

**Central London Congestion Charging Scheme
Consultation with the public and stakeholders**

**TfL's Report to the Mayor on the
Congestion Charging Scheme Variation
Order Consultation**

April 2014



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
1 Introduction	13
1.1. Overview and purpose of report	13
1.2. The legislative process	15
1.3. The Variation Order	16
1.4. Summary of the proposed changes.....	17
2 The consultation process	22
2.1. Introduction.....	22
2.2. Consultation dates.....	22
2.3. Publicising the consultation	22
2.4. Stakeholder communications and meetings	23
2.5. Targeted communications to Congestion Charging customers	24
2.6. TfL website	24
2.7. The consultation portal	24
2.8. Consultation leaflet.....	25
2.9. Telephone information service.....	25
2.10. Late consultation responses.....	25
3 Summary of respondent information	26
3.1. Introduction.....	26
3.2. Number of responses received.....	26
3.3. Channels used to respond to the consultation.....	26
3.4. Respondent types.....	26
3.5. Information channels	27
3.6. Driving behaviour.....	28
3.7. CC Auto Pay.....	29
3.8. Registered discounts	29
4 Analysis of public, community and business responses.....	31
4.1. Introduction.....	31
4.2. Allowing CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit	32
4.3. Enabling applications for discounts and renewals to be made online.....	35
4.4. Increasing the Congestion Charge	39
4.5. Enabling reimbursement of eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay	45
4.6. Enabling the date of a pre-paid charge to be amended on the day of travel	48
4.7. Minor administrative changes to the Scheme Order.....	52
4.8. Other comments about the Congestion Charge	53
5 Analysis of stakeholder responses.....	56
5.1. Introduction and responses received.....	56

5.2. Quantitative analysis	56
5.3. Qualitative analysis.....	58
6 TfL's response to the issues raised.....	62
6.1. Introduction.....	62
6.2. Theme A: Providing the option to pay CC Auto Pay Accounts by Direct Debit.....	62
6.3. Theme B: Introduction of an online facility for discount applications and renewals	65
6.4. Theme C: Increase to Congestion Charge	68
6.5. Theme D: NHS Reimbursement for CC Auto Pay	79
6.6. Theme E: Amendment of the date of a pre-paid charge.....	82
6.7. Theme F: Minor changes to the Congestion Charging Scheme	84
6.8. Theme G: Other comments on the Congestion Charge	88
7 Conclusions and recommendations	100
7.1. TfL's conclusions	100
7.2. Recommendations.....	106
7.3. Public inquiry	106
Annex A: Greater London (Central Zone) Congestion Charging (Variation and Transitional Provisions) Order 2012.....	108
Annex B: Full list of stakeholder organisations who responded to the consultation.....	109
Annex C: Summary of stakeholder responses.....	110

Executive Summary

- i. The Mayor's Transport Strategy contains a proposal to keep the Congestion Charging scheme under review and make variations to the scheme to ensure it remains effective in reducing traffic and congestion in central London and to improve the operation of the scheme. The Greater London (Central Zone) Congestion Charging Order 2004 ("the Congestion Charging Scheme Order") effectively sets out the rules which apply to the central London Congestion Charging scheme.
- ii. The Mayor of London asked Transport for London (TfL) to consult on the following proposed changes to the scheme to:
 - Allow Direct Debit payments for CC Auto Pay
 - Enable discount applications and renewals to be made online
 - Increase the daily charge to reflect inflation
 - Enable changes to the NHS Reimbursement Scheme to allow reimbursements to CC Auto Pay customers
 - Allow customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel (rather than in advance)
 - Make a number of minor administrative amendments to:
 - Remove the Residents' Discount vehicle seat capacity requirement
 - Include reference to card payment failures in the Scheme Order
 - Update the definition for recovery vehicles in order to reflect current standards
 - Amend references in the NHS Reimbursement Scheme in response to recent changes in the NHS
- iii. *The Greater London (Central Zone) Congestion Charging (Variation) Order 2013* (the Variation Order), made by TfL, makes the changes to the Congestion Charging scheme. TfL consulted with the public and stakeholders on the Variation Order from 6 January 2014 until 14 March 2014.
- iv. Members of the public and businesses were invited to respond to the consultation using the questionnaire on the consultation portal, and a telephone information service was also available during the consultation to answer queries and send out the consultation information leaflet and questionnaire.
- v. TfL also invited a range of stakeholder organisations to respond to the consultation including the London boroughs, transport and environment representative groups, motoring organisations and organisations representing the voluntary and community

sectors, among others. An information leaflet, the Scheme Description and Supplementary Information document and the Impact Assessment were also publicly available online.

- vi. This Report to the Mayor sets out TfL's analysis of the public, business and stakeholder views received to the consultation and includes TfL's comments and recommendations.

Consultation responses

- vii. Consultation responses were received from 11,036 members of the public and businesses and from 29 stakeholder organisations. The majority of respondents (85 per cent) drove within the Congestion Charging zone, with more than half (59 per cent) driving infrequently (between less than once a month and one to two times a month).

Response to proposal to allow CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit

- viii. Of public and business responses received to the proposal to allow CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit, 67 per cent supported the proposal and 6 per cent opposed it.
- ix. Of the 29 stakeholders who responded to the consultation, 13 supported the proposal and the remaining 16 neither supported nor opposed it.
- x. The most frequent comments/issues raised by stakeholders and the public and business respondents were:
- Support for the Direct Debit option
 - Clarifications regarding how the proposal differs from the existing situation
 - Suggestions regarding further incentivising the Direct Debit option

TfL response to issues raised

- xi. TfL welcomes the support for the introduction of the Direct Debit Option, noting that it has been introduced in response to customer feedback and will reduce administration for customers and TfL. However, it is not considered appropriate to incentivise Direct Debit payments as CC Auto Pay customers already pay a reduced charge and to incentivise this further could reduce the deterrent effect of the charge.

Response to proposal to enable discount applications to be made online

- xii. Of public and business responses received to the proposal to allow applications for discounts and renewals to be made online, 82 per cent supported the proposal and 2 per cent opposed it. The remainder either did not answer the question, or stated that they neither supported nor opposed.

- xiii. Of the 29 stakeholders who responded to the consultation, 15 supported the proposal and 14 neither supported nor opposed it.
- xiv. The most frequent comments/issues raised by stakeholders and the public and business respondents were:
 - Improving the application system and support for proposals which make it easier to administer the scheme, including requests that certain vehicles be automatically exempt or no fee be charged for registration/renewal
 - Queries regarding the Blue Badge application process

TfL response to issues raised

- xv. TfL welcomes the support for proposals which make the scheme easier to administer for customers and TfL. Registration and supporting documentation is required for all discounts, and a fee of £10 is charged to cover the administrative costs. The online application option will be available for all discount applications, including Blue Badge discounts and the postal application service will remain open to those who are not able to apply online.

Response to proposal to increase the Congestion Charge

- xvi. Of public and business responses received to the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge to £11.50, 11 per cent supported the proposal and 77 per cent opposed it. The remainder either did not answer the question, or stated that they neither supported nor opposed.
- xvii. Of the 29 stakeholders who responded to the consultation, 12 supported the proposal, 14 opposed the proposal and three stakeholders had a neutral view or did not state a view. There were a large number of comments made and issues raised in response to this proposal and these have been coded according to themes and analysed.
- xviii. Stakeholders who opposed the price increase were the following: Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) , Association of International Courier and Express Services (AICES), Automobile Association (AA), British Red Cross, British Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association (BVRLA), Carplus Trust, East London Business Alliance, Embassy of Lebanon, Federation of Small Business (FSB), Freight Transport Association (FTA), Road Haulage Association (RHA), Salvation Army, Sue Ryder Foundation and UKIP London Region.
- xix. Stakeholders who supported the price increase were: Camden Cycling Campaign, Darren Johnson AM, Ealing Passenger Transport Users Group, Friends of the Earth, London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA),

London Borough of Lewisham, London TravelWatch, Southwark Living Streets, Stop Killing Cyclists, Sustrans and Westminster Cycling Campaign.

- xx. Westminster City Council stated that it '*... recognises the need for the charge to reflect changes in inflation, however would sound a note of caution about the size of the increase and its particular effect on hard pressed families and motorists.*' This has been considered as a neutral response. The Whittington Health NHS Trust said that it neither supported nor opposed and NHS England did not state a view.
- xi. Five thousand, six hundred and ninety-eight comments were made by public and business respondents regarding the proposal. These were broadly similar to the comments made and issues raised by stakeholders. However, as stated above, the response from stakeholders with regard to support or opposition for the price increase was fairly evenly split, whereas public and business respondents were much more likely to oppose it. Westminster City Council, which is one of the eight boroughs for which all or part of the borough is in the Congestion Charging zone, and the only one of them to respond to the consultation, did not state either support or opposition.
- xii. The following is a list of the comments/issues raised:
- The current charge is adequate and does not need to be increased
 - The Congestion Charge is adequate at current level given other costs to motorists
 - The Congestion Charge is a burden on businesses, including those that make deliveries
 - The Congestion Charge is intended only to raise revenue
 - The proposed charge increase is not enough to deter trips but is an additional burden
 - The charge increase will be passed to London residents and visitors
 - The charge increase should be lower as it does not reflect inflation
 - The charge increase should be same across payment channels
 - Price increase should be higher to further reduce congestion
 - Public transport is not always a feasible alternative
 - Support for the increase as a way to encourage sustainable travel, reduce pollution and congestion

TfL response to issues raised

- xiii. The Mayor is required to keep the Congestion Charge under review and ensure that it remains effective. In order to do this it is necessary from time to time to review the level

of the charge. TfL has considered carefully the right level of charge increase and the potential impacts of the increase if it is implemented, as set out in the Impact Assessment published for the consultation. The proposed increase has been calculated to reflect the 13 per cent increase in inflation since the last charge increase in 2011 and an additional three per cent increase to ensure it remains effective in the future. This means that the proposal currently represents a real-terms increase of three per cent. By increasing the price slightly above inflation, TfL is able to ensure that the charge retains its deterrent effect for a few years beyond the price increase in 2014 (the exact number of years is dependent upon future inflation rates). The proposed increase varies slightly across payment channels (15-17 per cent) in order to round the charge up to the nearest 50 pence, ensuring that it is clear and memorable.

- xxiv. TfL recognises that these are difficult economic times and that certain costs related to motoring have risen. However the cost of motoring relative to the cost of public transport has continued to fall and so it is necessary to increase the Congestion Charge in order to maintain its deterrent effect.
- xxv. While TfL recognises that private motorists may have more flexibility than commercial vehicles in choosing the time, destination or route of their journeys, commercial vehicles nonetheless contribute to congestion and benefit from the effects of the Congestion Charge in mitigating congestion. The main aim of the Congestion Charge is to reduce traffic volumes and congestion in central London, which negatively impact upon traffic speeds and levels of congestion which in terms impact on London's productivity. The Impact Assessment of the proposed charge increase concluded that it would have a small positive economic effect compared to taking no action. One reason for this is that it would maintain the deterrent effect of the charge in order to prevent an increase in traffic volumes and congestion, which could negatively affect London's economic productivity. Congestion costs the London economy £4 billion annually¹.
- xxvi. Commercial and other operators (with six or more vehicles) who register for Fleet Auto Pay will continue to benefit from a £1 discount on the headline daily charge regardless of whether the charge increase is implemented, as will individual customers who register for CC Auto Pay, and TfL would continue to promote this as the cheapest way to pay the charge.
- xxvii. Almost half of stakeholders were supportive of the charge increase and many noted its value in promoting sustainable travel and reducing congestion and pollution. By law, all net revenue from the Congestion Charge must be reinvested in transport improvements in London. Over £1.2billion has been raised and invested in this way since the start of the scheme. If the charge increase is approved by the Mayor, TfL will continue to promote CC Auto Pay and Fleet Autopay as the cheapest ways to pay the charge, with

¹ TfL Traffic Note 4, 2010

additional benefits such as not needing to remember to pay the charge, thus removing the risk of receiving a Penalty Charge Notice.

Response to proposal to allow NHS reimbursements to be made to CC Auto Pay customers

- xxviii. Of public and business responses received to the proposal to allow reimbursement for eligible NHS journeys paid by CC Auto Pay, 70 per cent supported the proposal and six per cent opposed it. The remainder either did not answer the question, or stated that they neither supported nor opposed.
- xxix. Of the 29 stakeholders who responded to the consultation, 12 supported the proposal and 17 neither supported nor opposed it.
- xxx. The most frequent comments/issues raised by stakeholders and public and business respondents were:
- Support for NHS-related travel reimbursement and requests that it is publicised
 - Offering discounts to people working in certain industries is not fair
 - Concern about costs and potential abuse of the scheme
 - TfL should introduce discounts for people working for organisations that support the NHS and/or people receiving private medical treatment

TfL response to issues

- xxxi. TfL welcomes the support for the proposal. The NHS Reimbursement is administered by NHS organisations in London and they have been sent information on the proposed changes. The NHS reimbursement scheme is in recognition of the NHS' duty to provide universal health care which is free at the point of use. No such obligation applies to private medical providers and patients who choose to use these services are aware of the costs involved. Therefore it is not considered appropriate to offer a similar discount to other medical providers. In addition, given the diversity of private medical services available, such a discount would be very difficult to define and lead to requests for discounts for people using other services in the zone.

Response to proposal to allow the date of travel on a pre-paid charge to be amended on the day of travel

- xxxii. Of public and business responses received to the proposal to allow those who have pre-paid the Congestion Charge to change the date of travel on the day of travel, 77 per cent supported the proposal and one per cent opposed it. The remainder either did not answer the question, or stated that they neither supported nor opposed.
- xxxiii. Of the 29 stakeholders who responded to the consultation, 16 supported the proposal and 13 neither supported nor opposed it.

xxxiv. The most frequent comments/issues raised by stakeholders and the public and business respondents were:

- Support for the proposal
- Customers should not have to pay to amend the date of travel

TfL response to issues raised

xxxv. TfL welcomes the support for the proposal and notes that it increases flexibility in how the customer can pay for the Congestion Charge. However, this flexibility incurs an operational cost to TfL which is reflected in the £2.50 administration fee. The small fee will also deter customers from using this facility regularly. Currently, customers who find they can no longer travel on the date of a pre-paid charge cannot recover this cost by amending the date and using the charge at a later date. Even with the administration fee, the introduction of this option is a significant improvement on the current situation whereby a customer who finds that they can no longer travel on the date of a pre-paid charge cannot recover any part of the charge paid. With this option, the same charge payment can be re-applied to a later date.

Response to the proposed minor administrative amendments

xxxvi. The responses to the proposals to make minor administrative changes to the Scheme Order are shown in Tables 1 and 2 below:

Table 1: Public and business support and opposition for proposals to make minor administrative changes

Proposal (minor administrative change)	Support	Oppose	Neither support nor oppose	Did not answer
Amending vehicle capacity requirement on Residents' Discount	22%	12%	62%	4%
Including a reference to card payment failures	48%	5%	42%	5%
Updating definition for recover vehicles	36%	3%	55%	5%
Updating references in NHS reimbursement scheme	48%	5%	42%	5%

Table 2: Stakeholder support and opposition for proposals to make minor administrative changes

Proposal (minor administrative change)	Support	Oppose	Neither support nor oppose / No response
Amending vehicle capacity requirement on Residents' Discount	8	0	21
Including a reference to card payment failures	11	0	18
Updating definition for recover vehicles	10	0	19
Updating references in NHS reimbursement scheme	9	0	20

- xxxvii. The most frequent comments/issues raised by stakeholders and the public and business respondents were:
- General support or little opposition/comment
 - Notifications should be sent to customers when card payments fail
 - There should be an online facility to check if drivers have been in the zone
 - Queries on updating the definition for recovery vehicles
 - Clarification on current NHS governing bodies
- TfL response to issues raised*
- xxxviii. TfL notes the general support for these changes which are intended to keep the Scheme Order up to date and will achieve minor cost savings through a reduction in administration. Given that the changes have negligible impact on customers, it is not unexpected that there is so little opposition or comment.
- xxxix. There are no plans for an online tool which would be very complex and costly to develop, and there is already a map and an address checker on TfL's website. Currently, if a card payment fails notifications are sent to the customer via their preferred method of contact (email or post) and they are given five days to pay the charge.
- xl. The proposed change to the reference to accredited recovery organisations used in the definition of breakdown vehicles will not affect the vehicles but updates the reference so that it reflects the current standard.

- xli. TfL is pleased to have clarification from NHS England on the body responsible for the administration of the NHS Reimbursement Scheme. TfL recommends that a modification is made to the VO, as advised by NHS England.

General comments

- xlii. General comments on the Congestion Charge scheme (unrelated to the proposals under consultation) were made by 4,252 public and business respondents and 17 stakeholders and are described in the report. TfL is not recommending any changes to the Congestion Charging scheme arising from the issues raised under this theme.

TfL's conclusions and recommendations

- xlii. Having considered the responses to the consultation from the public, businesses and stakeholders and further operational considerations, TfL recommends that the Variation Order is made as consulted on, with the following amendments:
- The implementation date for providing an option to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel should be amended to 1 November 2015, in order to align with the other administrative changes proposed to take effect from this date.
 - A further change to the proposed change to the wording of the Scheme Order with regard to the NHS Reimbursement. It had been proposed to replace to replace Primary Care Trusts with Clinical Commissioning Groups as the body responsible for this reimbursement. Following further discussions with NHS lawyers it has now been clarified that the replacement body should be the National Commissioning Board and it is proposed that this modification is made.
- xliv. Should the Mayor decide to confirm the Variation Order, with the modifications proposed by TfL, the changes would be introduced as follows:
- 16 June 2014: Congestion Charge increase
 - From June 2014: updates and administrative changes (removing vehicle seat capacity for the Residents' Discount; including a reference to card payment failures; updating the definition for recovery vehicles; updating references to the NHS Reimbursement scheme)
 - 1 November 2015: Auto Pay by Direct Debit; online applications and renewals; NHS Reimbursement available for CC Auto Pay; amendment of the date of pre-paid charge on day of travel

1 Introduction

1.1. Overview and purpose of report

1.1.1. Proposal 129 of the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS, 2010) states that:

"The Mayor, through TfL, will operate and monitor Congestion Charging in the original central London Congestion Charging zone. The Mayor will keep the scheme under review, making variations to ensure the continued effectiveness of the policy reflects best practice, improves the operation of the scheme, or helps it to deliver the desired outcomes of the MTS."

- 1.1.2. The Transport for London (TfL) Business Plan includes a proposed increase in the Congestion Charge in line with inflation to help maintain the deterrent effect of the charge in reducing traffic volumes and congestion in central London.
- 1.1.3. In addition, in October 2015 the Congestion Charging scheme service provision contract will expire. The re-let of the service provision contract provides TfL with an opportunity to review the operation of the scheme in order to reduce the costs of operating the scheme and enhance customer satisfaction.
- 1.1.4. As a result, TfL made a Variation Order to modify the Congestion Charging Scheme and consulted on it with the public and stakeholders.
- 1.1.5. The proposed changes consulted on are to:
- Allow Direct Debit payments for CC Auto Pay
 - Enable discount applications and renewals to be made online
 - Increase the daily charge to reflect inflation
 - Enable changes to the NHS Reimbursement Scheme to allow reimbursements to CC Auto Pay customers
 - Allow customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel (rather than only in advance)
 - Make a number of minor administrative amendments to the Scheme Order as follows:
 - Removing the Residents' Discount vehicle seat capacity requirement
 - Include a reference to card payment failures
 - Update the definition for recovery vehicles
 - Amend references in the NHS Reimbursement Scheme in response to recent changes in the NHS

- 1.1.6. The consultation ran from 6 January 2014 to 14 March 2014. This report presents TfL's analysis of the comments made and issues raised in the consultation.
- 1.1.7. The remainder of this chapter provides the background to the consultation, including the legislative process and a summary of the proposals. Chapter 2 describes the consultation process. Chapter 3 provides an analysis of consultation respondents and the channels used to respond to the consultation. Chapters 4 and 5 provide an analysis of the responses to the consultation from the public and businesses and then stakeholders, respectively, including the number responding to the consultation, support and opposition to the proposals and the key issues raised in consultation responses. Chapter 6 provides TfL's response to the key issues raised by theme and recommendations for minor changes to the Variation Order. Finally, Chapter 7 sets out TfL's conclusions and recommendations to the Mayor.
- 1.1.8. The Mayor is advised, when considering TfL's summaries, responses and recommendations, to have regard to the consultation responses themselves, all of which have been copied to him.
- 1.1.9. If the Mayor confirms the Variation Order, with TfL's recommended modifications, the changes to the Scheme Order would commence according to the following timetable:

Table 3: Timetable for introduction of proposed changes

From June 2014	Minor administrative charges implemented, following the signing of the Instrument of Confirmation
16 June 2014	Daily charge increased from £10 to £11.50, alongside increases in other payment channels
1 November 2015	The following changes would be implemented with the re-let of the service provision contract: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online application and renewals for discounts open • Direct Debit for CC Auto Pay enabled • NHS Reimbursements for charges paid by CC Auto Pay enabled • Option to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the date of travel enabled

- 1.1.10. Should the Mayor progress with the proposed changes, an information campaign will be launched to inform customers of the implementation of any proposed changes such as the charge increase and the other changes made. This campaign would also promote CC Auto Pay which will remain the cheapest way to pay the charge, and ensures that customers are not issued with Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) for forgetting to pay the Congestion Charge.
- 1.1.11. In the context of this consultation, and subject to the Mayor's decision, TfL has been working to the operational timetable set out above and in the consultation materials. Should the Mayor decide to make modifications to the Variation Order, this could affect the date at which changes could be implemented. Under some circumstances, the Mayor's decision may entail further public consultation on proposed modifications.

1.2. The legislative process

- 1.2.1. The general duties, policies and functions of the Greater London Authority, the Mayor and TfL are set out in the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (the GLA Act, as amended). Principal amongst these that are relevant to issues raised by the Variation Order are the requirements for the Mayor to:
- Develop and implement policies and proposals for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities and services to, from and within Greater London and to prepare and to publish a Strategy (the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS)) containing them (sections 141 and 142 of the GLA Act);
 - Have regard to the need to ensure that each statutory strategy that he prepares under section 42 of the GLA Act (which includes the MTS and other relevant strategies such as the Mayor's Air Quality Strategy (MAQS) is consistent with each of his other statutory strategies.
- 1.2.2. The GLA Act gives TfL the power to create road user charging schemes in Greater London. The GLA Act stipulates that this charging scheme must be contained in an order and the Greater London (Central Zone) Congestion Charging Order 2004 ("the Congestion Charging Scheme Order") effectively sets out the rules which apply to the central London Congestion Charging scheme. Details of the required contents of a scheme order are contained in Schedule 23 of the GLA Act which stipulates that a charging scheme must:
- Designate the area to which it applies;
 - Specify the classes of motor vehicles in respect of which a charge is imposed;
 - Designate those roads in the charging area in respect of which a charge is imposed; and
 - Specify the charges imposed.

Conformity with MTS and other strategies

- 1.2.3. A charging scheme (or a variation to a charging scheme) can only be made if it directly or indirectly facilitates policies or proposals in the MTS and is in conformity with the MTS (under paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 23).
- 1.2.4. Paragraph 38 of Schedule 23 of the Act gives TfL a power to revoke or vary a charging scheme. The power is exercisable in the same manner and subject to the same limitations and conditions as the making of a Scheme Order. Various amendments to the Scheme Order have been made since it was first confirmed by the then Mayor in February 2002 and a formal consolidation of all such amendments to date was consulted upon and confirmed in October 2004, which has been subsequently amended. Such amendments are made by way of Variation Orders. Under Schedule 23, any Variation Order must be made by TfL and may be confirmed with or without modifications by the Mayor.
- 1.2.5. The requirements of Schedule 23, paragraphs 3 and 5 do not apply to other Mayoral strategies, such as the MAQS. Therefore a charging Scheme Order, or Variation Order altering it, is not required to be in conformity with the MAQS, albeit the MAQS would be a relevant consideration to the Mayor's confirmation of such an order.

