



To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 9 April 2026

Subject: Parking Services updates and future priorities

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board on current operational arrangements, performance, and strategic priorities within Coventry City Council's Parking Services, with a particular focus on the various enforcement functions and the management of the Council operated car parks.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4):
- 1) Note the actions and initiatives currently being implemented to address key parking and traffic enforcement priorities.
 - 2) Make recommendations as appropriate to the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities and the Cabinet Member for City Services.

3 Information and Background

- 3.1 Parking Services delivers a wide range of functions, including:
- Civil Parking Enforcement
 - CCTV camera enforcement
 - Car Park Management
 - Resident Parking Schemes
 - Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) processing, recovery, and appeals.
- 3.2 The enforcement activities referred to above operate under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and result in penalty charge notices being issued to offenders which incur fines and generate an income for the Council.

Penalty charge levels are set by Government, and the charge level depends on the type of offence. The fine is reduced by 50% if it is paid within a discount period (normally 14 days) and the level of fines is:

- High level charge - £70

- Low Level charge - £50

3.3 Surpluses generated from enforcement activities are ringfenced and may only be used to fund the service, highways improvements, or traffic safety schemes.

Councils must not use civil parking enforcement to raise revenue to support the general fund.

4 Civil Parking Enforcement

4.1 The parking enforcement function was established in Coventry during 2005 following the decriminalisation of parking offences and the transfer of responsibilities from West Midlands Police. The Police now retain only limited powers relating to dangerous and obstructive parking outside the scope of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).

4.2 Parking enforcement forms an integral part of the Council's wider transport strategy, helping to maintain traffic flow, support public transport, and improve road safety. The primary aims of Coventry's parking enforcement regime are to:

- Improve road safety.
- Improve access for public transport and emergency services.
- Deter inconsiderate and dangerous parking by educating drivers.
- Improve traffic flows.
- Reduce congestion and improve air quality.

4.3 Enforcement is restricted to areas covered by Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), such as yellow lines, parking bays, bus lanes, taxi ranks, disabled bays, and school keep clear markings etc.

4.4 Pavement parking remains a key challenge for Parking Services and is a significant hazard for pedestrians, particularly wheelchair users, those with prams, and visually impaired people. While no citywide ban exists, restrictions may apply where a TRO is in place. However, legislative changes are expected to be introduced by the DfT later this year. This will set out the powers available to local authorities to tackle unnecessary obstruction of pavements caused by vehicle parking. It should be noted that this will not result in a city-wide ban on all pavement parking.

4.5 Parking enforcement is a contentious issue due to rising vehicle ownership, which impacts congestion, accessibility, and environmental sustainability.

4.6 Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) i.e. traffic wardens, perform the function and work rotating shift patterns to ensure coverage across 364 days a year between 7.30am to 10pm.

4.7 In most circumstances, CEOs conduct a standard five-minute observation period before issuing a penalty charge notice (parking ticket) to vehicles that are parked in contravention of the restriction e.g. on single or double yellow lines. However, in certain situations, no observation period is necessary and 'instant tickets' are issued e.g. parking on the red route or on yellow zigzags outside schools.

Observations periods are used to collect evidence of a contravention taking place. An observation period is subtly different to a 'grace period.'

Under the legislation, the enforcement authority must allow a ten-minute grace period before issuing a penalty notice to a vehicle that is parked in a designated parking place e.g. in a car park, beyond the permitted parking period. This applies to on and off-street parking places.

- 4.8 Our Civil Enforcement Officers work partly in a responsive way and partly in a planned way. Members of the public can report parking contraventions by phone, or online and this helps to inform patrols and better target illegal parking.
- 4.9 CEOs are the public-facing element of enforcement operations. They provide a visible presence and maintain public contact. Their key responsibilities and duties include monitoring parking compliance, encouraging considerate behaviour, educating the public, issuing PCNs, and checking/repairing equipment.
- 4.10 CEOs are required to operate professionally and efficiently, often under challenging circumstances, including confrontational situations and exposure to verbal and physical assaults— which is a growing issue nationally.
- 4.11 We occasionally get comments from the public that they don't see a Civil Enforcement Officer on patrol when they have called about an issue but unless there is another call ongoing most of the time, we can evidence that an officer did attend the call and relay what action was taken.
- 4.12 The service currently faces pressures in terms of staff resources, and the recruitment of Civil Enforcement Officers has been a significant and persistent challenge for many years. This is because the role is often perceived as low-status and involves working under difficult circumstances, including exposure to conflict and unsocial working hours.
- 4.13 Recently, these challenges have been compounded by high sickness absence rates amongst the CEOs. Currently there are eleven vacant Civil Enforcement Officer positions in Parking Services, and this will increase during the next few months.
- 4.14 Staff shortages, whether due to vacancies or sickness, continue to have a negative impact on service performance which has the potential for reputational and financial damage to the Council.
- 4.15 Parking Services is no longer actively trying to recruit to the vacancies but instead, is using temporary staff provided through a specialist agency contractor to back-fill the vacancies. This helps to ensure continuity of service, provide resilience, and is helping to drive improvements in service delivery and performance.

