

Cllr Dr Robert Clegg
**Cabinet Member for Environmental
Services, Climate Action and Nature
Recovery**
Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon,
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Our reference: **Request for Review of
Off-Street Parking Enforcement
Legislation**

Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP
Secretary of State for Transport

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19th September 2026

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing in my capacity as Lead Member for Parking at Vale of White Horse District Council to request a review of the legislative framework governing parking enforcement in council-operated off-street carparks. In particular, I ask you to consider enabling local authorities (1) to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) by post where robust digital evidence is available and (2) to make use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology.

Under the current legislative framework, local authorities are generally required to serve a PCN by affixing it to a vehicle or handing it to the driver when enforcing parking regulations in off-street carparks. While this approach was originally developed to ensure fairness and transparency, it can now significantly limit the ability of councils to make effective use of modern enforcement technologies and more efficient service delivery models.

At a time when local authorities face increasing financial pressures and are expected to deliver better services with fewer resources, it is appropriate to consider whether existing legislation continues to strike the right balance between safeguarding motorists' rights and enabling efficient enforcement.

Modern parking management systems now routinely integrate Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), digital payment platforms, permit databases, and comprehensive electronic audit trails. These systems can provide accurate and reliable evidence of vehicle movements, payment activity, and permit status while preserving motorists'

rights to challenge a penalty, make representations, and appeal to an independent adjudicator. Private parking operators have used this technology extensively for many years in supermarkets, retail, and other private car parks across the country. While the regulatory framework differs, motorists are already familiar with parking regimes where postal notices are issued based on ANPR evidence, demonstrating that the technology itself is well established and widely understood.

A review of the current framework could help determine whether local authorities should be permitted to issue PCNs by post for off-street parking contraventions where sufficient digital evidence exists.

- Improved productivity and operational efficiency, allowing enforcement resources to be deployed more effectively and reducing reliance on manual ticketing processes.
- Reduced costs for taxpayers through streamlined administration and better use of digital systems.
- Improved compliance and service delivery, helping to ensure parking spaces are used appropriately and remain available for residents, visitors and businesses.
- A more modern and consistent enforcement framework, bringing council-operated off-street parking closer to arrangements already used in certain on-street enforcement circumstances.

Importantly, this proposal is not intended to diminish motorists' rights or procedural safeguards. Any changes should continue to ensure transparency, proportionality, and access to independent appeal processes. The objective is simply to determine whether those protections can be delivered through modern technology in a more efficient and cost-effective manner.

I would therefore respectfully request consideration of:

1. Whether the current requirement for physical service of PCNs in council-operated off-street car parks remains necessary in all circumstances.
2. Whether postal PCNs supported by ANPR and other digital evidence could provide equivalent safeguards while improving efficiency and reducing costs.
3. The potential productivity gains and financial savings available to local authorities through modernised enforcement arrangements.
4. Whether the current legislative framework remains aligned with wider Government objectives relating to public sector efficiency and digital transformation.

I would welcome the opportunity to provide further information or operational experience that may assist in considering this matter.

Yours sincerely

R. Clegg

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Vale of White Horse District Council