Climate change

- 1.2.6. The Mayor has a duty under section 361A of the GLA Act to address climate change, insofar as it relates to Greater London. This duty consists of each of the following:
 - To take action with a view to the mitigation of, or adaptation to, climate change;
 - In exercising any of his functions under this Act or any other Act (whenever passed), to take into account any policies announced by Her Majesty's government with respect to climate change or the consequences of climate change; and
 - To have regard to any guidance, and comply with any directions, issued to the Authority by the Secretary of State with respect to the means by which, or manner in which, the Mayor is to perform the duties imposed on him as above.

1.3. The Variation Order

- 1.3.1. TfL made the Greater London (Central Zone) Congestion Charging (Variation) Order 2013 on 19 December 2013. The Variation Order is attached to this report at Annex A. It is for the Mayor to decide whether or not to confirm the Variation Order, as made by TfL, with or without modifications.

- 1.3.2. The Variation Order proposed nine amendments to the Scheme Order, namely:
- Allowing Direct Debit payments for CC Auto Pay
 - Enabling discount applications and renewals to be made online
 - Increasing the daily charge from £10 to £11.50 and associated increases in other payment channels
 - Enabling changes to the NHS Reimbursement Scheme to allow reimbursements to CC Auto Pay customers
 - Allowing customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel (rather than in advance)
 - Removing the Residents' Discount vehicle seat capacity requirement
 - Including reference to card payment failures in the Scheme Order
 - Updating the definition for recovery vehicles in line with industry standards (ISO 9001:2008)
 - Amend reference to NHS Reimbursement scheme to reflect changes in the NHS

- 1.3.3. The Variation Order did not propose any other changes to the operation of the Congestion Charging scheme, as specified in the Scheme Order, other than minor consequential amendments required to bring the above amendments into force.

1.4. Summary of the proposed changes

- 1.4.1. This section provides a summary of the changes to the Congestion Charging scheme proposed by TfL in the Variation Order. It also includes the background to the change and a summary of the impacts of each proposal.

Allowing Direct Debit payments for CC Auto Pay

- 1.4.2. CC Auto Pay is an automated payment system which records the number of days a vehicle travels within the charging zone each month and bills the account holder's debit or credit card.
- 1.4.3. This change would allow customers registered for CC Auto Pay to pay their account via Direct Debit, which has been requested by customers. This option is already available to Fleet Auto Pay customers.
- 1.4.4. The change would take place in late 2015 with the commencement of the new service provision contract.

Enabling discount applications and renewals to be made online

- 1.4.5. Currently, discounts on the charge (for example the Ultra Low Emission Discount) are applied for by post or by phone. Customers, particularly fleet and business customers, have indicated they would prefer to submit applications for discounts online, scanning and uploading documentation rather than posting hard copies to TfL. This would reduce administration for both TfL and for customers.
- 1.4.6. TfL consulted on introducing an online system for making applications for discounts, discount renewals, daily charge refunds and charge amendments. The re-let of the service provision contract will provide the opportunity to introduce this option in late 2015.
- 1.4.7. By enabling discount and renewal applications to be made online, moderate to high savings on operational costs under the new service provision contract would be achieved. As this change is in response to customer feedback, it is also likely that it would result in higher rates of customer satisfaction with the service. The option to apply by post will remain in place for customers who are unable to use the online service.

Congestion Charge increase

- 1.4.8. Since its introduction in 2003, the Congestion Charge has delivered a significant reduction in traffic and helped to manage congestion by using the charging mechanism as a deterrent to driving into the central London area. The introduction of the scheme led to an initial fall in congestion in the Congestion Charging zone of some 30 per cent. Traffic in central London has been falling over the last decade. However while traffic volumes have been falling, traffic speeds have also been getting progressively slower, most likely due to interventions that have reduced the capacity of the road network. In recent years the trend toward slower traffic movements has ceased and although congestion in central London is close to pre-charging levels, without the Congestion Charge the situation would be worse. Traffic and congestion negatively impact on London's productivity and efficiency, costing the economy £4 billion per year.
- 1.4.9. As a result of inflation, real-term costs of driving within the Congestion Charging zone have decreased since the charge was last increased in January 2011. Inflation between the last charge increase in 2011 and 2014 (the year the proposed increase would be introduced) is estimated to be 13 per cent. The financial deterrent of the charge has therefore eroded over this time and it is necessary to increase the charge in order to maintain the effectiveness of the scheme in limiting congestion. TfL is therefore proposing to increase the daily charge to address this.
- 1.4.10. Increasing the charge also helps to maintain the relative deterrent effect of the charge in comparison to other transport costs and public transport fares. This helps to ensure the decongestion effects of the scheme are sustained. This is of benefit

to all who travel in the Congestion Charging zone, including private and commercial motor traffic and those using public transport, walking or cycling.

1.4.11. Table 4 sets out the current charges payable through the various payment channels and the changes proposed in the consultation.

Table 4: Proposed charge increases

Payment method	Current charge (since 2011)	Proposed charge (from June 2014)
Standard daily charge	£10	£11.50
CC Auto Pay / Fleet Auto Pay	£9	£10.50
Pay Next Day	£12	£14
Residents CC Auto Pay (daily)	£0.90	£1.05
Residents charge for five consecutive charging days (paid in advance)	£5	£5.75
Residents monthly charge (20 consecutive charging days paid in advance)	£20	£23
Residents yearly charge (252 consecutive charging days paid in advance)	£252	£289.80

1.4.12. The Weighted Average Increase across the various payment methods is 16 per cent (calculated using the proportion of customers using each payment method). Assuming inflation of 13 per cent, this results in a real-term price increase of just 3 per cent.

1.4.13. The proposed rise is placed slightly (three per cent) above inflation to ensure that:

1. The charge retains its deterrent effect for a few years beyond the price increase in 2014 (the exact number of years will be dependent upon future inflation rates). This means that the charge would remain effective without the charge having to be increased again in the short-term.
2. The charges are rounded to the nearest 50p to be clear and memorable to customers.

- 1.4.14. It is estimated that increasing the daily charge from £10 to £11.50 (along with the associated rises in the other payment methods) would contribute £82.7m in additional Gross Income over the course of the five years to 2017/18. To put this in context, in the financial year 2012/13, the Gross Income raised by the Congestion Charging scheme was £222m.
- 1.4.15. Any net revenue generated by the Congestion Charge must, by law, be used for funding improvements to transport in London. Over the last decade, £1.2bn net revenue has been generated and has been fed straight into ongoing investment in improving transport in London.

Allowing NHS Reimbursements for CC Auto Pay payments

- 1.4.16. A 100 per cent reimbursement of the daily charge applies for certain journeys undertaken by NHS patients and staff. The NHS Reimbursement Scheme does not currently allow the charge to be reimbursed if it was paid via CC Auto Pay and this facility has been requested by customers.
- 1.4.17. The introduction of the new service provision contract would enable a unique payment reference to be generated for each CC Auto Pay payment which could be used in reimbursement applications. TfL therefore proposes to allow NHS patients and employees who meet the eligibility criteria for the NHS Reimbursement Scheme to apply for reimbursements for charges paid by CC Auto Pay. This change would come into force in late 2015 when the new service provision contract commences.
- 1.4.18. The proposed change will ensure that the original intention of the NHS reimbursement scheme is maintained, i.e. that the charge does not act as a barrier to receiving NHS care, in recognition that NHS treatment is universal and free at the point of delivery.

Allowing customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel

- 1.4.19. This proposed change would allow a customer who has purchased a charge in advance but can no longer travel on that date to apply the charge purchased to a future date. An administration fee of £2.50 would be applicable.

Minor administrative changes

- 1.4.20. The following proposed changes are minor administrative amendments to update the Scheme Order. The primary rationale is to clarify the Scheme Order and align it to updated legislation.

- **Amend the vehicle seat capacity requirement for the Residents' Discount:** This proposed change would remove the limit on the seating capacity of vehicles that can be registered for the 90 per cent Residents' Discount. This change will have a beneficial effect on customers because vehicles with nine or more seats are already eligible for the 100 per cent 9+ Seat Discount. This prevents residents applying for a less advantageous discount.
- **Include reference to card payment failures:** This change will update the section in the Scheme Order which refers to dishonoured cheque payments to include card payment failures, Direct Debit failures and indemnity claims. It allows TfL to treat the daily charge as not being paid where any kind of payment has bounced or been returned as unpaid.
- **Update the definition for recovery vehicles:** The definition of an “accredited recovery organisation” refers to an out of date industry standard. This change updates the Scheme Order to reflect the current international standard for quality management systems in relation to a certified accreditation body².
- **Updating the references in the NHS Reimbursement Scheme:** The restructure of the NHS has meant that Primary Care Trusts have been abolished and their functions have been taken over by Clinical Commissioning Groups. The proposal is to update the Scheme Order to reflect this change.

² ISO 9001:2008, www.iso.org/iso/iso_9000

2 The consultation process

2.1. Introduction

- 2.1.1. This chapter provides an overview of the consultation, as well as a description of the actions and communication methods employed to promote the consultation itself and elicit views from the public and stakeholders about the proposals.
- 2.1.2. The primary objective of the consultation process is to understand the views of the public and stakeholders concerning proposed changes to the Consultation Charging scheme. This report sets out the feedback from the consultation process which aims to inform the Mayor's decision making process.
- 2.1.3. The previous Mayor issued statutory guidance to TfL detailing consultation practice, entitled 'Guidance from the Mayor of London on charging schemes pursuant to schedule 23 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999'. This guidance informed the consultation strategy in advance of implementation.
- 2.1.4. The consultation sought views on the nine proposed changes to the Congestion Charging scheme set out in the Variation Order (see sections 1.3 and 1.4).

2.2. Consultation dates

- 2.2.1. The consultation commenced on 6 January 2014 and closed on 14 March 2014.

2.3. Publicising the consultation

- 2.3.1. A marketing campaign was developed to raise awareness of the consultation and encourage customers to have their say. Adverts were featured in a variety of London media titles including Evening Standard, Metro and City AM.
- 2.3.2. A notice was also published in the London Gazette.
- 2.3.3. The consultation was further promoted through effective media liaison with news and trade titles.
- 2.3.4. A press release was issued on 6 January to announce the start of the consultation. The consultation received media coverage from a number of London news outlets including BBC News London, ITV, The Guardian and the Evening Standard. Advertising was used throughout the 10 week consultation to raise awareness and encourage customers to participate in the consultation. Pan London press ads appeared in 25 insertions across the Evening Standard, Metro, and City AM titles. Detailed information was available on the TfL website and this was signposted with banners throughout the TfL website. An information leaflet, with the questionnaire attached for people to provide their views, was available on demand by phoning TfL

customer service. Tweets were also sent from the @tflofficial Twitter feed on the first and last weeks of the consultation. Emails were sent to 395,100 Congestion Charge customers registered on the TfL database (Discount holders, CC Auto Pay users, fleet customers) on the first week of the consultation which included a link to the online questionnaire

2.4. Stakeholder communications and meetings

- 2.4.1. The public consultation was supplemented by engagement with stakeholder organisations, as set out in the paragraph below. This was to ensure that stakeholders were well briefed about the potential timetable for the proposed changes, to understand their issues and concerns, and to encourage participation in the consultation.
- 2.4.2. TfL identified key stakeholder organisations including the 33 London boroughs (including the City of London Corporation), London Councils, the Metropolitan Police Authority, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, business representative organisations, freight and haulage representative organisations, transport and environment representative organisations, government departments and non-departmental bodies, trade and professional associations and London TravelWatch, London Assembly members and organisations representing the local community and voluntary sectors. TfL also consulted with the Environment Agency and neighbouring local authorities.
- 2.4.3. On the consultation launch date, TfL wrote to over 600 stakeholder organisations explaining the plans in full. In order to provide further background and detailed information about the proposals copies of the following consultation materials were included:
 - Consultation public information leaflet (see section 2.8);
 - Scheme Description and Supplementary Information; and
 - Impact Assessment.
- 2.4.4. TfL also offered face-to-face meetings to 177 stakeholder organisations in order to provide a further opportunity to explain our proposals in detail. At their request, TfL met with the Association of International Courier and Express Services (AICES) to discuss the proposals.
- 2.4.5. London boroughs were reminded twice by email towards the close of the consultation of their opportunity to respond.

2.4.6. A stakeholder event was arranged specifically for NHS organisations, but had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. Instead, TfL emailed a presentation to all NHS stakeholders, with a further offer of a meeting and a headline explanation of the proposed changes to the NHS Reimbursement Scheme. In this presentation, TfL also took the opportunity to reiterate the purpose and eligibility criteria for the NHS Reimbursement, which is timely given the recent NHS reorganisation. No meetings were requested, but TfL did receive comments by email on the proposed changes with regards to minor wording changes to the NHS Reimbursement Scheme which have been incorporated into its recommendations (see Chapter 6). TfL will continue to liaise with NHS organisations, particularly in light of their recent organisational changes to ensure that the NHS Reimbursement Scheme is well-understood and implemented.

2.5. Targeted communications to Congestion Charging customers

2.5.1. On the consultation launch date, TfL sent an email to relevant registered Congestion Charging scheme customers using a customer relationship management system. 395,100 customers were emailed, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Number of consultation emails sent to each Congestion Charging scheme customer registration type

Customer registration type	Customers contacted
Congestion Charge customers	388,122
Fleet customers	6,988
Total	395,100

2.5.2. Customers were requested to complete the online questionnaire to provide their views and were directed to TfL's consultation portal (see section 2.7).

2.6. TfL website

2.6.1. TfL raised awareness of the consultation by placing banners in a number of prime areas of its website, including the TfL main home page (www.tfl.gov.uk) and the Congestion Charging scheme home page (clondon.com). The banners offered a link through to the consultation portal and an opportunity for the public to provide their views.

2.7. The consultation portal

2.7.1. The TfL online consultation portal (www.tfl.gov.uk/ccyourviews) hosted all the relevant information relating to the Congestion Charging consultation. This included an overview of the Congestion Charging scheme and map of the zone. During the consultation period, there were 65,422 unique visitors to the Congestion Charging consultation page.

2.7.2. The consultation portal provided a summary of the proposed changes and set out the proposed implementation dates. The portal also included a link to the following documents which provided more detailed information on the proposals:

- Consultation leaflet (see section 2.8);
- Scheme Description and Supplementary Information;
- Impact Assessment;
- Variation Order;
- Schedule of Variations; and
- Legal Notice.

2.7.3. Respondents were requested to complete and submit an online questionnaire to provide their feedback about the proposals. It included a number of open and closed questions providing the opportunity for respondents to indicate their views about each of the proposals as well as give additional comments and feedback.

2.8. Consultation leaflet

2.8.1. TfL produced a consultation leaflet, aimed at the public and businesses, which featured high level information about the proposals (consistent with the consultation portal) as well as a hard copy of the questionnaire. Respondents wishing to respond to the consultation using this method did so by completing and returning the questionnaire to a specified freepost address.

2.8.2. The consultation leaflet was available on request. Ten copies of the consultation leaflet were posted directly to members of the public following requests received through the telephone information service.

2.9. Telephone information service

2.9.1. A telephone information service was established over the period of the Congestion Charging consultation to answer queries relating to proposed changes. The call centre did not record or address responses to the consultation.

2.9.2. Throughout the consultation period, the centre dealt with nine calls directly relating to the consultation.

2.10. Late consultation responses

2.10.1. No representations from members of the public were received after the consultation closed. Any representations received after this report is submitted, and up to the date of the Mayor's decision, will be forwarded to the Mayor.

3 Summary of respondent information

3.1. Introduction

- 3.1.1. This section of the report provides a summary of the information collected about respondents through the consultation questionnaire. In each table, the total of the percentages is 100 per cent prior to rounding.

3.2. Number of responses received

- 3.2.1. In total, 11,065 responses were received to the consultation. Table 6 provides a breakdown of public and stakeholder responses.

Table 6: Total number of stakeholder and public responses received

Audience type	Number of responses	Percentage
Public and businesses	11,036	99.7%
Stakeholders	29	0.3%
Total	11,065	100%

3.3. Channels used to respond to the consultation

- 3.3.1. TfL offered a number of ways for respondents to provide their responses to the consultation.
- Online – through the consultation portal
 - Leaflet – through the return of a hard copy of the consultation questionnaire
 - Email – comments emailed directly to TfL

Table 7: Consultation responses by response method

Response method	Number of responses	Percentage
Online (consultation portal)	10,743	97%
Leaflet	1	<1%
Email	292	3%
Letter	0	0 %
Total	11, 036	100%

3.4. Respondent types

- 3.4.1. Public and business respondents were asked to indicate what capacity they were responding to the consultation, that is whether they were representing themselves or another business or organisation. Respondents were free to identify themselves as any of these categories and it should be noted that where ‘government organisation’, ‘community or voluntary organisation’ or ‘campaign group’ was selected, TfL undertook a check to see if any of these were stakeholders (see

paragraph 2.4.2) and these respondents were transferred to the stakeholder analysis in Chapter 5.

Table 8: Proportion of responses by respondent type

Respondent Type	Number of responses	Percentage
As an individual	8,606	78%
As a representative of a business	1,878	17%
As a representative of a community of voluntary organisation	31	0%
As a representative of a Government Organisation	11	0%
As a representative of a campaign group	5	0%
Not Answered	505	5%
Total	11,036	100%

3.5. Information channels

3.5.1. To understand how news about the consultation was received, respondents were asked how they heard about the consultation.

Table 9: Information channels through which respondents heard about the consultation

Respondent Type	Number of responses	Percentage
Received an email from TfL	9,331	85%
Read about it in the press	487	4%
Saw an advert on the TfL website	397	4%
Through social media	155	1%
Read about it on my Congestion Charge statement	32	0%
Other	189	2%
Not Answered	445	4%

Total	11,036	100%
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3.5.2. ‘Other’ information channels included from a friend/family member/colleague (39), on the radio (31) and via email (23).

3.6. Driving behaviour

Respondents were asked to provide information about their driving behaviour. The questionnaire sought information on whether respondents drove within the Congestion Charging zone, the main reason for driving in the zone and the frequency of driving in the zone. The following tables provide an analysis of the answers to these questions.

Table 10: Proportion of public and business respondents who drive in the Congestion Charging zone during charging hours

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Yes	9,421	85%
No	1,203	11%
Not answered	412	4%
Total	11,036	100%

Table 11: Main reason indicated by public and business respondents for driving in the Congestion Charging zone

Reason	Number of responses	Percentage
For business reasons	5,123	46%
For leisure	3,099	28%
For commuting	1,681	15%
On behalf of my organisation	268	2%
Not Answered	865	8%
Total	11,036	100%

Table 12: Public and business respondent frequency of driving in the Congestion Charging zone

Frequency	Number of responses	Percentage
5 days a week	1,188	11%
3-4 days a week	1,001	9%
1-2 days a week	1,840	17%

1-2 times a month	3,037	28%
Less than once a month	3,476	31%
Not Answered	494	4%
Total	11,036	100%

3.7. CC Auto Pay

3.7.1. Respondents were asked to state whether they were registered to pay the charge by CC Auto Pay.

Table 13: CC Auto Pay registration

Frequency	Number of responses	Percentage
Yes	6,807	62%
No	3,265	30%
Not sure	483	4%
Not Answered	481	4%
Total	11,036	100%

3.8. Registered discounts

3.8.1. Respondents were asked to indicate which Congestion Charging scheme discounts they were registered for (if applicable).

Table 14: Proportion of public and business respondents registered for a Congestion Charging discount

Discount type	Number of responses	Percentage
Ultra-Low Emission Discount/Greener Vehicle Discount	611	6%
Residents' Discount	680	6%
Blue Badge Discount	961	9%
Another CC Discount	154	1%
None of the above	7,610	69%
Unsure	318	3%

Not Answered	702	6%
Total	11,036	100%

4 Analysis of public, community and business responses

4.1. Introduction

- 4.1.1. This chapter provides an analysis of the feedback provided by the public and businesses about the proposals being consulted on.
- 4.1.2. A quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data received under each proposal is provided.
- 4.1.3. The response to the proposals is considered in the following order:
 - To provide the option for CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit
 - To enable applications for discounts and renewals to be made online
 - To increase the Congestion Charge
 - To enable eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed
 - To provide an option for customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel
 - Minor administrative changes

Quantitative analysis of closed questions

- 4.1.4. For each proposed change, an analysis of the closed questions contained within the questionnaire is provided. Results are provided for the number of respondents and the proportion of support and opposition and these are cross-referenced with key respondent characteristics, such as their main reason for driving in the zone.
- 4.1.5. In the explanatory text, the percentage for the proportions supporting the proposal includes those who stated that they ‘strongly support’ and ‘support’ each proposal. The percentage for those opposing the schemes likewise includes those who ‘strongly oppose’ and ‘oppose’ the proposal. A full breakdown of these categories is provided in the tables and charts.
- 4.1.6. In all cases, the totals equal 100 per cent prior to rounding.

Qualitative analysis of free text responses (open question)

- 4.1.7. The questionnaire contained a free text box to provide any comments or suggestions regarding any or all of the proposals. All of the comments and suggestions received were reviewed and coded in order to identify common themes of comments raised by respondents.

- 4.1.8. For clarity, these comments are organised in the following sections according to the closed question to which they pertain. For each proposal, the frequency that each comment or theme was raised is evaluated. The qualitative analysis of this text also identifies the percentage of overall public and business comments related to main proposals, calculated using the total number of respondents.
- 4.1.9. Comments about the Congestion Charge which are not directly related to the current proposals are analysed at the end of this chapter.
- 4.1.10. TfL's response to the main comments and suggestions raised in the open text section of the questionnaire are provided in Chapter 6 of this report.

4.2. Allowing CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit

Quantitative analysis

- 4.2.1. Table 15 sets out the proportion of support and opposition to the proposal from public and business respondents, with 67 per cent supporting the proposal and 6 per cent opposing it. 23 per cent of respondents neither supported nor opposed the proposal and three per cent did not answer this question.

Table 15: Proportion of support and opposition from public and business respondents to the proposal to allow CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit

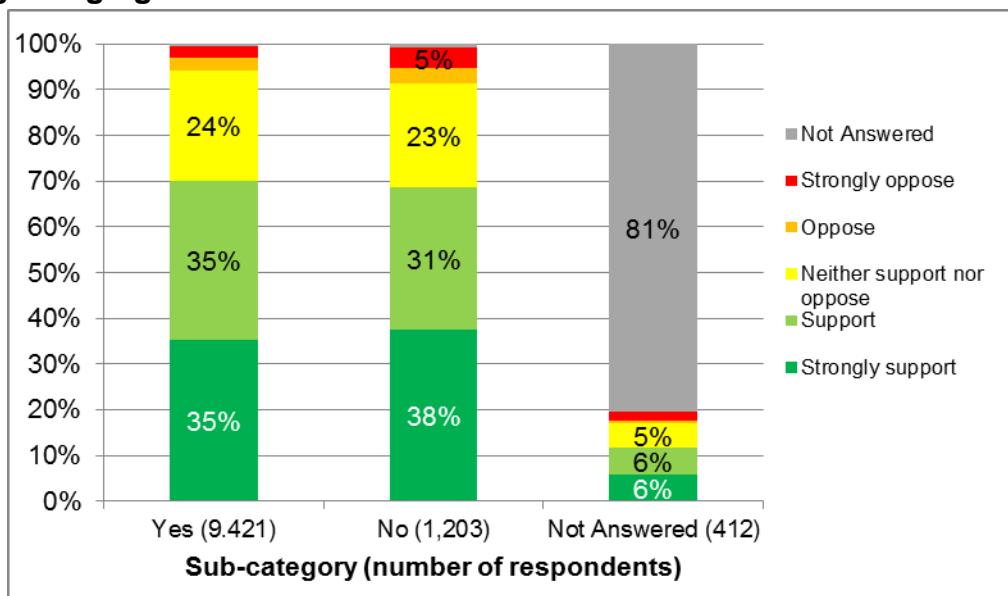
Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Strongly Support	3,790	34%
Support	3,696	33%
Neither support or oppose	2,561	23%
Oppose	312	3%
Strongly Oppose	302	3%
Not answered	375	3%
Total	11,036	100%

- 4.2.2. Table 16 and Figure 1 show the proportion of respondents who supported and opposed the proposal for allowing CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit. 70 per cent of respondents who drive in the zone and 69 per cent of those who do not drive in the zone supported the proposal. Six per cent of those driving in the zone and eight per cent not driving within the zone opposed the proposal and the remainder neither supported nor opposed.