5 CCTV camera-based enforcement

- 5.1 The use of CCTV cameras for parking and traffic enforcement purposes is limited to the following situations:
 - School Keep Clear zigzags.
 - Red routes
 - Bus lanes and bus gates
 - Moving traffic contraventions

The camera enforcement systems used for these activities must be accredited and certified by the Secretary of State as 'type approved.' Each use case is explored further below:

5.1.1 School Keep Clear zigzags

School gate parking is a significant issue and concern to the public, which is the same across the UK. As with the standard parking patrols, Parking Services have scheduled patrols of schools on a planned basis with increased targeted patrols that have the highest issues of parking offences.

There are more than 130 schools in Coventry, many of which experience similar parking challenges during morning drop-off and afternoon pickup times. As a result, available staffing resources must be allocated carefully to provide coverage across the city.

In addition to traditional foot patrols by Civil Enforcement Officers—whose presence acts as a visible deterrent to unlawful parking—Parking Services also uses a mobile ANPR enforcement vehicle to support the management of school related parking issues. Each year, this combined approach results in the issuance of hundreds of penalty notices to vehicles that stop on the yellow zigzag markings outside school entrances, where such behaviour poses significant safety risks to both road users and children. There are hundreds of others who park unlawfully nearby on double yellow lines.

New static CCTV enforcement cameras have recently been installed at four schools to further enhance enforcement of School Keep Clear yellow zigzag lines. These cameras are currently undergoing final system testing prior to going live.

5.1.2 Red route enforcement

Parking Services uses static CCTV cameras to enforce sections of the city's red routes, e.g. Far Gosford St. Red routes indicate a 'no stopping at any time' restriction and are intended to ensure the free flow of traffic.

During 2025, additional red routes were installed across Coventry. Red routes are notoriously difficult to enforce effectively using foot patrolling CEOs. Consequently, more CCTV cameras are needed to ensure more effective enforcement during 24/7, and it is expected that additional cameras will be bought for the purposes of enforcing the city centre red routes.

Recently, four new CCTV cameras have been installed for the purposes of red route enforcement in The Burges (x2) and King William Street (x2).

The new cameras are currently being tested prior to 'go-live.'

Parking Services has recently bid for funding for ten additional CCTV cameras for the purposes of red route enforcement. If the bid is successful, the enforcement cameras will be deployed throughout the city centre to tackle illegal parking during 24/7.

5.1.3 Bus lane and bus gates

This type of enforcement began in Coventry during 2011.

The use of bus lane enforcement cameras helps to reduce bus journey times and improve the reliability of bus services. Bus lanes can also significantly help reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

Although there are circa fifty bus lanes throughout Coventry, some of which have been in operation for years, the Council currently chooses to enforce just seven of these locations where access for public transport would otherwise be problematic.

During September 2025, a new bus gate was installed at Greyfriars Rd near the junction with Warwick Rd.

5.1.4 Moving Traffic contraventions

Coventry City Council adopted enforcement powers for this type of activity during 2024, and now enforced certain moving traffic offences that historically were only enforceable by the Police.

These powers enable Councils to address unsafe manoeuvres and congestion-related issues through targeted camera-based enforcement. This includes:

- access restrictions
- banned right or left turns
- blocking a yellow box junction
- travelling the wrong way in a one-way street
- no entry zones
- illegal U turns
- driving in pedestrian zones
- driving in bus and pedal cycle lanes
- one way traffic
- goods vehicles exceeding maximum weight limits

To date, Coventry City Council has used CCTV cameras to undertake moving traffic enforcement of 'school street' access restrictions at five schools in Coventry.

A 'school street' restriction is an active travel and traffic management scheme that improves road safety and air quality outside schools. The aim is to encourage walking, wheeling, cycling, and scooting to schools by closing specific roads to create safer and healthier car free environments outside schools at the start and end of the school day at key times. This helps reduce congestion and air pollution in the area by minimising the volume of vehicles entering the road or surrounding roads, making it easier and safer to walk or cycle to school.

These measures can also help to address traffic and parking pressures and problems experienced by people living close to a school due to school gate parking.

Camera based enforcement will be introduced at another three school streets during the spring 2026 as part of Phase 3 of the School Streets programme. This initiative will be expanded in future years as funding streams become available.

- 5.2 The Table 1 shows the current locations of the static CCTV cameras that Parking Services uses for the purposes of parking and traffic related enforcement.
- 5.3 The use of CCTV enforcement cameras has proven to be effective in changing driver behaviours, which in turn improves road safety and the environment. It is expected that the use of CCTV cameras for these purposes will increase during the next few years.

