

Meeting date: 10th January 2019
Report to: Transport and Highways Cabinet



Subject/report title: **Parking and Enforcement Services half year update**

Report from: Head of Highway Services

Report author/lead contact officer: Carl Newman /Paul Tovey

Wards affected:

- All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: Select an Exemption paragraph from the Quick Parts drop-down list

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide a half year position update on Parking and Enforcement services to the end of September 2018 and consider service improvements.

2. Decision(s) recommended

2.1 Cabinet Member is asked to:

- (a) Note the half year performance and financial position of the Parking Service as detailed in Appendix 1.
- (b) Note the contents of the September 2018 Tariff update in Appendix 2.
- (c) Note the half year performance and financial position of the Enforcement Services as detailed in Appendix 3.
- (d) Approve the Abandoned Vehicle Operating Policy as detailed in Appendix 4.
- (e) Agree to implement CCTV enforcement outside schools as detailed in paragraph 4.9.

- (f) Agree to receive the annual parking and enforcement performance report in June 2019.

3. What is the issue?

- 3.1 The Council's parking and enforcement service has the potential of being a key financial risk to the authority. Through this report the service seeks to provide reassurance of continued good performance across all four elements and to obtain approval to some specific service improvements.
- 3.2 **The Parking Service** is a key part of the service and it concentrates on the performance and operational maintenance of the council's 5 multi-storey car parks and 17 surface car parks situated across the borough.
- 3.3 The performance of the car parks consists of managing income generation and operational expenditure as detailed in Appendix 1. The service continues to face three main challenges:
- Meet the car park annual income target of £3,568,150.
 - Contribute to the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
 - Maintain the car parks in a safe, efficient and attractive condition for our customers.
- 3.4 In recent years, the number of retail customers using the car parks in Solihull has been reducing. This is due to a range of economic and competition factors including growth of Internet based shopping and the development of significant retail centres in the region such as Grand Central, Resorts World and Parkgate. The recently approved new food store (with its own free parking facility), on Homer Road in Solihull Town Centre will no doubt add to this pressure when it opens in late 2019. The declining performance of High Streets in general, has received much media coverage recently and Solihull, Knowle and Shirley are all facing similar pressures.
- 3.5 The continued promotion of public transport and the considerable investment into other modes of sustainable travel cannot be overlooked either. These initiatives are also competing for the parking service customer.
- 3.6 To help the service adapt to the changing local economy, the service improvement plan to encourage more commercial parking in Solihull Town Centre has gone very well. The service now generates over £250,000 annually from leasing parking spaces. Without this change the service would be reporting a significantly different picture than the one presented in Appendix 1.
- 3.7 In addition to monitoring the income performance of the car parks, the service also manages the annual operating costs and maintenance work programme. Appendix 1 also provides a summary of all expenditure and at this stage in the financial year, all expenditure plans are on target. There has though been some very good progress with the planned redecoration work to improve the internal appearance of the key town centre car parks. Feedback from stakeholders has been positive.

- 3.8 In September, the service successfully implemented the first increase in the Solihull Town Centre tariff for 10 years to help support the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. It also introduced new charges in the Knowle Village Centre car parks. An initial review of these changes, to the end of November 2018, is provided in Appendix 2. Whilst it is too soon to compare annual trends, early indications suggest that customer usage is comparable to that seen in 2017. As things stand then the service will achieve its MTFS saving target.
- 3.9 The team regularly look for efficiencies and ways of improving the customer experience. To this end, a number of options are being considered, including provision of cash and vending machines and the upgrade of the Pay & Display equipment. More details on these initiatives are expected to be available in the end of year report.
- 3.10 **The Enforcement Service** now covers two areas of enforcement, Civil Parking Enforcement and Bus Lane enforcement. This report considers the half year performance update and highlights key issues facing the service this year.
- 3.11 Civil Parking Enforcement is delivered in accordance with Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 3.12 These regulations ensure that the parking restrictions in Solihull are enforced in a firm, fair and consistent manner. The aim of the service is to ensure the available parking space is used correctly, meeting the needs of the local communities which they support, and to ensure such activity is carried out safely.
- 3.13 Resources are focused on promoting compliance of parking restrictions and conditions of use to assist residents, businesses and visitors. By operating a structured enforcement regime these objectives are generally being met.
- 3.14 At the end of period 6 (See Appendix 4) 12,367 Penalty Charge Notices had been issued. Whilst this places the service in a positive position, the poorer winter weather conditions, expected in the months to come, usually reduce income and therefore, this position would not support deploying additional officers, and could expose the authority to a financial risk.
- 3.15 Overall, the enforcement element of the service is operating very well and recently retained a Level 1 "Full Assurance" rating following an Internal Audit review. In addition, the new CCTV based Bus Lane enforcement service introduced an improved web-based appeals service which offers advice and guides motorists through the appeals process; this has been well received and has reduced the number of postal appeals. Of the 7,229 appeals so far this financial year, 5,017 (69%) were via the new online portal.
- 3.16 The service was also selected by the Independent Traffic Penalty Tribunal to be one of the first authorities to use its online web portal for motorists making an appeal. After rigorous testing of its processes, the service also received a level 1 audit outcome from the DVLA's external assessor.
- 3.17 After a strong start to the year, August and September were difficult months for the service, with a number of front line staff leaving the contract at a time when traffic on the network and in the car parks was very quiet. As a result, PCN issue rates were

lower than expected. The contract team, supported by colleagues at NSL Ltd., have been monitoring the position closely and the latest position will be shared at the meeting.

