

Mark Stone
Chief Executive
South & Vale District Councils
135 Eastern Avenue
Milton Park
Milton
Oxfordshire
OX14 4SB

copy

19th February 2020

Dear Mark,

As you will be aware there are concerns from many of your residents about the enforcement of illegal parking. Whilst this remains one of the few parts of the Thames Valley where parking remains a criminal issue I welcome the policy of both South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils to work with Oxfordshire County Council to decriminalise parking enforcement.

Recognising that this will take some time I have met with both the Chief Constable and the local area commander to encourage Thames Valley Police to take a more proactive approach in the interim. I am delighted that the Force has agreed to increase targeted enforcement by Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

There remain many competing demands on the police and whilst focussing on priorities such as reducing violence, burglary, rural crime and the drug trade, it is recognised that the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire are the only two areas of the Thames Valley that have neither decriminalised parking, nor do they contribute financially to support the police in their enforcement efforts.

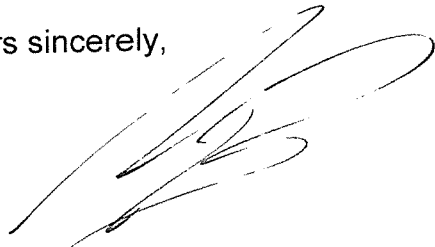
I have encouraged Thames Valley Police to undertake this initiative as there remains no alternative until decriminalisation is in place. Financial support for enforcement is already in place in Cherwell District (the only other part of Thames Valley without decriminalisation) through a Section 25 agreement and I understand there remains an appetite amongst both district and town councils to provide similar support in this way. The agreement in Cherwell is for the police to provide a *full time-equivalent* service in exchange for the cost of an additional PCSO. This means that rather than a specific person being employed purely to carry out parking enforcement, the Force ensures that Councils only pay for the service provided.

I would urge both South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils to work with their Town Councils to come to a suitable arrangement to provide adequate funding for PCSOs to continue this work on parking enforcement. The

initiative being launched now will provide for much needed targeted enforcement but it is not sustainable in the long term without support from local councils.

Decriminalisation of parking enforcement is a common goal amongst us. Following the discussions that I have had with the Force I am delighted that they are able to step up to the mark in the short term whilst the Councils go through the necessary legal processes. I hope you will also recognise the benefit to local residents and be able to support the local police in providing this enforcement in the short term while the Councils establish their own parking enforcement teams which is their stated aim.

Yours sincerely,



Matthew Barber
Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner

To: Leaders & Chief Executive
South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse District Councils

CC: Town Clerks
Faringdon, Wantage, Wallingford, Thame, Henley, Didcot & Abingdon Town Councils