Table 16: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit according to whether or not the respondent drives in the zone during charging hours

Drives in the zone during charging hours?	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not answered	Total
Yes	35%	35%	24%	3%	3%	0%	100%
	3314	3299	2264	270	240	34	9421
No	38%	31%	23%	3%	5%	1%	100%
	452	373	275	39	55	9	1203
Not Answered	6%	6%	5%	1%	2%	81%	100%
	24	24	22	3	7	332	412

Figure 1: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit according to whether or not the respondent drives in the zone during charging hours

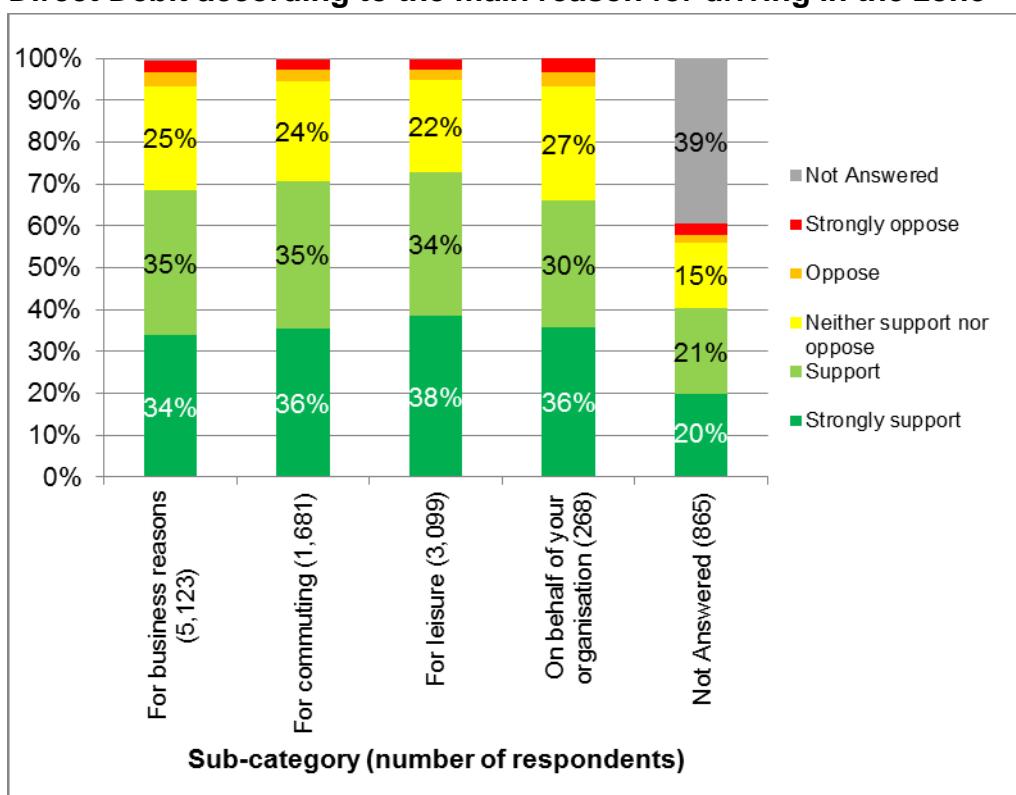


4.2.3. Table 17 and Figure 2 show the support and opposition for the proposal to allow CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit according to respondents' main reasons for driving into the zone. The highest level of support for this proposal was from the respondents who travel in the zone for leisure (72 per cent) followed by those who travel in the zone for commuting (71 per cent). The lowest level of support was in the group who travel in on behalf of their organisation, with 66 per cent supporting the proposal and six per cent opposing it.

Table 17: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit according to respondents' main reason for driving in the zone

Main reason for driving in the zone	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not answered	Total
For business reasons	34%	35%	25%	3%	3%	0%	100%
	1734	1783	1265	166	152	23	5123
For commuting	36%	35%	24%	2%	3%	0%	100%
	598	590	403	42	46	2	1681
For leisure	38%	34%	22%	3%	2%	0%	100%
	1191	1063	686	79	71	9	3099
On behalf of your organisation	36%	30%	27%	3%	3%	0%	100%
	96	81	73	9	9	0	268
Not Answered	20%	21%	16%	2%	3%	39%	100%
	171	179	134	16	24	341	865

Figure 2: Support and opposition for the proposal to CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit according to the main reason for driving in the zone



Qualitative analysis of free text responses

- 4.2.4. Of the 11,036 public and business respondents, 234 left a comment that related to the proposal to allow Direct Debit payments for CC Auto Pay accounts. This is approximately two per cent of respondents.

4.2.5. Of these, 79 per cent of these comments in support of providing this facility (185 respondents). The comments provided are shown in Table 18 below, alongside the number of respondents who made that comment.

Table 18: Qualitative analysis of comments on the proposal to allow CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit

Comment	Number of respondents making comment	Percentage of comments on this proposal	Percentage of all respondents
Support for direct debit as it reduces administration (though it should be optional)	185	79%	2%
Unclear on how the direct debit option differs from the existing situation	20	9%	0%
Concern that direct debit will lead to increased charges/difficulties	17	7%	0%
Direct debit payments should be incentivised	8	3%	0%
Easy direct debit payment will not be deterrent to rich	4	2%	0%
Total	234	100%	2%

4.3. Enabling applications for discounts and renewals to be made online

Quantitative analysis

4.3.1. Table 19 sets out the proportion of support and opposition to the proposal from public and business respondents, with 82 per cent supporting the proposal and two per cent opposing it. 12 per cent of respondents neither supported nor opposed the proposal and four per cent did not answer this question.

Table 19: Proportion of support and opposition from public and business respondents to the proposal to allow applications for discounts and renewals to be made online

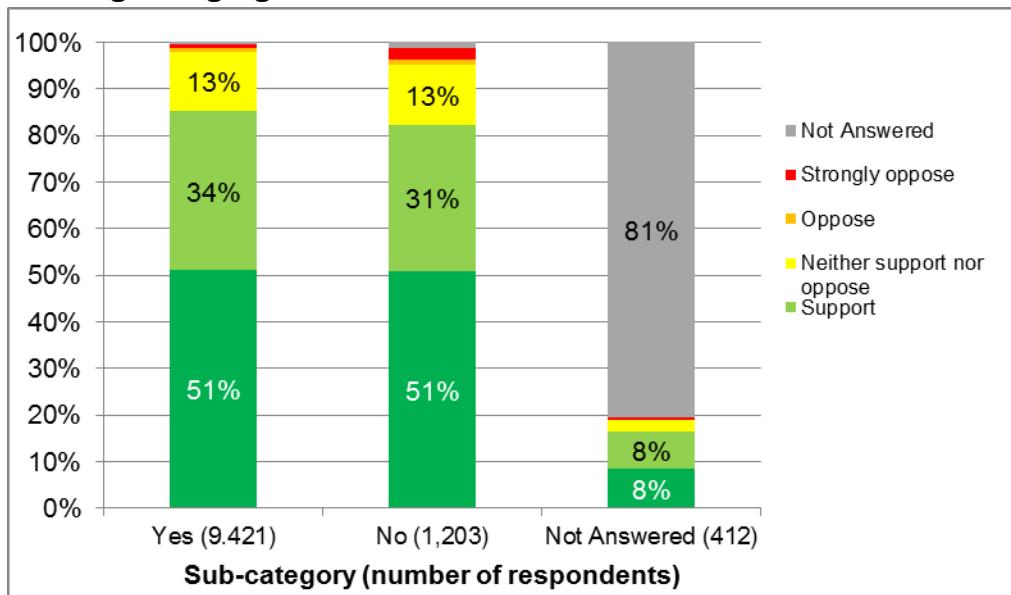
Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Strongly Support	5,458	49%
Support	3,628	33%
Neither support or oppose	1,364	12%
Oppose	77	1%
Strongly Oppose	107	1%
Not answered	402	4%
Total	11,036	100%

4.3.2. Table 20 and Figure 3 show the proportion of respondents who supported and opposed the proposal to allow applications for discounts and renewals to be made online according to whether or not they drive in the zone. 85 per cent of the respondents who drive in the zone in charging hours and 82 per cent of those who do not drive in the zone supported the proposal to allow online applications for discounts and renewals.

Table 20: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow applications for discounts and renewals to be made online according to whether or not the respondent drives in the zone during charging hours

Drives in the zone during charging hours?	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not answered	Total
Yes	51%	34%	13%	1%	1%	1%	100%
	4810	3219	1199	64	74	55	9421
No	51%	31%	13%	1%	3%	1%	100%
	613	376	155	13	31	15	1203
Not answered	8%	8%	2%	0%	0%	81%	100%
	35	33	10	0	2	332	412

Figure 3: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow applications for discounts and renewals to be made online according to whether or not the respondent drives in the zone during charging hours

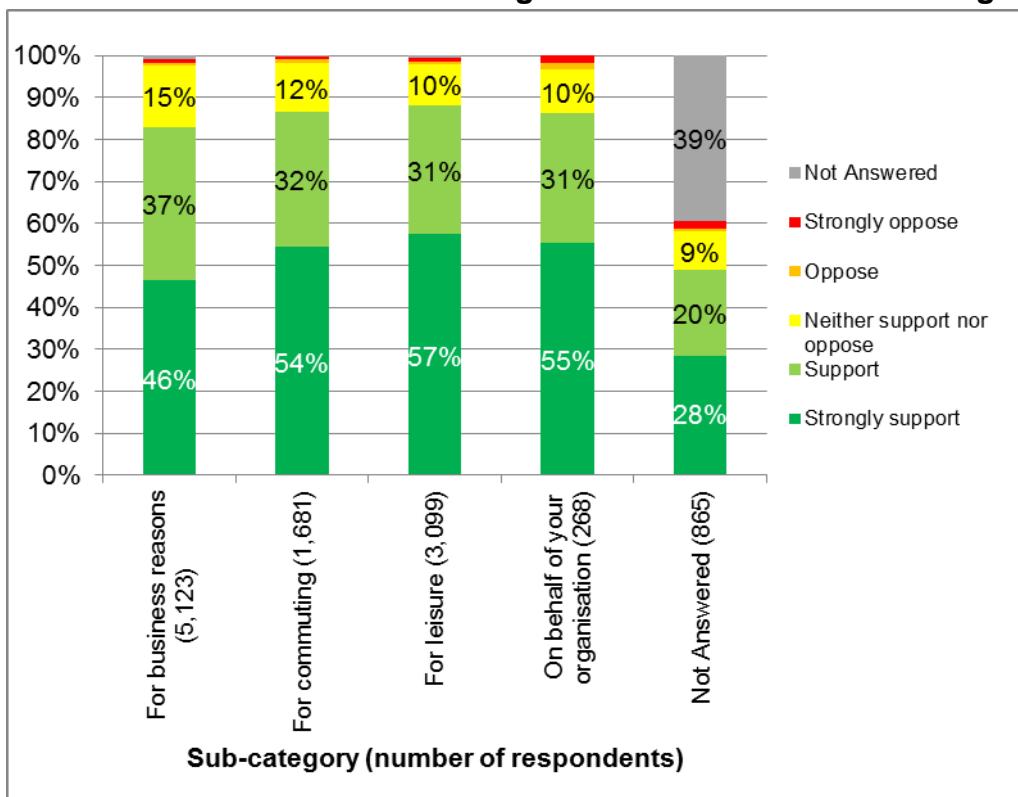


4.3.3. Table 21 and Figure 4 show the support and opposition for proposal to allow online applications according to respondents' main reason for driving in the zone. Over 80 per cent of each group supported the proposal. The highest level of support was in the group who travel in for leisure, with 88 per cent of this group supporting the proposal.

Table 21: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow applications for discounts and renewals to be made online according to the main reason for driving in the zone

Main reason for driving in the zone	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not answered	Total
For business reasons	46%	37%	15%	1%	1%	1%	100%
	2374	1873	755	35	49	37	5123
For commuting	54%	32%	12%	1%	1%	0%	100%
	913	540	197	14	12	5	1681
For leisure	57%	31%	10%	1%	1%	1%	100%
	1777	956	303	18	26	19	3099
On behalf of your organisation	55%	31%	10%	1%	2%	0%	100%
	148	83	28	4	5	0	268
Not Answered	28%	20%	9%	1%	2%	39%	100%
	246	176	81	6	15	341	865

Figure 4: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow applications for discounts and renewals to be made online according to the main reason for driving in the zone



Qualitative analysis of free text responses

- 4.3.4. One hundred and fifty-seven public and business respondents left a comment related to the proposed introduction of online applications for discounts and renewals; this equates to approximately one per cent of respondents. Of these, 62 per cent commented that the online renewal facility makes it easier and the online facility should be introduced as soon as possible. 32 per cent stated that they would support an online facility for Blue Badge renewal. The results are shown in Table 22.

Table 22: Qualitative analysis of comments regarding the proposal to allow applications for discounts and renewals to be made online

Comment	Number of respondents making comment	Percentage of comments on this proposal	Percentage of all respondents
Enable easy use of systems for people who use the congestion charge and introduce online renewal facility as early as possible	96	62%	1%
Support for Blue Badge renewal online	50	32%	0%
Low emission cars should be automatically exempt - you shouldn't have to register them	8	5%	0%
Retain the option to renew by phone	3	2%	0%
Total	157	100%	1%

4.4. Increasing the Congestion Charge

Quantitative analysis

- 4.4.1. Table 23 sets out the proportion of support and opposition to the proposal from public and business respondents, with 77 per cent opposing the proposal and 11 per cent supporting it. Nine per cent of respondents neither supported nor opposed the proposal and three per cent did not answer this question.

Table 23: Proportion of support and opposition from public and business respondents to the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge

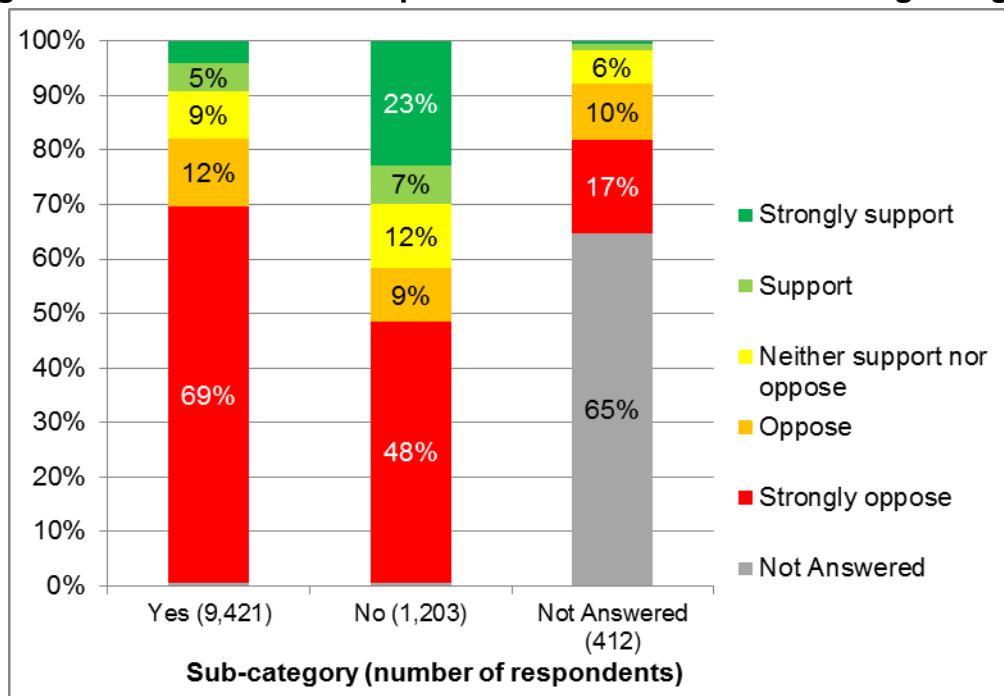
Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Strongly Support	652	6%
Support	590	5%
Neither support or oppose	986	9%
Oppose	1,326	12%
Strongly Oppose	7,152	65%
Not answered	330	3%
Total	11,036	100%

4.4.2. Table 24 and Figure 5 show the proportion of respondents who opposed and supported the charge according to whether they drive in the Congestion Charge zone during charging hours. Those who do not drive in the zone during Congestion Charging hours were more supportive of the proposed increase, with 30 per cent in support of the proposal and 58 per cent opposing it. 81 per cent of respondents who do drive in the zone during Charging hours opposed the charge increase and nine per cent supported the proposal.

Table 24: Support and opposition for the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge according to whether or not the respondent drives in the zone during charging hours

Drives in the zone during charging hours?	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not answered	Total
Yes	4%	5%	9%	12%	69%	1%	100%
	376	501	817	1167	6505	55	9421
No	23%	7%	12%	10%	48%	1%	100%
	274	84	144	116	577	8	1203
Not Answered	0%	1%	6%	10%	17%	65%	100%
	2	5	25	43	70	267	412

Figure 5: Support and opposition for the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge according to whether or not the respondent drives in the zone during charging hours

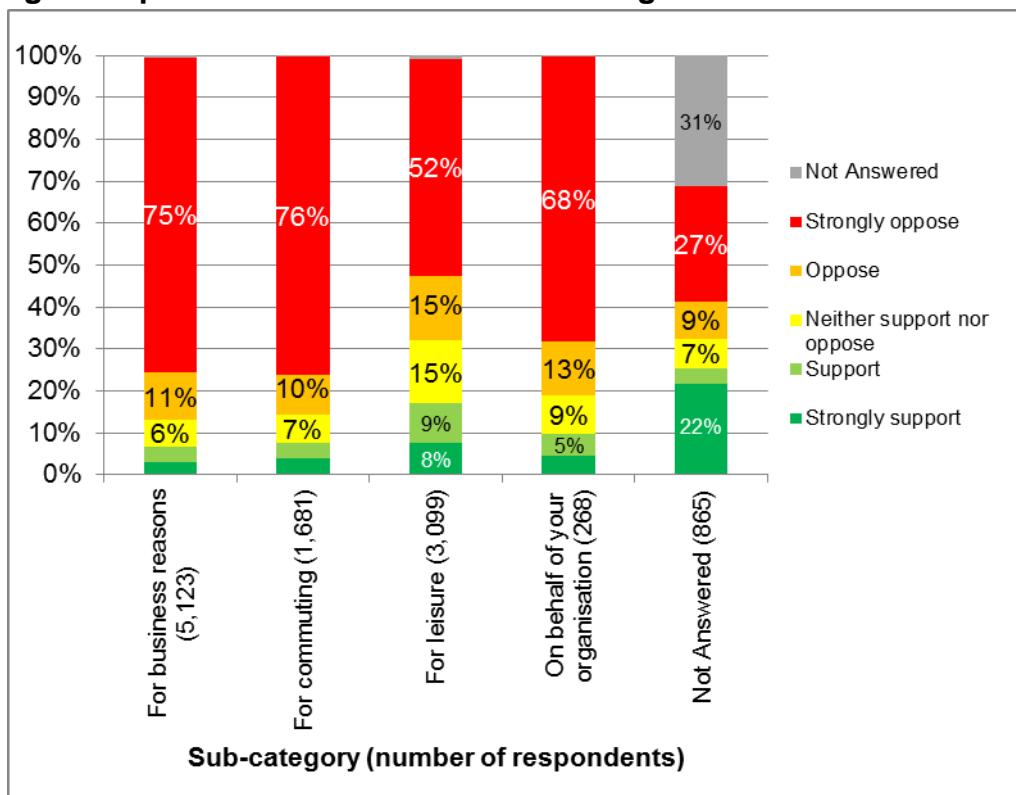


4.4.3. Table 25 and Figure 6 show the support and opposition to the proposed charge increase according to the main reason for driving in the zone. The groups with the highest proportion of respondents opposing the charge increase were those commuting and those travelling for business reasons (both 86 per cent). The group with the highest proportion of respondents supporting the charge increase was those who travel in the zone for leisure purposes, of whom 17 per cent supported the proposal to increase the charge and 67 per cent opposed it.

Table 25: Support and opposition for the proposal to increase the congestion charge according to respondents' main reason for driving in the zone

Main reason for driving in the zone	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not answered	Total
For business reasons	3%	4%	6%	11%	75%	1%	100%
	151	192	324	578	3851	27	5123
For commuting	4%	4%	7%	10%	76%	0%	100%
	66	62	112	161	1274	6	1681
For leisure	8%	9%	15%	15%	52%	1%	100%
	236	290	464	476	1608	25	3099
On behalf of your organisation	4%	5%	9%	13%	68%	0%	100%
	12	14	25	34	182	1	268
Not Answered	22%	4%	7%	9%	27%	31%	100%
	187	32	61	77	237	271	865

Figure 6: Support and opposition for the proposal to increase the congestion charge according to respondents' main reason for driving in the zone



- 4.4.4. The support and opposition for the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge has also been mapped according to where respondents are based, using the postcodes they provided in the questionnaire. Providing a postcode was optional but was requested in order to help TfL better understand the response to the consultation by enabling a high-level geographical analysis. Out of the 11,036 public and business respondents, 10,109 provided postcodes which were placed into the groups of 'inside the Congestion Charging zone', 'outside the Congestion Charging zone but in Greater London' and 'outside Greater London.'
- 4.4.5. The results are shown in Table 26. Those living within the Congestion Charge zone were most likely to support the charge increase, with 17 per cent of this group supporting and 74 per cent opposing. 12 per cent of respondents living within Greater London but outside the Congestion Charge zone supported the charge increase, but 80 per cent in this area were opposed it. Of those respondents living outside Greater London, nine per cent supported the charge increase and 78 per cent opposed it.

Table 26: Support and opposition for the charge increase by postcode location

	Inside CCZ	Outside CCZ but in Greater London	Outside Greater London
No. of postcodes plotted	886	5,377	3,846
Strongly oppose	60%	70%	63%
Oppose	14%	10%	15%
Total oppose	74%	80%	78%
Strongly support	10%	8%	3%
Support	7%	5%	6%
Total support	17%	12%	9%
Neither support nor oppose	9%	7%	12%
Not Answered	0%	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Qualitative analysis of free text responses

- 4.4.6. Over 5,500 comments were made by public and business respondents regarding the proposed price increase.
- 4.4.7. The full results are shown in Table 27. The most common comment referred to the charge as being a burden on small businesses, such as those who make deliveries (26 per cent). 23 per cent suggested that the current charge is already adequate and effective, so an increase was not needed. 11 per cent of the comments stated that the increase would not deter trips, but instead place an additional strain on individuals and businesses.
- 4.4.8. In support of the charge, five per cent of these comments noted that the Congestion Charge was beneficial as it encourages people to travel sustainably, reduces pollution and congestion and frees up space for other road users, such as cyclists and public transport users. Three per cent suggested the price should be put up further in order to reduce congestion.