- 3.18 **Bus Lane Enforcement** is delivered under section 144 of the Transport Act 2000; Bus Lane Contraventions (Penalty Charges, Adjudication and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2005).
- 3.19 The authority's CCTV equipment captures potential contraventions. These are then reviewed by our software provider Chipside Limited who, on our behalf, then issue a Penalty Charge Notice by post to the registered keeper of the vehicle, as supplied by the DVLA. Appeals and customer enquiries are dealt with by the council's own Parking Services team.
- 3.20 The service went live in September 2017 with three cameras. Two cameras on Lode Lane and one camera at the entrance to the bus gate leading into Warwick road cul de sac. One of these cameras is shortly to be relocated to monitor compliance on Poplar Road as part of the Gateway project in Solihull Town Centre. This is subject to the outcome of the on-going Traffic Regulation Order consultation process.
- 3.21 In the 2017/18 financial year, the new Bus Lane enforcement service produced £81,569 of income which has been put into a reserve. From April to September this year, nearly 3,000 Penalty Charge Notices have been issued for driving in the Lode Lane bus lane producing £48,569 of income. If this level of contravention continues throughout the rest of the year then the council can expect to generate approximately £80,000. These funds will be moved into the reserve to ensure the annual maintenance and operating costs are cost-neutral for the authority in the years to come.
- 3.22 Overall the service is continuing to be a success in meeting its traffic management objectives and is also promoting and prioritising public transport along the Lode Lane corridor, which will shortly become one of the region's first SPRINT bus routes.
- 3.23 The **Abandoned Vehicle Service** transferred from Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services and became the responsibility of Parking and Enforcement Services in September 2017. A considerable amount of work to improve processes and integrating the service into the parking operation by utilising our current enforcement contractor NSL has been implemented.
- 3.24 An Internal Audit review in August 2018 noted clear improvements to the operation and was awarded an improved Level 3 rating. The audit recognised that aspects of the original service had not been approved and recommends the introduction of an operating policy. The proposed policy is detailed in Appendix 4, and this document seeks to clarify the current operating processes involving such areas as:
- the timescales for serving notice,
 - response times,
 - removal of vehicles,
 - application of statutory charges,
 - improved involvement with the DVLA, and
 - the disposal of vehicles and taking enforcement action.

- 3.25 It is clear from discussions with other authorities that the Abandoned Vehicle legislation is open to interpretation which is reflected in the varied operating processes, removal times and final actions used across the country. Overall, the suggested policy proposes service standards based on this Council's level of resources and expected volume of cases, which can be impacted on by the value of scrap metal and local economic circumstances.
- 3.26 From the experience gained managing the abandoned vehicle service already, it is apparent that there are three main issues that fall under the remit of abandoned vehicles.
- Untaxed Vehicles,
 - Burnt out vehicles, and
 - Abandoned vehicles.
- 3.27 The suggested policy addresses these three case types and if approved, will support the team in their overall objective of removing unsafe, untaxed and abandoned vehicles from land accessible to the general public.

4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 4.1 **Parking Services** - The amount of income generated at the half year position is in line with expectations. The final out-turn will be subject to the performance of the Christmas retail period and the severity of the winter weather conditions. The situation will continue to be monitored on a monthly basis.
- 4.2 Early indications suggest the tariff changes in both Solihull Town Centre and Knowle will meet the increased MTFs income target, subject to there being no change in the number of customers using the council's car parks. The second part of the planned tariff increase will be considered as part of the end of year report, which will be presented at the June decision-making session.
- 4.3 The change to allow a proportion of commercial parking into Solihull Town Centre car parks has so far been successful. This option helps deliver the MTFs saving target, offsets the impact of reducing numbers of retail customers and helps to maximise usage of the available parking space in Solihull Town Centre.
- 4.4 The evidence is suggesting that the **Enforcement** contract may have reached its optimal deployment level, with any additional resources failing to generate a financial return. This will be kept under review with no further increase plan at this time.
- 4.5 Inconsiderate and dangerous parking continues to be a concern outside schools despite the significant presence of the Civil Enforcement Officers. The service has seen an increased amount of requests for school gate enforcement so far this year.
- 4.6 Enforcement by Civil Enforcement Officers can be an effective deterrent, however, the parking issues occur at the same time of day at all schools and the demand outstrips

the resources available.

- 4.7 CCTV equipment along with sophisticated software has evolved recently and following the success of the bus lane scheme, the technology available to aid school enforcement is a viable option to help tackle this continuing problem.
- 4.8 Currently the DfT allows School Keep Clear restrictions to be enforced by CCTV systems. One system in particular now offers an affordable solution, integrates with our existing system and has the flexibility to be deployed between five schools, for an estimated cost of £20,000 per camera. (subject to competitive tendering process). A demonstration of the system's capabilities will be provided at the meeting. This new initiative could be funded from the revenue generated from the CCTV enforcement service which is in accordance with the approved method of use.
- 4.9 Since transferring to Parking Services the performance of the **Abandoned Vehicle** operation has improved significantly, as recognised by the recent Internal Audit review. The suggested service operating policy in Appendix 4, clearly defines service standards, how abandoned vehicles will be disposed of and allows officers to take enforcement action, where appropriate evidence is available.
- 4.10 In most cases there will be insufficient evidence to take enforcement action for abandonment of a motor vehicle. Where evidence is available, officers will in consultation with colleagues from legal services, progress a case against the owner of the vehicle. The preferred option is for the Council to issue Fixed Penalty Notices under the powers available to the Council in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Alternatively, it may be necessary to take action via the courts under Section 2 of the Refuse Disposal Act 1978. There are concerns about taking legal action, which may result in additional costs for the authority. This part of the service will, therefore, be monitored to compare the cost and benefits of taking such action.
- 4.11 The evidence is telling us that a policy needs to be in place and if approved, the Service Policy, set out in Appendix 4, will not only help the team to continue providing an excellent service to the residents of Solihull, but it will also support the team move towards a level 1 "Full Assurance" audit rating in the future.

5. Reasons for recommending preferred option

- 5.1 The service improvements considered in section 4, if approved, will all help to make the parking and enforcement service more efficient, effective and contribute towards the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 5.2 It is therefore recommended that the following initiatives should be approved and implemented as soon as practicable:
- A CCTV enforcement system to monitor compliance of School Keep Clear markings outside 5 schools in the borough.
 - Adopt the proposed Abandoned Vehicle Operating Policy as set out in Appendix 5.

5.3 It is also recommended that the current performance of the parking and enforcement service, as summarised in appendix 1, 2 and 3 should be noted, and continued to be monitored via the Cabinet Member's monthly briefing meeting with the Assistant Director for Environment & Highways.

6. Implications and Considerations

6.1 Delivery of key themes in the Council Plan:

How will the options/proposals in this report contribute to the delivery of the key themes in the Council Plan?

