

Town Clerk

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Our Reference
TC/CJJ/PAT/GLA

Your Reference

Date
28 September 2001

Ken Livingstone Esq.
Mayor of London (Congestion Charging)
Greater London Authority
Room A401, Romney House
Marsham Street
London SW1P 3PY

The Greater London (Central Zone) Congestion Charging Order 2001

I write with regard to the Scheme Order on your congestion charging proposals.

The Corporation of London's original response, of 19 September 2000, to your outline proposals highlighted that the introduction of a scheme for congestion charging represented a fundamental change to the way in which traffic would be managed in the Capital. Whilst the Corporation supported, and continues to support, action to reduce traffic congestion, in central London in particular, we expressed reservations about some aspects of the draft proposals. Now that our Policy and Resources Committee and Planning and Transportation Committee have had the opportunity to study the draft order, the Corporation's observations can be given, and these are set out below: -

- (a) The Corporation of London accepts the rationale behind your proposals to encourage motorists to move away from private vehicles and onto public transport, to reduce traffic congestion and to contribute to improved air quality. The Scheme Order does cover many issues but highway planning, transport modelling and other detailed works issues have not been finalised and a full analysis of the proposed effects has not, therefore, been possible, other than on a broad basis. Such submissions would not be accepted from private sector developers who put forward proposals affecting the City's streets.

- (b) The scheme relies on extensive future improvements to public transport, particularly buses. We are concerned that if these are not entirely implemented in advance of the scheme being introduced, the predicted benefits will not be achievable.

Of particular concern to the Corporation is the impact of the scheme on certain groups of people within the charging area, namely those working at Smithfield Market and other key workers; residents; and disabled persons.

- (c) We remain of the opinion that Tower Bridge will not be able to accommodate the increase in traffic that may arise in areas adjacent to the zone. Given the structure of the Bridge, the width of the carriageway and the need to raise the bridge for vessels, all of which factors will add to traffic congestion in the area, the boundary for charging should be moved further east.
- (d) The Corporation's original response to your outline proposals, referred to earlier, highlighted our concerns regarding Tower Bridge vis-à-vis the currently proposed boundary of the charging area. Whilst we welcome the proposed enforcement measures for Tower Bridge, we do need detailed figures for the anticipated effects of traffic on the local streets around the eastern part of the cordon.
- (e) The hours of operation of Smithfield Market require many workers to travel when public transport services are unavailable. For these people, the proposed charge would be an unavoidable cost and, ultimately, a considerable burden on those individuals, the businesses or the distributors. If the businesses had, in effect, to pick up the cost that could, in some cases, challenge their economic viability. Other key workers serving the charging area will also be similarly disadvantaged by the proposed charge. We feel most strongly that those working at Smithfield Market and other key workers in the City who are unable to use public transport should be granted a dispensation or exemption from the charge.
- (f) We are of the view that provision should be made for a residential *exemption* (not just a reduction) from the proposed charge. Moreover, we feel that this exemption should be extended to those persons resident in the City on occasion, i.e. whose principal residence may be located outside the charging area.
- (g) The 100% discount from the proposed charge available to "Blue Badge" holders resident in Greater London is welcomed. However, we are of the opinion that the exemption should go further and be extended to all such

badge holders. Furthermore, it should not be qualified on the basis of residency. In its proposed form, the discount discriminates against disabled persons who are not resident in Greater London but who may, on occasion, drive a vehicle into the charging area, for example to access services at St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

- (h) The Bishopsgate/Gracechurch Street/London Bridge route should be removed from the strategic London Network and return to being a local borough street as a result of the altered nature of the highways at the perimeter of the charging area.
- (i) A qualified objection to the Scheme Order be made on the basis of the limited information available to assess the scheme.
- (j) As further information by Transport for London becomes available, the effects on the City and assessment of local impacts may change. The Corporation therefore reserves the right to make further comment and, if necessary, objection should matters so require.

In conclusion, we remain, as you can see, concerned about many aspects.

We also note that further modelling is being conducted by Transport for London, the results of which could have a further effect on the City as a whole or in part and, in the circumstances, we feel that we must formally object to the Order ((i) above) until such time as the above issues are resolved and reserve the right to make further comment and, if necessary, objection should matters so require.

Yours sincerely

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Date

12 November 2001

Ken Livingstone Esq.
Mayor of London
Greater London Authority
Room A401, Romney House
Marsham Street
London SW1P 3PY

Dear Mayor Livingstone

The Greater London (Central Zone) Congestion Charging Order 2001

I write further to my letter of 28 September 2001 setting out the Corporation of London's observations on the draft Greater London (Central Zone) Congestion Charging Order 2001.

The Court of Common Council debated the draft Order at its meeting on Thursday, 8 November. Whilst the Court reiterated the Corporation's support of action to reduce traffic congestion, in central London in particular, Members wished to further draw to your attention a number of the concerns that had been expressed by both the Policy and Resources Committee and Planning and Transportation Committee, viz: -

- (a) the eastern boundary of the charging zone should be extended further east than Tower Bridge;
- (b) the key workers who arrive in the zone before 7.00am should be exempted from the charge;
- (c) the residents within the zone should be exempted from the charge; and
- (d) the exemption from the charge for the disabled should not be confined just to those who live in Greater London but be extended to include those who may need to access the central zone, for example to make use of the services provided by St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

The Court of Common Council resolved that, because of these concerns, the decision of the Policy and Resources Committee and Planning and Transportation Committee to formally object to the draft Order should be supported, and instructed me to write to you to draw this to your attention.

Yours sincerely