



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN CLERK Glenna Frost, The Town Hall, Clarence Road,

Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 1LD

Telephone: 01243 867744 E-mail: bognortc@bognorregis.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

I hereby give you Notice that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of the Bognor Regis Town Council will take place in **The Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Clarence Road, Bognor Regis** at **5.45pm on MONDAY 21st AUGUST 2023.**

All Members of the Policy and Resources Committee are **HEREBY SUMMONED** to attend for the purpose of considering and resolving upon the business to be transacted as set out hereunder. An opportunity will be afforded to those **members of the public** who have pre-booked a place to put **Questions/Statements** to the Committee during an adjournment shortly after the meeting has commenced. (NOTE: Members of the public will be asked to provide their name and are encouraged to put questions/statements in advance, in writing. Priority will be given to written questions/statements and these should be restricted to the functions of this Committee). Any written question received by 9am on Monday 21st August from members of the public not able to attend the Meeting in person, will be read by the Chairman during this adjournment.

PLEASE NOTE START TIME

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE

TOWN CLERK

DATED this 14th day of AUGUST 2023

AGENDA AND BUSINESS

1. Welcome by Chairman and Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
Members and Officers are invited to make any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registrable and/or Ordinary Interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda and are reminded that they should redeclare their Interest before consideration of the item or as soon as the Interest becomes apparent and if not previously included on their Register of Interests to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days. Members and Officers should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the item they have the Interest in
 - b) whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registrable or Ordinary Interest
 - c) the nature of the Interest
 - d) if it is an Ordinary Interest whether they intend to leave the room for the discussion and vote
 - e) if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Registrable Interest, and therefore must leave the room for the discussion and vote, whether they will be exercising their right to speak on this matter under Public Question Time
3. Adjournment for public question time and statements
 4. Two Hour Free Parking Disc Scheme - to consider the proposals received from ADC to amend the current scheme prior to putting in place a new agreement with the current agreement due to expire at the end of 2023

THERE IS A LIFT AVAILABLE AT THE TOWN HALL FOR ACCESS TO THE COUNCIL CHAMBER IF REQUIRED

**BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING - 21st AUGUST 2023**

AGENDA ITEM 4 - TWO HOUR FREE PARKING DISC SCHEME - TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSALS RECEIVED FROM ADC TO AMEND THE CURRENT SCHEME PRIOR TO PUTTING IN PLACE A NEW AGREEMENT WITH THE CURRENT AGREEMENT DUE TO EXPIRE AT THE END OF 2023

REPORT BY THE TOWN CLERK

FOR DECISION

Members will recall that the Town Clerk reported at the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting on 31st July (Min. 30.3 refers) that a proposal in relation to two-hour free parking in Bognor Regis had been received from Arun District Council just prior to the Clerk's annual leave seeking comments and agreement to the document from the Town Council by the end of July 2023. The Parking Services Manager at the District Council was advised that this would need to be placed before Members for consideration, which in view of the timescale would not be possible to achieve by the end of the month. An Extraordinary meeting of the Committee would therefore be called to discuss this matter in detail once the opportunity to review the document and understand its implications had been undertaken.

In the interim period, further discussions have taken place and revised proposals (with amendments shown in red on the document) have now been received for consideration by Members attached as **Appendix 1**.

As stated in the proposals, it is the intention of Arun District Council to continue to support a two-hour free parking scheme for the next 4 years by switching over to virtual permits rather than continuing with the current scheme. The proposals indicate the District Council have no accurate means of quantifying usage of the discs, or therefore the financial contribution made by ADC by way of foregone parking revenue. It is considered to be the most responsible approach to make a two-year agreement with the introduction of virtual permits, alongside a cardboard disc for a transitional one-year period, progressing to a virtual only scheme in January 2025.

Bognor Regis Town Council are being asked to contribute at the current level of £21,000 per annum with this commitment remaining the same during the proposed two-year agreement. Whereas Bognor Regis BID who currently contribute £5,000 would no longer be required to contribute financially under the new scheme.

Arun District Council are seeking the support of Bognor Regis BID and the agreement of Bognor Regis Town Council to enter into this new two-year agreement. The new scheme would operate from 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2025 and would then enable a review to be carried out.

