking areas have been added, including one with over 1000 residential properties.
- Use of cameras and camera cars has increased (for outside schools and bus stop parking enforcement, particularly) – five authorities reference it.
- Red routes (e.g. on faster moving, dangerous stretches of highway) – three authorities reference it.
- Five authorities referenced they are commencing moving traffic restrictions.
- Six authorities referenced they have added / increased bus lane enforcement.
- Three authorities referenced they have commenced CAZ / ZEZ enforcement.
- One authority referenced it is adopting on-street parking linked to vehicle emissions.
- One authority referenced it has adopted Active Travel and Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes.
- One authority referenced it has added littering from vehicles enforcement.
- One authority referenced it has added TTROs for high-season problem areas.
- One authority referenced it had been authorised by the DfT to target HGVs contravening overnight wait ban.

Other comments

Insights from comments

CEO pay

- One authority commented that, post-pandemic, it has been hard to recruit CEOs.
 - Has led to a dip in the PCN issue rate, with a consequent impact on finances.
 - To compound matters – wage inflation. The starting rate for CEOs has increased (also an impact on recent starters, with a payment needing to be made to the group that had been overtaken by the pay rise).
 - A further pay increase was made after pay negotiations and a separate one-off lump sum was paid as part of the pay negotiations.
 - The starting wage rose from = £10.80 p.h. (2021 starting wage) to now (2022 levels pending pay increase from 1/4/23) = £13.06 p.h.

Maintenance

- There is a public expectation that lines and signs will be kept in good condition...where the budget is being spent on increased salaries for front-line staff, it cannot be spent on maintenance – to the detriment of the entire system.

Political pressures

- During the COVID pandemic, councillors were reluctant to put up the cost of Resident Parking Permit fees for three years, which has had a compound impact on income vs. expenditure for this authority's operation, contributing to the present deficit.
 - Prices have now been approved with an inflationary increase, but the missing years have caused a large impact on finances.

Appendix