

MINUTES
of the
SOUTH ESSEX PARKING PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE
held on 11th September 2025 at 2pm

Members present:

Councillor Daryll Sankey – Brentwood Borough Council
Councillor Terry Sherlock – Chelmsford City Council
Councillor Laureen Shaw – Essex County Council
Councillor Mike Steptoe – Rochford District Council

Officers present:

Brett Edwards – Basildon Borough Council
Carole Carr – Brentwood Borough Council
Stuart Jarvis – Castle Point Borough Council
Freddey Banks-Ayres – Chelmsford City Council
Nick Binder – Chelmsford City Council
William Butcher – Chelmsford City Council
Mike Packham – Chelmsford City Council
Russell Panter – Chelmsford City Council
Jack Sharp - Chelmsford City Council
Jo Heynes – Essex County Council

Shadowing:

Jack Doyle – Chelmsford City Council
Nicola Morris – Chelmsford City Council

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Mike Fuller (Castle Point Borough Council), Cllr Simon Morgan (Maldon District Council), Nicola Syder (Maldon District Council), Sharon Braney (Rochford District Council)

3. Minutes of the Joint Committee Meeting 26th June 2025

The minutes of the meeting 26 June 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. Public Question Time

One question was raised from Chelmsford City Councillor, Andrew Sosin in relation to the current number of penalty Charge Notices issued across the partnership which are currently estimated to fall below the estimate contained in the Business Plan, and if the estimates in the Business Plan are too ambitious achieve.

In response Cllr Sosin was advised that this question would be covered in Agenda Item 7

5. Operational and Performance Report (Verbal Update)

The Joint Committee received a verbal update on operational enforcement matters. It was reported that staffing vacancies had been addressed, with two posts in Brentwood filled through agency staff, one agency officer appointed in Chelmsford, and the vacancy in Maldon had also been filled. The School Engagement Officer role had also been recruited to.

The Committee was updated on ongoing projects. Camera enforcement and red route feasibility work had continued in Chelmsford and Brentwood, the replacement of enforcement handheld computers and printers had been completed. Work was due to take place to improve the enforcement mailbox, and a risk assessment was planned with a focus on staff mental health.

The Pavement Parking Bill was noted to be scheduled for its second reading in December.

Action: The link to the first reading would be circulated to all attendees.

An update was provided on the current cost of penalty charge notices and the Central Government position on any future increase to the charge. It was explained that national data had been misrepresented in the Daily Mail, but the recovery process was underway. The British Parking Association had requested local authorities to submit evidence on repeat offenders, to demonstrate that PCNs were not always a sufficient deterrent. Persistent offenders were defined as vehicles with two or more PCNs that were still paid, and it was noted that the numbers were high. The BPA confirmed they had heard similar statistics elsewhere. No timeframe had been set for a formal government response on changes to PCN charges.

The Committee was informed that the 3PR school parking project had been quieter during the school holidays. The newly appointed School Engagement Officer had begun visits and resident surveys showed largely positive feedback, with only minor negative responses. Engagement levels from both schools and residents were promising, and the officer was settling well into their role. A request had been made for a list of schools included in the programme, and it was noted that funding had come from Essex County Council, with support from SEPP. The Sustainable Travel Scheme had provided a one off external payment, which only covered one year.

Action: A list of schools included in the 3PR programme would be circulated. LS would follow up on Stanbridge School.

It was confirmed that new body cameras had been ordered and were fully operational.

The Committee also considered camera enforcement locations. In Brentwood, discussions had taken place with the Council Leader about enforcement in the High Street and on a prospective red route, with two strands of work being developed around high street repair and future restrictions. In Chelmsford, a potential red route had been identified around Duke Street, the bus station, and the train station. In Chelmsford and Brentwood, funding for cameras had been included in the business plan. It was confirmed that dummy cameras would not be used, in the interests of transparency, and signage without cameras was not planned.

