

95/23/24 TO CONSIDER URGENT NON-FINANCIAL ITEMS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN.

Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Key Stakeholder Consultation.

Due to the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry public consultation closing on 29th October 2023 and the next Full Council meeting being 2nd November 2023, Members were asked to consider providing permission for Councillor Bickford to work up a letter of response on behalf of the Town Council to the Joint Tamar Bridge and Ferry Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Dent, seconded by Councillor Lennox-Boyd and **RESOLVED** to approve Councillor Bickford to work up a response on behalf of Saltash Town Council to be shared with Members for their input, submitting to the Joint Tamar Bridge and Ferry Committee.

The above resolution is to be ratified at Thursday 14th December 2023 Services Committee meeting.



Konsel An Dre Essa

28 October 2023

To whom it may concern

Saltash Town council are pleased to be asked to give their views on the Tamar Crossing consultation.

Saltash Town Council considers that the Tamar Crossings and in particular the Tamar Road Bridge are key parts of our towns infrastructure, and play a large part in our towns life. Many residents use the bridge on a daily basis to access employment and education, many others use it to access healthcare, leisure and for shopping trips.

At recent Town Council meetings there has been a focus on congestion in and around Saltash caused by delays on the bridge and the knock-on impact of this congestion to the public and businesses just trying to get around our town. Anecdotally, residents have informed us that journey times across the bridge have increased, thus traffic ends up being queued through Saltash, primarily impacting North Road/New Road and Fore Street through the Town Centre. This has significant negative impact on local residents who sometimes feel trapped in their own homes, or have to put up with queues of traffic right outside their door. This is inevitably leading to increased pollution which has well documented impacts on peoples health and wellbeing. Further, this is having a negative impact on businesses trying to take or make deliveries within the town and further afield. At a recent meeting of the Town Council, it was deemed a priority to resolve the congestion by the Saltash Chamber of Commerce.

We ask you to urgently look to resolve whatever is behind the additional delays that appear to be the cause of serious traffic congestion in and around Saltash, and implement mitigation to relieve this congestion which is having financial and health impacts on people's lives.

One suggestion is to automatically open the toll plaza barriers when congestion rises above a certain threshold, thus removing any toll payment time that is contributing to the delays. We suggest you consider this and possibly run a trial to see if it helps to reduce congestion and its impact.

A longer term suggestion is to find a way to remove those tolling related delays, and that could primarily be through utilising Automatic Number Plate Recognition, thus allowing near 'free flow' of traffic, which should reduce delays and therefore congestion.



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In terms of tolling levels, Saltash Town Council would like you to carefully consider the impact of increasing tolls, and keep any increase to an absolute minimum, if at all. We would encourage better management of the organisation and assets through external review of your operating methods, that includes looking at alternative income generation methods to reduce any toll increases.

Saltash Town Council would support an increased differential between those with and without Tamar Tag accounts, and whilst it would mean that visitors to Cornwall or less frequent bridge and ferry users would pay proportionally more, it is felt that this would be more easily absorbed by these infrequent users.

Ultimately you must maintain a safe and efficient pair of crossings, we would support strong negotiations with National Highways in terms of them paying a substantive contribution for operation of the A38 across the bridge and A374 across the ferry, and other efforts to provide a better funding solution for the crossings going forward.

There have been some criticism of your survey, and we are unsure why you haven't informed all account holders in regard to the consultation, as you hold those details. The range of questions and possible options in our opinion is not well designed, which may make some people feel unable to, or are minded not to complete what they consider to be a poor survey.

So, to reiterate, please keep the tolls as low as possible, look seriously at an increased differential, or increased discount level for account holders. Please also keep at the top of your 'to do' list mitigation measures to reduce and eventually eliminate traffic congestion caused by bridge delays, and look at the suggestion to allow 'free flow' when congestion impacts traffic flows through Saltash.

We would welcome further engagement and are always pleased to welcome representatives at our meetings.

Submitted by Councillor Richard Bickford
Mayor of Saltash 2023 - 2024
On behalf of Saltash Town Council



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