Table 27: Qualitative analysis of comments regarding the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge

Comment	Number of respondents making comment	Percentage of comments on this proposal	Percentage of all respondents
The CC is a burden on small businesses including those that make deliveries	1433	26%	13%
Suggests that the current charge is adequate and effective and does not need to be increased	1253	23%	11%
An increase of £1.50 isn't enough to deter trips, it just puts a strain on hard pressed individuals and businesses	612	11%	6%
Current charge is enough considering the cost of fuel, vehicle taxes and driving conditions in London	521	9%	5%
If the CC goes up it will be passed on to the cost of other goods and services, which deters people from visiting/doing business in London	497	9%	5%
The price increase should be more modest, 15 - 16% is not reflective of inflation	489	9%	4%
Public transport is not always an option (e.g. for people who work night shifts, those with mobility issues) it is unfair to increase the price for these people	312	6%	3%
Support for the CC increase - it encourages people to travel sustainably, reduces pollution and congestion and frees up space for other road users (i.e. public transport and cyclists)	261	5%	2%
Put the price up further to see a reduction in congestion	148	3%	1%
Should be a £1 increase to price, including for those using Auto Pay	8	0%	0%
Total	5534	100%	50%

4.5. Enabling reimbursement of eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay

Quantitative analysis

- 4.5.1. Table 28 sets out the proportion of support and opposition to the proposal from public and business respondents, with 70 per cent supporting the proposal and six per cent opposing it. 21 per cent of respondents neither supported nor opposed the proposal and four per cent did not answer this question.

Table 28: Proportion of support and opposition from public and business respondents to the proposal to allow eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed

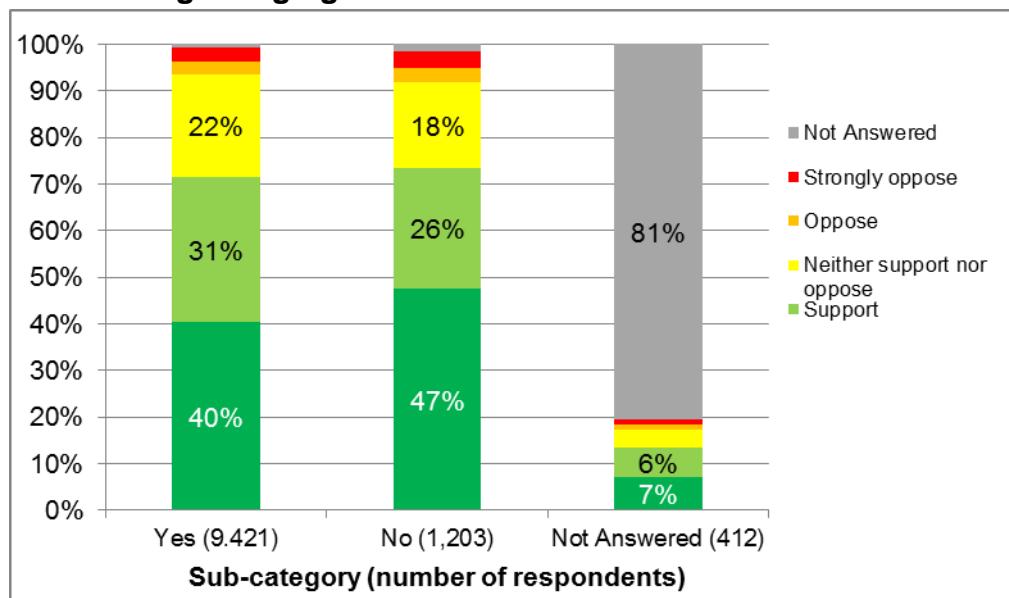
Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Strongly Support	4,411	40%
Support	3,270	30%
Neither support or oppose	2,300	21%
Oppose	305	3%
Strongly Oppose	323	3%
Not answered	427	4%
Total	11,036	100%

- 4.5.2. Table 29 and Figure 7 show the support and opposition for the proposal for eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed according to whether or not respondents drive in the zone during charging hours. 71 per cent of the respondents who drive in the zone supported this proposal and 73 per cent of respondents who do not drive in the zone supported it. Six per cent of each group opposed the proposal.

Table 29: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed according to whether or not the respondent drives in the zone during charging hours

Drives in the zone during charging hours?	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not answered	Total
Yes	40%	31%	22%	3%	3%	1%	100%
	3811	2931	2062	264	278	75	9421
No	47%	26%	18%	3%	3%	2%	100%
	571	313	222	36	41	20	1203
Not Answered	7%	6%	4%	1%	1%	81%	100%
	29	26	16	5	4	332	412

Figure 7: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed according to whether or not the respondent drives in the zone during charging hours

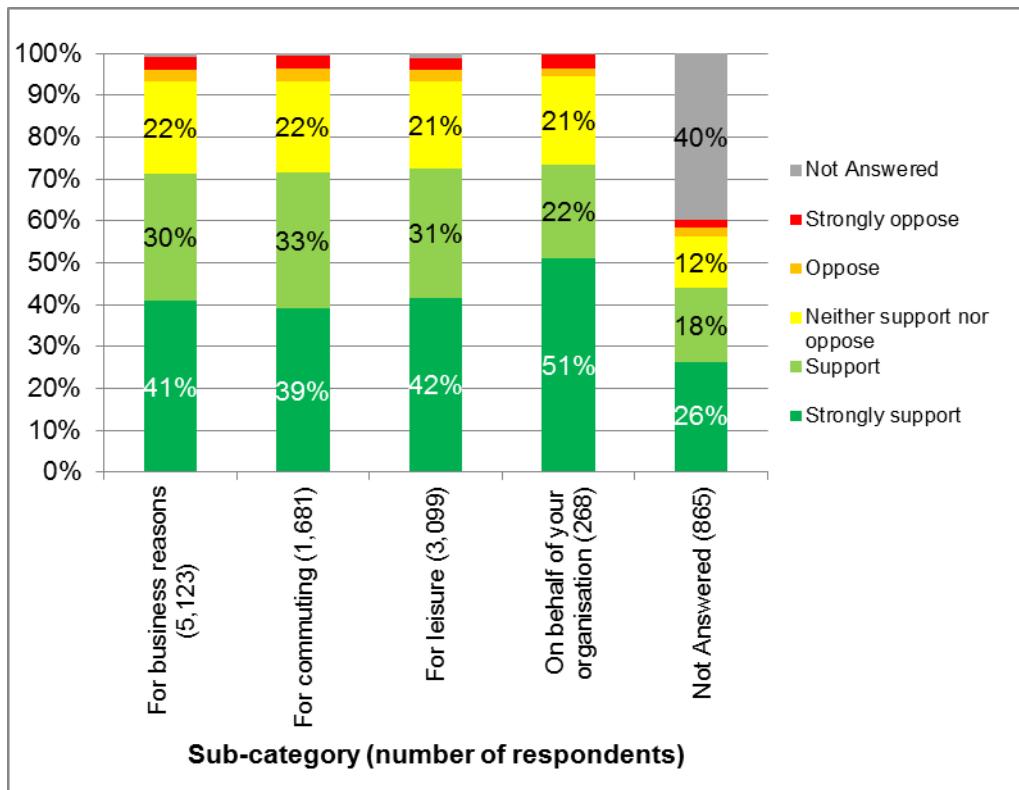


4.5.3. Table 30 and Figure 8 show the support and opposition to the proposal to allow eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed, according to respondents' main reasons for driving into the zone. The groups all showed similar levels of support (71-73 per cent) and opposition (5-6 per cent).

Table 30: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow applications for discounts and renewals to be made online according to respondents' main reason for driving in the zone

Main reason for driving in the zone	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not answered	Total
For business reasons	41%	30%	22%	3%	3%	1%	100%
	2101	1557	1122	148	154	41	5123
For commuting	39%	33%	22%	3%	3%	0%	100%
	656	548	364	51	55	7	1681
For leisure	42%	31%	21%	3%	3%	1%	100%
	1291	951	651	84	87	35	3099
On behalf of your organisation	51%	22%	21%	2%	3%	0%	100%
	137	60	56	5	9	1	268
Not Answered	26%	18%	12%	2%	2%	40%	100%
	226	154	107	17	18	343	865

Figure 8: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed according to respondents' main reason for driving in the zone



Qualitative analysis of free text responses

- 4.5.4. Around 250 comments were made by public and business respondents made a comment regarding the proposal to allow eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed. The breakdown of these comments is shown in Table 31. The most frequent comments (70 per cent, 178 respondents) were supportive of the NHS-related reimbursement and that it should be publicised. 15 per cent (39) of respondents commenting on this proposal said that providing discounts to staff and patients was not fair.

Table 31: Qualitative analysis of comments regarding the proposal to allow NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed

Comment	Number of respondents making comment	Percentage of comments on this proposal	Percentage of all respondents
In support of NHS related travel reimbursement, ensure it is publicised	178	70%	2%
Offering discounts to people working in certain industries is not fair (e.g. NHS staff and patients)	39	15%	0%
Concern about NHS trip reimbursement as it may increase costs for other users/people could abuse the system	17	7%	0%
TfL should introduce discounts for people working for organisations that support the NHS/people receiving private medical treatment	10	4%	0%
Unsure of thinking behind this policy and the details	9	4%	0%
Total	253	100%	2%

4.6. Enabling the date of a pre-paid charge to be amended on the day of travel

Quantitative analysis

- 4.6.1. Table 32 sets out the proportion of support and opposition to the proposal from public and business respondents, with 77 per cent supporting the proposal and one per cent opposing it. 18 per cent of respondents neither supported nor opposed the proposal and four per cent did not answer this question.

Table 32: Proportion of support and opposition from public and business respondents to the proposal to allow customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the date of travel

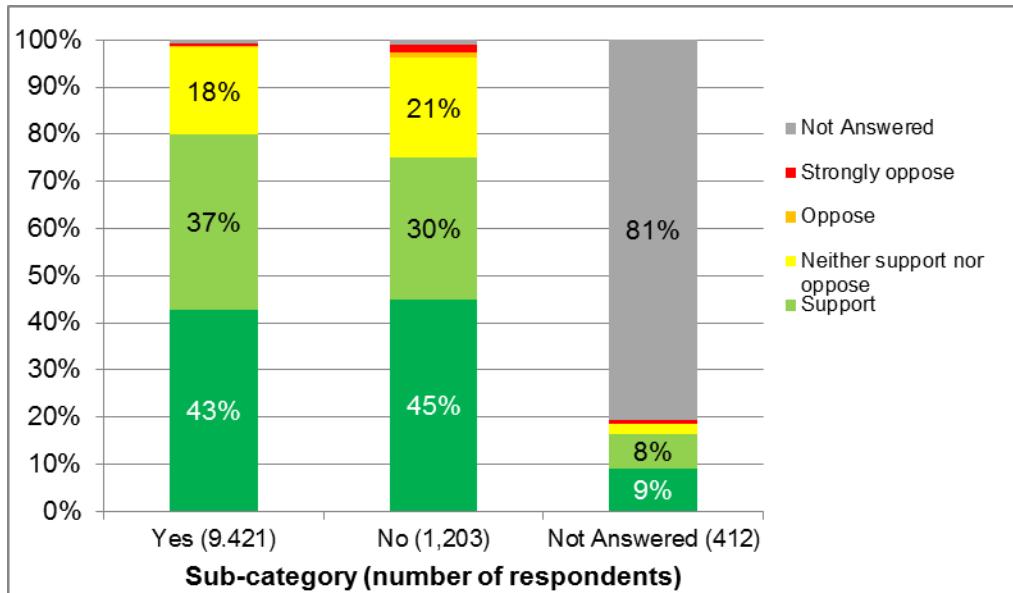
Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Strongly Support	4,604	42%
Support	3,910	35%
Neither support or oppose	1,995	18%
Oppose	53	0%
Strongly Oppose	61	1%
Not answered	413	4%
Total	11,036	100%

4.6.2. Table 33 and Figure 9 show the proportion of respondents who supported and opposed the proposal to allow customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel, according to whether or not they drive in the zone. 80 per cent of those who drive in the zone supported this proposal and zero per cent opposed it. 75 per cent of respondents who do not drive in the zone supported it and three per cent opposed it.

Table 33: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow customers to change the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel according to whether or not the respondent drives in the zone during charging hours

Drives in the zone during charging hours?	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not answered	Total
Yes	43%	37%	18%	0%	0%	1%	100%
	4025	3516	1734	40	37	69	9421
No	45%	30%	21%	1%	2%	1%	100%
	542	363	252	13	21	12	1203
Not Answered	9%	8%	2%	0%	1%	81%	100%
	37	31	9	0	3	332	412

Figure 9: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow customers to change the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel according to whether or not the respondent drives in the zone during charging hours

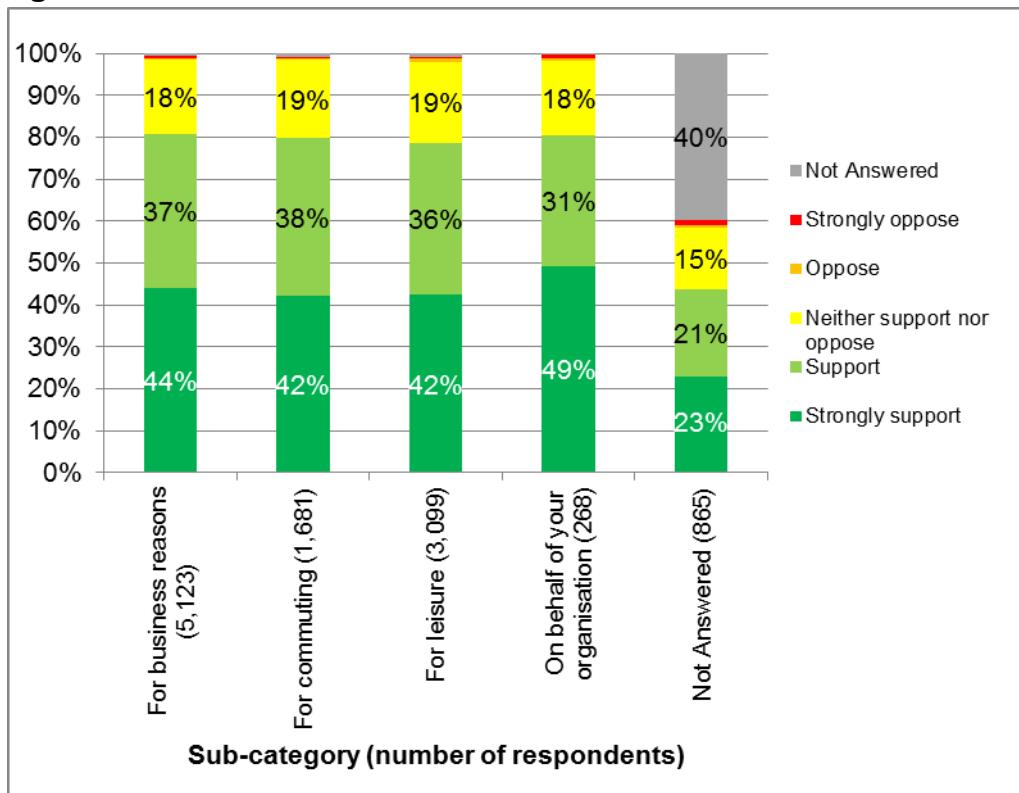


4.6.3. Table 34 and Figure 10 show the proportions of respondents who supported or opposed the proposal to allow customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel according to their main reason for driving in the zone. The groups have similar levels of support (between 78 per cent and 81 per cent) and opposition (between zero per cent and two per cent).

Table 34: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel according to respondents' main reason for driving in the zone

Main reason for driving in the zone	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Not answered	Total
For business reasons	44%	37%	18%	0%	1%	1%	100%
	2253	1890	905	15	30	30	5123
For commuting	42%	38%	19%	0%	0%	1%	100%
	708	633	314	6	5	15	1681
For leisure	42%	36%	19%	1%	0%	1%	100%
	1313	1123	601	25	14	23	3099
On behalf of your organisation	49%	31%	18%	1%	1%	0%	100%
	132	84	47	2	2	1	268
Not Answered	23%	21%	15%	1%	1%	40%	100%
	198	180	128	5	10	345	865

Figure 10: Support and opposition for the proposal to allow customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel according to respondents' main reason for driving in the zone



Qualitative analysis of free text responses

- 4.6.4. There were 77 comments received from the public and business respondents regarding the proposal to allow the date of a pre-paid charge to be amended on the date of travel (0.7 per cent). 82 per cent of these stated that customers should not have to pay to change the date of travel (referring to the administration fee of £2.50) and 18 per cent made comments in support of this proposal.

Table 35: Qualitative analysis of comments regarding the proposal to allow the date of a pre-paid charge to be amended on the day of travel

Comment	Number of respondents making comment	Percentage of comments on this proposal	Percentage of all respondents
Customers should not have to pay to amend the date of a pre-paid charge	63	82%	1%
In support of ability to amend the date of a pre-paid charge	14	18%	0%
Total	77	100%	1%

4.7. Minor administrative changes to the Scheme Order

Quantitative analysis

- 4.7.1. Four proposals to make minor administrative changes to the Scheme Order were also consulted on and the results shown in Table 36. A large proportion of respondents stated they neither supported nor opposed these changes. Most of the remainder of respondents supported the changes. In Table 36, the column for 'Support' includes both those who answered that they 'support' and 'strongly support' the proposal. The column for 'Oppose' includes both those who answered that they 'oppose' and 'strongly oppose'.
- 4.7.2. The minor proposals with the highest levels of support were 'updating references in the NHS Reimbursement Scheme' (48 per cent) and 'including a reference to card payment failures' (48 per cent). The minor proposal with the least amount of support was the change to the vehicle capacity requirement on the Residents' Discount, which 22 per cent supported and 12 per cent opposed.

Table 36: Support and opposition for proposals to make minor administrative changes to the Scheme Order

Proposal (minor administrative change)	Support	Oppose	Neither support nor oppose	Did not answer
Amending vehicle capacity requirement on Residents' Discount	22%	12%	62%	4%
Including a reference to card payment failures	48%	5%	42%	5%
Updating definition for recover vehicles	36%	3%	55%	5%
Updating references in NHS reimbursement scheme	48%	5%	42%	5%

Qualitative analysis of free text responses

- 4.7.3. Around 100 comments were made by public and business referring to the proposed administrative charges; these comments are shown in Table 37. The most frequent comments were that TfL should send a notification when a card payment has failed (59 per cent of these comments) and there should be an online tool to check whether you have entered the zone (30 per cent).

Table 37: Qualitative analysis of comments regarding the minor administrative changes

Comment	Number of respondents making comment	Percentage of comments on this proposal	Percentage of all respondents
TfL should send a notification when card payments have failed so further charges aren't incurred	62	59%	1%
Introduce an online tool to check whether you have entered the zone	31	30%	0%
Existing arrangements seem to work well so further administrative costs should be avoided	6	6%	0%
Recovery vehicles should be exempt	5	5%	0%
Against specifying seat allowance	1	1%	0%
Total	105	100%	1%

4.8. Other comments about the Congestion Charge

- 4.8.1. In addition to comments on the proposed changes, 4,252 comments and suggestions were left by public and business respondents regarding the Congestion Charge Scheme in general (rather than the current proposed changes). The comments and suggestions regarding the Congestion Charge and its management are provided in Table 38, alongside how many respondents made each comment/suggestion.
- 4.8.2. Of the general comments, the most common comment was that the Congestion Charge is a tax designed to raise revenue rather than tackle congestion or environmental issues (1048 respondents, 25 per cent of general comments, nine per cent of all respondents). Eleven per cent of comments relating to the Congestion Charge in general suggested that there is no evidence of the benefits of the Congestion Charge and therefore no justification for the price increase. A further 10 per cent of these comments (416 respondents) stated that the revenue raised should be ring-fenced for improving transport in London.
- 4.8.3. As with the comments on the proposals, these comments are addressed by TfL in Section 6 of this report.

Table 38: Common themes raised by public and business respondents relating to the Congestion Charge scheme in general (rather than the proposals)

Comment	Number of respondents making comment	Percentage of comments on this proposal	Percentage of all respondents
The CC is a tax designed to raise revenue, it is not driven by congestion or the environment	1048	25%	9%
There is no evidence of benefits resulting from CC, information on where revenue is invested or justification for need for increased price	486	11%	4%
Revenue raised should be ring fenced for investment in roads/public transport (incl. reducing fares)/cycling/streetscape improvements within and into London	416	10%	4%
Allow discounts/exemption for those required to drive in London for work	325	8%	3%
Suggests other changes to CC including reinstate the western extension zone/expand the charge zone/increase hours the CC is in operation	271	6%	2%
Support for any proposals which make CC easier to pay/administer	237	6%	2%
Congestion has increased due to reallocation of road space/changes to traffic light phasing/road works/increased buses, taxis and HGV	213	5%	2%
Suggestions for other charging regimes/differential charging i.e. time of day/distance travelled	205	5%	2%
Support for the CC, it promotes sustainable and healthy means of travel, this should be further promoted	202	5%	2%
Improve the discount/terms and conditions for residents of the charge zone/residents in surrounding areas	172	4%	2%
The CC should be scrapped	149	4%	1%
Reinstate the low emission exemption/greener vehicle discount - it encourages people to buy	125	3%	1%

Comment	Number of respondents making comment	Percentage of comments on this proposal	Percentage of all respondents
environmentally friendly cars			
Explore more effective ways of reducing congestion/pollution (e.g. traffic management)	85	2%	1%
Suggests that the consultation is predetermined and responses will not be considered	69	2%	1%
Better explanation of policy changes and their impact required	67	2%	1%
Low emission vehicles should not receive a discount - it is not an environmental charging scheme	49	1%	0%
TfL should implement measures to encourage deliveries to be made at night	41	1%	0%
There should be no administration fee for CC Auto Pay/exemptions, or it should be a one off fee not annually	38	1%	0%
TfL should seek overdue payments from foreign diplomats/vehicles	31	1%	0%
Total	4252	100%	39%

5 Analysis of stakeholder responses

5.1. Introduction and responses received

- 5.1.1. This chapter of the report looks at the feedback provided by stakeholder organisations about the proposals being consulted on. It includes an analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.
- 5.1.2. Responses were received from 29 stakeholder organisations. A full list of the stakeholders who responded is provided at Annex B and a summary of each stakeholder response is provided at Annex C.

5.2. Quantitative analysis

- 5.2.1. Stakeholders submitted their comments using a variety of channels. Of the 29 stakeholders that responded to the consultation, 18 used the consultation portal, which is part of TfL's website. The other stakeholders responded by letter or by email.
- 5.2.2. The following section provides a quantitative analysis of the support or opposition to the proposals included in the stakeholder responses. Stakeholders who provided comments setting out their views on the proposals but did not specifically state support or opposition, or noted that they had no objections to the proposals are listed in the category 'no objection/ not stated'. Tables 39 to 44 below set out the level of support and opposition to the proposal indicated in the stakeholder responses. For the proposal to make four minor administrative changes, none of the stakeholders stated that they opposed any of the changes and this is reflected in Table 39 below.

Table 39: Stakeholder support for and opposition to the proposal to provide the option to pay CC Auto Pay accounts by Direct Debit

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Support	13	45%
Oppose	0	0%
No objection/ not stated	16	55%
Total	29	100%

Table 40: Stakeholder support for and opposition to the proposal to enable discount applications and renewals online

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Support	15	52%
Oppose	0	0%
No objections/not stated	14	48%
Total	29	100%

Table 41: Stakeholder support for and opposition to the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Support	12	41%
Oppose	14	48%
No objections/not stated	3	10%
Total	29	100%

Table 42: Stakeholder support for and opposition to the proposal to enable eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Support	12	41%
Oppose	0	0%
No objections/not stated	17	59%
Total	29	100%

Table 43: Stakeholder support for allowing customers to amend the date of travel of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel

Response	Number of responses	Percentage
Support	16	55%
Oppose	0	0%
No objections/not stated	13	45%
Total	29	100%

Table 44: Stakeholder support for and opposition to proposals to make minor administrative changes

	Support		No objection/not stated	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Amend seat capacity for Residents Discount	8	28%	21	72%
Including a reference to card payment failures	11	38%	18	62%
Updating the definition for recovery vehicles	10	34%	19	66%
Updating the reference to the NHS Reimbursement scheme	9	31%	20	69%

5.3. Qualitative analysis

5.3.1. Stakeholders were invited to submit comments to further illustrate their stated views and/or to raise additional points for TfL's consideration. The responses received are shown in Tables 45 to 49 below.