Once the proposal has been considered by both Bognor Regis Town Council and Bognor Regis BID, a report will be presented to the District Council's Environment Committee on 7th September for consideration.

DECISION

Members are asked to consider whether they **AGREE** or **DISAGREE** to entering into the proposed two-year agreement, based on the proposals in the attached report including continued Bognor Regis Town Council financial contributions at current levels of £21,000 per annum.

Proposals for 2 hours free parking scheme in Bognor Regis

Summary:

Arun District Council, in conjunction with Bognor Regis Town Council and Bognor Regis Business Improvement District (BID) operate a 2-hour parking scheme in Bognor Regis for the purpose of supporting town centre footfall. The current 2-hour parking scheme expires in December 2023.

This report sets out proposals for a new agreement to continue a 2-hour parking scheme in the town centre beyond 2023.

Informal engagement has taken place between all parties to the existing agreement, and this has established ongoing interest in a scheme that supports footfall in the town centre, which in turn benefits town centre businesses. The feedback received has helped shape the proposal.

Background:

Arun District Council (ADC), in conjunction with stakeholder partners, set up a parking disc scheme offering 2 hours free parking to encourage shoppers into Bognor Regis town centres in specified town centre car parks. The scheme was implemented in 2012 and it's administration is now undertaken by the Bognor Regis BID.

The scheme encompasses three ADC owned and operated car parks at Hothampton, Fitzleet and Lyon Street (N.B Lyon Street is not in the BID area) covering a total of 605 eligible pay and display spaces, allowing customers to park for 2 hours free of charge.

Disc holders display a cardboard disc showing the time of their arrival. The disc holder can stay for a maximum of two hours, with a no return restriction within one hour.

The Bognor Regis parking disc is valid from 1st January to 31st December each year at a cost of £2.00. The Bognor Regis BID produces a new disc each year, invalidating the previous calendar years disc.

Bognor Regis BID produces the disc and distributes them to retailers to sell to the public. Retailers make a small profit on each disc sold, 40p per disc. The disc production is capped at 30,000 units per year. Any profit generated by the Bognor Regis BID through the distribution of the scheme is retained by them, with no restrictions on how it is spent.

The Bognor Regis Town Council pays to ADC a yearly contribution of £21K towards the loss of parking revenue incurred by Arun District Council. This contribution has not increased since date of implementation of 2012. Additionally, the Bognor Regis BID continues to contribute £5,000 per annum to ADC and this has also not increased since 2012.

There is no documented evidence to suggest there has been any changes to the financial agreements since commencement.

There is an agreement with the Bognor Regis Town Council and the Bognor Regis BID to continue the current scheme until December 2023.

Limitations of the scheme in its current format:

There are limitations to the 2-hour parking scheme that is currently active in Bognor Regis Town Centre.

At this time, there is the potential for the disc to be misused in the format it is currently. Users are entitled to 2 hours free parking with no return permitted within one hour. The terms do not prohibit disc holders from relocating their vehicle to an alternate car park or return to the original car park for a further 2 hours free parking, allowing the user to park for free all day. This is not the intended purpose of the disc scheme and has a detrimental impact on the revenue generated by ADC car parks.

There is evidence that the discs are being abused by moving the time on the discs forward which results in lost parking revenue.

Enforcement is impractical, leaving the scheme open to abuse. Unless detailed photographs are taken of each vehicle displaying the disc, it is impossible to verify if the vehicles have left at the end of the 2-hour parking period or if the time on the disc is being moved forward fraudulently.

A one-day survey identified that of the 133 vehicles displaying the 2-hour parking disc, 10 were found to have moved the disc forward without moving their vehicle or overstayed the 2-hour time limit. Whilst acknowledging that this was a limited duration survey, extrapolated it suggests an annual figure of 3,650 vehicles per year misusing the 2-hour free parking disc which represents significant revenue loss to ADC.

The contributions by the partners in real terms have reduced since the scheme's introduction in 2012, whilst ADC's loss of parking revenue, taking into account the tariff increases over the intervening years, has increased.

