

What the Council bosses say is in black
Manchester Against Road Tolls view is in red

Our Future Transport

A great move for Greater Manchester

Information about Greater Manchester's plans for a **£3 billion investment programme** for public transport and proposed congestion charge

What do you think?

We can bid to Government for a £3 billion package of local transport investment and congestion charging. We want to hear your views on whether we should do so.

For more information and to give your point of view visit the website at:

www.gmfuturetransport.co.uk

or write to us at:

GM Future Transport
GMPTE
2 Piccadilly Place
Manchester
M1 3BG

If you disagree with the congestion charge, then contact the people who can really stop this disaster - your local councillors - make sure that they know your views.
Also contact your local paper - some of them realise how bad road tolls will be for the area, but others seem to be little better than publicity handouts for GMPTE - let them know what you think.

A transport revolution

The £3 billion investment would include:

a) 30km of new Metrolink lines including Chorlton – Airport, Chorlton – East Didsbury, Droylsden – Ashton, Oldham Town Centre, Rochdale Town Centre, Trafford Park, Stockport and a second city crossing. There will be money for new trams too.

We were promised these routes and work on them had already begun when the government decided to scrap the plans 3 years ago. Now they make it seem as if they are doing us a “favour” by introducing these “new” proposals - to be paid for by road tolls! We were originally promised £500 million for this, but due to the governments time-wasting, costs rose and the plans were scrapped:-

http://www.bbc.co.uk/manchester/have_your_say/2004/07/20/metrolink_scrapped.shtml

b) New BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) priority lanes, more buses and some high-quality express services for commuters. There will also be a new 21km dedicated busway between Leigh, Salford and Manchester.

Bus lanes reduce road capacity by 50% on a two-lane carriage way. So the amount of traffic on these roads will need to be reduced by 50% for congestion to stay the same!!! To reduce congestion then more than half of the vehicles will need to be forced off the road.

c) Longer, better and cleaner trains, as well as a range of platform and station improvements.

The public's main concerns with the railways are that trains are late, unreliable and over-priced. If more people are forced on to trains then the service will get worse, not better. Trains are owned by private companies. They get the profits and it is them who should be providing the investment.

d) New transport Interchanges for the regional centre, Altrincham, Rochdale, Stockport and Bolton, a by-pass for Ashton-under-Lyne and a new transport hub for Wigan.

Though more billions of pounds are to be taken off drivers, only one road improvement is planned - A6 by-pass in Stockport. The

plans for that have been around since the 1970s. It hasn't been built despite the billion pounds a week that drivers already pay.
<http://www.stockport.gov.uk/content/newsroom/latestnews/furyatde lay?a=5441>

e) Local and strategic Park and Ride at rail and Metrolink sites.

So if we choose not to take the train or Metrolink to the city centre, we still have to pay for parking. You will have to pay no matter what.

f) A new fares and ticketing system, real time passenger information, on-bus passenger information and better passenger security and safety.

“A new fares and ticketing system”, translated into English means “price increases”. £2 billion of the “promised” £3 billion investment package is a loan. This loan, plus interest, will need paying back. Where else will the money come from?

g) Plus hundreds of new yellow school buses to cut congestion during the school run.

h) The charging would be a simple-to-use card reader. When the vehicle crosses the charging point, the charge is deducted from the card. Infrequent users can register for a scheme enabling them to pre-pay.

So if somebody borrows or takes your car, you still have to pay.

Only pay in the peak

Greater Manchester's charging scheme would target the most congested routes at their busiest times only. There would be no charges at weekends, evenings, and between 9.30am and 4pm weekdays. Most popular leisure activities would also escape any charge – these include weekend shopping, evening and weekend football and other sport events, bar and restaurant dining at both lunchtime and evening, and entertainment such as concerts and theatre performances.

For how long? This is only "phase one". Once the system is in place it will be impossible to stop them from extending the charging times if they want to. Once a potentially profitable target is identified, it will be added to the scheme.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/manchester/6301107.stm>

Many orbital and short journeys would not pass a charging point and would therefore be exempt.

There will be cameras along the corridors to catch those who are "avoiding" the charge, so no, you won't be exempt, and yes, you will get caught by a camera, and yes, you will still have to pay.

We are developing a discount scheme for certain groups and vehicle types.

How much will the discount be? Since the plan is to charge as many people as possible to gain as much revenue as possible, there will certainly be few groups and vehicle types that will be entitled to any discount. It won't be you.