Legislative matters were raised. Questions were asked as to whether verge parking would be covered by the new Bill, but at present the wording referred to footways and walking areas. It was noted that a government consultation held in 2020 had considered different approaches, including a blanket ban or an obstruction based approach. SEPP expressed support for powers relating to obstruction, though recognised that staffing implications would need to be managed. The Bill was expected to provide councils with enforcement powers, subject to limited exemptions.

It was clarified that if schools wished to campaign for reduced speed limits, they would need to apply through National Highways and their Local Highways Panel.

RESOLVED that the operational and performance update be noted.

(2.00pm to 2.19pm)

6. Financial Report

The Joint Committee received a financial report regarding the financial position of the South Essex Parking Partnership for the period covering 1 April 2025 to 1 September 2025. The report provided details of the actual costs incurred and income received during this period.

Members were advised that the SEPP account showed a surplus of £153,639, while the TRO account showed a deficit of £208,407. The overall position for the Partnership, including the TRO account, was therefore a deficit of £54,768, which was £104,671 worse than last reported.

The Joint Committee noted that income from Penalty Charge Notices between April and August 2025/26 totalled £670,440, compared to £615,643 in the same period of 2024/25. This represented just under 109% of the previous year's level, although members were advised that PCN income was still unlikely to reach the budgeted level of £1,731,000 unless there was a significant increase later in the year.

The impact of the inflationary increases to residents' parking charges was also highlighted, with income for April to August 2025/26 totalling £352,102, compared to £283,119 over the same period in 2024/25. This represented 124% of the 2024/25 level and was on target to achieve the £750,000 budgeted for 2025/26.

It was also confirmed that there had not been any spend from reserves to date in 2025/26.

(2.20pm to 2.22pm)

7. Progress on Business Plan 2025/26

The Joint Committee received an update on progress of the Business Plan for 2025/26.

It was reported that the Business Plan had estimated a final enforcement account surplus of £332,000 to contribute towards the costs of the TRO function, maintenance of signs and lines, and the implementation of new traffic management schemes, with the £400,000 reserve maintained.

The Committee noted that the number of PCNs issued across the Partnership was currently 13% up compared with 2024/25, but 2.8% below the estimated figure in the Business Plan. Operating costs and expenditure remained as expected.

The overall PCN recovery rate was reported at 72%, which was in line with the previous year's outturn and within the expected range of 75–77%. The cancellation rate of 9% also remained within expected levels.

In answer to Cllr Sosin's previous question the Committee were advised that the estimates for PCNs issued in the Business Plan are based on historical performance and are dependent on a full complement of staff. The recent staff turnover and vacant positions had temporarily reduced the number of PCNs issued, but that the position was expected to improve following recruitment and completion of training for new staff.

All other expenditure and income were reported to be in line with expectations, and the Partnership was expected to maintain a positive financial position to cover the costs of the TRO function, necessary maintenance of signs and lines, and the implementation of new traffic management schemes, while retaining the £400,000 reserve.

RESOLVED that the update on the Business Plan 2025/26 be noted.

(2.22pm to 2.50pm)

8. AOB

Concerns were raised about parking issues on Ashingdon Road, Rochford, particularly in the service road opposite the school. Members noted that residents had reported persistent parking by non-permit holders, which was affecting access for carers and other essential visitors. It was also highlighted that residents who had purchased parking permits felt enforcement was insufficient and confidence in the scheme was being affected.

The Committee discussed enforcement resource challenges within the Rochford area and noted that this related to the wider Business Plan considerations. It was reported that the Partnership had previously worked with RMC, a contractor engaged through Brentwood Borough Council under a Service Level Agreement. RMC had successfully supported Brentwood with enforcement patrols and had recently undertaken enforcement activity within Rochford. Members noted that the use of RMC could provide a potential solution to

support local enforcement needs, either for specific problem areas or to supplement patrol coverage during core hours.

(2.50pm to 3.17pm)

9. Date and time of next meeting

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Joint Committee be on 11th December 2pm, in the Marconi Room, at the Chelmsford City Council offices.

The meeting closed at 3.17pm

Chairman