- Improve Health and Wellbeing** – N/A
- Managed Growth** – N/A
- x **Build Stronger Communities** – Consistent and effective enforcement of the local parking facilities and on-street restrictions helps to support the economic performance of the local retail centres in Solihull.
- Deliver Value** – The implementation of the recommendations within this report are intended to contribute and ultimately delivery the MTFs savings.

7. Implications for children and young people, vulnerable groups and particular communities:

7.1 None as a consequence of this report

7.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

7.2.1 None of as a consequence of this report

7.3 Financial implications:

7.4 Detailed financial position for this service area is contained within Appendix 1, 2 and 3.

7.5 Legal implications:

7.5.1 None as a consequence of this report

7.6 Risk implications:

(a) Based on the available information it is the officers' opinion that there are no net "Red" risks to the Council associated with the recommendation of the report.

8. Statutory Equality Duty:

8.1.1 No issues identified as part of this report.

9. List of appendices referred to:

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Parking Services half year review 2018/19
- 9.2 Appendix 2 - Review of new Tariff September 2018
- 9.3 Appendix 3 – Enforcement Service half year review 2018/19
- 9.4 Appendix 4 – Abandoned vehicle policy.

10. Background papers used to compile this report:

- 10.1 Traffic management Act 2006

11. List of other relevant documents:

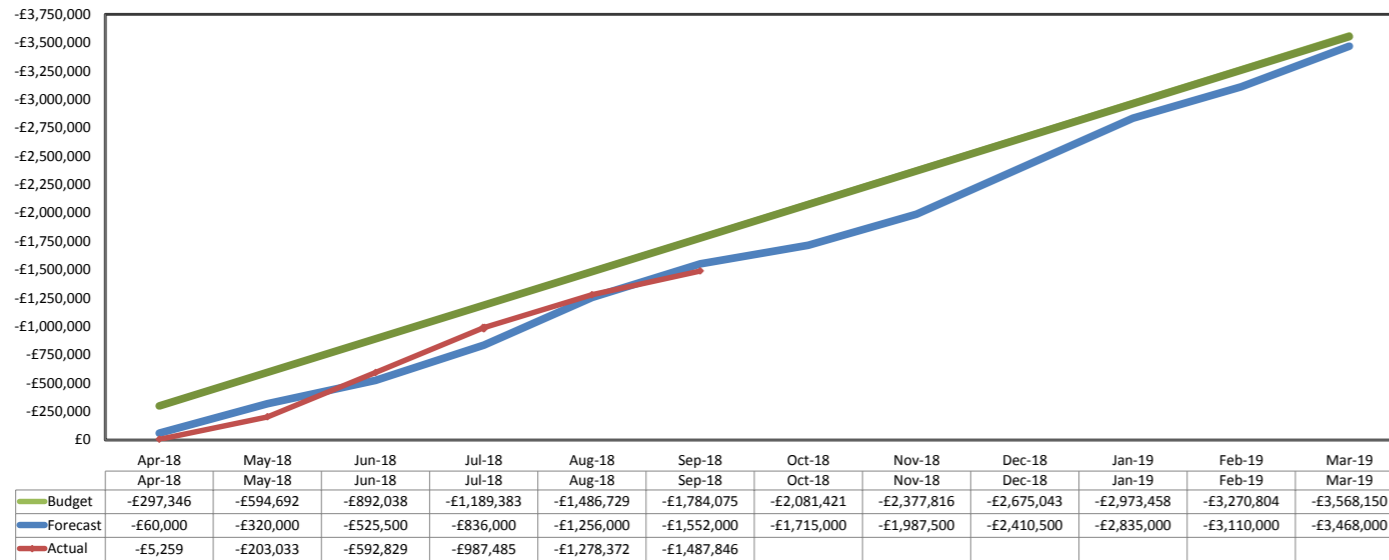
- 11.1 None

Parking Facilities September report

Risk Level Amber

Income Monitoring

Income Received VS Budget and Forecast



Summary: No significant issues of concern at this stage however officers will continue to carefully monitor and report position each month.

Income / Expenditure Monitor

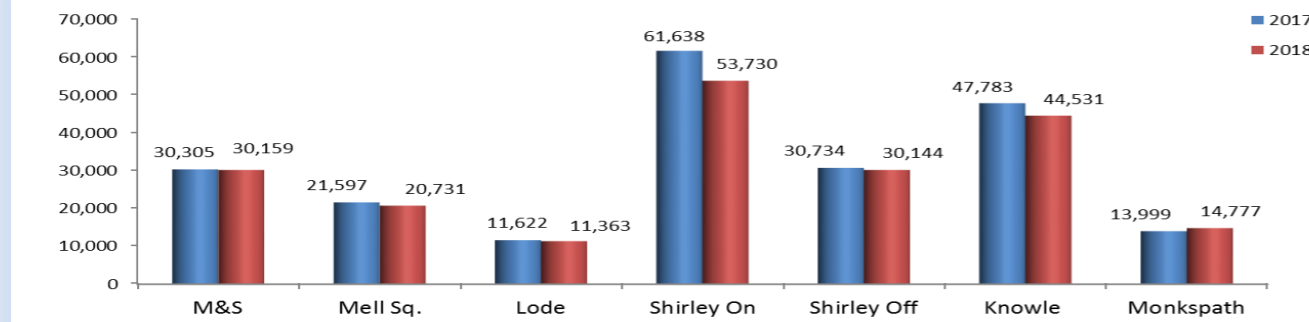
Expenditure	Budget	Actual	Budget Remaining
Employee Cost	£24,480	£12,098	-£12,382
Utilities	£177,690	£43,476	-£134,214
Premises Costs	£708,240	£762,978	£54,738
Maintenance	£240,110	£29,845	-£210,265
Other Costs	£2,000	£26,987	£24,987
Equipment Costs	£145,450	£101,350	-£44,100
Contracts	£295,450	£123,713	-£171,737
Internal Charges	£78,180	£8,813	-£69,367
Total	£1,671,600	£1,109,260	-£562,340

Income	Budget	Actual	Variation
Internal Income	-£41,000	-£35,918	£5,082
Parking Charges	-£3,042,150	-£1,342,490	£1,699,660
Season Permits	-£110,000	-£36,102	£73,898
Rents	-£228,560	-£74,000	£154,560
Contributions	-£146,440	£664	£147,104
Total	-£3,568,150	-£1,487,846	£2,080,304

