

NOTICE OF MOTION – MERSEY TUNNEL TOLLS

Proposed by Councillor Les Rowlands

Seconded by Councillor Andrew Hodson

- (1) Council regrets the recent tunnel toll increases for all toll classes forced through by the Labour-led Integrated Transport Authority.
- (2) Council notes that since the introduction of the 2004 Mersey Tunnels Act, sponsored by former Labour MP Claire Curtis-Thomas and supported by Labour Members throughout its passage through Parliament, Merseytravel has accrued over £40 million in surpluses which have been used on their pet transport schemes and vanity projects.
- (3) Council also notes that Merseytravel have squandered large amounts of money as can be evidenced by the £70 million failed tram scheme colloquially known as 'Line 1 to Nowhere' and its extravagance in occupying a half empty building at No 1 Mann Island.

Therefore Council believes

- (a) The consistent increases year on year is damaging Wirral's economy putting further pressure on motorists and businesses.
- (b) Council recognises such increases place a greater strain on tunnel users who have to travel to and from work placing an unfair tax burden on Wirral residents
- (c) Council recognises discount toll schemes/free crossings for local residents already exist in other parts of the country and while recognising that fast tag users benefit from a discount, Council believes that regular users should be rewarded with a local discount scheme over and above that afforded by use of the fast tag such as that announced for the Mersey Gateway Bridge of a "local user discount scheme" with up to 300 free journeys per year.

Council therefore requests the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to write to the Chief Executive/Director General of Merseytravel requesting an urgent meeting to discuss: if and how the Mersey Tunnels can be reinstated back into the national road network and Tunnel Tolls abolished.

If that is not possible how a 'local user discount scheme' over and above that which already exists through the Fast Tag can be implemented to ease the burden on hard the pressed motorists of Wirral.