Essential vehicles and Hackney cabs would not be charged.

So if someone takes a taxi instead of a car, how will this reduce congestion?

To travel into the regional centre during the peak morning period, vehicles would be charged £2 to cross at or near the M60 Outer Ring and £1 to cross the Intermediate Ring (yet to be determined). To travel out of the regional centre during the peak evening period, vehicles would be charged £1 to cross the Intermediate Ring and £1 to cross at or near the M60 Outer Ring.

This is only phase one. And they are already talking about a third toll cordon, even before we get round to phase two.

http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/s/1010/1010358_triple_blow_for_city_drivers.html

Pricing Details – Weekdays

Morning peak inbound:

£2 to cross Outer Ring, £1 to cross Intermediate Ring

Evening peak outbound:

£1 to cross Intermediate Ring, £1 to cross Outer Ring

But for how long, the London Congestion Charge had only been in place for less than 5 years before there was a 60% price increase.

We've got to tackle congestion, together

We completely agree, but we don't see how reducing road capacity will help. In fact it will be worse than doing nothing.

In the next 15 years congestion is set to get even worse across Greater Manchester and it will cost us up to 30,000 jobs.

How many jobs will the congestion charge cost us? Williams BMW has already announced that they are leaving Manchester to escape the charge (or so they think). How many more businesses, and jobs, will we lose? How many companies will consider basing themselves in Manchester when their employees have this extra tax burden? Why choose Manchester when Leeds and Liverpool are con charge free and only ½ an hour down the M62?

It will also damage the environment, lead to more pollution and leave people like you stranded in traffic jams more often.

This is exactly what will happen if these proposals go ahead. Road capacity will be reduced so congestion will increase, resulting in more traffic jams, meaning more cars sitting in traffic jams but still burning fuel. Congestion will also increase on the routes not included in the congestion charge, as people use side-roads to avoid paying the charge. These roads are not designed to cope with the excess traffic they will be receiving and will become congested very quickly. This will result in added congestion for local drivers and this amount of traffic on side-roads will be very dangerous for children walking to and from school.

Doing nothing is not an option

The leaders of Greater Manchester's ten councils have put together a planned bid for a £3 billion package of transport funding and the introduction of a road congestion charging system across the city region.

£2 billion of this money is a loan. At an interest rate of 5%, repayments would equal £200 million a year over 30 years. Of the further £1 billion, £470 million will be used to set up the congestion charging system, leaving £600 million of new money to invest in public transport. We were already promised £500 million a few years ago, but the government withdrew its support. Are you really prepared to mortgage Manchester's future for the sake of an extra £100 million?

The extra investment would lead to a public transport revolution in Greater Manchester.

But at what cost? If you work in the City Centre you will pay on average an extra £1,200 per year to travel to work by car. Delivery trucks will also have to pay the charge, which will be passed onto customers. The massive debt incurred will cripple the opportunity for further investment in future years. The debt must be paid back at a cost of £200 million per year over 30 years meaning that we pay back a total of £5 billion. Ultimately this will come from higher travel costs, higher prices of goods in shops and possibly even a council tax rise.

Proposals include Metrolink expansions, improved trains and more frequent and better quality bus services, not to mention Park and Ride and yellow school bus schemes.

We were promised all this in the past, now they want to make drivers and businesses pay for them.

The changes would also cut our carbon emission and help us tackle climate change.

If they really believed any of this, they would want to encourage more fuel efficient vehicles. Instead all they will do is to encourage vehicles to drive more to try and avoid the toll cordons.

If we're successful, this would be the biggest and most far-reaching transport investment programme ever launched outside London

A limited congestion charge would be introduced, which would reduce congestion and help pay for local transport improvements.

If, like London, it costs £4 per vehicle per day to collect the charge, then to meet loan repayments of £200 million per year, nearly 800,000 cars per day would have to travel into and out of Manchester. If the scheme does encourage people not to drive, then where will all this money come from?

The charges would be limited to peak hours, only during weekends and at today's prices would come to a maximum of £5 a car.

How long will "today's prices" be applicable? In London the charge increased by 60% in less than 5 years.

Many journeys will continue to cost less than this and most journeys will continue to cost nothing.

Until they decide to extend the zones, just like they did in London.