Outturn	Budget	Actual	Variation
Total Expenditure	£1,671,600	£1,109,260	-£562,340
Total Income	-£3,568,150	-£1,487,846	£2,080,304
Balance	-£1,896,550	-£378,586	£1,517,964

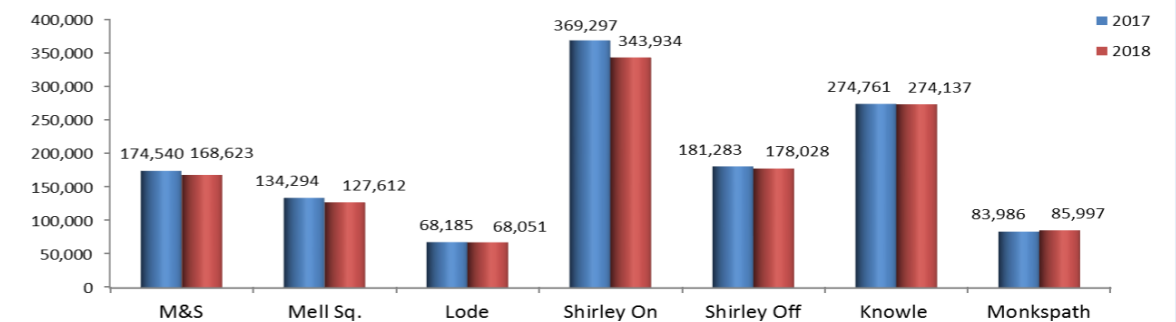
Summary: The increase in premises costs has been passed to Finance/Corporate land to review and validate these increases. Whilst expenditure appears low at present this is due to suppliers billing cycles and should be on track in the coming months.

Monthly usage comparison



Summary: The car parks across the borough were very quiet during the beginning of the month however the Food Festival at the end of month was well supported and helped the end of month position for the town centre.

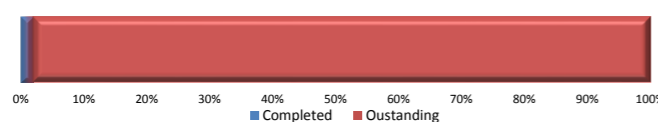
Annual usage comparison Year to Date



Summary: Officers will be carefully monitoring usage figures following the tariff increase at the end of September. Officers will supply a more detailed report detailing the stay length of customers at each car park going forward.

Maintenance

Notable Schemes	Status
1 Installation LED lights	In process
2 Boundary repairs Olton Car Park	In process
3 Lode Lane surface repairs /relining	In process
4 Lode Lane external signage	In process
5 Shirley car park boundary Wall	In process
6 Lining and signs Church Road	In process
7 Relining knowle car parks	In process
8 Monkspath Ground Works	In process
9 Refurbishment works M & S	In process
10 Security upgrades various car parks	In process
11 Surface repairs Shirley	In process



Service Notes

Service Pressures

- Continued growth of internet shopping
- Reduction in evening visitors Monday to Friday
- Fewer visitors to Sainsbury affecting M & S car park income

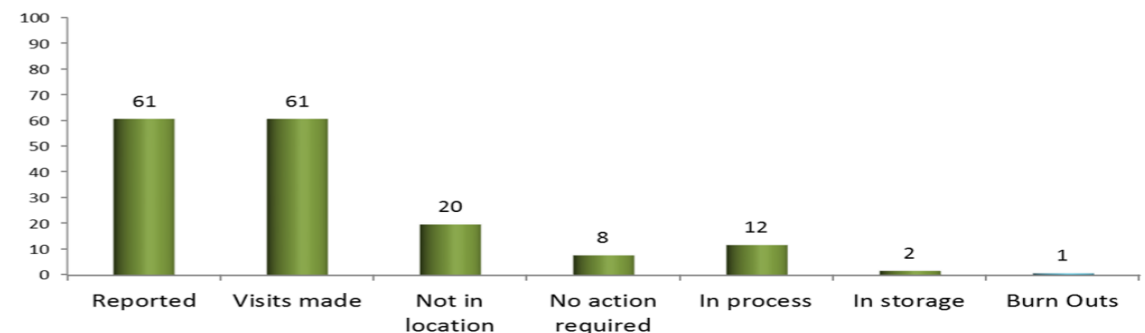
Service Prospects

- Tariff increase in September
- Expansion of Contract parking

Service News

- Retained all Park Mark awards in June for a further 12 Months
- Retained Disabled "Certificate of Excellence" for 12 Months

Abandoned Vehicle performance



Maintenance Summary The above list contains a number of schemes that were postponed from previous financial year. External improvement works are currently being conducted at Marks and Spencer car park and a number of schemes will follow thereafter.

61 reports were received in September. All reports were visited as part of on-going training exercise The Parking team are reviewing processes and policies following the outcome from the internal audit team and will be preparing a cabinet report for early 2019 to seek approval on how to manage the service going forward.

Knowle Village Car Park - Tariff Change Monitor

	Old Tariff	New Tariff
Greswolde Arms		
0 - 0.5 Hours	£0.00	£0.00
0.5 - 1 Hours	£0.00	£0.20
1 - 2 Hours	£0.00	£0.40
2 - 3 Hours	£1.00	£1.20
3 - 4 Hours	£2.00	£2.20
4 - 6 Hours	£3.00	£3.20
Over 6 Hours	£4.00	£4.00
2018/19 user total		
2017/18 user total		
Percentage Change		

October 18	Old Tariff Income (Inc VAT)	New Tariff Income (Inc VAT)
12,926	£3,813	£5,171
7,705	£0	£0
1,518	£0	£304
2,177	£0	£871
574	£574	£689
227	£454	£499
115	£345	£368
610	£2,440	£2,440
12,926		£5,171
11,583		£3,813
11.59%		

November 18	Old Tariff Income (inc VAT)	New Tariff Income (Inc VAT)
12,480	£4,099	£5,426
7,257	£0	£0
1,526	£0	£305
2,062	£0	£825
606	£606	£727
244	£488	£537
135	£405	£432
650	£2,600	£2,600
12,480		£5,426
9,352		£4,099
33.45%		

