

# ENGINE IDLING – ESTIMATED REVENUE AND COSTS

## Purpose

On 24 November 2022, the committee resolved to:

1. Continue internal and external promotional / educational public information campaigns in accordance with the findings of the Feasibility Study (Appendix A).
2. Adopt additional legislative powers under the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002.
3. Write to government with respect to fixed penalty notices and the level of fine applicable.

To inform the committee meeting in November 2023, estimated costs and revenues have been identified based on:

- Research, which is limited to a couple of freedom of information requests published online;
- Correspondence with other local authorities who are members of the British Parking Association; and
- An internal review on the likely cost of setting up systems if legislative powers were introduced.

## Revenue

### Online Research

Online research identified three articles related to freedom of information requests. These were from Wandsworth Borough Council, Westminster Council and an article published in the Telegraph about freedom of information requests made to a number of councils.

In all cases, the number of fines issued is small, resulting in very low revenue being generated. Additionally, nearly all drivers comply if/ when spoken to by a Civil Enforcement Officer, which removes the requirement for issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice under the legislative powers.

Council	URL/ Weblink	Key Points
Wandsworth Borough Council	<a href="#">Idling fines - a Freedom of Information request to Wandsworth Borough Council - WhatDoTheyKnow</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• During 2019, 212 vehicles were logged where the driver was spoken to.</li><li>• No Fixed Penalty Notices issued as all drivers complied when spoken too, meaning no revenue was generated.</li></ul>
Westminster Council	<a href="#">Just 0.1% of idling drivers fined in central London, data reveals   Air pollution   The Guardian</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows number of fines issued was low despite the number of reports made.</li></ul>
Not specific	<a href="#">Only 59 motorists have been fined for idling despite councils having the powers for 17 years, FOI reveals (telegraph.co.uk)</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drivers generally comply when spoken to.</li><li>• 10 councils have only issued 59 Fixed Penalty Notices over the period they have adopted legislative powers.</li></ul>

## Feedback from Other Local Authorities

Feedback was sought from other local authorities via the British Parking Association forum. The correspondence is reported in the table below, which outlines some of the challenges about costs vs income.

Council	Key Points
Feedback from British Parking Association Forum	"We looked into this, but it would require substantial funding as a service, requiring revenue which we don't have. The legislation is geared up around driver education and advice in the first instance, with a very low-value penalty able to be issued as a last resort - meaning that you'd need to fund any officers completely - income might pay for equipment and uniform."
Feedback from British Parking Association Forum	"From memory, Hounslow did it and reported negligible income to cover the resourcing required."
Feedback from British Parking Association Forum	"I believe London Borough of Hounslow did that, but also remember that the statistics were of negligible income for the resource cost."

## Resourcing

If legislative powers are adopted by the council, this could create an additional pressure on an already limited resource pool of Civil Enforcement Officers. This means that the amount of enforcement action for civil matters could reduce. Consequently, this could reduce income from Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs).

## Costs

An internal review of the estimated costs for adopting the legislative powers was conducted by the parking services team. The estimated costs are summarised in the table below.

Based on the estimated costs, the adoption of legislative powers would likely cost the council in the region of £75,000 to £80,000 during the first year (based on items 1, 3 and 4). Each year, there would be ongoing costs (item 2) plus officer time each year, estimated to be in the region of £23,000 to continue being able to enforce engine idling.

Item	Ballpark Cost per Annum	Basis of Estimate	
1	Software for processing Fixed Penalty Notices	£40,000	This includes purchasing, licensing and setting up software in the first year only.
2	Software License per annum	£23,000	Based on current licensing fee for processing Penalty Charge Notices.
3	Training of Staff	£35,000	Assumed Grade 6 staff based on average costs for training staff for issuing PCNs. Training is required because the process

Item	Ballpark Cost per Annum	Basis of Estimate
		for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices is a separate appeals route from PCNs.
4	£1,500	Based on cost of specialist stationary for issuing PCNs.

## Conclusion

Overall, the amount of revenue that is likely to be generated from the adopting legislative powers is small and feedback from other local authorities suggests that it is very unlikely that revenue would cover the costs of adopting notice processing systems, officer training and other costs.