There are no accurate means of quantifying usage of the discs, nor therefore the financial contribution made by ADC by way of foregone parking revenue. The only data currently available is the number of discs being sold, but Arun District Council is unable to quantify their usage in participating car parks or their misuse. The absence of financial loss information makes it impossible for ADC to make fully informed decisions about the scheme, nor to promote its contribution to supporting footfall in the town centre.

In addition, the production costs for the cardboard discs are increasing in line with inflation. Consequently, the costs of production will likely surpass the current cost to the customer, resulting in these additional costs being passed to the consumer to cover any losses whilst maintaining the profit margin for retailers.

The production, storage, and distribution of 30,000 cardboard discs each year also has a detrimental environmental impact. The environmental effects of cardboard production include deforestation, the use of enormous amounts of energy and water as well as air pollution and waste.

Proposals:

To mitigate the above limitations to the current 2-hour parking scheme, taking into account the feedback received, Arun District Council make the proposal below. This proposal achieves the scheme's purpose of supporting town centre footfall and enables Arun District Council to better manage and enforce the Scheme.

A new two-year agreement for a 2-hour free parking scheme operating from 1st January 2024 – 31st December 2025. It is the intention to continue to support a 2-hour free parking scheme for the next four years, but given the paucity of financial information currently available, it is considered to be the most responsible approach to make a two-year agreement which enables a review to be carried out.

The introduction of virtual permits, alongside a cardboard disc for a transitional one-year period, progressing to a virtual only scheme in 2025. There will be ~~as a replacement for the discs~~, There will be ~~with~~ an emphasis on assisted self-serve and alternatives for customers who are elderly or vulnerable. Customers with smart phones, would use an app to activate the 2 hours free parking. A reminder can be sent to the customer when the end of two free hours is approaching and offers the opportunity to purchase additional parking via the pay by phone app to extend their stay. This would allow customers who use the 2-hour free parking to continue to use the businesses and amenities the town has to offer. By eliminating the need for customers to return to their vehicles to purchase additional tickets, we would be encouraging customers to spend additional time supporting local businesses uninterrupted.

Customers will purchase a virtual permit which will be valid for the calendar year, with the administration fee of £2 (as at present) being paid to ADC who will administer the scheme using software already in use for issuing on-street and off-street parking permits in the district. Alternatively, during the first year of the scheme, cardboard discs will be available to purchase for £2 from Bognor Regis Town Hall and Arun Civic Centre for those who prefer them. The scheme will be heavily advertised ahead of the go-live date for the virtual permit system, ensuring the maximum amount of exposure to customers. Promotional signage will be available in affected car parks, leaflets will be available in Bognor Regis Town Hall and Arun Civic Centre and the scheme will be advertised online. For customers with a smart phone, details of how to download the required pay by phone app, including a QR code which will take customers directly to the app on either the Apple App Store/ Android Play Store will be available on the posters, leaflets and online. Customers would subsequently download the app to their phones for free and can purchase the required permit through the app. An option to automatically renew the permit would be available during registration and the admin fee would be automatically debited from the customers bank card at the start of the year. Automatic renewal can be cancelled at any time. Additional parking can also be purchased via the pay by phone app.

Moving to an app-based scheme will reduce the environmental impact of producing, storing, and distributing cardboard discs during the transitional first year due to lower production rates. The full environmental benefit will be gained from 1st January 2025.

~~eliminates the environmental impact of producing, storing and distributing 30,000 cardboard discs each year.~~

Users that have paid for the virtual permits can also transfer it to multiple vehicles by changing the registration number on the app.

Customers without a smartphone, would be directed to call a customer helpdesk number. During this call, the 2 hours free parking would be activated, and the customer would provide their registration number to the call operator. Pay stations will remain in the car parks for any customers wishing to pay for additional parking by cash or card who are unable to do so using the pay by phone apps.

Support would be available for vulnerable customers during the set-up process and then an automatic renewal of the permits would be configured to prevent future distress or concerns.

To participate in a working group with Bognor Regis Town Council, Bognor Regis BID, Littlehampton Town Council and Littlehampton Traders Association. The working group would advise on how the transition to virtual only permit scheme in January 2025 is managed, to provide assurance that elderly and vulnerable drivers' needs are sufficiently understood and accommodated.