	Old Tariff	New Tariff
Rear of Natwest Bank		
0 - 0.5 Hours	£0.00	£0.00
0.5 - 1 Hours	£0.00	£0.20
1 - 2 Hours	£0.00	£0.40
2 - 3 Hours	£1.00	£1.20
3 - 4 Hours	£2.00	£2.20
4 - 6 Hours	£3.00	£3.20
Over 6 Hours	£4.00	£4.00
2018/19 user total		
2017/18 user total		
Percentage Change		

	Old Tariff Income (Inc VAT)	New Tariff Income (Inc VAT)
6,241	£1,097	£1,622
4,198	£0	£0
841	£0	£168
753	£0	£301
181	£181	£217
61	£122	£134
34	£102	£109
173	£692	£692
6,241		£1,622
6,446		£1,097
-3.18%		

	Old Tariff Income (inc VAT)	New Tariff Income (Inc VAT)
5,756	£1,268	£1,780
3,736	£0	£0
774	£0	£155
759	£0	£304
171	£171	£205
70	£140	£154
27	£81	£86
219	£876	£876
5,756		£1,780
6,441		£1,268.00
-10.63%		

	Old Tariff	New Tariff
Rear of Tesco Car Park		
0 - 0.5 Hours	£0.00	£0.00
0.5 - 1 Hours	£0.00	£0.20
1 - 2 Hours	£0.00	£0.40
2 - 3 Hours	£1.00	£1.20
3 - 4 Hours	£2.00	£2.20
4 - 5 Hours	£3.00	£3.20
Over 6 Hours	£4.00	£4.00
2018/19 user total		
2017/18 user total		
Percentage Change		

	Old Tariff Income (Inc VAT)	New Tariff Income (Inc VAT)
9,649	£999	£1,647
7206	£0	£0
1,061	£0	£212
941	£0	£376
205	£205	£246
58	£116	£128
34	£102	£109
144	£576	£576
9,649		£1,647
12,727		£999
-24.18%		

	Old Tariff Income (inc VAT)	New Tariff Income (Inc VAT)
12,537	£1,366	£2,307
8,982	£0	£0
1,579	£0	£316
1,344	£0	£538
329	£329	£395
66	£132	£145
43	£129	£138
194	£776	£776
12,537		£2,307
12,483		£1,366.00
0.43%		

	Old Tariff	New Tariff
Village Hall Knowle		
0 - 0.5 Hours	£0.00	£0.00
0.5 - 1 Hours	£0.00	£0.20
1 - 2 Hours	£0.00	£0.40
2 - 3 Hours	£1.00	£1.20
3 - 4 Hours	£2.00	£2.20
4 - 5 Hours	£3.00	£3.20
Over 6 Hours	£4.00	£4.00
2018/19 user total		
2017/18 user total		
Percentage Change		

	Old Tariff Income (Inc VAT)	New Tariff Income (Inc VAT)
19,277	£3,984	£6,170
11,252	£0	£0
2,748	£0	£550
3,461	£0	£1,384
883	£883	£1,060
252	£504	£554
127	£381	£406
554	£2,216	£2,216
19,277		£6,170
17,172		£3,984
12.26%		

	Old Tariff Income (inc VAT)	New Tariff Income (Inc VAT)
17,144	£3,858	£6,023
9,164	£0	£0
2,808	£0	£562
3,364	£0	£1,346
911	£911	£1,093
264	£528	£581
113	£339	£362
520	£2,080	£2,080
17,144		£6,023
17,400		£3,858
-1.47%		

2018/19 MiPermit users total	188	£581.20
2017/18 MiPermit users total	66	£174.50

207	£637.00
69	£183.00

48,281	£15,191
47,994	£10,068
0.60%	£5,123

2018/19 Knowle Car Parks User Totals (Including VAT)	48,281	£15,191
2017/18 Knowle Car Parks User Totals (Including VAT)	47,994	£10,068
Total Percentage change	0.60%	£5,123

48,124	£16,173
45,745	£10,774
5.20%	£5,399

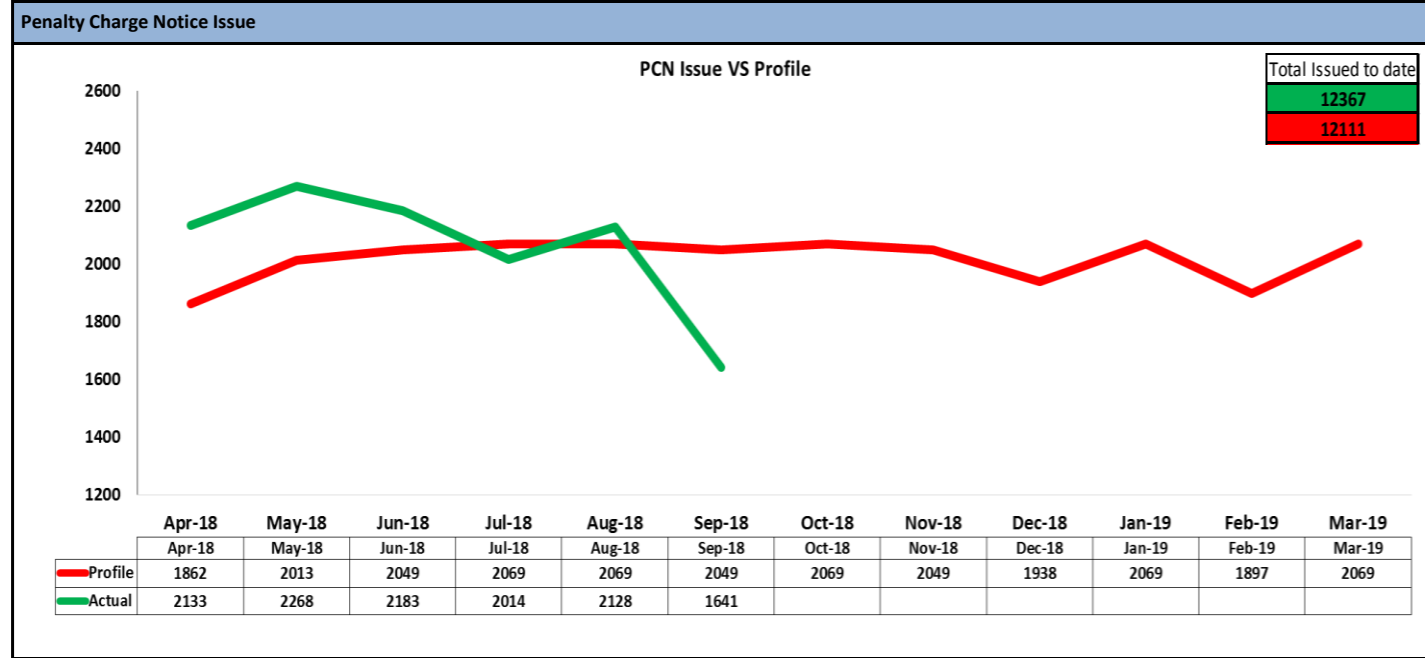
48,124	£16,173
45,745	£10,774
5.20%	£5,399