Table 45: Common themes raised by stakeholder respondents relating to the proposal to provide the option to pay CC Auto Pay accounts by Direct Debit

Comment/theme	Comment/ theme frequency	Percentage
Support for direct debit as it reduces administration	3	10%

Table 46: Common themes raised by stakeholder respondents relating to the proposal to enable discount applications and renewals online

Comment/theme	Comment/ theme frequency	Percentage
Support - Enable easy use of systems for people who use the Congestion charge and introduce online renewal facility as early as possible.	2	7%
Restricting how discounts can be claimed and the admin process raises money for TfL	1	3%
Suggests that Blue Badge applications/renewals will only be available by post	1	3%

Table 47: Common themes raised by stakeholder respondents relating to the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge

Comment/theme	Comment /theme frequency	Percentage
Suggests that the current charge is adequate and effective and does not need to be increased	2	7%
Current charge is enough considering the cost of fuel, vehicle taxes and driving conditions in London	1	3%
The CC is a burden on organisations like charities - donor money would be better spent than paying the charge	2	7%
The CC is a burden on small businesses including those that make deliveries	3	10%
An increase of £1.50 isn't enough to deter trips, it just puts a strain on hard pressed individuals and businesses	1	3%
If the CC goes up it will be passed on to the cost of other goods and services, which deters people from visiting/doing business in London	2	7%
The price increase should be more modest, 15 - 16% is not reflective of inflation	6	21%
Put the price up further to see a reduction in congestion and environmental improvements	3	10%
Support for the CC increase - it encourages people to travel sustainably, reduces pollution and congestion and frees up space for other road users (i.e. public transport and cyclists)	8	28%

Table 48: Common themes raised by stakeholder respondents relating to the proposal to enable eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed

Comment/theme	Comment/ theme frequency	Percentage
In support of NHS related travel reimbursement, ensure it is publicised	1	3%
Need to consider local authority employment of staff undertaking NHS work providing / performing NHS Services	1	3%
Suggests changes should be implemented more quickly	1	3%

Table 49: Common themes raised by stakeholder respondents relating to the proposal to provide an option for customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel

Comment/theme	Comment/ theme frequency	Percentage
In support of ability to amend the date of a pre-paid charge	1	3%

6 TfL's response to the issues raised

6.1. Introduction

- 6.1.1. This chapter sets out TfL's analysis of the responses received to the consultation by theme and its response to the comments, issues and recommendations contained in those responses. Comments from stakeholders and free text responses from public/business respondents have been attributed to the most pertinent proposal (Themes A to F). Within each theme, sub-themes have been identified and are listed at the start of each section, followed by TfL's response and any recommendation. Where sub-themes are similar, these have been grouped together for a single TfL response. Comments that do not relate to a specific proposal have been addressed in Theme G.

6.2. Theme A: Providing the option to pay CC Auto Pay Accounts by Direct Debit

- 6.2.1. Representations within this theme concern the proposal to enable CC Auto Pay accounts to be paid by Direct Debit.
- 6.2.2. Thirteen stakeholders indicated support for the proposal to introduce Direct Debit payments for CC Auto Pay accounts; these were: Automobile Association, Camden Cycling Campaign, Ealing Passenger Transport User Group, East London Business Alliance, Licensed Taxi Drivers Association, London Borough of Lewisham, London TravelWatch, Salvation Army, Stop Killing Cyclists, Sue Ryder Foundation, Westminster City Council, Whittington Health NHS Trust and UK Independence Party - London Region. The remaining 16 either stated that they neither supported or opposed the proposal, or did not state an opinion in their response.

Analysis of responses

- 6.2.3. Three stakeholders commented on this proposal. These were East London Business Alliance, UK Independence Party – London Region (UKIP) and Westminster City Council.
- 6.2.4. Around 230 comments were made by public and business respondents. This equates to approximately two per cent of public and business respondents commenting on this issue.

Issues raised

- 6.2.5. The following is a list of the comments/issues raised. Only the first of these issues was raised by stakeholders, the others were raised by public and business respondents.
- Support for the Direct Debit option

- Clarifications regarding how the proposal differs from the existing situation
- Suggestions for incentivising the Direct Debit option

Support for Direct Debit

- 6.2.6. The three stakeholders who commented on this proposal supported it. The East London Business Alliance recognised that the Congestion Charge scheme administration continues to improve and welcomes the proposed Direct Debit option. UKIP stated that the introduction of Direct Debit as non-contentious and reflective of current banking and payment practice. Westminster City Council stated that they are fully supportive of changes to make it easier to pay the charge, such as the Direct Debit option for CC Auto Pay, as they reduce the complexity of the scheme and may have the potential to reduce the extent of non-payment.
- 6.2.7. 185 comments from public and business respondents on this issue included that this facility is welcome but should be optional; that it will reduce administration (so users should not be charged for the Direct Debit facility); and general comments in support of the Auto Pay system.

TfL response

- 6.2.8. TfL welcomes the support for the introduction of the Direct Debit option and notes that it has been introduced in response to customer feedback. Direct Debit is a commonly used and convenient payment option that enables customers to set up automatic payments. TfL is proposing to introduce the Direct Debit option for CC Auto Pay customers as a result of requests from customers. The Direct Debit option is already available to Fleet Auto Pay customers. The availability of Direct Debit will help reduce administration for both customers and TfL.
- 6.2.9. All customers who register for a discount, including CC Auto Pay, must pay a £10 annual registration fee to cover TfL's administration costs. This fee would be the same whether the customer chooses to pay by Direct Debit or is billed via debit or credit card.

Clarification on how the proposal differs from the existing situation

- 6.2.10. Thirty-seven comments were received by public and business respondents stating that they were unclear about how the proposal would be different to the existing situation or were concerned that the Direct Debit option would lead to increased difficulties and charges.

TfL response

- 6.2.11. CC Auto Pay is an automated payment system. TfL automatically records the number of charging days a registered vehicle travels within the charging zone each month and the customer is billed at the end of each month and the bill paid via a debit or credit card. If the facility to pay by Direct Debit is introduced, customers will have the additional option to pay their CC Auto Pay bill via Direct Debit. This change has been requested by customers as it is a convenient way to make payments.
- 6.2.12. If customers do not choose to pay by Direct Debit, they can choose to be billed via debit or credit card. There will be no additional charges to the customer for choosing Direct Debit.

Incentivising the Direct Debit option

- 6.2.13. A small number of public and business comments (eight) suggested that Direct Debit payments should be incentivised, for example through a week's free access to the zone for annual sign-up. Conversely, four respondents said that a Direct Debit option reduces the deterrent for the wealthy.

TfL response

- 6.2.14. CC Auto Pay customers already pay a reduced charge compared to the standard daily charge to incentivise this payment method. The Direct Debit option is being introduced to reduce administration for customers and TfL, as part of a continuous effort to improve the operation of the scheme. Therefore it is not considered appropriate to have an incentive to use it, as it is an improvement to the service for customers. Given that the purpose of the Congestion Charge is to reduce congestion and traffic in central London, it is not considered appropriate to provide an incentive (such as a discount) to customers using Direct Debit in order to pay the charge. Any incentive could reduce the deterrent effect of the charge.
- 6.2.15. With regard to Direct Debit potentially undermining the scheme by reducing the deterrent for the wealthy, TfL considers that the charge level itself is the deterrent. The Direct Debit option is not an additional incentive; it is being introduced as an improvement to the existing CC Auto Pay payment system. In itself, the Direct Debit option does not make the charge any lower.

TfL recommendation

No change to the Variation Order

6.3. Theme B: Introduction of an online facility for discount applications and renewals

- 6.3.1. Representations within this theme concern the proposal to introduce a facility to enable online registration for discounts and renewals. This would enable customers to scan and upload their supporting documents, rather than send them via post.

Analysis of responses

- 6.3.2. Fifteen stakeholders indicated support for the proposal to introduce a facility to enable applications for discounts and renewals to be made online. These were: Automobile Association, British Red Cross, British Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association, Camden Cycling Campaign, Ealing Passenger Transport User Group, Embassy of Lebanon, London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, Licensed Taxi Drivers Association, London Borough Lewisham, London TravelWatch, Salvation Army, Stop Killing Cyclists, Sue Ryder Foundation, Whittington Health NHS Trust and UK Independence Party - London Region (UKIP). The remaining 14 did not state an opinion.
- 6.3.3. The two stakeholders who commented on this proposal supported it; these were the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) and UKIP. Westminster City Council and London TravelWatch also commented generally that they support any proposals which make the Congestion Charge easier to pay/administer.
- 6.3.4. 157 comments were made by public and business respondents. This equates to approximately one per cent of public and business respondents commenting on this issue.

Issues raised

- 6.3.5. The following is a list of the comments/issues raised:
- Improving the application system and support for proposals which make it easier to administer the scheme
 - Queries regarding the Blue Badge application process

Improving the application system

- 6.3.6. Westminster City Council stated that it is supportive of proposals to make it easier to pay the charge, because they will make the scheme less complex and have the potential to reduce the extent of non-payment. London TravelWatch stated that it is supportive of the various administration changes proposed.

- 6.3.7. BVRLA welcomed the proposal to provide the online application facility for discounts and renewals but suggest that TfL go further and remove the requirement to provide the V5C vehicle registration form and instead introduce a DVLA data look-up facility.
- 6.3.8. UKIP requested that discounts and exemptions should be as easy to obtain and renew as possible. This was also raised in approximately 100 public and business comments, a small number of who also said that: there should be no administration fee for CC Auto Pay registration (or discounts); that low emission cars should be automatically exempt and/or that discounts should not have to be renewed; or that the online application facility should be brought in earlier than planned.

TfL response

- 6.3.9. TfL welcomes the support for this proposal, which makes the scheme easier to administer. The online application facility is being proposed to improve customer satisfaction with the application process, as it will reduce the administration of printing and posting the application form and related documents. TfL is committed to making our online services accessible and user-friendly.
- 6.3.10. TfL notes the issues raised by the BVRLA regarding the V5C vehicle registration form. However, a further DVLA look-up facility would not be cost effective for TfL as there are very significant costs involved in obtaining and maintaining the integrity of vehicle registered keeper information from the DVLA.
- 6.3.11. Registration is required for all discounts as a proof of ownership and to establish that the vehicle meets the requirements for that discount. By requiring a customer to register, TfL reduces the amount of data that it needs to hold on drivers; those applying for a discount provide the necessary information for TfL to recognise that the vehicle or the driver is eligible for the discount. This is needed because of the way that the Congestion Charge scheme is enforced, which is by Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR).
- 6.3.12. If a vehicle enters the zone and is not pre-registered with us for a discount and is not shown to have paid the charge then a Penalty Charge Notice may be issued. Pre-registering each vehicle removes significant administration costs that would be associated with checking every vehicle that enters the zone that is not registered as eligible for a discount or as having paid the charge. If it were TfL which checked eligibility for discounts (without customer registration), then it would potentially need to check all vehicles and drivers in the zone, which would be resource-intensive and entail TfL holding more information on customers than is necessary.

- 6.3.13. Discounts need to be renewed to ensure customers and vehicles obtaining the discounts remain eligible. Proposal 129 of the Mayor's Transport Strategy sets out that the Mayor will keep the Congestion Charge under review; therefore the scheme and its discounts are regularly reviewed by TfL. An application fee of £10 is charged to cover the administration costs of processing the discount application.
- 6.3.14. Subject to the Mayor approving the change, the proposed online application facility will be introduced in November 2015 when the new service provision contract commences. To introduce the change before the new service provision contract starts would incur significant costs to TfL. Introducing all the proposed changes to the scheme at the same time will help to ensure that the changes are well-understood by customers.

Queries regarding the Blue Badge applications process

- 6.3.15. UKIP stated that it opposes keeping applications for Blue Badge discounts open only by post. UKIP stated that limiting the ways of applying for discounts and exemptions is a tactic to maximise revenues. It supports the retention of the option to make applications by post. It also objects to the long lead-in time until the online facility is introduced, stating that this is a way to minimise the discounts being claimed.
- 6.3.16. Fifty comments from the public and business respondents supported the option for renewing Blue Badge discounts online. Three public and business comments requested that the option to renew by phone is retained.

TfL response

- 6.3.17. Customers have indicated they would prefer to apply for and renew discounts online, scanning and uploading the supporting evidence rather than having to post it (or post the evidence if they are unable to scan it). This reduces the administration burden for both customers and TfL. It will also considerably speed up the registration process to enable discounts to be applied more quickly. The online option will be available for all discounts, including Blue Badge discounts.
- 6.3.18. TfL welcomes the support for the inclusion of the Blue Badge Discount. TfL acknowledges UKIP's concerns regarding the accessibility of the scheme. To maintain accessibility to all, the postal option will remain available for Blue Badge holders and those who are not able to apply online, as stated in the consultation materials.

6.3.19. The proposed introduction date for the online facility is November 2015. This has not been set in order to maximise revenue but in order to introduce it as part of the new service contract for the scheme, which commences at that time. The discount is already in place and postal applications will be required until this date. The application form can be downloaded from the TfL website. The proposed online application facility would be introduced in November 2015 when the new service provision contract commences. To introduce the change before the new service provision contract starts would incur significant costs to TfL. Introducing the proposed changes to the scheme at the same time will also ensure that the changes will be better understood by customers. All net revenue received through the Congestion Charge scheme is, by law, reinvested in improving London's transport and road network.

6.3.20. It is not possible to renew discount applications by phone as supporting evidence needs to be provided with all registrations. However, customers who are unable to pay online or access the forms on the website can call TfL to request a form, which they can then fill in and post to TfL along with their supporting documents.

TfL recommendation

No change to the Variation Order

6.4. Theme C: Increase to Congestion Charge

6.4.1. Representations made within this theme concern the proposal to increase the headline daily charge from £10 to £11.50. Increases are proposed for all the payment channels as set out in Table 3 in Chapter 1 above.

Analysis of responses

6.4.2. Twelve stakeholders (41 per cent) supported this proposal; 14 stakeholders (48 per cent) opposed it and three stakeholders (10 per cent) had a neutral view or did not state a view.

6.4.3. Stakeholders who opposed the price increase were the following: Alliance of British Drivers (ABD), Association of International Courier and Express Services (AICES), Automobile Association (AA), British Red Cross, British Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association (BVRLA), Carplus Trust, East London Business Alliance, Embassy of Lebanon, Federation of Small Business (FSB), Freight Transport Association (FTA), Road Haulage Association (RHA), Salvation Army, Sue Ryder Foundation and UKIP London Region.

- 6.4.4. Stakeholders who supported the price increase were: Camden Cycling Campaign, Darren Johnson AM, Ealing Passenger Transport Users Group, Friends of the Earth, London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA), London Borough of Lewisham, London TravelWatch, Southwark Living Streets, Stop Killing Cyclists, Sustrans and Westminster Cycling Campaign.
- 6.4.5. Westminster City Council stated that it ‘... recognises the need for the charge to reflect changes in inflation, however would sound a note of caution about the size of the increase and its particular effect on hard pressed families and motorists.’ This has been considered as a neutral response. The Whittington Health NHS Trust said that it neither supported nor opposed and NHS England did not state a view.
- 6.4.6. Of public and business respondents, 77 per cent opposed the price increase, 11 per cent supported it and nine per cent neither supported nor opposed.
- 6.4.7. Five thousand, five hundred and thirty-four comments were made by public and business respondents regarding the proposal. These were broadly similar to the comments made and issues raised by stakeholders. However, as stated above, the response from stakeholders with regard to support or opposition for the price increase was fairly evenly split, whereas public and business respondents were much more likely to oppose it. Westminster City Council, which is one of the eight boroughs for which all or part of the borough is in the Congestion Charging zone, and the only one of them to respond to the consultation, did not state either support or opposition.

Issues raised

- 6.4.8. The following is a list of the comments/issues raised:
- The current charge is adequate and does not need to be increased
 - The Congestion Charge is adequate at current level given other costs to motorists
 - The Congestion Charge is a burden on businesses, including those that make deliveries
 - The Congestion Charge is intended only to raise revenue
 - The proposed charge increase is not enough to deter trips but is an additional burden
 - The charge increase will be passed to London residents and visitors
 - The charge increase should be lower as it does not reflect inflation
 - The charge increase should be same across payment channels
 - Price increase should be higher to further reduce congestion

- Public transport is not always a feasible alternative
- Support for the increase as a way to encourage sustainable travel, reduce pollution and congestion

Current charge level is adequate / motorists facing rising costs of fuel, tax

- 6.4.9. Four stakeholders stated that the charge was already at the correct level and should not be increased: the Embassy of Lebanon, East London Business Alliance. UKIP London Region stated that the charge increase was inappropriate given the costs of motoring such as VED, parking charges and other road tolls. Two stakeholders also commented that the Congestion Charge should be reviewed annually as part of the annual fares decision: Ealing Passenger Transport Users' Group and London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group.
- 6.4.10. Of the 5,534 comments made by public and business respondents, 23 per cent of these stated that the charge does not need to increase, commenting on the rising costs of fuel, vehicle taxes and driving generally.

TfL response

- 6.4.11. The Mayor is required to keep the Congestion Charge under review and ensure that it remains effective. In order to do this it is necessary from time to time to review the level of the charge. TfL has considered carefully the right level of charge increase and the potential impacts of the increase if it is implemented, as set out in the Impact Assessment published for the consultation.
- 6.4.12. As a result of inflation, real-term costs of driving within the Congestion Charging zone have decreased over time. The financial deterrent of the charge has therefore reduced over time and it is necessary to increase the charge in order to maintain the effectiveness of the scheme.
- 6.4.13. Without the Congestion Charge, congestion in central London would be worse. By reducing traffic levels, the Congestion Charge benefits those who drive private and commercial vehicles in London.
- 6.4.14. The proposed charge increase of 16 per cent is three percentage points above the 13 per cent inflation there has been since the last charge increase in 2011. This 3 per cent is added to ensure that the charge remains effective as a deterrent to driving in the CCZ during charging hours.
- 6.4.15. By increasing the price slightly above inflation, TfL is able to ensure that the charge retains its deterrent effect for a few years beyond the price increase in 2014 (the exact number of years is dependent upon future inflation rates). Additionally, the charges are rounded to the nearest 50p to be clear and memorable to customers.

TfL recognises that these are difficult economic times and that certain costs related to motoring have risen, chiefly the cost of fuel, insurance and in some cases vehicle taxation³ (Vehicle Excise Duty, which is set by Government). These rising costs impact on everyone as they are absorbed within the overall economy and contribute to, for example, rising food prices. However the cost of motoring relative to the cost of public transport has continued to fall⁴ and in order to maintain the deterrent effect of the charge compared to other transport costs and public transport fares, it is necessary from time to time to increase the Congestion Charge.

- 6.4.16. Unlike public transport fares, the Congestion Charge is not increased on an annual basis. This is because of the different legal framework which pertains to the Congestion Charge: the level of the charge must be specified in the Scheme Order, which is why it is necessary to consult on a Variation Order when it is proposed to make changes to the scheme. TfL monitors the levels of congestion in central London and this informs the decision to propose a charge increase. Additionally, any proposed changes to the scheme, including a charge increase, must be subject to a statutory consultation on a Variation Order.
- 6.4.17. The charge has been raised twice before: in 2005 when it was raised from the original £5 charge to £8, and then again in 2011 when it was raised to the present level of £10 (these are headline daily charges; the price increase was reflected across all payment channels as is currently proposed). Inflation continues to rise between price increases but is not reflected in an annual charge increase; rather the charge is increased from time to time when it becomes necessary and is always preceded by a statutory consultation.
- 6.4.18. Should the Mayor confirm the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge, TfL would undertake a public information campaign to inform customers in advance of the introduction of the change.

Adverse impact on businesses / charities

³ <http://www.racfoundation.org/data/cost-of-motoring-index>

⁴ <http://www.racfoundation.org/data/cost-of-transport-index>

- 6.4.19. The FSB stated that given the increasing costs to business in London this was not the right time to increase the charge. The RHA, AICES, FTA also noted that businesses have less opportunity to change their behaviour to avoid driving in the zone during charging hours and their industries provide essential services. The RHA also noted that the London Lorry Control Scheme (LLCS) further restricts the times that operators can use London's roads. The Salvation Army and the British Red Cross stated that they had to use donated money to pay the Congestion Charge. The AICES stated that the increase is "a tax rise for businesses".
- 6.4.20. In addition, 1433 public and business comments expressed concern about the impact of the proposal on businesses operating in London.
- TfL response*
- 6.4.21. While TfL recognises that private motorists may have more flexibility than commercial vehicles in choosing the time, destination or route of their journeys, commercial vehicles nonetheless contribute to congestion and benefit from the effects of the Congestion Charge. The main aim of the Congestion Charge is to reduce traffic volumes and congestion in central London, which negatively impact upon traffic speeds and levels of congestion which in terms impact on London's productivity. In this way, the scheme may benefit commercial operators by reducing congestion and delays.
- 6.4.22. The Impact Assessment of the proposed charge increase concluded that it would have a small positive economic effect compared to taking no action. One reason for this is that it would maintain the deterrent effect of the charge in order to prevent an increase in traffic volumes and congestion, which could negatively affect London's economic productivity.
- 6.4.23. TfL offers a discount to operators in the Fleet Scheme and the convenience of a dedicated team. Fleet Auto Pay allows operators (which include charities) with six or more vehicles to register for Direct Debit payments. The Fleet Scheme provides a £1 discount on the headline daily charge so the current daily charge is £9; it is proposed that this is raised to £10.50, maintaining the £1 differential from the headline daily charge. In addition operators may be eligible for other discounts such as the Ultra Low Emission Discount (ULED), which incentivises the use of low emission vehicles with a 100% Congestion Charge discount. There is a very high level of public transport in the CCZ which provides charities and other organisations with headquarters or offices in the zone with an option other than driving.
- 6.4.24. The London Lorry Control Scheme (LLCS) is operated by London Councils on behalf of London boroughs and restricts night-time lorry movements in London to limit noise pollution for the benefit of residents. TfL has no remit to make changes to this scheme.

Congestion Charge intended only to raise revenue / will not deter trips / will be passed to customers and visitors to London

- 6.4.25. The RHA, the FTA and the FSB stated that because commercial vehicles have no alternative but to drive in the zone during charging hours, the effect of a charge increase is not to deter them but is only to raise revenue for TfL. RHA and AICES stated that the charge increase will be passed on to customers. The RHA disputes that the price increase will have a neutral effect on businesses, as stated in TfL's Impact Assessment. The FSB stated that the price increase was intended by TfL to compensate for revenue lost as a result of removing the Western Extension. The FSB called for a complete review of the Congestion Charge in light of the Roads Task Force work. UKIP stated that TfL should explore other ways of reducing congestion.
- 6.4.26. In addition, 612 public and business comments expressed concern about the impact of the proposal on businesses and individuals driving in London. 497 comments from public and business respondents stated that the charge would be passed on to customers in London.

TfL response

- 6.4.27. The primary aim of the Congestion Charging scheme is to reduce traffic and congestion in central London. While levels of congestion in London in central London are now close to pre-charging levels, traffic levels in central London continue to fall and the reason that congestion has not fallen at the same rate is attributable to a number of factors including reallocation of road space to prioritise public transport, increased pedestrianisation and increased dedicated road space for cycling, and extensive utilities and development works. Without the charge, traffic levels would rise and congestion would be worse, with resulting adverse economic impacts on London.
- 6.4.28. By law, all revenue raised from the Congestion Charge must be spent on implementing the Mayor's strategy for transport in London. Over the last decade, some £1.2bn has been generated and been invested in public transport, roads and walking and cycling schemes. The gross and net income generated from CC is published in TfL's annual accounts, which are available from TfL's website.
- 6.4.29. The table below shows how the forecasted revenue for 2014/15 has been allocated to improve transport in London.