For those who choose to drive there will be less congestion, easy to access Park and Ride schemes and a simple card-reader to help you pay your way.

Many people are forced to drive as their car is a necessity for work. Congestion will increase, because as part of the proposals, the available road space will be reduced by up to 50% for bus lanes.

We can bid for the £3 billion investment programme to go to the Government in July, if the people and businesses of Greater Manchester – people like you – think we should do so.

Translated – "We can mortgage the future of Greater Manchester and cripple further public transport investment opportunities for generations to come, for what will essentially be an investment of £600 million (£500 million of which we were previously promised anyway). For the privilege we will also have to pay to drive into Manchester, pay higher prices for goods and services and increase congestion.

Who pays what for driving where?

(Bear in mind that all of these case studies are fiction)

Ann from Ashton-under-Lyne

Ann is a solicitor who lives in Ashton and drives to work in central Manchester to start work at 9am every day. She will have to pay £2 at the outer charge point and £1 at the inner charge point. She finishes work at 5pm and again, because she is driving at peak times, she'll have to pay on the way home - £1 at the inner charge point and £1 at the outer charge point. If she wants to avoid charges she could consider altering her working hours or switch to improved public transport such as the new Metrolink extension to Ashton and leave her car at home.

Most people's bosses choose the hours they work so if your boss wants you in at 9 you will not be able to avoid the charge.

Why could we not have the Metrolink extension that we had already been promised with no mention of the congestion charge?

Terry from Rochdale

Terry is a self-employed van driver who makes several deliveries across Greater Manchester from 7am. When he is travelling into central Manchester between 7am and 9.30am, he has to pay £2 when he drives past the outer charge points and £1 on the inner charge points.

The peak delivery time for couriers is from 7am to 9.30 pm. How will Terry cope with losing up to 50% of available road capacity (due to more bus lanes) during this time? We will need more couriers on the road at this time to cope with demand, further adding to peak period congestion.

Then in the afternoon between 4pm and 6.30pm when he is travelling away from the centre, he pays £1 at the inner and £1 at the outer. Terry may have to pay the charge more than once but there will be a cap on the total charge that he and other delivery drivers would have to pay.

There is no mention on what this cap would be.

Terry likes to go to football matches and because they are out of peak times, he doesn't have to pay.

For a normal weekday 7.30pm kick-off, people have to travel in earlier to get to find a parking space and get to the match on time. As the major routes to both Old Trafford (A56) and the City of Manchester Stadium (A6 & A57) are all included in the toll proposals then he will have to pay.

Neil from Beswick

Neil is out of work and only just manages to afford to keep his car on the road. It's essential for him to drive to see his elderly mum and his auntie on Sunday afternoons. He lives in Beswick and needs to drive to their house in Harpurhey, and to shop for them in a local supermarket. Because none of his driving is in peak hours, and there is no charge at weekends (yet), Neil doesn't have to pay. Neil also has to visit hospital regularly for check-ups so, where possible, he makes arrangements for his appointments to be out of peak hours, so he doesn't have to pay a congestion charge.

Neil's mum and auntie are elderly, so the chances of a medical emergency are relatively high, who knows whether this would happen in peak time or not?

Neil will make his own hospital appointments when the NHS can fit him in, this may mean that his journey there or back may unavoidably be in a "peak" period.

Rachel from Trafford

Rachel is a mum from Trafford who drives her daughters aged eight and six to school on the way to her part-time job. She goes shopping at weekends in Manchester city centre and at the Trafford Centre. The school is only 1.5 miles from her house and although she's travelling at peak times in the morning, she doesn't cross a charge point. Therefore she doesn't have to pay.

Err, yes she will, she will get caught by one of the many cameras that are being put up along the corridors to catch those who try to "avoid" the charge.

And at weekends, when she is shopping at the Trafford Centre, there is no congestion charge so again she doesn't have to pay. If she ever needs to drive to her low-paid job in peak hours, she will benefit from the discount scheme being set up with businesses who establish travel plans.

Unfortunately nobody yet knows who will be entitled to the discount because the scheme is still being set up. Given that loan repayments of £200 million per year will need to be met very few people will be given a discount. How much will the discount even be. As Rachel has a low paid job then she will have to consider whether or not it is even worthwhile working when she has this extra toll tax burden to pay.

Rachel will be able to consider walking her children to school (Can't this be done without toll threats?) or using the yellow bus scheme, in the interest of the environment and public health