The admin cost for once daily two-hour free parking would be £2 per year for each customer. The current daily charges for 2-hour parking in all town centre car parks is £2, except Fittleeet which is £1.50. The admin cost provides exceptional value for money and would continue to encourage footfall into our town centres. Most users would only have to use their virtual permit once in a year to reap the benefits of the scheme. The cost for the virtual permit and the cardboard disc will be the same. Cardboard discs will be available for customers to purchase from Littlehampton Civic Centre and Bognor Regis Town Hall.

Under the new proposal, no contributions would be required from the Bognor Regis BID.

In the absence of disc data usage, it is not possible to quantify accurately the cost to ADC in foregone parking revenue. It is therefore proposed to freeze the financial contributions from Bognor Regis Town Council.

Arun District Council propose introducing a virtual permit and cardboard disc in Bognor Regis from 1st January 2024 – 31st December 2024, with administration of the disc transferring to Arun District Council from 1st January 2024. Ahead of both the transitions, clear signage would be posted in all affected car parks and a 2-week 1-month grace period would be given to all customers still displaying the cardboard discs. The signage would be erected 2 months ahead of the go live date and customers would be encouraged to contact Arun District Council with any questions or concerns. From 1st January 2024, all previous parking discs would be null and void.

The information available from the introduction of a virtual based permit scheme would provide quantifiable data on the use of the free 2 hours parking and the inferred impact of the scheme on footfall within the town centre.

Advantages, Risks, Mitigation and Transitional Arrangements:

Advantages

The advantages of progressing to a virtual permit system detailed below:

One of the most important benefits of progressing to a virtual permit system is that it continues the 2-hour free parking scheme in the Bognor Regis Town Centre. This is beneficial for the local businesses as well as encouraging tourism within the area. The continuation of the scheme is likely to encourage customers to stay local and the introduction of the parking app will make it easier for customers to purchase additional time in the car parks.

Customers will be able to claim their 2 hours free parking via the MiPermit App, which will also enable them to purchase additional parking without returning to their vehicles. Thus, encouraging customers to spend more time in the town centre, without the urgency of returning to their vehicle to ensure they don't receive a Penalty Charge Notice. As pay by phone apps are used in car parks up and down the country, as well as in Bognor Regis for on and off-street parking permits, it is likely they will already be installed on many customers phones and tablets, and they will be familiar with how to pay for parking through these apps. During the first year of the scheme cardboard discs will be available to purchase for £2 from Bognor Regis Town Hall and Arun Civic Centre.

The admin cost of the virtual permit will remain at £2 per annum, ensuring the scheme remains affordable for all customers. The admin cost provides exceptional value for money and would continue to encourage footfall into our town centres. Most users would only have to use their virtual permit once in year to reap the benefits of the scheme.

Contributions from Bognor Regis Town Council will be frozen for the next two years to enable accurate data to be collated to ensure informed decisions can be made regarding any changes to the scheme or financial contributions.

Arun District Council appreciate that the Bognor Regis BID will be losing income generated through the sales of the cardboard discs by moving to a virtual permit system. Therefore, no contribution towards the virtual permit scheme will be required from the Bognor Regis BID.

As detailed above, there is the potential of the current cardboard discs in circulation being misused by customers. By introducing a virtual permit dual scheme for 2024, the potential for misuse ~~of these discs would be eliminated.~~ would be reduced and then eliminated from January 2025.

The virtual permit system will provide Arun District Council and partners with more quantifiable data of the uptake of the 2-hour parking scheme and the usage of the car parks in the town centre. This will also provide information on the number of customers visiting the town centre and whether they have extended their visit by purchasing additional hours.

The environmental effects of cardboard production are significant, as detailed above. By moving to a virtual permit scheme, this will reduce the environmental damage caused by producing, storing, and distributing 30,000 discs annually. This would also support Arun District Council's Corporate Strategy and pledge to become carbon neutral by 2030.

The format of the virtual permit- dual scheme in the first year and the virtual only permit scheme from January 2025, will be the same as the scheme in Littlehampton which is both equitable and will create familiarity with the systems in place in Arun District Council car parks and encourage uptake of the scheme as it becomes simpler.