Table 50: Forecasted application of net Congestion Charging revenue

	2014/15 £m
Bus Network Improvements	125.7

Continued enhancement of London's bus infrastructure and expansion of 24-hour routes and expansion of CCTV on buses	
Borough Plans Local transport improvements including safer routes to schools programmes	10.9
Roads and Bridges Programme for improving the quality of street conditions and bridges, including safety	14
Road Safety Plan Initiatives to reduce road casualties including engineering schemes at accident hotspots and road safety campaigns	1.6
Walking and Cycling Improvements for pedestrians, including on borough roads. Investments in cycling initiatives	3.9
Congestion charging forecast revenue	156.1

- 6.4.30. Businesses may choose to pass on the increased cost to customers however, the Congestion Charge is only one of a number of costs to business, and since it has now operated in London for over a decade, businesses have had time to factor in its cost into their operations. As set out above, the increase must keep pace with inflation (which will affect businesses' and individuals' other costs) in order to remain effective, and must also act a deterrent in order to meet its objective. Individuals will usually have more choice in their mode of transport and the Congestion Charging zone is exceptionally well-served in terms of public transport.
- 6.4.31. As noted by the RHA, TfL's Impact Assessment of the proposed changes assessed the price increase as being expected to have a neutral effect. The assessment noted that impacts on individual businesses would of course vary but that since the increase was in line with inflation, and that businesses benefit from the effect of the charge in reducing traffic levels (which lead to congestion and delays), the overall impact would be neutral.
- 6.4.32. The proposed increase in the charge is not designed to make up for the loss of revenue following the removal of the Western Extension of the Congestion Charging Zone (WEZ) in 2011. It is of course true that the removal of this zone has meant a fall in revenue from the scheme, but like any other cost, the Congestion Charge needs to respond to inflation and, additionally, act as an effective deterrent to driving in the zone in charging hours.

6.4.33. The Congestion Charge is one of many ways in which TfL is tackling congestion on the road network and is by no means the only intervention in place. The Mayor and TfL are doubling its investment in the road network from £2 billion to £4 billion across the next 10 years, helping to deliver the recommendations of the recent Mayor's Roads Task Force (RTF) to tackle the challenges facing London's streets and roads, which delivered its report in July 2013. This independent body brought together a wide range of interests and expertise and set out its recommendation for the development of a long-term strategy for roads and the need for a commitment to major investment in street management and urban design. TfL responded to the report and has set out its short-term actions and is developing its longer-term approach with regular reports⁵. TfL's approach following the RTF work includes a programme targeted at tackling congestion hotspots across London.

With regard to other means to reduce congestion, a key proposal in TfL's response to the RTF was to expand the use of technology such as SCOOT (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique), with the installation of a further 1500 SCOOT sites. This uses sensors to determine the number of vehicles at a junction and adjust the 'green light' time. SCOOT has been proven to reduce delays by around 12 per cent and the technology is now in use at more than 3,000 sites across London.

6.4.34. As specified by the MTS, the Congestion Charge is kept under review and changes are proposed from time to time in order to maintain the effectiveness of the scheme. The CC was included in the work of the RTF and is listed in its report as one of the approaches that will continue to form part of TfL's approach to managing London's roads.

Price increase should be lower/ price increase does not reflect inflation/ should be same across all payment channels

6.4.35. Five stakeholders stated that the increase was too high and did not reflect inflation. These were: Alliance of British Drivers (ABD), the Automobile Association (AA), the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), AICES and Freight Transport Association (FTA). The FSB stated that two-thirds of their members oppose the charge increase, and noted that the current inflation rate is 1.9 per cent. The FTA and AICES noted that the proposed increase to the charge for the Fleet Scheme and Auto Pay was, at 17 per cent, higher than the 16 per cent proposed increase to the headline daily charge.

6.4.36. The AA and the ABD stated that the charge had increased by more than 100 per cent since the scheme's inception, and the AA stated that congestion was 10 per cent higher than when the scheme first started. Additionally the ABD stated that service had deteriorated and so the charge should be reduced.

⁵ <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/about-tfl/how-we-work/planning-for-the-future/roads-task-force?cid=fs086>

- 6.4.37. Westminster City Council did not explicitly state that the charge should be lower but noted that there could be an adverse impact on drivers given the difficult economic situation.
- 6.4.38. Four hundred and eighty-nine comments from public and business respondents said that the price increase did not reflect inflation.

TfL Response

- 6.4.39. As set out above, the proposed increase has been calculated to reflect the 13 per cent increase in inflation⁶ since the last charge increase in 2011 and an additional three per cent increase to ensure it remains effective in the future. This means it is a real-terms increase of three per cent.
- 6.4.40. There are a number of payment channels for the Congestion Charge including CC Auto Pay and Fleet Auto Pay, which offers a £1 discount on the headline daily charge. This £1 discount would be maintained under the current proposals.
- 6.4.41. The proposed charge increase has been calculated by applying the inflation rate between now and the last charge increase (thirteen per cent) and an additional three per cent to maintain the deterrent effect of the charge in the future. This approach was applied to all of the payment channels and results in an average weighted increase of 16 per cent, which reflects the number of vehicles being paid for through each of the channels. In each case, the resulting charge was rounded up to the nearest 50 pence so that the charge is memorable. In the case of Fleet Auto Pay, a 16 per cent increase would mean a charge of £10.44, which has been rounded up to £10.50.
- 6.4.42. The original cost of the Congestion Charge on its introduction in February 2003 was £5. Since then it has been increased twice: as for the current proposed change these increases reflect inflation and the need to maintain the deterrent effect of the scheme. With regard to the AA's comment that congestion is 10 per cent higher now than when the scheme introduced, TfL would need to know more about its source for this in order to comment. As stated in the consultation materials, congestion is close to pre-charging levels but would be expected to be worse without the Congestion Charge.

⁶ Using Office for National Statistics Retail Price Index (RPI) figures

6.4.43. With regard to the ABD comment about service levels, the call wait time for the call centre is longer in order to encourage use of other channels, which has been a standard practice in industry call centres over recent years. Customer satisfaction with the Congestion Charge operation has increased year on year and the most recent survey saw the highest score ever, 87 out of 100. Retail payments for CC were discontinued in July 2013 following a consultation from November 2012 to February 2013. This channel was used for only 6 per cent of transactions.

Price increase should be higher to further reduce congestion

- 6.4.44. Three stakeholders said that the charge should be increased more than is proposed: Camden Cycling Campaign, Darren Johnson AM and Southwark Living Streets.
- 6.4.45. One hundred and forty-eight public and business comments supported a further price increase.
- 6.4.46. Darren Johnson AM stated that the Congestion Charge should be raised to £20 in order to act as a more effective deterrent to unnecessary journeys, reduce the damaging effect of congestion on the economy, provide increased money to invest in transport and better reflect the damage caused to human health by pollution from road transport. In his response, Darren Johnson AM noted the £4bn annual cost to the economy of congestion and stated that a higher charge would help to increase productivity and so act as an offset to the increased cost to business of paying the higher charge. Southwark Living Streets also said that the charge should be higher in order to further reduce private and commercial vehicle usage and Camden Cycling Campaign called for a doubling of the charge to discourage driving and reduce pollution.

TfL Response

- 6.4.47. TfL considers that the proposed increase strikes the right balance between maintaining the deterrent effect of the charge and enabling those drivers who need to use the zone to continue to do so. There are no plans for a further increase, while the scheme is kept under review, and any further changes to the scheme such as an increase would be subject to public consultation. Proposal 129 of MTS sets out that the Mayor will keep the scheme under review.

Public transport is not always a feasible alternative

- 6.4.48. Of the 5,534 comments from public and business respondents, six per cent (312) stated that it was unfair to increase the price for people who could not use public transport, for example people with mobility difficulties or night shift workers. Stakeholders did not comment on this issue.

TfL Response

- 6.4.49. The 100% Blue Badge discount on the Congestion Charge is available for people who have a Blue Badge in recognition of their need to park closer to their location (the Blue Badge is a national scheme administered by local councils not TfL). People registered for this discount will not be affected by the charge increase.
- 6.4.50. TfL is committed to improving the accessibility of public transport in London. All of its bus fleet is accessible, with low-floor access, a wheelchair space and a ramp, and TfL is working towards 100 per cent accessible bus stops. Step-free access is in place at around a quarter of Tube stations with a focus on strategic interchanges. TfL also provides door-to-door transport services such as Dial-a-Ride.
- 6.4.51. All of the discounts and exemptions for the Congestion Charge are kept under review and in the past TfL has considered whether it would be appropriate to offer new discounts for example to night-shift workers. It was not considered appropriate to offer discounts to certain groups of workers because by driving in the zone, they contribute to congestion, like any other vehicle. Additionally, it would be difficult to define the eligible group and enforcing any discount and the likely consequence of calls for similar discounts for other groups. The effect of additional discounts of this nature would be to undermine the scheme. No new evidence has come to light to justify a further review of whether further discounts are merited and therefore it is not considered appropriate to propose additional discounts.

Supports the increase as a way to encourage sustainable travel, reduce pollution and congestion

- 6.4.52. Eight stakeholders supported the increase as a means to encourage sustainable travel. These were: Camden Cycling campaign, Friends of the Earth, London TravelWatch, Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA), London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, London Borough of Lewisham, Sustrans, Westminster Cycling campaign. As noted above, three stakeholders called for a higher increase.
- 6.4.53. London TravelWatch stated that the proposed increase would help to maintain the deterrent effect of the Congestion Charge and asked to be assured that all revenue from the scheme is used only for transport improvements. London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group stated that it was important for the level of the Congestion Charge to keep pace with public transport fare increases in order to maintain the relative deterrent effect. The LTDA similarly stated that it needed to increase in order to remain effective. The London Borough of Lewisham stated that it shared TfL's objective of encouraging public transport use in place of private cars.

- 6.4.54. Westminster Cycling Campaign stated that there was a need to increase the charge because if its cost falls in real terms, the decongestion benefits achieved in 2003 would be lost, and that the Congestion Charge helps to improve bus journey time reliability and to realise the Mayor's Vision for Cycling. Sustrans noted that the proposed increase was at a minimum level and asked that TfL ring-fence the income for use in schemes to improve walking and cycling facilities in London.
- 6.4.55. 261 comments were received by public and business in support of the Congestion Charge increase. A further 202 comments supported the scheme in general as it promotes sustainable travel and healthy means of travel.

TfL Response

- 6.4.56. TfL notes this support and reiterates that the Congestion Charge is one of a number of approaches which helps to manage congestion in London and contributes towards the Mayoral objective of sustainable and efficient economic growth in London. The trend toward increased public transport use has continued in London since the introduction of the scheme. While the primary objective of the Congestion Charge is to reduce traffic and congestion in Central London, it is one part of a strategy which includes measures to increase walking and cycling and improve public transport in London. It will be important to maintain this trend in order to enable the sustainable economic and population growth which is forecast for London.
- 6.4.57. As stated above, all the revenue from the Congestion Charge is reinvested in transport in London, including facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

TfL recommendation

No change to the Variation Order

6.5. Theme D: NHS Reimbursement for CC Auto Pay

- 6.5.1. Representations made within this theme concern the proposal to enable eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed. Currently the 100% NHS Reimbursement is not available for payments made via this channel.

Analysis of responses

- 6.5.2. Twelve stakeholders (41 per cent of stakeholders) commented on issues relevant to this section and 17 made no comment. Stakeholders who commented were: the AA, British Red Cross, Camden Cycling Campaign, Ealing Passenger Transport Users Group, the Embassy of Lebanon, the London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, London TravelWatch, the Salvation Army, Stop Killing Cyclists, the Sue Ryder Foundation, UKIP London Region and the Whittington Health NHS Trust.

- 6.5.3. Of the public and business responses, 70 per cent supported this proposal, 6 per cent opposed it and 21 per cent neither supported nor opposed it. Four per cent did not answer this question.
- 6.5.4. Around 253 comments were made by public and business respondents regarding the proposal. Most stakeholders who commented on this proposal did not give reasons for their support. The following issues were raised by public and business respondents:

Issues raised

- 6.5.5. The following is a list of the comments/issues raised:
 - Support for NHS-related travel reimbursement and requests that it is publicised
 - Offering discounts to people working in certain industries is not fair
 - Concern about NHS trip reimbursement as it may increase costs for other users, or concerns that people could abuse the system
 - TfL should introduce discounts for people working for organisations that support the NHS and/or people receiving private medical treatment

Supports introduction of facility and requests that it is publicised

- 6.5.6. All of the twelve stakeholders who commented on this proposal supported it. Of the 253 open text responses from public and business respondents, 70 per cent stated their support for the proposal. UKIP London Region commented that it was only fair to introduce this facility for the NHS Reimbursement and called for it to be introduced more quickly.

TfL response

- 6.5.7. TfL welcomes the support for this proposal and notes that it is in response to requests from customers. The NHS Reimbursement scheme is not administered directly by TfL but by specified NHS organisations within the Congestion Charging zone. As described in Section 2.4 above, information material regarding the proposed change, eligibility for the NHS Reimbursement and the operation of the scheme has been sent to NHS organisations, which is timely given the recent reorganisation of Primary Care Trusts into Clinical Commissioning Groups.
- 6.5.8. However it is not cost-effective to introduce this change more quickly: as described in the consultation materials the service provider for the Congestion Charge will change in late 2015 and this and other changes have been provided for in the new contract. It should be noted that the NHS Reimbursement itself remains available for payment via the other channels available.

NHS Reimbursement not fair / concern about abuse and cost of the scheme

- 6.5.9. Of comments from public and business respondents, 15 per cent stated that the NHS Reimbursement was not fair and 7 per cent had concerns about abuse of the discount and its costs to TfL. Some stated that a similar discount should be available to workers in other industries.

TfL response

- 6.5.10. The 100% NHS Reimbursement has been available for eligible NHS journeys since the commencement of the Congestion Charging Scheme in 2003. The NHS reimbursement scheme is in recognition of the NHS duty to provide universal health care which is free at the point of use. It should be noted that there are strict criteria which are applied to determine eligibility for this reimbursement. To be eligible, patients must be clinically assessed as too ill to travel to an appointment on public transport; for NHS staff, the criteria is that they are using their vehicle for official business and claim travel expenses. In the vehicle they must be carrying types of specified items or be responding to an emergency when on call.
- 6.5.11. The NHS Reimbursement is by no means a blanket reimbursement to all NHS staff or patients and TfL works with NHS Trusts to encourage both staff and patients to use public transport where possible.
- 6.5.12. It is not considered appropriate to offer a similar discount to other groups of workers, such as shift workers for example, because the same requirement to provide services free at the point of use does not apply. Any such discount would be very difficult to define and could be considered unreasonable and unfair to other workers, leading to legal challenge. The NHS Reimbursement recognises that for *certain* NHS staff and patient journeys only, it may be necessary to drive in the Congestion Charging zone.
- 6.5.13. The Congestion Charging zone has a very high level of public transport provision, and it is important to control the number of discounts and exemptions available in order not to undermine the effectiveness of the scheme.
- 6.5.14. TfL works with NHS organisations to ensure that the NHS Reimbursement scheme is well-understood and each claim is checked by an automated process which does not add to the cost of the scheme. It is a relatively small element of the scheme in terms of cost and, like all other discounts and exemptions, is kept under review by TfL.

Discount for private medical patients and organisations which support the NHS

- 6.5.15. Ten comments from public and business respondents (four per cent of those that made a comment on this theme) stated that the NHS Reimbursement scheme be available to patients receiving private medical treatment
- 6.5.16. NHS England stated that due to changes to the organisation of the NHS, certain functions previously undertaken by NHS staff were now undertaken by local authority staff

TfL response

- 6.5.17. As stated above, the NHS reimbursement scheme is in recognition of the NHS' duty to provide universal health care which is free at the point of use. No such obligation applies to private medical providers and patients who choose to use these services are aware of the costs involved. Therefore it is not considered appropriate to offer a similar discount. In addition, given the diversity of private medical services available, such a discount would be very difficult to define and lead to requests for discounts for people using other services in the zone.
- 6.5.18. With regard to the comment from NHS England, TfL appreciates their contribution to understanding the potential impact of NHS reorganisation on the operation of the Congestion Charge. This change needs to be further understood before recommending any change to the Scheme Order and TfL will work with stakeholders on this matter.

TfL recommendation

No change to the Variation Order

6.6. Theme E: Amendment of the date of a pre-paid charge

- 6.6.1. Representations made within this theme concern the proposal to enable customers to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel. This would allow a customer who has already paid the Congestion Charge in advance but who can no longer travel on the date paid for to change the day of travel to a future date. A £2.50 administrative fee would apply to make this change.

Analysis of responses

- 6.6.2. Sixteen stakeholders supported this proposal and the remaining thirteen stakeholders did not state their views. Seventy-seven per cent of comments from public and business respondents were in support of the proposal, 18 per cent neither supported nor opposed it, one per cent opposed it and four per cent did not state a view.

6.6.3. Seventy-seven comments from public and business respondents referred to this proposal. These responses were different to those made by stakeholders in that public and business respondents' comments were supportive, and the two stakeholders who commented challenged the proposal.

Issues raised

6.6.4. The following is a list of the comments/issues raised:

- Support for the proposal
- Customers should not have to pay to amend the date of travel

Supports proposal/ should not have to pay to amend date of travel

6.6.5. Sixty-three comments from public and business respondents (82 per cent of those who commented on this proposal) stated that there should not be a charge to amend the date of travel. Fourteen respondents used the comments box to state their support for the proposal.

TfL response

6.6.6. TfL welcomes the support for this proposal and notes that it increases flexibility in how the customer can use the Congestion Charge. However this flexibility incurs an operational cost to TfL in terms of the staff time and scheme functionality required to make this amendment, which is reflected in the £2.50 administration fee. The small fee will also deter customers from using this facility routinely. In the current situation a customer who has paid the daily charge but then finds they cannot travel in the Congestion Charge zone in that day would not be able to re-use the charge payment: the charge paid is not recoverable. With the proposed change, the payment of the £2.50 fee will enable the customer to use the same payment to travel in the zone on another day.

6.6.7. It was stated in the consultation that the proposed changes would come into effect on three different dates, subject to the public consultation and the Mayor's subsequent decision. These were: the charge increase on 16 June 2014, the minor administrative changes from May 2014 and the other changes in late 2015. At the time it was proposed that the introduction of the facility to amend the date of a pre-paid charge would be introduced from May 2014 following the Mayor's decision. However, following further discussions with the CC service provider, TfL is now recommending that it be introduced from November 2015, along with the other changes such as the introduction of Direct Debit for CC Auto Pay. This will enable the change to be introduced at a lower cost and, because the data aligns with other changes, be better understood by customers.

TfL recommendation

TfL is recommending a minor modification to the Variation Order to delay the introduction of the facility to amend the date of a pre-paid charge on the day of travel. It recommends that this change is introduced in November 2015.

6.7. Theme F: Minor changes to the Congestion Charging Scheme

6.7.1. Representations made within this theme concerned the following proposals :

- Amending the vehicle seat capacity for the Residents' Discount
- Including a reference to card payment failures
- Updating the definition for recovery vehicles
- Updating the references in the NHS scheme

Analysis of responses

6.7.2. With regard to the first proposal (seat capacity for Residents' Discount), eight stakeholders supported it, and the remaining twenty-one did not state a view. No stakeholders opposed it. Those in support were: East London Business Alliance, Embassy of Lebanon, London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, the London Borough of Lewisham, the Salvation Army, the Sue Ryder Foundation and the Whittington Health NHS Trust.

6.7.3. For the second proposal (reference to card payment failures), eleven stakeholders supported it and the remaining eighteen did not state a view. No stakeholders opposed it. Those in support were: the AA, the British Red Cross, East London Business Alliance, Embassy of Lebanon, London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, the London Borough of Lewisham, London TravelWatch, the Salvation Army, the Sue Ryder Foundation, the Whittington Health NHS Trust and UKIP London Region.

6.7.4. In response to the third proposal (recovery vehicles), ten stakeholders supported it and the remaining nineteen did not state a view. No stakeholders opposed it. Those in support were: Ealing Passenger Transport User Group, Embassy of Lebanon, London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, Licensed Taxi Drivers Association, London Borough of Lewisham, London TravelWatch, Sue Ryder Foundation, Sustrans, Whittington Health NHS Trust and UKIP London Region.

- 6.7.5. On the fourth proposal (reference to the NHS), nine stakeholders supported it and the remaining twenty did not state a view. No stakeholders opposed it. Those in support were: British Red Cross, Ealing Passenger Transport User Group, Embassy of Lebanon, London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, Licensed Taxi Drivers Association, London TravelWatch, Sue Ryder Foundation, Whittington Health NHS Trust, UKIP London Region.
- 6.7.6. With regard to public and business respondents, for each of the four proposals the biggest proportion of responses was 'neither support nor oppose'. All four of the proposals were more supported than opposed. A full breakdown of the responses is set out in Section 4.7 above.
- 6.7.7. One hundred and five comments were made by public and business respondents regarding the proposal. Two stakeholders (the AA and the RHA) commented on the recovery vehicles proposal. NHS England commented on the update to the NHS definition.

Issues raised

- 6.7.8. The following is a list of the comments/issues raised:
- General support or little opposition/comment
 - Notifications should be sent to customers when card payments fail
 - There should be an online facility to check if drivers have been in the zone
 - Queries on updating the definition for recovery vehicles
 - Clarification on current NHS governing bodies

General support or no comment

- 6.7.9. For each of the four minor administrative changes, a large proportion of both stakeholder and public and business respondents did not answer the question or responded that they neither supported nor opposed it.

TfL Response

- 6.7.10. TfL notes the general support for these changes which are intended to keep the Scheme Order up to date and will achieve minor cost savings through a reduction in administration. Given that the changes have no impact on customers, it is not unexpected that there is so little opposition or comment.

Notifications should be sent when card payments fail

- 6.7.11. Sixty-two comments from public and business respondents stated that notification should be sent to a customer when a card payment fails.

TfL Response

- 6.7.12. It is already the case that notifications are sent when card payments fail for Auto Pay payments and all other payments are advised at the point of payment if the card payment fails. For Auto Pay payment failures customers are notified via their preferred method of contact (email or post) of the payment failure and are given five days to pay via another means.

Online facility

- 6.7.13. Thirty-one comments from public and business respondents stated that there should be an online tool to allow drivers to check if they have been in the zone.

TfL Response

- 6.7.14. It is the responsibility of the individual driver to pay the Congestion Charge if they drive within the zone during charging hours. The Congestion Charge zone is signed on its approach roads and within the zone as well as being a feature of many satellite navigation devices. Drivers who wish to remove any uncertainty about paying the charge could register for CC Auto Pay and have the charge automatically taken from them. There are no plans for an online tool which would be very complex and costly to develop. However, TfL provides an online map and address location check tool for customers wishing to check if they are travelling in the zone.

Queries on updating the definition for recovery vehicles

- 6.7.15. The AA and the Road Haulage Association queried the definition of a recovery vehicle in the Scheme Order. The AA stated that the change from PAS 43 to ISO 9001 may impact some of the vehicle recovery operators it uses. The RHA stated that it was content with the proposal provided that it is in line with the VOSA/DVSA definition.

TfL Response

- 6.7.16. A 100 per cent discount on the Congestion Charge is available for eligible assisted breakdown vehicles as is a 100% discount for eligible roadside recovery vehicles. No change is proposed to the definition of recovery vehicles.

- 6.7.17. It is however proposed that the reference to an accredited recovery organisation used in the definition of breakdown vehicles is updated. The proposed change would update the British / UK Accreditation Service Standard relevant to the certified accreditation body responsible for accrediting recovery organisations. Currently the Order refers to ISO 9002:1994, which is an obsolete version of the ISO 9000 quality management standard. The current version is known as ISO 9001:2008, with previous industry specific versions combining ISO 9001, ISO 9002 and ISO 9003 under the year 2000 edition of the standard. ISO 9001:2008 contains no new requirements compared to the previous ISO 9001:2000 edition, but provides clarifications to the existing requirements of ISO 9001:2000.
- 6.7.18. The requirement to be certified to PAS 43 has never been included in the Order as an additional pre-requisite to be eligible for the 100 per cent discount. TfL will continue to monitor any further developments of this sort and would be pleased to work with stakeholders if further issues arise which may lead to changes to the Scheme Order.