Total monetary income excluding VAT	£8,389.58	£12,659.00
Additional income after Sept. 2018 Tariff Increase.		£4,269.42

£8,978.33	£13,477.33
	£4,499.00

£8,978.33	£13,477.33
	£4,499.00

Civil and Bus Lane Enforcement September report Risk Level Green

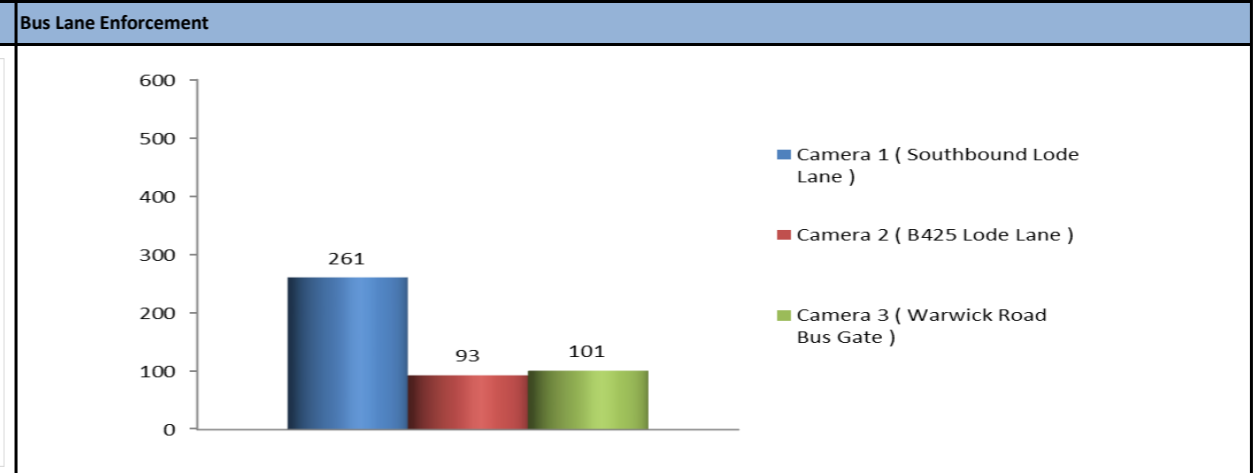
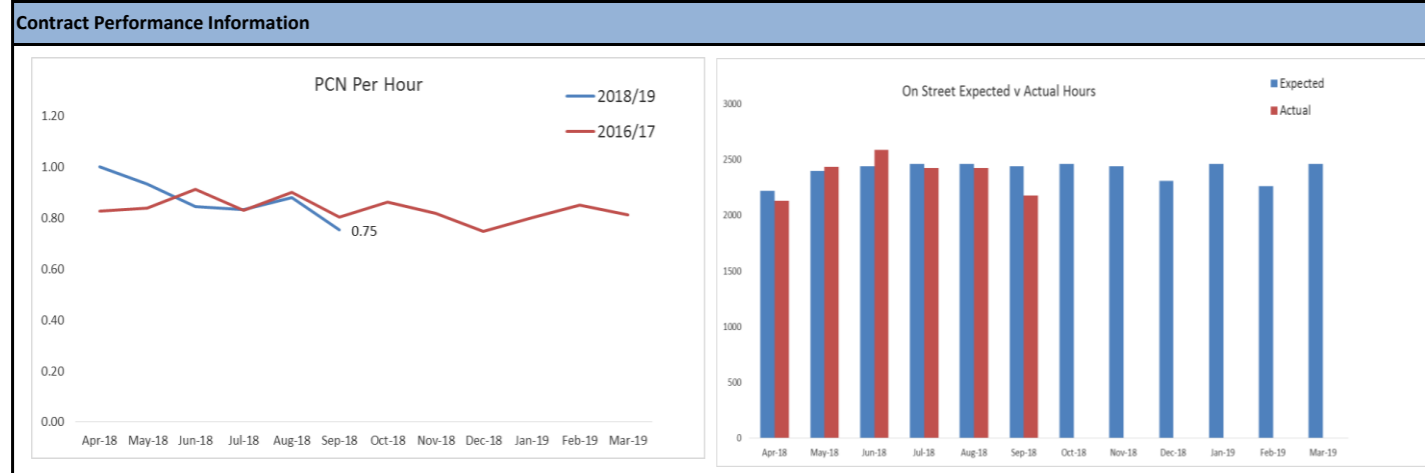


Income / Expenditure Monitor

Expenditure	Budget	Actual	Budget Remaining
Employee Cost	£85,180	£44,456	-£40,724
Utilities	£0	£0	£0
Premises Costs	£570	£0	-£570
Maintenance	£0	£0	£0
Other Costs	£19,330	£27,654	£8,324
Equipment Costs	£10,680	£4,065	-£6,615
Contracts	£492,880	£228,859	-£264,021
Internal Charges	£1,030	£0	-£1,030
Total	£609,670	£305,034	-£304,636
Income	Budget	Actual	Variation
Internal Income	£0	-£850	-£850
Parking Charges	-£553,930	-£339,742	£214,188
Bus Lane Enforcement	£0	-£48,596	-£48,596
Season Permits	£0	-£518	-£518
Contributions	-£41,060	-£30,413	£10,647
Total	-£594,990	-£420,119	£174,871
Outturn	Budget	Actual	Variation
Total Expenditure	£609,670	£305,034	-£304,636
Total Income	-£594,990	-£420,119	£174,871
Contribution to Reserve	£0	£0	£0
Balance	£14,680	-£115,085	-£129,765