In addition, under a virtual permit system, there will be no limit on the number of permits issued. This will have a positive impact on the number of customers able to access the scheme as there is a current limit of 30,000 cardboard discs issued per year. This will likely generate additional footfall into the town centre and encourage additional uptake of the scheme. During the first year of the scheme cardboard discs will be available to purchase for £2 from Bognor Regis Town Hall and Arun Civic Centre for those who prefer them.

Moving to a virtual permit will enable customers to purchase permits online, 24 hours a day. This could lead to increased uptake of the scheme and thus increased footfall into the town centre.

Risks, Mitigations and Transitional Arrangements to be set in place:

Arun District Council appreciate that there are some risks with the virtual permit proposal. The proposals for mitigating these risks are detailed below:

Elderly and vulnerable customers would be directed to call a customer helpdesk number. During this call, the 2 hours free parking would be activated, and the customer would provide their registration number to the call operator. Pay stations will remain in the car parks for any customers wishing to pay for additional parking by cash or card who are unable to do so using pay by phone apps. Support would be available for vulnerable customers during the set-up process and then an automatic renewal would be offered to prevent future distress or concerns. A grace period would be introduced after the transition to ensure that elderly and vulnerable customers have additional time to adapt to any changes implemented. Staff will be available at Bognor Regis Town Hall and Arun Civic Centre who be able to offer advice and support to any customers encountering difficulties with the new system.

Informative promotional signage will be displayed within the affected car parks and will contain key dates for change over and directions on how to use the pay by phone app. A QR code will also be available for customers to scan using their smart phones and will take them straight to the relevant pay by phone apps on either the Apple App Store/ Android Play Store. From here, the app can be downloaded to their phones in readiness for the change over. Customers with any questions or concerns will be directed to Bognor Regis Town Hall or Arun Civic Centre for assistance.

Further information in the form of leaflets will be available at Bognor Regis Town Hall and Arun Civic Centre for customers who are encountering difficulties, would like the information available in paper format or would like to know more about the scheme. Thus, ensuring customers without smartphones are able to have a copy of the information available if they are unable to take a photograph of the signage in the car park or wish to promote the scheme to friends and family. The leaflets available will provide an overview of the scheme, contain information regarding the participating car parks, auto-renewal details, provide a frequently asked questions section and contact details should further assistance be required. The leaflets will also form part of the promotional plan to encourage uptake of the scheme and promote footfall into the town centres.

Ahead of the transition, clear signage would be posted in all affected car parks and a ~~2-week~~ 1-month grace period would be given to all customers still displaying the cardboard discs. The signage would be erected 2 months ahead of the go live date and customers would be encouraged to contact Arun District Council with any questions or concerns.

During informal early engagement with partners, it has become apparent to Arun District Council that there will be a modest loss of income from the sales of discs to the Bognor Regis BID and to the businesses that currently sell that cardboard discs. It is important to recognise that the purpose of the scheme has always been to support footfall in the town centre which is of benefit to businesses located there. The scheme's purpose has never been to generate revenues.

It is hoped that with effective advertising, participation in the scheme will increase along with footfall into the town centre, having a beneficial impact on small businesses and traders. To promote the scheme, the permits would be advertised on the Arun District Council website under the Streets and Parking link and would provide details on how to obtain free parking in participating car parks. The scheme would also be advertised ahead of the proposed changes on the Arun District Council Facebook and Twitter pages to increase awareness. Promotional signage would be erected in affected car parks to make existing customers aware of the changes and to promote the scheme to new customers. Leaflets would be available in Arun Civic Centre and Bognor Regis Town Hall for customers to collect and an article regarding the scheme and participating car parks would also be included within the Arun Times to make residents within the Arun area aware of the scheme and to promote uptake.

Next Steps:

Arun District Council seek the support of Bognor Regis BID and the agreement of Bognor Regis Town Council to enter into the proposed two-year agreement, based on the features set out including continued BRTC financial contributions at current levels.

Arun District Council will then present the proposal to the Environment Committee for decision in September 2023.

Alternative Options Considered and Discarded:

Tanking account of feedback from early engagement with partners, Arun District Council has considered alternative options for the continuation of the 2-hour parking scheme.

