

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET		
SUBJECT:	AMENDMENT TO TOLL ORDER		
DATE OF DECISION:	19 DECEMBER 2017		
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

NOT APPLICABLE

BRIEF SUMMARY

Southampton has been identified as one of the five areas in the UK that is forecast to exceed EU air quality limits beyond 2020. Alongside a Clean Air Zone, Southampton City Council is committed to encouraging greater use of electric vehicles within the city to aid the City Council's targets to improve air quality.

One of the principal reasons for maintaining a Toll on the Itchen Bridge is to manage congestion in the city and the impacts of congestion (including idling and queuing vehicles) to preserve the character and amenity of the area. Encouraging a greater use of electric vehicles by introducing a concession on the Itchen Bridge Toll for vehicles of this type would better preserve the amenity and character of the area by improving air quality impacted by vehicles stationary in queues and moving through the areas adjacent to the bridge.

Any concession for electric vehicles would need to be introduced by means of proposing an Amendment to the Toll Order for which a public notice and representation period is required.

If uptake of electric vehicles became such that there was a significant impact on traffic using the route, then the amendment to the Toll Order would need to be reconsidered in line with the other statutory reasons for charging (including ongoing maintenance costs of the bridge and bridge facilities).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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| (i) | To delegate authority to the Service Director, Transactions and Universal Services to publish notice of an amendment to the Itchen Bridge Tolls Order introducing a new class of vehicle (Electric) for which there will be a zero charge concession until air quality standards have improved and / or the maintenance requirements of the bridge require further consideration of proposed charging structures. |
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REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	To encourage drivers to use electric vehicles for the benefit of air quality in Southampton, in the region of the A3025 and the City Centre to improve the quality of the environment in the areas adjacent to the Itchen Bridge where traffic congestion occurs at peak times.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	Not amending the Toll Order
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
3.	Southampton has been identified as one of the five areas in the UK that is forecast to exceed EU air quality limits beyond 2020. Alongside a Clean Air Zone, Southampton City Council is committed to encouraging greater use of electric vehicles (EV) within the city to aid the City Council's targets to improve air quality. This has included examining concessions for Electric Vehicles to encourage drivers to adopt this technology at an early stage where this delivers environmental improvements and or addresses air quality issues caused by vehicle congestion. The City Council has already implemented a 90% discount on City Centre Parking Season Tickets for electric vehicle users.
4.	<p>The Itchen Bridge was opened in 1977 to improve access from the east side of the city to the City Centre. A toll was introduced to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) cover the costs of construction and ongoing maintenance ii) preserve the character and amenity of the area by controlling the composition and flow of traffic using the bridge <p>The standard toll charge for a car at peak times is £0.60 while the off-peak charge is £0.50. Residents of Southampton are entitled to a discount of £0.20 per crossing through the use of a Smart Cities card. The Bridge sees in the region of 7M crossings per annum with the tolls generating revenue of approximately £3.2M.</p>
5.	One of the principal reasons for maintaining the Toll on the Bridge is to preserve the amenity and character of the area. As air quality can be considered a key component of the amenity of the area, the Council could consider amending the Toll Order to create a new class of vehicle that would allow a concession for electric vehicles. This would encourage a greater proportion of vehicles using the route to be electric for the benefit of air quality within the area. To further ensure that the amenity and character of the area is maintained, the electric vehicle concession should only be available to traffic that is local in nature. Once uptake of electric vehicles by drivers using the route is such that there is an impact on traffic through the area (i.e. improved air quality but increased congestion) or the maintenance and planned maintenance requirements of the bridge require further investment, the Amendment to the Toll Order would need to be reconsidered to once again ensure the character and amenity of the area is preserved and planned and reactive maintenance costs are covered by toll revenue.
6.	The Toll is regulated by statute by the Hampshire Act 1983 and the Toll Order made pursuant to that Act. Any changes to the Tolls and/or concessions requires an amendment to the Toll Order. The amendment needs to be formally proposed and there is statutory representation period of 21 days to enable the public to make comment or objection. These representations are then taken into consideration before a final decision is made on whether to implement the amendment and revise the Toll Order. A report will be

	presented to cabinet to consider those objections or representations in due course.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
7.	<p>The Itchen Bridge generates around £3.2M of revenue per annum. As electric vehicles currently represent around 1% of road traffic, the initial impact to revenue is expected to be minimal. Mid-range forecasts suggest that by 2020, 3.1% of vehicles will be electric and by 2025, 12.5% of vehicles will be electric. Assuming traffic across the Itchen Bridge remains relatively static, the revenue loss can be estimated as follows;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2018/19 - £32,000 2020/21 - £99,200 2025/26 - £400,000</p>
8.	The legal costs for proposing an amendment to the Toll Order are likely to be between £4,000 and £8,000 depending on the volume of the consultation responses.
<u>Property/Other</u>	
9.	N/A
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
10.	Southampton City Council has the statutory power to propose and subsequently Amend the Toll Order subject to a formal public notice and representation period.
11.	Section 22 of the Hampshire Act 1983 grants the Council the powers to maintain a toll on the bridge. Furthermore, Section 22 Part 3 states that, " <i>In exercising their powers under this section, the council shall have regard to... the need to control the composition and flow of traffic over the bridge so as to avoid causing traffic congestion in areas adjacent to the bridge and so as to preserve the character and amenities of those areas.</i> " In proposing this amendment, the Council is seeking to control the composition of traffic, specifically the means by which vehicles are powered, to protect the character and amenities of the area, i.e. air quality where emissions are being generated by vehicle usage of this key route into and out of the City Centre.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
12.	In considering the impact of the introduction of the revised Toll class and concession, the Council must have regard to the impact of its proposals under the Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149 Equality Act 2010) and be prepared to take steps to mitigate any negative impacts associated with the proposals. A detailed equality impact assessment will be undertaken and updated as the representation period progresses to identify any positive or negative impacts on protected characteristics or mobility vehicle users etc. arising out of the proposals and what steps may be required to address any such impacts.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
13.	The key risk is that an Amendment to the Toll Order is subject to a formal

	public representation process the decision maker may determine as a result of representations made or other evidence coming forward during this period that the Amendment to the Toll Order should not be made. However, the City Council will have demonstrated that it has considered this option for promoting electric vehicle use even if it is subsequently found to be undeliverable.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
14.	Traffic along routes related to the Bridge will need to be monitored to ensure that the concession does not result in increased congestion but the proposals are wholly in accordance with the published policy framework.

KEY DECISION?	Yes
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Equality and Safety Impact Assessment
2.	Privacy Impact Assessment

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
Equality Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	Yes
Privacy Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) to be carried out.	Yes
Other Background Documents	
Other Background documents available for inspection at:	
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None