Parking	Bus lanes / gates	Moving Traffic
Far Gosford St red route	Gosford St	Cardinal Wiseman School
King William St red route	Hale St / Burges	Knights Templar School
Burges red route	Sky Blue Way	Ravensdale School
St John's CofE School	Stoney Rd	Southfields School
Allesley Hall School	Tile Hill Lane	Stanton Bridge School
St Christopher's School	Hales St (Whittle Arches)	
Frederick Bird School	Greyfriars Rd	

Table 1

- 5.4 The number of penalty charge notices issued across each of the above activity areas is set out in Table 2.

Year	Parking Enforcement (000's)	Bus Lane Enforcement (000's)	Moving Traffic (000's)	Total Enforcement (000's)
2025/2026 Est.	63	58	17	Forecast. 138
2024/2025	62	36	n/a	98
2023/2024	52	41	n/a	92
2022/2023	48	25	n/a	73
2021/2022	45	26	n/a	71
2020/2021	20	20	n/a	40
2019/2020	45	65	n/a	110

Table 2

6 Car Park Management

- 6.1 The Council currently operates nineteen public car parks, fourteen of these are in the city centre. The total capacity in the Council's car parks is circa 3,000 spaces.
- 6.2 There are other privately operated public car parks in the city centre, e.g. Belgrade Plaza, Lower Precinct, Skydome, Coventry University, and a few small NCP car parks which have space for a further c.3,000 cars. The total provision in the city's public car parks is c.6,000 spaces.
- 6.3 The Council's car parks, which are managed by Parking Services, are commercial assets and generate a significant income to the Council. These facilities help support the economic generation and prosperity of the city centre and are integral to the wider transport plans.
- 6.4 Several car parks were closed following the COVID19 pandemic in 2021. Subsequently whereas three new car parks, (Station, Salt Lane, and New Union Street) were either constructed or refurbished.
- 6.5 During 2025, the Barracks and City Arcade car parks were also closed pending the City Centre South redevelopment scheme.
- 6.6 More recently, Salt Lane car park - which opened to the public in 2019, has been plagued with anti-social behavioural issues including, drug-taking, rough sleepers, littering and graffiti for the past few years and Council staff are often power-less to tackle the issues.
- 6.7 In addition, the customer lifts have been subject to regular vandalism often rendering them out of service which has severely hampered and impacted access for customers with limited mobility, especially wheelchair users and parents with young children in push chairs.
- 6.8 Consequently, the Council has embarked on an improvement scheme of essential work that is needed to address issues with the aesthetics and general appearance / quality of the car park, together with the access and security arrangements to ensure the car park is fit for purpose and is a standard befitting of a premier car park in the heart of the city centre.
- 6.9 In summary, the ongoing programme of improvement work comprises:
 - Improved access controls
 - Improved site security systems
 - Additional CCTV surveillance cameras
 - Overhauling the lifts
 - Improved lighting
 - Improved accessibility and signage
- 6.10 Historically, Parking Services has operated the site at White Street as a coach park with provision for twenty-four coaches.
- 6.11 Due to a lack of demand for long-stay coach parking, and an increase in demand for car parking in the area, White St has recently been converted to a dual-purpose facility for both coaches and cars. This has resulted in a decrease in the coach

parking provision from twenty-four to twelve coaches and the installation of about fifty car park spaces. The new facility is expected to open to the public in April 2026

- 6.12 Parking Services has recently submitted a bid for funding to undertake improvements in several other car parks, to ensure they too remain of a suitable quality and are in good condition.
- 6.13 If the bid is successful, essential repairs will be conducted in West Orchards, Bishop St, Grove St, and Clay Lane car parks.

7 Summary of ongoing service initiatives

- 7.1 The following summarises the key challenges and ongoing initiatives from across Parking Services:
- Reduce staff sickness absence rates in Parking Enforcement.
 - Ensure staff resource levels are suitable and sufficient to drive service standards and performance and to influence driver behaviours to improve road safety.
 - Prepare and plan for upcoming changes to pavement parking legislation.
 - Increase the use of CCTV cameras to ensure more effective and efficient enforcement of illegal parking, bus lane / gate restrictions, and banned moving traffic manoeuvres.
 - Improve the overall quality, security and standard of the Council's car parks with particular focus on Salt Lane and White St car parks.
 - Ensure the continued investment in parking facilities to ensure they are fit for purpose and improve the customer experience.

8 Health Inequalities Impact

- 8.1 Tackling illegal parking and traffic manoeuvres through enforcement initiatives will help to reduce congestion and improve air quality by reducing pollution, whilst improving road safety.
- 8.2 A transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to low emission vehicles, and promoting active travel e.g. cycling or walking, will help to improve the air quality and generate public health benefits from increased physical activity.

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