1. Discontinue the 2-hour free parking scheme altogether.

- Ø This would be financially advantageous to Arun District Council as additional income would be generated by short stays within town centre car parks. However, this would almost certainly have a detrimental impact on the footfall into the town centre and an impact on businesses. This is something Arun District Council would want to avoid as this does not support our Corporate Vision.

2. Increase partner contributions significantly.

- Ø Increasing the partner contributions significantly would have a negative impact on their ability to provide other services and may result in the partners pulling out of the scheme altogether, as it becomes unaffordable. In this event, the scheme would likely come to an end, which would be to the detriment of customers and businesses in the town centre.

3. Increase disc/ permit price significantly.

- Ø By increasing the cost of the disc or permit, this would have a disadvantageous impact on customers financially. The purpose of the scheme is to encourage customers into the town centre as opposed to shopping online. By increasing the initial cost, customers may be inclined to discontinue use of the scheme, reducing footfall into the town centre, and having a detrimental impact on businesses. In addition, Arun District Council recognise that encouraging parking in the town centre at a reduced rate will benefit customers significantly during these challenging financial times.

4. Reduce the period of time parking is free from 2 hours to 1 hour.

- Ø Reducing the free parking time from 2 hours to 1-hour, may discourage uptake of the scheme and impact negatively on footfall. 1 hour would often not be sufficient for customers to get into the town centre and utilise the local amenities and shop with businesses before needing to return to their vehicle to pay for additional parking.

5. Reduce the number of car parks within the scheme from 3 to 1 at Fitzleet.

- Ø Fitzleet is currently one of the participating car parks in Bognor Regis and does not operate close to capacity. By removing Lyon Street and Hothampton from the scheme, this would significantly reduce the number of spaces available to customers parking in the town centre. This would have a particularly detrimental impact to customers during the summer months, when demand for parking in the town centre is higher.

6. To continue the 2-hour free parking scheme in its current format.

- Ø Continuing the 2-hour free parking schemes in their current format would continue to provide difficulties with enforcement and would not eradicate misuse of the schemes. Quantifiable data on usage and the benefit the schemes have on town

centre footfall would remain unobtainable. The absence of usage data and foregone revenue information would make it impossible for Arun District Council to make fully informed decisions regarding the schemes, or to promote its inferred contribution to supporting footfall in the town centre. Littlehampton Traders Association cannot commit to fulfil their financial obligations under the current scheme.

7. To defer implementation of the proposed virtual permit schemes

Ø Delaying the introduction of the virtual permit scheme would not enable Arun District Council to obtain usage data in the interim. Any decision taken regarding the 2-hour free parking scheme in the future would need to be made with the same lack of data available today.

8. To move to a virtual permit system (only) on 1st January 2024

Ø This is considered to be consistent with the Council's equalities duties. However, some more elderly and vulnerable drivers may appreciate the additional option of a cardboard disc during for 2024 as a transitional arrangement.

9. Scratch cards

Ø Single-use scratch cards (where the date and time of parking are scratched off a card) reduce abuse, and provide more usage data than discs, but not as much as a virtual permit scheme. A scratch card scheme has significantly higher financial costs and environmental impacts than a virtual or cardboard disc scheme.

Having reviewed the alternative options, none of the above, with the exception of option 8, provide accurate data on the usage of the scheme. As detailed above, this is of vital importance to ensure that informed decisions can be taken in the future.

The above options would also not prevent misuse of the scheme by customers. Presently, Arun District Council are unable to accurately monitor or prevent the misuse of the scheme in its current format. ~~To eradicate misuse and abuse, but to ensure the continuation of the scheme, the only viable alternative would be to progress to virtual permits.~~

Option 8 is the only option which would immediately eradicate misuse, reduce environmental impact, and gather usage and financial data without impinging on the effectiveness of the scheme as a tool for supporting town centre footfall.

Arun District Council recognise the importance of reducing our environmental impact and have pledged to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. By continuing the scheme in its current format, this would continue to have a detrimental impact on the environment. By moving to a virtual permit system, this would support Arun District Council's Corporate Strategy of becoming carbon neutral in the next 7 years.