

20th April 2026

Dear Dorset Council,

I write in my capacity as Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset to formally raise concerns regarding the proposed introduction of Department for Transport (DfT) approved rental e-scooter trials, to be operated by Beryl, across the areas of Corfe Mullen & Upton and Weymouth, Dorchester, Portland & Chickerell.

I recognise the Dorset Council's ambition to expand sustainable transport options and to build upon existing shared mobility schemes. Evidence from national and local trials, including the neighbouring BCP area, clearly demonstrates strong public uptake, notable modal shift away from private car use.

However, it is essential that these benefits are weighed against the practical realities and risks associated with implementation—particularly from a policing and public safety perspective.

From a policing standpoint, the proposed trials present several significant challenges. Dorset Police is likely to face increased demand linked to antisocial behaviour, road safety incidents, and new crime opportunities associated with misuse of the vehicles. Additional areas of concern is the unintentional promotion of illegal use of private e-scooter riding which complicates enforcement efforts further.

Of additional concern is the ongoing lack of clear identification measures on Beryl-operated e-bikes and e-scooters. The absence of easily visible and enforceable identification plates presents a tangible barrier to effective policing when vehicles are used unlawfully. This issue has been raised previously and remains unresolved by Beryl.

Furthermore, Beryl's complaints process continues to lack clarity and accessibility. A transparent, responsive, and well-publicised reporting mechanism is essential—not only for public confidence but also to support timely enforcement and issue resolution. At present, this remains insufficient.

While I acknowledge that the proposal includes a requirement for engagement with Dorset Police and disability groups, I must stress that it should result in clearly defined mitigation strategies, adequate resourcing, and enforceable safeguards that address the concerns raised by both policing and vulnerable road users.

In its current form, the proposal risks placing additional strain on already stretched police resources. Without firm commitments to address enforcement challenges, identification

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issues, and public reporting mechanisms, there is a significant risk that the burden of managing the scheme's negative consequences will fall disproportionately on Dorset Police.

In summary, while the scheme offers clear environmental and transport benefits, I am not satisfied that sufficient measures are presently in place to mitigate the associated risks. I therefore urge Dorset Council to reconsider progressing the trials until these concerns are fully addressed, with particular focus on:

- Ensure Beryl has a robust, transparent, and user-friendly complaints and reporting process and enforceable e-scooter identification measures
- Dorset Council works closely with Dorset Police define enforcement expectations
- Comprehensive mitigation plans addressing antisocial behaviour, misuse, and road safety risks

I remain committed to working collaboratively with Dorset Council and partners to support innovative transport solutions. However, this must not come at the expense of public safety or place unsustainable demands on policing.

Yours sincerely,

David Sidwick
Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset

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