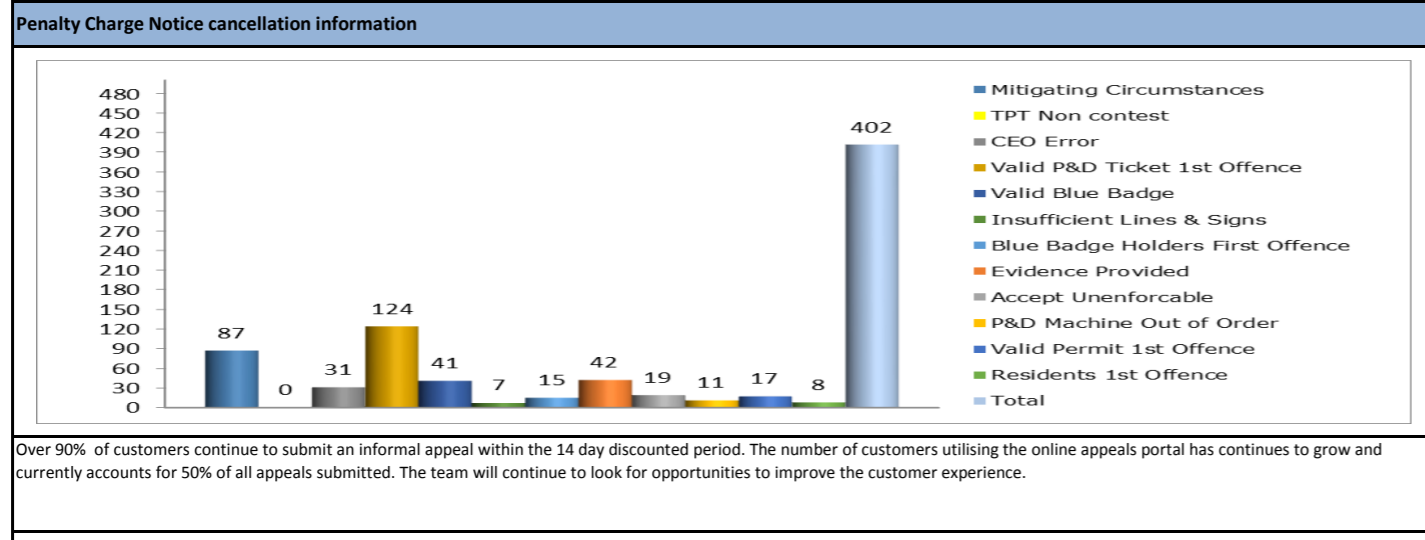
September has been a very quiet month and deployment was reduced to offset this. The team continue to work close with our enforcement contract to ensure deployment of officers is effective and efficient. A number of staff have left the contract during August and September and their replacement have received training and are now deployed. The service ended September issuing 1641 PCNS making year to date 256 PCNS ahead of profile.

1,640 Penalty Charge Notices were paid in September. 1,217 of these payments were made within the discount (14 Day) period. Our Enforcement agents formerly known as Bailiffs. (Jacobs Ltd and Bristow and Sutor Ltd) are currently processing 803 live cases. The service ended the month of September with a positive variance of £115,085

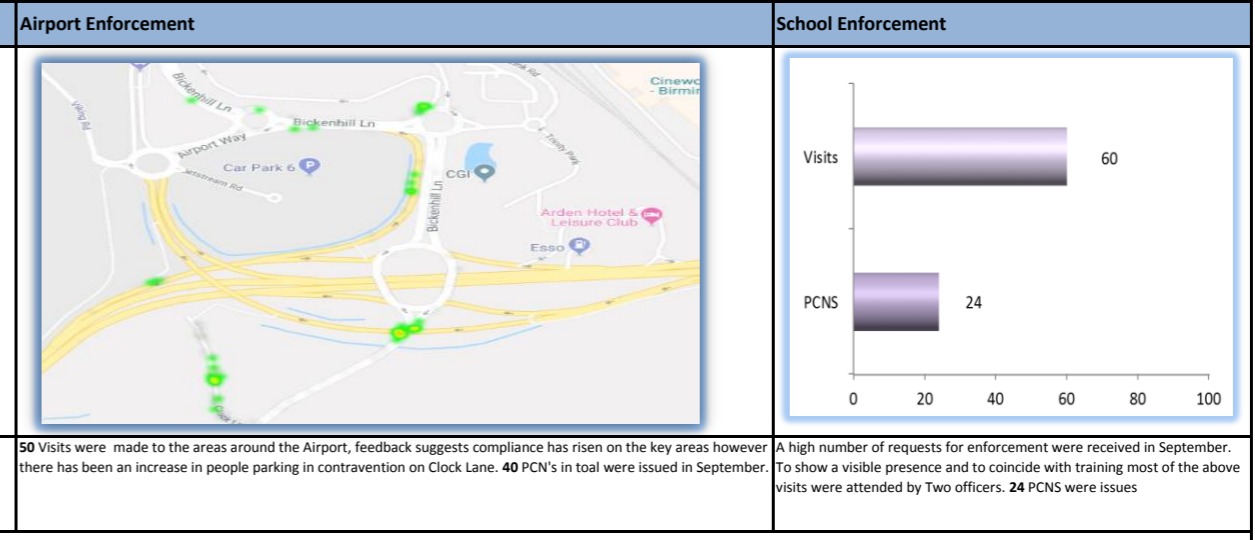


As in previous years the issue rate in August and September does see a decline, deployment was reduced to ensure the service remained as effective as possible. The team have been working closely with our enforcement contractors to ensure deployment remains efficient. Should the issue rate continue to be under 0.85 PCNS further steps will be required. A number of officers left the contract in August/September and their replacements have received training and are now deployed.

455 PCNS were issued in September, the lowest amount to date which may indicate a degree of compliance. However, as with normal enforcement its was a quiet month so the team will monitor this going forward. Circa 48k has so far been received in bus lane PCNS payments with 75% of these been paid within the discount period.



