

Written evidence submitted by Transport for Quality of Life (EVP0080)

1. Introduction

Transport for Quality of Life is a specialist consultancy that is working to create a sustainable, equitable zero-carbon transport system here in the UK. We help develop better policies; evaluate national and local sustainable transport investment programmes; research ‘what works’; and share UK and international best practice. We also publish a series of Radical Transport 2-Pagers to open up discussion about transport policy to everyone, beyond the current narrow terms of debate.

We wanted to draw the Transport Committee’s attention to evidence from our reports which are directly relevant to the Inquiry on Zero emission vehicles and road pricing.

2. Accelerating the shift to zero emission vehicles

The feasibility, opportunities, and challenges presented by the acceleration of the ban of the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles to 2030;

The actions required by Government and private operators to encourage greater uptake of electric vehicles and the infrastructure required to support them.

Our briefing paper for Friends of the Earth [More than Electric Cars](#) addresses some of the risks associated with the use of incentives to encourage a faster uptake of electric cars, which should be designed to avoid unnecessary increase in car ownership, eg trade-in rebates for existing petrol/diesel cars/vans, matched by similar or higher levels of financial support for public transport or e-bikes in exchange for old vehicles. It also suggests regulatory measures in the form of a binding mandate are needed to progressively reduce the number of petrol and diesel vehicles sold between now and 2030. The paper also estimates that even with a faster uptake of electric vehicles we will still need to cut traffic by at least 20% between now and 2030 for a reduction pathway that aligns with a 1.5°C warming scenario.

3. Road pricing

The case for introducing some form of road pricing and the economic, fiscal, environmental and social impacts of doing so;

Which particular road pricing or pay-as-you-drive schemes would be most appropriate for the UK context and the practicalities of implementing such schemes;

The level of public support for road pricing and how the views of the public need to be considered in the development of any road pricing scheme;

The lessons to be learned from other countries who are seeking to decarbonise road transport and/or utilise forms of road pricing.

Our briefing paper for Friends of the Earth [An Eco Levy for driving: cut carbon, clean up toxic air and make our towns and cities liveable](#) explains why road pricing is necessary to reduce traffic levels and how using the funds raised to support public transport is critical to its success. The paper suggests that while it is necessary to make walking, bike and public transport attractive and viable options, they are not on their own sufficient to stimulate a society-wide change in how people travel. We cite evidence from schemes in central London,

Stockholm, Gothenburg, Milan and Singapore, that show that road pricing can be a highly effective way of reducing the negative impacts of traffic and cutting carbon. We also cite evidence to suggest that once people have experienced a road pricing scheme, their support for it increases. Generally there are more ‘winners’ than ‘losers’, which is reinforced if the revenues are used to improve public transport, reduce fares, and improve the city environment, which tends to benefit people on lower incomes, young people, single people and women. We propose that if road pricing is framed as an Eco Levy, which tackles climate change, toxic air, and makes towns and cities healthier and more liveable, it is likely to result in more support (and therefore a greater chance of implementation) than framing it as a congestion charge or a way of raising money for big infrastructure schemes. Our paper [A Radical Transport Response to the Climate Emergency](#) suggests combining it with free local public transport could make it a politically sellable policy, so that it becomes the norm wherever a good non-car option exists.

We recently also drew attention to the importance of introducing per-journey road pricing in this report on [School Streets](#) for climate charity Possible and Mums for Lung. A pay-per-mile Eco Levy would have the price linked to distance driven as well as vehicle size and emissions. The charge could also be varied by time of day and area (e.g. higher charges at peak hours and lower charges in areas with less well-developed public transport). This would mean that people making short journeys in small low-emission cars in places without good public transport would not pay very much, but people driving a lot in large, polluting cars in places with good public transport would pay more.

We found in our report that, even if rolled out comprehensively, School Streets would achieve only very modest reductions in total transport carbon emissions. This highlights the need for complementary measures that more directly constrain car use, including pay per mile road pricing.

The table below shows the benefits of the various road and vehicle charging schemes in terms of air quality, congestion and carbon emissions. It shows that a pay-per-mile Eco Levy provides the maximum benefits across all of the criteria shown.

Table 1: Road and vehicle charges and their benefits for local authorities

Road/vehicle charges	Improve air quality	Reduce congestion	Reduce carbon	Within LA powers	Revenue goes to LA
Road charges					
Pay-per-mile Eco Levy	+	+	+	+	+
Pay-per-mile national road pricing	+	+	+	x	x
Congestion charge eg London Congestion Charge	+	+	+	+	+
Clean Air Zone (charging) eg London ULEZ	+	+	+	+	+
Workplace Parking Levy eg Nottingham’s WPL	+	+	+	+	+
Vehicle charges					
Fuel duty	+	+	+	x	x

Vehicle Excise Duty	+	x	+	x	x
Key:	+ Large benefit	+ Intermediate benefit	x No benefit		

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