



Abolish the Congestion Charge

Chris Prior for the London Assembly

"Use your vote, have your say"

RELYING ON CATCHING PEOPLE OUT IS NOT GOOD PUBLIC POLICY

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Immediate Release

"The congestion charge consistently relies on issuing nearly a million fines a year, to show any kind of return," says Chris Prior, the Abolish the Congestion Charge candidate in the London wide Assembly elections.

"In 2006/07 a staggering £55m of the £90m net income came from fines.

As a matter of good public policy, it is quite wrong for a scheme rely on catching people out to show any kind of return. Yet without the excessive fines, the congestion charge "profits" would be negligible.

Since the charge was introduced millions of people have been fined. I urge them to use their vote and have their say.

In the campaign both the Mayor and Mr Johnson have announced measures that could cut the income from fines but this highlights a further issue. With the administrative costs largely fixed under contract, reducing the level of fines points to an increase in the £8 charge to maintain the current level of net income.

Neither candidate has said that they will raise the charge; indeed Mr Livingstone has promised, as in 2004, not to do so. Once re-elected he raised it 60% from £5 to £8. How long before the charge is £10 or even higher?"

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. Fine information from Transport of London's "Congestion Charge – Impacts Monitoring – Fifth Annual Report: June 2007" pages 109 and 114.
2. Of the £252m raised from congestion charging only £89m was available to spend on improving public transport – Transport for London's Statement of Accounts 2006/07 page 99.
3. For more on past promises and future charges see London Assembly Transport Committee report "Proposed Congestion Charge Increase" February 2005.

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