

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO 2023-24-020

Your request has now been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) and we provide our response below.

You asked:

1. I would like to see the communication between the Government and PCC regarding the illegal summer parking and the call for higher fines, particularly in summer months.
2. I would like to see the evidence that the lower charges do not work and not a sufficient deterrent. I understand that local councillors and PCC wrote to Government in March 2023.

Your request for information has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) and our response is as follows:

1. Attached is the correspondence between the Government and the Police and Crime Commissioner related to illegal summer parking and the call for higher fines.

Appendix A – Letter dated 17 March 2023 to the Secretary of State for Transport jointly from the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Leader of BCP Council and the Leader of Dorset Council

Appendix B – Letter dated 23 April 2023 from the Minister for Roads and Local Transport

Appendix C – Letter dated 7 June 2023 to the Secretary of State for Transport from the Police and Crime Commissioner

2. No information held. We would suggest you make your request to the two Local Authorities in Dorset, which I have provided links for below.

[Information held by us and how to request it \(bcpCouncil.gov.uk\)](https://bcpCouncil.gov.uk)

[Freedom of information - Dorset Council](#)



17 March 2023

The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP
Secretary of State for Transport
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

By email: Dft.Ministers@dft.gov.uk

Dear Secretary of State,

You may recall that I met with you at the February SW Conference in Taunton and raised the issue of parking fines. You appeared open to a further discussion and therefore we would like to formally raise it.

Once again, we find ourselves entering a summer period when the fines for illegal parking on a double yellow line, and for causing increased congestion around our coastal resorts are simply too low to deter antisocial parking and to keep our road traffic flowing freely.

Two years ago, at the height of the first lockdown when the beaches were open but not the restaurants and supporting hospitality infrastructure, we found ourselves facing antisocial parking on a new and extreme level, which caused severe congestion and interfered with the normal running of our seaside and tourist resorts. Since then, every time we have a spell of pleasant weather our resorts are overcrowded with antisocial parking which is simply not deterred by the low level of penalty charge that is currently in place. In practice, many people now decide to take the penalty of a fine for parking on a double yellow line because a £35 fine is not much more than the cost to park for the day in a regulated car park and the locations are often more convenient for the beach or beauty spot. We have asked now for two years, to increase the base level of fine to a more significant level but no action appears to have been taken on this at all.

We are writing to ask that you now commit to increasing parking fines to a base figure of at least £150 (with a discount to £100 if paid early) to ensure that the fines really do act as a deterrent to illegal parking so that we can manage our resorts properly.

Yours sincerely

David Sidwick
Police and Crime Commissioner

Cllr Philip Broadhead
Leader, BCP Council

Cllr Spencer Flower
Leader, Dorset Council

Copy: Dorset MPs

The Office of the Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner

E pcc@dorset.pnn.police.uk

Force Headquarters,
Winfrith, Dorchester,
Dorset DT2 8DZ

T 01202 229084
W dorset.pcc.police.uk





Department
for Transport

From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State
Richard Holden MP

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000
E-Mail: richard.holden@dft.gov.uk

Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

Our Ref: MC/426571

David Sidwick
Police and Crime Commissioner

Councillor Philip Broadhead
Leader of BCP Council

Councillor Spencer Flower
Leader of Dorset Council

23rd April 2023

Dear *David, Mr Broadhead & Cllr Flower,*

Thank you for your joint letter of 17 March to the Secretary of State, about parking fines. I am replying as the Minister for Roads and Local Transport.

I fully understand the concerns that you have raised in relation to fines for inconsiderate parking on double yellow lines in Dorset.

As you will appreciate, the issue of parking fines is a controversial subject and identifying the right degree of deterrent and fairness is not straightforward.

The correct penalty level is something of a balancing act and the best policy is evidence-led. We have encountered anecdotal evidence of the issue but do not have hard evidence of the decreased deterrent effect of current Penalty Charge Notice levels or the sustainability of parking operations at this time. It is therefore something I would want to look at very carefully and in the light of good evidence.

Thus, while I can assure you that we will keep the issue of parking penalty levels under consideration, I am not able to commit for the time being to a review of the level of parking fines.

I am grateful to you for taking the time to write.

Best wishes,

RICHARD HOLDEN MP
MINISTER FOR ROADS AND LOCAL TRANSPORT

7 June 2023

The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

Dear Secretary of State,

Thank you for your reply to our letter of 17th March 2023 (attached).

I note with interest that Tobias Ellwood raised this issue with the Leader of the House recently and that she was receptive to a debate on the subject and would raise it with you. Copy of the interchange is below.

May we have a debate on parking on yellow lines? Someone who parks around Westminster is charged £65, going up to £130. If they park in Bournemouth, it is capped at £35, going up to £70. We do not have the crane lorries to remove cars, and tourists— who are most welcome— have realised that paying £35 on a sunny day's visit is worthwhile. That is affecting emergency services getting around and is raising concerns from residents. May we therefore have a debate or a statement on gaining parity so that Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council can raise its fines for parking on yellow lines?

Tobias Ellwood to Penny Mordaunt

I thank my right hon. Friend for his kind remarks. I am sorry to hear about the situation in his constituency. Those fines are not to raise revenue but to ensure that thoroughfares are clear for emergency vehicles, as he points out, or for safety reasons to avoid accidents. I will make sure that the Secretaries of State for Levelling Up and for Transport have heard his concerns.

It should be emphasised that this is not about income generation but deterrence and support for local residents. Vikki Slade, the new Leader of BCP Unitary Authority, supports this initiative to further lobby in this regard. Given that it cannot be right that one part of the UK is able to set parking rates significantly higher than we can here in Dorset and we have this seasonal ongoing issue please can we urge you to look at it again? The summer is about to start in earnest, and this would help alleviate the problem.

Yours sincerely



David Sidwick
Police and Crime Commissioner

Copy: Tobias Ellwood MP
Cllr Vikki Slade, Leader BCP Council