Clarifications on current NHS governing bodies

- 6.7.19. NHS England clarified that the updated reference to the body responsible now responsible for the administration of the NHS Reimbursement should be the National Commissioning Board, not the Clinical Commission Group, which had been proposed by TfL. It also commented that in future TfL may need to include certain local authority staff in the NHS Reimbursement, as in some cases these have assumed responsibilities previously undertaken by NHS staff.

TfL Response

- 6.7.20. In 2013, the NHS underwent a major restructure which, in addition to a number of other changes, abolished some NHS organisations and created new organisations to take their place. The operation of the Congestion Charging NHS Reimbursement scheme relies on the relevant NHS organisation vetting the Congestion Charge payments made by members of NHS staff and patients and submitting a claim to TfL for reimbursement. Following the NHS restructure, some of the organisations that were listed in the Scheme Order as being eligible to submit claims for reimbursement no longer exist and therefore the wording requires updating.
- 6.7.21. TfL proposed amendments to reflect these changes and is pleased to have clarification from NHS England so that the correct modification can be recommended. TfL recommends that a modification is made to the Variation Order, as advised by NHS England.
- 6.7.22. There would be no change to the operation of the NHS Reimbursement scheme as a result of this change. As set out in Theme D above, there is a separate proposal to allow NHS Reimbursement from a payment made by CC Auto Pay.

- 6.7.23. TfL will also consider if there is a need to make further changes in future (subject to public consultation) as a result of the NHS reorganisation and the consequent move to local authority employment of staff performing certain NHS services.

TfL recommendation

TfL is recommending a minor modification to the Variation Order to refer to the National Commissioning Board as the responsible body for the administration of the NHS Reimbursement (not Clinical Commissioning Groups as was proposed).

6.8. Theme G: Other comments on the Congestion Charge

- 6.8.1. Representations made within this theme concerned the nature of the charge, the size of the Congestion Charging zone and suggested changes to the operation of the scheme. Comments were also made in support and opposition to the Congestion Charge.

Analysis of responses

- 6.8.2. Seventeen stakeholders commented on issues relevant to this section. These were: Alliance of British Drivers (ABD), British Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association (BVRLA), Camden Cycling Campaign, Carplus Trust, Darren Johnson AM, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), Freight Transport Association (FTA), Friends of the Earth, London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, London Borough of Lewisham, Southwark Living Streets, Stop Killing Cyclists, Sustrans, Westminster City Council, Westminster Cycling Campaign, Whittington Health NHS Trust and UK Independence Party - London Region (UKIP).
- 6.8.3. 4,252 comments were made by public and business respondents regarding the proposal. These were broadly similar to the issues raised by stakeholders.

Issues raised

- 6.8.4. The following is a list of the comments/issues raised:
- The Congestion Charge is a tax designed to raise revenue
 - There is no evidence of benefits of Congestion Charge or how revenue from it is used
 - The Congestion Charge should be scrapped
 - TfL should explore other ways of reducing congestion and pollution
 - Suggestions for changes to discounts/exemptions
 - Suggestions for changes to the operation of the Congestion Charging zone, including hours of operation and geographical coverage

- Support for the Congestion Charge as a means to promote sustainable travel
- Other suggestions
- Consultation is predetermined

Congestion Charge is a tax to raise revenue and there are no demonstrable benefits in terms of congestion and/or Congestion Charge should be scrapped/TfL should explore other ways of reducing congestion

- 6.8.5. Three stakeholders stated that the Congestion Charge is a tax to raise revenue and is not driven by congestion or the environment. These stakeholders were: ABD, FSB, and UKIP.
- 6.8.6. ABD stated that the scheme is about raising revenue rather than reducing congestion and stated that it is a tax that should be scrapped. They also stated that congestion has not come down and TfL does not publish figures on it.
- 6.8.7. The FSB stated that a recent survey has shown that 40 per cent of their members think the Congestion Charge is a tax on their business.
- 6.8.8. UKIP questions the justification for the Congestion Charge, stating that whatever the claimed congestion or environmental aims of the scheme (which it also questions and attributes to improvements in vehicle technology), the real aim is to raise revenue.
- 6.8.9. Around 1,000 public and business comments (approximately 9 per cent of all respondents) were received stating that the Congestion Charge is a tax designed to raise revenue, rather than being driven by congestion or the environment. There were 486 further comments regarding the lack of published evidence on the congestion benefits of the scheme.

TfL Response

- 6.8.10. TfL and the UK Government are of the view that the Congestion Charge is better described as a charge for a service and not a tax. This position has been reiterated previously. The net revenue raised from the scheme is reinvested in London's transport network: see Table 51 below.

- 6.8.11. In response to ABD's comment about TfL no longer publishing information on the impact of the Congestion Charge, it should be noted that the dedicated Congestion Charge Annual Impacts Monitoring Report was originally intended to report for five years from the start of the scheme, although an extra year was added for the introduction of the Western Extension. It was never intended to continue in this format beyond that date. Information on the performance of London's roads, including the Congestion Charging zone, is included in the annual Travel in London report, available on TfL's website.
- 6.8.12. The Congestion Charge has been effective in delivering congestion reduction benefits by deterring traffic from driving in central London and reducing traffic volumes. However, while traffic volumes have been falling within London, traffic speeds have also been getting progressively slower over the past decade; this is particularly the case in central London. The historic decline in traffic speeds is most likely due to interventions that have reduced the effective capacity of the road network in order to improve urban realm, increase road safety, prioritise public transport, and an increase in pedestrian and cycle traffic, as well as an increase in road works by utilities and general development activity.
- 6.8.13. More recently, in the past six years this trend towards slower traffic movement has ceased and traffic speeds have remained more stable, as evidenced by GPS satellite tracking data from 2006 to 2012 (Travel in London 6⁷). Indicators of excess delay or congestion also suggest a stable overall picture, with some improvements in the past two years.
- 6.8.14. While levels of congestion in central London are close to pre-charging levels, without the financial deterrent of the Congestion Charge, the number of vehicles driving in the central London zone would be likely to rise and congestion would be likely to worsen. With this in mind, there is no plan to remove the Congestion Charging scheme. Proposal 129 of the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS, 2010) states that:

"The Mayor, through TfL, will operate and monitor Congestion Charging in the original central London Congestion Charging zone. The Mayor will keep the scheme under review, making variations to ensure the continued effectiveness of the policy reflects best practice, improves the operation of the scheme, or helps it to deliver the desired outcomes of the MTS."

⁷ <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/travel-in-london-reports>

- 6.8.15. TfL is tackling congestion on the road network in a number of ways in addition to the Congestion Charge. For details, please refer to section 6.4 of this report. With regard to the UKIP comment about environmental benefits from the Congestion Charge, TfL does not dispute that factors such as the introduction of Euro standards for new vehicles and changes in vehicle technology have helped to reduce pollutant emissions from vehicles. Nevertheless the Congestion Charge plays a role in reducing emissions by incentivising the use of vehicles with low or no emissions, by offering the 100% Ultra Low Emission Discount (ULED).
- 6.8.16. In response to queries as to whether the aim of the Congestion Charge is to raise revenue: the primary aim of the Congestion Charge is to reduce traffic and congestion in Central London. Additional revenue raised and environmental improvements are secondary benefits of the scheme. By law, all surplus income generated by the Congestion Charging Scheme must be reinvested in public transport in London. Revenue is therefore incorporated into the overall TfL Business Plans. In the first 10 years of its operation, the Scheme generated in excess of £1.2bn in net revenue.
- 6.8.17. Table 51 below shows how the revenue from the charge was allocated in 2012/13:

Table 51: Allocation of forecast revenue 2012/13

	2012/13 £million
Bus network improvements Continued enhancement of London's bus infrastructure and expansion of 24-hour routes and expansion of CCTV on buses	96
Borough Plans Local transport improvements including safer routes to schools programme	8
Roads and Bridges Programme for improving the quality of street conditions and bridges, including safety	10
Road Safety Plan Initiatives to reduce road casualties including engineering schemes at accident hotspots and road safety campaigns	1
Walking and Cycling Improvements for pedestrians, including on borough roads. Investments in cycling initiatives	3
	118

Suggestions for changes to discounts/exemptions

- 6.8.18. Seven stakeholders made comments and suggestions for amending the discount criteria. These were: BVRLA, Camden Cycling Campaign, Carplus Trust, Darren Johnson AM, FSB, FTA and Stop Killing Cyclists.
- 6.8.19. The FTA asked TfL to consider providing discounts or exemptions for freight vehicles because there are no charge-free breaks in the working day to encourage deliveries to be made outside the rush hour; while the London Lorry Control Scheme restricts HGV movements at night and on weekends. The FSB requests that TfL recognises the difference between essential and non-essential journeys. The FSB also requests that TfL considers a discount to assist 'micro-businesses', similar to the Residents' Discount.
- 6.8.20. The BVRLA call for exemption to the Congestion Charging scheme for rental vehicles, based on the sustainable transport benefits of vehicle rental. Carplus Trust request that further consideration is given to the level of charges applied to car club vehicles located in the Congestion Charge zone to reflect the Residents' Discount. They cite research which indicates that car hire and car clubs reduce car ownership and use and have lower than average vehicle emissions.
- 6.8.21. Darren Johnson AM suggested TfL considers a 'polluter pays' principle whereby businesses make an appropriate contribution to offset the pollution they generate. The FTA also states that TfL should offer discounts to the types of cleaner freight vehicles on the market, namely Euro VI vehicles, so this acts as an incentive to upgrade their fleets. The FTA also states that it is imperative that discounts and incentives must be future-proofed to provide certainty for those investing in new vehicles. FSB stated that in a survey of their businesses, over 35 per cent of firms agreed that charges should be priced according to environmental performance.
- 6.8.22. Camden Cycling Campaign stated that it is against the 100 per cent discount for low emission vehicles (ULED) as they still contribute to congestion. This was also a comment from 49 public and business respondents. Stop Killing Cyclists stated that the Residents' Discount is far too low.
- 6.8.23. Three hundred and twenty-five public and business comments also called for discounts for those required to drive in London for work/business purposes.
- 6.8.24. One hundred and twenty-five comments from public and business respondents requested that the low emission discount/greener vehicle discount be reinstated as it encourages people to buy environmentally-friendly cars.

TfL response

- 6.8.25. TfL acknowledges FTA's and FSB's requests for separate consideration of freight, micro-businesses and essential journeys, and the comments from the public and business respondents regarding discounts for those having to drive in London for work/business. However, TfL has investigated this and is unable to grant discounts and exemptions for essential or business journeys on the basis that it would be very difficult to define or enforce and it is impractical to distinguish between 'essential' and 'non-essential' journeys or vehicles.
- 6.8.26. The Mayor and TfL reviewed the discount and exemption categories in 2010. It reviewed requests from commercial enterprises, charities and private health care providers including small businesses for which the FSB requests a discount. It was recommended that they should remain subject to the full Congestion Charge, as to exempt them would undermine the entire scheme. This is because the deterrent effect of the charge would be removed for a large number of customers which would significantly impact on the performance and integrity of the Congestion Charging scheme. Organisations with six or more vehicles, including freight and other commercial vehicles, can register for Fleet Auto Pay and pay a lower £9 daily charge per vehicle per day (this differential would be maintained if the charge is increased as proposed). Other discounts may also be available for commercial vehicles, such as ULED.
- 6.8.27. TfL is supportive of car clubs, recognising their potential to help reduce congestion and vehicle emissions. TfL actively promotes and supports car clubs in a number of ways, including supporting the Carplus Trust, providing funding from 2003 to 2013/14 for boroughs to install dedicated car club spaces to support expansion and promoting car clubs on the TfL website. However, TfL does not consider it appropriate to provide a discount from the Congestion Charging scheme for car clubs or car hire vehicles, as requested by the BVRLA and Carplus. The primary aim of the scheme is to reduce traffic and congestion in central London. Whilst car clubs and rental vehicles may contribute to an overall reduction in the number of vehicles in London, car club cars and rental vehicles still contribute to congestion in central London. It is therefore not appropriate to provide a specific discount from the Congestion Charge for these vehicles. Car clubs and car rental vehicles are eligible for the ULED should these vehicles meet the emissions criteria.

- 6.8.28. The availability of an ‘environmental’ discount has been a feature of the scheme since its inception and acts as an incentivise those who continue to drive in central London to switch to the cleanest vehicles. The MTS requires the Mayor to regularly review the Congestion Charge and therefore its environmental discounts are subject to regular review. The current discount is the Ultra Low Emission Discount (ULED), a 100 per cent discount for electric vehicles and cars and vans with CO₂ emissions of 75g/km or less that meet the Euro 5 standard. This replaced the Greener Vehicle Discount (GVD), which had replaced the Alternative Fuel Discount (AFD) before it. These changes have been in response to an increasing number of vehicles meeting the earlier discounts’ criteria as technology which enables the production of lower emission vehicles has developed relatively quickly. TfL has therefore needed to tighten the standards in order to preserve the decongestion benefits of the scheme and ensure that only vehicles with the lowest emissions benefit from a discount.
- 6.8.29. Since the ULED discount is available to cars and vans it offers an opportunity for a 100% discount for commercial vehicles. Electric vehicles over 3.5 tonnes are eligible for the ULED on the basis of having fuel-type electric. TfL recognises that HGVs have a business need to operate within the Congestion Charging zone and it is important to explore opportunities to promote best practice. Therefore TfL will continue to work with industry and its representatives including the FTA to see if there are options for incentivising low carbon or alternative fuel HGVs.
- 6.8.30. TfL acknowledges FSB, FTA and Darren Johnson AM’s comments regarding incentives to encourage the cleanest vehicles, including for HGVs, such as a discount for Euro VI vehicles. However, since Euro VI became mandatory for all new HGVs, buses and coaches from January 2014 and such a discount could be seen to reward existing purchasing behaviour.
- 6.8.31. Options for future standards and incentives are being considered under the development of proposals for an Ultra Low Emission Zone in Central London. Any standards and incentives proposed in ULEZ for the various vehicle types would be subject to statutory public and stakeholder consultation. TfL also acknowledges the need for any new standards to be future-proofed as far as possible to provide certainty to those investing in new technology.

6.8.32. TfL notes Camden Cycling Campaign's concern over the congestion implications of the ULED. TfL responds that the ULED incentivises only the cleanest vehicles, emitting <75g/km CO₂ and meeting Euro V standards. The primary aim of the Congestion Charge is to reduce traffic and congestion in central London and the environmental discounts are reviewed by TfL to ensure they do not impact on traffic and congestion. By reviewing the environmental discount, TfL can ensure that the eligibility criteria keeps pace with developments in vehicle technology. This will help ensure that the number of vehicles receiving such a discount does not get so large as to negatively impact on congestion.

6.8.33. In response to the comment from Stop Killing Cyclists: The 90 per cent Residents' Discount was developed through extensive consultation when the Congestion Charge was introduced. There are no current plans to adjust the level of the Residents' Discount.

Changes to scheme operation, including hours of operation and geographical coverage

- 6.8.34. Eight stakeholders made suggestions for changes to the operation of the scheme. These were: Darren Johnson AM, Friends of the Earth, FSB, London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group, Southwark Living Streets, Stop Killing Cyclists, Westminster City Council and Whittington Health NHS Trust.
- 6.8.35. The London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group stated that TfL should investigate the feasibility of introducing variable charges throughout the day to discourage road use in the most congested times. FSB state that 42 per cent of small businesses they have surveyed feel the charge should be less during off-peak hours and 34 per cent feel it should be increased during peak times. Whittington Health NHS Trust also suggested an option to restrict high polluting vehicles during certain periods of the day, stating that the scheme should be targeted to reduce congestion, rather than making it possible to drive in the zone if they are prepared to pay the charge.
- 6.8.36. Southwark Living Streets stated that TfL should consider an extension of the zone to cover the area within the North and South Circular roads. Friends of the Earth asked whether TfL should consider further measures, such as a London-wide road-user charge, are needed to ensure traffic and air pollution issues are tackled. Stop Killing Cyclists also stated that the zone is too small and the scheme does not go far enough in reducing the dominance of motor vehicles. Darren Johnson AM states that the removal of the Western Extension Zone has resulted in a net reduction in funding for investment in London's transport network and that traffic in the area has increased.

- 6.8.37. Westminster City Council would like to see additions to the existing boundary neighbourhoods buffer zone (with 90 per cent discount) to incorporate those just outside the zone, stating that the scheme boundaries have severed certain communities.
- 6.8.38. From public and business responses, there were around 475 comments suggesting changes to the Congestion Charge scheme, including: differential charging according to how long is spent in the zone; reinstatement of the Western Extension zone; expansion of the geographical coverage of the zone; and differential charging according to vehicle type. A further 85 comments were provided suggesting TfL explores more effective ways of reducing congestion e.g. traffic management measures.

TfL Response

- 6.8.39. TfL notes the suggestions regarding variable charging throughout the day to reduce traffic in the most congested times, or to restrict high polluting vehicles during certain periods of the day. The Congestion Charge is in place all day (7am to 6pm) because congestion in London occurs throughout the day. Its hours reflect the traffic conditions in London and were part of the original consultation to implement the scheme in 2003 which determined the scheme was needed throughout the day. To implement a new system would be expensive and not appropriate in terms of the congestion experienced in the zone.
- 6.8.40. Regarding the suggestions from stakeholders to extend the Congestion Charge zone area: the area of the Congestion Charge zone was developed under extensive consultation when the scheme was introduced. The extent of the zone was last reviewed in 2010 when, following a public consultation, the Mayor announced that the Western Extension of the Congestion Charging zone would be removed. Proposal 129 of the MTS states that the Mayor will operate the central London Congestion Charging zone and keep it under review, but at present there are no plans to extend the zone.

- 6.8.41. In response to the request from Friends of the Earth that TfL should consider a London-wide road user charging scheme, TfL notes that the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) is a road-user charging scheme that covers the Greater London Area and already has been successful in reducing air pollution in the Capital by encouraging the oldest and dirtiest diesel vehicles driving in Greater London to become cleaner and reduce their emission of air pollutants. As the objective of LEZ is to improve air quality, the LEZ has very strict emission standards for the most individually polluting diesel vehicles and operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The charge level is set much higher than the Congestion Charge to discourage travel into the zone by non-compliant vehicles and to incentivise vehicle owners to upgrade their vehicles to cut pollution. The Congestion Charge is a deterrent to travel, but is set at a level to enable some vehicles to make necessary journeys in the zone if they pay the charge. Like the Congestion Charge, LEZ is regularly reviewed and the standards tightened to ensure it keeps delivering air quality benefits. TfL is currently working on proposals for a possible Ultra-Low Emission Zone to tackle the specific air quality issues in Central London. There are currently no plans to widen the Congestion Charge zone to cover a bigger area of London.
- 6.8.42. With regard to Westminster City Council's request for additional areas to be included in the Residents' Discount buffer zone, there are already several 'buffer zones' i.e. additional residents' discount areas. The limit of these is identified by, for example, physical barriers to movements that would enable the resident to avoid the zone and/or alleviate potential parking and severance issues for residents living just outside the boundary of the zone. TfL reviewed these when it consulted on the removal of the WEZ in 2010 and did not recommend changes. No new evidence has been presented and TfL has no plans to re-examine the buffer zones.

Support for the Congestion Charge as a means to promote sustainable travel

- 6.8.43. Three stakeholders made general comments indicating their support for Congestion Charge as a means to encourage travel by sustainable modes: London Borough of Lewisham, Sustrans and Westminster Cycling Campaign.
- 6.8.44. London Borough of Lewisham stated that it shares TfL's objective of encouraging the use of public transport rather than the private car. It stated that a higher charge will reduce the number of vehicles passing through Lewisham and increase the funding for public transport. Westminster Cycling Campaign stated that the Congestion Charge helps to improve bus journey times and reliability, and make road space available for walking and cycling, which help to achieve the Mayor's Vision for Cycling.
- 6.8.45. Around 200 public and business respondents made general comments expressing their support for the Congestion Charge, as it promotes sustainable and healthy means of travel, and it should be further promoted.

TfL response

- 6.8.46. TfL welcomes support for the Congestion Charge and the recognition that it encourages sustainable and healthy modes of travel.

Other suggestions

- 6.8.47. The BVRLA asked TfL to consider electronic notification of PCNs for rental companies to reduce administration. It also encouraged TfL to consider a DVLA look-up facility for rental companies registering vehicles for Congestion Charging accounts/ discounts to avoid having to provide a copy of the vehicle registration document.
- 6.8.48. The City of Westminster would like to work with TfL to address fraud they experience through the submission of false address details or listing commercial premises as a residential property, believing it is possible this fraud also occurs with Congestion Charge Residents' Discounts. It also stated that the results of this consultation should be considered in the development of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), which it supports in principle.
- 6.8.49. The London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group requested that TfL seek to recover overdue payments from foreign diplomats/embassies which could be well spent on making improvements to London' transport network.

TfL response

- 6.8.50. In response to BVRLA's request that TfL considers electronic notification of PCNs: TfL regularly reviews the operation of the Congestion Charging scheme and makes changes where possible to make the scheme as efficient as possible and more user-friendly for its customers, such as with the introduction of CC and Fleet Auto Pay. However, to provide for the electronic notification of PCNs would be expensive for TfL to implement and operate because this would require extensive secure IT systems and data interfaces which would need to be available to all its customers. Furthermore, TfL is bound to send the PCN to the registered keeper of the vehicle, and is dependent on the information held by the DVLA, which does not hold email details for registered keepers. There are also very significant costs involved in obtaining and maintaining the integrity of vehicle registered keeper information from the DVLA, which means a DVLA look-up facility would not be cost effective for TfL. However, TfL does accept electronic representations against Congestion Charge PCNs.
- 6.8.51. TfL has undertaken its own investigations into fraudulent claims on the Residents' Discount in the past but welcomes the opportunity to work with Westminster City Council on this issue. TfL will also ensure that the outcome of this consultation and

information about the Congestion Charge generally are considered in the development of the proposal for an Ultra Low Emission Zone.

- 6.8.52. Regarding the money owed by foreign diplomats/embassies, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), TfL and the Mayor will continue to pursue unpaid Congestion Charge fees and related Penalty Charge Notices. Following the latest legal advice, we are pushing for the matter to be taken to the International Court of Justice by the Government and TfL continues to make representations to the FCO, who are considering this matter.

Consultation is predetermined/ insufficient information provided

- 6.8.53. From public and business respondents, 69 comments made suggested that the results of the consultation would not be taken into account in making a decision on the proposed changes and 67 comments concerned the need for more explanation of the proposed changes and their expected impact.

TfL response

- 6.8.54. The Mayor and TfL are required by law to consult on changes to the Congestion Charging scheme and the Mayor must consider the responses received in deciding whether to accept the changes as consulted on, to accept them with modifications or not to implement them at all. TfL has made considerable efforts to make customers who may be affected by the proposals aware of the consultation, including sending emails to registered customers as described in section 2.3 above.

- 6.8.55. The purpose of this Report to the Mayor is to present TfL's analysis of the responses and make recommendations to the Mayor as to his decision. Additionally, copies of all the responses are provided to the Mayor for his consideration. More information on this process is given in Chapter 7 below. It is not the case that the decision is predetermined and the result of this consultation, this report and the Mayoral Decision Form that records the Mayor's decision will be publicly available, as is usual practice following Scheme Order consultations.

- 6.8.56. TfL considers that sufficient information has been made available on the proposals and their likely impact. As well as the consultation leaflet, a Scheme Description and Supplementary Information document and an Impact Assessment were available online throughout the consultation.

