

Liberal Democrat Strategic Theme Motion 1

Effective action to cut the most polluting vehicles

This Council notes:

- The proposals for increasing parking charges adopted by Cabinet on 14 January 2019, in the report *Public health, air quality and sustainable transport – a strategic approach to parking charges 2*;
- That policy on parking charges cannot be a revenue-raising strategy;
- The reference made by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 9 January, that Cabinet was required to receive additional evidence to demonstrate that “increasing parking charges results in a decrease in traffic, and on the link between higher costs for high polluting cars and changing the behaviour of drivers”;
- A planned review of the diesel levy and emissions based charging that will report back later this year, and the start of the procurement process for an IT system that can support an emissions based charging policy.

This Council believes:

- Air quality is a significant public health issue that requires a link to be made between the action proposed, the outcome desired, and a means of measuring success;
- That any scheme for parking charges is undermined in the eyes of the public by a lack of any evidence or analysis the specific charges being proposed will improve air quality by driving down car use or reducing journeys;
- That as vehicle emissions have a direct relationship to air quality and emissions-based charging conforms to the ‘polluter pays’ principle, there is a clear logic which is now commonplace in London for a higher premium to be charged for vehicles that have higher emissions, and a lower charge for cars that have lower emissions; and
- That some residents will need help switching to greener transport options. This is especially those who bought diesel vehicles on the understanding that they were more environmentally friendly, based on Government advice.

This Council therefore requests that Cabinet:

- Abandons the proposals outlined in the *Public health, air quality and sustainable transport – a strategic approach to parking charges 2* adopted by Cabinet on 14 January 2019;
- Urgently brings forward proposals for parking charges based on emissions, using evidence resulting from the planned review of the diesel levy and emissions based charges (expediting that review if necessary), and learning lessons from similar schemes adopted by other London Boroughs;
- Supports and promotes the Mayor of London’s new scheme to help smaller business owners scrap older more polluting vehicles, and investigates ways to help those with lower incomes to change to less polluting vehicles, such as a scrappage schemes for older cars, or only applying emissions based charges to new vehicle applications for controlled parking permits/appropriate sunset periods;
- Engages with the Mayor of London on: extending the Ultra Low Emission Zone to Merton, or the possibility of a mini-ULEZ for the borough; other action to limit the number of high polluting HGVs travelling through the borough; the possibility of Low Emission Bus Zones, like on Putney High Street.

Signed

Cllr Simon McGrath

Cllr Anthony Fairclough

Cllr Carl Quilliam

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