

Council: 17 April 2007

Administration Policy Item: Cllr. Matthew Offord

Road User Charging

Council is extremely concerned at Labour Government plans to introduce Road User Charging Across the country, and believes that any plan to introduce such a charge will impact disproportionately on people with low or fixed incomes and those who depend on their car for mobility.

It is noted that the Labour Government has received over 1 million signatures in objection to its road charging plans, demonstrating the strength of opinion nationwide against such a levy.

It should be further noted that the first road charging policy in existence in Britain, the Central London Congestion Charge, has failed to cut congestion in the long run, with delays inside the zone nearly back up to pre-charge levels. The said levy is also attributed to delays and congestion in Barnet, where the attendant increase in commuter parking has resulted in the necessary implementation of additional Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs).

However, in addition to extending the Congestion Charge westwards, Transport for London (TfL) has also mooted plans to charge on "busy roads". Last year TfL admitted, under these plans, it would cost a road user £13 to travel from Barnet across London.

This Council is committed to ensuring its residents are free to go about their everyday lives without being unduly charged. We believe there are more effective means of cutting carbon emissions than by Road User Charging, which, the London Congestion Charge has demonstrated, can be ineffectual at reducing congestion in the long run.

Council requests that Cabinet considers more effective means by which congestion and emissions could be reduced other than road user charging, and that these suggestions are communicated to the Secretary of State for Transport.