TfL recommendation

No change to the Variation Order (beyond those recommended at sections 6.6 and 6.7 above).
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7 Conclusions and recommendations

7.1. TfL's conclusions

- 7.1.1. TfL considers that this Report to the Mayor on the outcomes of the consultation (alongside the Impact Assessment and Scheme Description and Supplementary Information that was provided for the consultation) provides the information and analysis needed for the Mayor to make an informed decision, taking into account the range of views expressed during the consultation, as to whether to confirm the Variation Order, with or without modifications. The Mayor has also been provided with copies of all the consultation responses. This report and the consultation responses will thus allow the Mayor to take into account the range of views expressed during the consultation.
- 7.1.2. In this report, TfL has analysed the consultation responses and set out its views on the representations received on the proposals. The proposed price increase met with a high level of public and business opposition (77 per cent). The reasons for opposing the increase included that the charge level was already adequate and it would place a burden on businesses; the level of the charge increase exceeds inflation.
- 7.1.3. Overall, there was more opposition to the proposed price increase from public respondents, with more support from stakeholders. It should be noted that TfL emailed 395,100 customers who were registered to pay the Congestion Charge to notify them of the consultation and of the 11,036 public and business respondents 9,421 said that they drive in the zone. It is not possible to say whether these respondents are registered customers, because this information is not tracked and respondents may remain anonymous. However, this does suggest that only around two per cent of regular drivers commented on the proposed price increase in this consultation.
- 7.1.4. The other proposed changes were well-supported by both public and stakeholder respondents. The proposal to introduce the option to pay CC Auto Pay by Direct Debit was supported by 67 per cent of respondents; to introduce online discount applications and renewals was supported by 82 per cent of respondents; CC Auto Pay for NHS Reimbursement by 70 per cent; and the ability to change the date on a pre-paid charge by 77 per cent of respondents. These changes are in response to customer feedback and will make the charge easier to pay and reduce TfL's costs.
- 7.1.5. Most stakeholders did not comment on these changes; some commented that they supported any changes which made the Congestion Charge easier to use and administer.

- 7.1.6. TfL is recommending that a change is made to introduce the option to change the date of travel of a pre-paid charge in November 2015, at the same time as the other proposed changes would be introduced. This will be more cost-effective and easier to understand.
- 7.1.7. There was general support and minimal opposition to the proposed administrative changes. With regard to the changes to references to card payment failures and the NHS Reimbursement, around half of respondents did not answer or neither supported nor opposed; this figure was even higher for the seat capacity and recovery vehicles changes. This is to be expected given the nature of the changes which will not affect customers' experience of the Congestion Charge.
- 7.1.8. The consultation provided further opportunity for comment on the proposed change to NHS references and following this, TfL is recommending a change to the wording so that it accurately reflects the recent changes to the NHS.
- 7.1.9. In addition to comments on the proposals being consulted on, stakeholders and the public also made general comments to the consultation relating to the Congestion Charging scheme itself. Issues raised included variable charging, extending the zone, discounts and exemptions and other traffic management issues. TfL is not recommending any changes to the Variation Order in response to these issues.
- 7.1.10. Given the high level of support for the proposed changes apart from the charge increase, and the high incidence of no response being made to the administrative changes, the section below considers in more detail the proposal to increase the charge, and should be read in conjunction with the relevant section in Chapter 6. The response to the other proposed changes is also considered in Chapter 6.

Proposal to increase the Congestion Charge

- 7.1.11. Although there was a high level of opposition to the charge increase from public and business respondents, the response from stakeholders was mixed. Overall, 77 per cent of public and business respondents opposed the charge increase, nine per cent neither supported nor opposed, and eleven per cent supported it (three per cent did not answer this question). The response from the 29 stakeholders who responded was more evenly split between support and opposition: 14 opposed the charge increase, 12 supported it and two neither supported nor opposed it. One respondent, the City of Westminster, made a neutral response on this issue.

- 7.1.12. Among public and business respondents, most stated that they drove within the zone in charging hours (9,421 respondents, 85 per cent of respondents). Of these respondents, 81 per cent opposed the charge increase and nine per cent supported it. Only eleven per cent (1,203) of these respondents stated that they did not drive in the zone in charging hours and among this group, opposition to the charge increase was much lower, at 58 per cent, with 30 per cent supporting it.
- 7.1.13. Most of the respondents who drive in the zone (69 per cent) reported that they are not registered for any discount to the Congestion Charge. This makes this group of respondents atypical of the overall group of drives in the Congestion Charging zone. Less than a quarter of drivers who are eligible to pay the Congestion Charge do so at the standard daily rate.
- 7.1.14. Given that most respondents state that they drive in the zone in charging hours and that most say they are not registered for a discount, the level of opposition to the charge increase is not surprising. It should be noted in this context that respondents to a consultation are a self-selecting group, unlike a survey. Nor is the consultation a referendum on the proposed increase. The response to the proposed charge increase is comparable to consultation on an increase to the Congestion Charge in 2005, which was opposed by 76 per cent of respondents and was subsequently implemented. In 2005, the proposed charge increase formed part of the statutory consultation on the removal of the Western Extension (WEZ) of the Congestion Charging zone. Respondents were invited to comment via an open text box on the removal of WEZ and several other changes including a charge increase. Thirteen per cent of the comments made then were in opposition to the charge increase and eight per cent were in support of it; the remainder of the comments concerned the other proposed changes or, for the proposed charge increase, were made by less than one per cent of respondents.

Impacts of the proposed charge increase

- 7.1.15. The impact of the charge increase also needs to be understood in the light of other information provided by respondents, which indicates that most drive in the zone relatively infrequently. A small number (412, 4 per cent) of public and business respondents did not state if they drove in the zone. For those who do drive in the zone, the biggest group (28 per cent) drive there once or twice per month; 11 per cent drive there five times a week.

- 7.1.16. Additionally, although most reported that they are not registered for a discount, 62 per cent stated that they are registered for CC Auto Pay (which includes Fleet Auto Pay), which provides a £1 discount on the charge and would continue to do so if the proposed charge increase is confirmed by the Mayor. This would mitigate to some extent the impact of the charge increase on this group. Within the same consultation it is also proposed to make it easier to use CC Auto Pay by enabling payment by Direct Debit: if this proposal is approved by the Mayor then the option to register for CC Auto Pay may become attractive to more people and achieve wider take-up, again mitigating the impact of the charge increase. If the proposed changes are implemented, TfL would continue to promote CC Auto Pay as the cheapest way to pay the charge.
- 7.1.17. Just over half of the public and business respondents (5,534 or 50 per cent) also commented on the proposed charge increase. Among these comments, the most frequently-made (by a quarter of those responding) was that the Congestion Charge is a burden on small businesses, including those that make deliveries. The FSB, RHA and AICES also made this comment, and also called for a discount for certain businesses which need to drive in the zone. The FSB called for a new discount similar to the 90% Residents Discount to be available to 'micro businesses' where a vehicle is needed in order to carry out the business.
- 7.1.18. TfL acknowledges that some businesses, including service and delivery companies, may have less flexibility in the times they can travel in the zone. However, these vehicles do contribute to congestion and benefit from the decongestion effects of the Congestion Charge. Any discount to businesses in the zone would undermine the deterrent effect of the charge and adversely affect the scheme's effectiveness. In addition, it would be very difficult to define and enforce a discount for some businesses and not others. Any such discount would inevitably lead to legal challenge from operators not eligible for it.
- 7.1.19. Among stakeholders who opposed the price increase, several stated that the proposed increase exceeded inflation and this comment was also made by nine per cent of public and business respondents. Twenty-three per cent of public and business respondents stated that the charge level was adequate at its current level and does not need to increase.
- 7.1.20. The proposed charge increase has been calculated by applying the inflation rate between now and the last charge increase (thirteen per cent) and an additional three per cent to maintain the deterrent effect of the charge over time. This approach was applied to all of the payment channels and results in an average weighted increase of 16 per cent, which reflects the number of vehicles paying by each of the channels. In each case, the resulting charge was rounded up to the nearest 50 pence so that the charge is memorable.

7.1.21. Unlike public transport fares, the Congestion Charge is not reviewed annually, owing to the different legislative framework under which it operates. In this context, it is important that the charge increase ensures that the deterrent effect of the charge is maintained over time. This means that an increase slightly above inflation is needed. It is of course not possible to know future inflation rates and for this reason the level of the charge is kept under review.

Use of Congestion Charge revenue

- 7.1.22. Another comment which was made by a substantial number of both stakeholder and public respondents was that Congestion Charging was a revenue raising scheme and some were uncertain as to the use of the revenue. There were also questions about whether the charge was still effective in reducing congestion.
- 7.1.23. It is worth reiterating that the primary aim of the scheme is to reduce traffic and congestion in central London. It has secondary benefits in terms of reducing pollution from road transport and in raising revenue, which is important as a source of income to TfL and which it reinvests in transport improvements in London. When the scheme was introduced, congestion initially fell by around 30 per cent and traffic volumes have continued to fall in London. However, traffic speeds have also continued to fall and the decongestion effects of the scheme have been reduced so that congestion is close to pre-charging levels. This is thought to be due to a high volume of utility and development works in central London and a reallocation of road space over the period in favour of buses, cyclists and pedestrians. Although its effects are less than they were at the start of the scheme, congestion would nevertheless be much worse without the Congestion Charge.
- 7.1.24. By law, all net revenue from Congestion Charge must be used to further the aims of the Mayor's Transport Strategy. Since the scheme's inception in 2003, over £1.2 billion in revenue has been reinvested in transport in London: Table 50 in Chapter 6 sets out how the revenue (£156.1m) has been allocated for 2014/15. The London borough of Lewisham noted that its support for the charge increase was based on the fact that it reduced vehicle use and made more money available for public transport.

Support for the proposed charge increase

- 7.1.25. As stated above, almost half the stakeholders who responded were supportive of the charge increase. Darren Johnson AM, Camden Cycling Campaign, and Southwark Living Streets stated that the increase should be higher. The reasons for their support included the congestion and environmental benefits of the charge in discouraging journeys in central London, and similar comments were made by some public and business respondents.

- 7.1.26. Darren Johnson AM noted that the cost of congestion to the economy is £4bn⁸ (this figure pertains to the London economy) annually and stated that the Congestion Charge is an important way of maintaining business productivity. London TravelWatch, which is the statutory watchdog for transport users in London, also supported the charge increase in order to maintain the deterrent effect of the charge. Westminster Cycling Campaign and Camden Cycling Campaign (both within the Congestion Charging Zone), supported the charge increase, stating that the Congestion Charge helps to support cycling in London.
- 7.1.27. Congestion Charging needs to be seen as one of the many ways in which TfL is actively tackling congestion on the network. An effective long-term strategy for road management is particularly important to London's businesses and to ensure the continued growth of the London and UK economy, and London's place as a competitive world city. The Mayor's Roads Task Force has recognised the place of Congestion Charging within this approach. Without a charge increase from time to time, traffic volumes are likely to increase which would worsen journey time and congestion, thus having a negative impact on London's economic productivity and efficiency.
- 7.1.28. It is recognised that the charge increase presents a further cost to businesses and individuals who choose to drive in the zone in charging hours and as such will be unpopular, particularly in a time of economic difficulty. However, as set out above, the level of the proposed increase reflects the rise in inflation since the last charge increase and the likely level of future inflation. It has been set at a level which should maintain its deterrent effect. And it is acknowledged that the decongestion benefits of the scheme are not of the same magnitude as at the start of the scheme but it is reiterated that congestion in central London would be worse without the Congestion Charge.
- 7.1.29. The Mayor's attention is particularly drawn to the comments of Westminster City Council, which is the only borough within the Congestion Charging zone which responded to the consultation. It stated that it recognised the need for the charge to reflect changes in inflation, but sounded a note of caution about the size of the increase and its impact on already hard-pressed families and motorists. With this in mind it is worth reiterating that if the proposals are accepted, CC Auto Pay and Fleet Auto Pay would continue to provide a £1 discount on the daily headline charge to both businesses and individuals, and that the ULED offers a 100% Discount for cars and vans which meet environmental criteria.

⁸ TfL Traffic Note 4, 2010

7.2. Recommendations

7.2.1. TfL recommends that the Mayor should:

- Consider the whole of this report and other relevant information available to him, including advice from GLA officers and the contents of the Impact Assessment
- Consider the responses to the consultation, together with the considerations of TfL, particularly with relation to Chapter 6 of this report
- Consider whether further consultation, further information or the holding of some form of inquiry is necessary or appropriate prior to his decision whether or not to confirm the Variation Order, and
- If the Mayor considers that no further consultation is necessary or appropriate and that the holding of a public inquiry is not necessary or appropriate, to confirm the Variation Order with the minor modifications as described.

7.3. Public inquiry

7.3.1. This section examines the issue of whether the Mayor should hold some form of inquiry as part of a process of determining whether or not to confirm the Variation Order. The GLA Act provides that the Mayor may ‘hold an inquiry, or cause an inquiry to be held, for the purposes of any order containing a charging scheme’. Whether an inquiry should be held (and if so its scope) to consider the proposed changes to the Congestion Charging scheme is a matter for the Mayor to decide.

7.3.2. None of the respondents to the consultation asked for a public inquiry.

7.3.3. An inquiry could take a number of forms, including a public inquiry. Whilst the Mayor has a broad discretion he must approach the matter with an open mind. He needs to ask himself whether he has sufficient information available without holding an inquiry; and whether the issues raised, by objectors in particular, are sufficiently clear to him so that he can properly assess this information and weigh conflicting views (including taking account of representations and objections) without the benefit of an independent report following an inquiry.

7.3.4. A Congestion Charging case, [2002] EWHC 2440 (Admin); [2003] LGR 612, held at common law that the Mayor had to apply his mind genuinely and rationally to the issue of whether to hold an inquiry, taking into account all relevant considerations, and that, save perhaps exceptionally, Article 6 of the European Convention did not require an inquiry to be held.

7.3.5. TfL does not consider that any significant quantitative evidence beyond that already supplied by TfL and GLA officers would emerge in an inquiry which would assist the Mayor's decision. An inquiry would also delay the confirmation of the Variation Order. TfL does not consider there are any issues which point strongly to the holding of an inquiry and does not recommend that an inquiry be held. However, the Mayor is advised that these issues should not be the prime focus in determining whether to hold an inquiry.

Annex A: Greater London (Central Zone) Congestion Charging (Variation and Transitional Provisions) Order 2012

Annex B: Full list of stakeholder organisations who responded to the consultation

Stakeholder organisations who responded to the consultation

Alliance of British Drivers
Association of International Courier and Express Services
Automobile Association
British Red Cross
British Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association
Camden Cycling Campaign
Carplus Trust
Darren Johnson AM
Ealing Passenger Transport User Group
East London Business Alliance
Embassy of Lebanon
Federation of Small Businesses
Freight Transport Association
Friends of the Earth
London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group
Licensed Taxi Drivers Association
London Borough of Lewisham
London TravelWatch
NHS England
Road Haulage Association
Salvation Army
Southwark Living Streets
Stop Killing Cyclists
Sue Ryder Foundation
Sustrans
UK Independence Party - London Region
Westminster City Council
Westminster Cycling Campaign
Whittington NHS Trust

Annex C: Summary of stakeholder responses

Alliance of British Drivers

Alliance of British Drivers states that it does not support the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge and states that the increase does not reflect inflation.

It believes that the Congestion Charge is a scheme which aims to raise revenue for TfL rather than to reduce congestion and should be scrapped. It believes that the Congestion Charge has not reduced congestion levels within London.

It believes that it is now more difficult for customers to pay for the charge and refers to reduced customer service operating hours and the removal of the retail payment channel.

Association of International Courier and Express Services (AICES)

Association of International Courier and Express Services (AICES) states that it does not support the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge and states that the increase does not reflect inflation.

AICES also states that their members' business operations require them to drive into the Congestion Charge Zone to deliver packages. Subsequently, the Congestion Charge represents an additional cost their members and their customers.

AICES requests that TfL considers the Congestion Charge increase with respect to commercial vehicles.

Automobile Association (AA)

The Automobile Association states that it does not agree with the increase of the Congestion Charge since the charge was introduced. It suggests that the charge has not impacted on congestion levels.

It also states that their organisation and similar recovery operators that remove broken down vehicles which may be blocking traffic may be impacted by changing from PAS 43 to ISO 9001.

British Red Cross

The British Red Cross suggests that the Congestion Charge is a burden on organisations like charities and that money provided by donors would be better spent on charitable work rather than paying the charge.

British Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association (BVRLA)

The British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association states that it does not support the proposed increase of the Congestion Charge. It believes that the proposed increase will

affect their members who are recovering from the economic downturn. BVRLA requests that TfL consider the introduction of e-notification of fines for fleet customers.

It supports the proposal to allow customers to register or renew discount applications online and further suggests removing the need for customers registering or renewing discounts to provide a copy of their vehicle registration document (V5C).

The BVRLA suggests that TfL considers introducing a DVLA look-up facility to verify any information required from the vehicle registration document. It further suggests that TfL adopts other DVLA IT systems to use fines.

Finally, BVRLA seeks TfL's support on an amendment to the Road User Charging Regulations to allow leasing companies whose agreements are longer than six months in duration to transfer fines to the customer.

Camden Cycling Campaign

Camden Cycling Campaign supports the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge. It also suggests that TfL should further increase the Congestion Charge to discourage vehicles from entering the zone and to reduce congestion more.

Camden Cycling Campaign believes that private motor vehicles should be discouraged from travelling in Central London. It suggests that public transport provision is good which negates the need for private vehicles to travel into the zone.

It also requests that low emission vehicles should not receive a discount as they also contribute to congestion within the zone.

Carplus Trust

Carplus Trust states that the proposed Congestion Charge increase should not be applied to car club fleets within the Congestion Charge zone. It suggests that these vehicles contribute towards achieving Mayoral air quality targets.

It also requests that TfL consider reducing the Congestion Charge for car club fleets within the Congestion Charge zone similar to the Residents' Discount.

Darren Johnson AM

Darren Johnson AM supports the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge and also suggests that TfL should further increase the Congestion Charge to discourage vehicles from entering the zone and to reduce congestion more. Darren Johnson AM suggests that that this would create more revenue which could be invested in public transport and would mean that annual fare rises could be reduced.

Darren Johnson AM suggests that the Congestion Charge needs to reflect pollution levels in London and go some way to address targets as set out in the Mayor's Air Quality Strategy.

Lastly, Darren Johnson AM suggests that the western extension of the Congestion Charge zone should be reinstated.

Ealing Passenger Transport User Group

Ealing Passenger Transport User Group suggests that the cost of the Congestion Charge should be reviewed on an annual rather than on an ad hoc basis. It suggests that this would result in incremental charge increases rather than large one-off increases.

East London Business Alliance

The East London Business Alliance suggests that the current charge level is adequate and effective and does not need to be increased.

It also supports improvements to Congestion Charge administration including the introduction of Direct Debit payments.

Embassy of Lebanon

The Embassy of Lebanon states that the current charge level is adequate and effective and does not need to be increased.

Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)

The Federation of Small Businesses does not support the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge and states that this proposal is a tax on business and serves only to raise revenue for TfL.

It states that the amount that the charge is proposed to be raised by does not reflect inflation and is not supported by their members in the context of the current economic climate.

It states that the Congestion Charge should be reformed to allow discounts for small businesses that drive into the zone as part of their business operations. It also suggests that the Congestion Charge should be reviewed to allow for differential charging and should consider the time of day and environmental impact of the vehicle entering the zone.

Freight Transport Association (FTA)

The Freight Transport Association suggests that the Congestion Charge should be reformed to allow discounts for freight vehicles that drive into the zone as part of their business operations.

It also states that the amount that the charge is proposed to be raised by does not reflect inflation. It suggests that the proposed increase should be tiered so that the freight industry is only required to pay a small or no increase at all.

Lastly, the Freight Transport Association also requests that TfL consider providing discounts for cleaner vehicles used for freight/commercial purposes – including vehicles not currently eligible for the Ultra Low Emissions Discount.

Friends of the Earth

Friends of the Earth supports the proposed increase of the Congestion Charge and suggests that the increase is needed for the charge to remain effective.

It also requests that TfL considers other methods to address congestion and air pollution including a London-wide road user charge.

Liberal Democrat London Assembly Group

The Liberal Democrat London Assembly Group broadly supports all of the proposed changes to the Congestion Charging scheme.

It suggests that the level of the Congestion Charge should be reviewed annually as part of the fares decision and also suggested that TfL consider differential charging through the day to discourage road use at the most congested periods. It suggests that any additional revenue raised should be ring-fenced for investment in public transport.

Lastly, the Liberal Democrat London Assembly Group recommends that TfL take steps to collect unpaid Congestion Charge fines from embassies and diplomats.

Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA)

The Licensed Taxi Drivers Association states that it supports the charge increase and suggests that it is required to keep pace with inflation and to ensure that the charge does not become less effective.

London Borough of Lewisham

The London Borough of Lewisham states that it supports TfL's objective to encourage the use of public transport over private cars.

It also suggests that they would support any additional revenue generated from the charge increase being invested in public transport.

Lastly, it suggests that an increased Congestion Charge will result in fewer vehicles using roads in Lewisham.

London TravelWatch

London TravelWatch supports the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge. It states that they wish to see revenue raised from the increase to be invested in public transport improvements.

London TravelWatch supports all other proposed administrative changes.

NHS England

NHS England requests that TfL considers the employment of local authority staff that undertake NHS work or perform a NHS Service as these staff would not be eligible for the Congestion Charge reimbursement.

NHS England also noted that section 9 of the Order also contains provisions regarding reimbursement in respect of vehicles used for transporting certain NHS patients and contains a reference to Primary Care Trusts (PCT) at section 9(1) (b). It notes that the reference to PCTs should be removed as these organisations have been superseded by Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Road Haulage Association (RHA)

The Road Haulage Association does not support the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge.

It states their members are required to travel into the zone as part of their business operations and that the charge increase will not deter their members from entering in the zone. It suggests that the increased congestion charge will be passed onto customers and the price of goods and services.

It also states that their organisation and similar recovery operators that remove broken down vehicles which may be blocking traffic may be impacted by changing from PAS 43 to ISO 9001.

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army suggests that the Congestion Charge is a burden on organisations like charities and that money provided by donors would be better spent on charitable work rather than paying the charge.

Southwark Living Streets

Southwark Living Streets supports the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge. It also suggests that other factors such as air quality and the environment should influence the charging regime in London to reduce the number of vehicles on London's roads.

It also suggests other changes to encourage walking and cycling in London including providing more dedicated road space for these modes and extending the Congestion Charging zone.

Stop Killing Cyclists

Stop Killing Cyclists states that the Congestion Charge does not go far enough to reduce the numbers of private single occupancy vehicles within the Congestion Charging zone.

It urges TfL to review transport policy to enable pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users to have priority on London's roads.

It also suggests other changes to the Congestion Charge including reviewing the Residents' Discount so that they pay more, and extending the Congestion Charging zone.

Sue Ryder Foundation

No comments provided.

Sustrans

Sustrans supports the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge. It requests that revenue raised for the charge is ring fenced for public realm improvements that specifically benefit pedestrians, cyclists and other sustainable modes of transport.

UK Independence Party - London Region

The UK Independence Party does not support limiting the ways in which people including Blue Badge holders can undertake discount applications and renewals.

It does not accept that the Congestion Charge addresses either congestion or air quality in London. It also suggests that the scheme is a tax on motorists and exists to raise revenue for TfL. It states that the revisions to and availability of environmental discounts also suggest that the Congestion Charge is a revenue generating scheme.

The UK independence Party supports the proposal to enable eligible NHS journeys paid for by CC Auto Pay to be reimbursed and requests that this is implemented more quickly.

Westminster City Council

Westminster City Council states that it recognises that the Congestion Charge needs to reflect changes in inflation, but requests that TfL considers the size of the increase within the context of the current economic environment.

It supports administrative changes which make the charge easier to pay including the proposed introduction of a Direct Debit payment for CC Auto Pay.

Westminster City Council requests that TfL consider the introduction of further buffer zones to allow residents who live directly surrounding the existing Congestion Charge zone to qualify for the Residents' Discount.

Westminster Cycling Campaign

Westminster Cycling Campaign supports the proposal to increase the Congestion Charge. It suggests that the Congestion Charge is required to encourage people to travel more sustainably using transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.

Whittington NHS Trust

Whittington NHS Trust suggests other changes to the operation of the Congestion Charge including limiting higher polluting vehicles from the zone at certain times of the day.