Over 90% of customers continue to submit an informal appeal within the 14 day discounted period. The number of customers utilising the online appeals portal has continues to grow and currently accounts for 50% of all appeals submitted. The team will continue to look for opportunities to improve the customer experience.



50 Visits were made to the areas around the Airport, feedback suggests compliance has risen on the key areas however there has been an increase in people parking in contravention on Clock Lane. 40 PCN's in total were issued in September. A high number of requests for enforcement were received in September. To show a visible presence and to coincide with training most of the above visits were attended by Two officers. 24 PCNS were issues

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Abandoned Vehicle Service Policy

Introduction

Solihull Council has a duty under sections 3 and 4 of the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978 to remove unlawfully abandoned motor vehicles from land in the open air and roads (including private roads). Vehicles do not have to be removed from land in the open air if special machinery is needed.

Reporting

All reports of abandoned vehicles are processed by the Parking team and recorded on the Council's Icloud Customer Enquiry Management System. This approach ensures demand for the service is captured accurately and any personal information is managed in accordance with the Council's General Data Protection Act policies.

Individual electronic case files are then created and used by the team to manage the process of responding to reports of a suspected Abandoned Vehicle. These files are closed upon completion of the case and retained for a period of 2 years, or until any on-going insurance or criminal case has been concluded.

DVLA database

To support the efficient processing of enquiries, the DVLA has granted the Council direct access to their Vehicle Registration database. Only after a period of 7 days from serving the statutory notice will the DVLA database be accessed to obtain the registered keeper's details. This process reduces the need to access DVLA data unnecessarily.

Access is restricted to SMBC authorised officers and is subject to regular DVLA audits. A clear detailed audit trail must be documented for each enquiry case and records kept for 2 years.

Inspections

Reports of suspected abandoned vehicles are inspected within **5** working days. Officers will however prioritise response times depending on the level of demand for the service and the information shared, including the vehicle location, type and condition.

Vehicles suspected of actually being abandoned and having been served with the appropriate statutory **14** day notice of removal are known as "Actionable" cases. The case file will include a copy of the statutory notice and a condition report together with photographic records. The vehicle is inspected again on or around the 7th day. The majority of cases are closed at this stage due to the owner taking appropriate action. Should the vehicle has not been removed, then a DVLA enquiry will take place and the registered keeper will be informed of the intended action. On or shortly after the 15th day of serving the notice, the vehicle is inspected again to determine if the vehicle has been removed or whether further action is required. (See attached process map)

Untaxed Vehicles.

The Drivers' Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) has a duty to clamp and remove untaxed vehicles from the public highway and issue penalties to the registered keeper.

- In the absence of any other sign of abandonment, in the first instance the Council will refer the case to the DVLA to investigate and process. Note: The DVLA will not action any untaxed vehicle until **21 days** after expiry of road fund licence.
- A vehicle parked dangerously will also be reported to the Police.

Burnt out vehicles.

Where a Burnt out vehicle is brought to the attention of the Authority it will be given a higher priority and again an assessment will be made in terms of its condition and location. A site visit will be made to obtain either the Vehicle Registration Mark (**VRM**) or Vehicle Identity Number (**VIN**) and document the incident.

If either identification mark is found, the DVLA database is accessed to find the registered keeper's details. Attempts will be made to contact the registered keeper and request its removal within **5 working days**. Should it remain or no information is available, the Council will remove the vehicle and take it to the nearest treatment centre for destruction within **5 working days**. Statutory charges will be applied where owner's details are identified.

Vehicle Removal

Removal of an abandoned vehicle is conducted by an approved contractor only, and overseen by an officer. The vehicle will be removed to the Council's secure storage area only after expiry of a 14 day notice.

Vehicle Storage

Vehicles brought into storage will incur the statutory charges for a maximum period of **21 days**. At the Council's discretion vehicles may be stored for longer to facilitate efficient methods of disposal and the current demand on the service for space at the storage facility.

Whilst in storage the vehicle owner, if one is recorded, will be sent a further letter advising them of the opportunity to collect vehicle and details of the associated statutory costs.

The compound is subject to monthly audits to verify vehicle storage records.

Contents of vehicles

Property found inside an abandoned vehicle is considered to be part of that vehicle. Officers will not attempt to catalogue or interfere with the contents of any vehicle.

Detailed condition reports and photographs from outside the vehicle shall be taken at the time of removal then again as they are taken into storage.

Destruction

In the event that the owner does not collect the vehicle and pay all necessary charges, vehicles under an estimated value of £2,500 will be taken to an authorised treatment centre and destroyed. A certificate of destruction will be obtained. The DVLA are notified automatically.

It is perceived that some vehicles should be sold to recoup costs, however, the process is onerous and time consuming, and the below points have to be considered:

- Requirement to obtain log book from DVLA with associated costs.
- Vehicles outwardly looking in good condition, but mechanically may be unsound.
- Vehicles have to be sent to a specialist auction with unknown charges / fees.
- Vehicle auctions of this nature focus on quick sales “sold as seen” and realise minimal returns.
- The potential for negative publicity due to a dangerous vehicle originating from the authority is an unwarranted and unnecessary risk.

On this basis, only in exceptional cases where a vehicles value is estimated to be more than £2,500 will an independent valuation be obtained to advice of the vehicle’s potential value versus costs.

A report will be prepared and sent to the Head of Highway Services to determine the appropriate course of action.

Enforcement Action

The Council has enforcement powers under Section 2 of the Refuse Disposal Act 1978. This legislation provides a mechanism through the courts for dealing with abandoning a vehicle in a public space and carries a maximum fine of £2,500. The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environments Act 2005 also a mechanism for the Council to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice, currently up to £200, to the owner of the vehicle.

The Council will use the most appropriate legal course of action, where appropriate evidence is available, to help control and reduce the risk of motor vehicles being abandoned in the future.

Contact Information. Suspected Abandoned vehicles should be reported to the Council either via the webpage or contact number given below:

abandonedvehicles@solihull.gov.uk

Parking Enforcement Services 0121 704 6111

Full details on the Council Abandoned Vehicle service and the current statutory charges are available up on request or on the Council’s website at:

<http://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Parking-travel-roads/road-issues/abandonedvehicle>

Abandoned vehicle – Inspection Process Flow Chart 2018

