

TfL Increase in Penalty Charge Notices

November 2017

About us

Heart of London Business Alliance serves as the voice for 500 businesses and 100 property owners in the Piccadilly & St James's and Leicester Square areas. Our purpose is to support the commercial well being of the businesses and organisations we represent, and ensure our areas remain integral to London's West End offer as a place for people to visit, live, trade and work.

Increase in penalty charges for drivers

Transport for London (TfL) are consulting on increasing the Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) for contraventions of the Red Route network or Congestion Charge Zone (CCZ). The cost of congestion on the Red Route network, which makes up 5% of roads but carries 30% of traffic, is almost £2.2 billion a year. There are an increasing number of contraventions of the rules of the red route network and the CCZ, with a growing proportion by 'repeat offenders'. Penalty charges have been frozen for four years (Red Routes frozen since 2011). TfL's view is that this is possibly not seen as sufficient deterrent, and that an increase in the value of the PCN would ensure it continues to deter "against poor or inconsiderate driving which can cause delays and make our streets less safe."

The proposals can be summarised as follows:

- PCNs will increase to £160, which is an increase of £30
- It will only affect PCNs issued for violation of the Congestion Charge Zone and Red Route network (not local roads)
- The current discount of 50% remains if penalty charges are paid within 14 days
- Late payment will increase to up to £240

Our response

I. Do you believe that there are other, alternative options to increase compliance with the red route network and congestion charging zone? If so, please record your thoughts below.

Broadly, Heart of London agrees with the proposals in the consultation. We support the notion that it is particularly important to tackle repeat offending, given it has risen substantially to nearly 40% of Red Route contraventions and 65% of CCZ fines issued. We agree that increasing the value of PCNs would increase the deterrence value and there are no other proportionate methods to increase compliance given current Mayoral powers.

In a further attempt to tackle the environmental consequences of congestion, TfL should also reconsider the way the Congestion Charge Zone and Red Route network operate. As mentioned in our recent response to the Mayor's Transport Strategy, we would, in principle, support an emissions-based road charging system to help tackle congestion and air quality in Central London. We would be particularly keen to see the details of, a future 'smarter' system with differential charges by type of traffic, time periods and distance travelled – potentially within the area

broadly covered by the Circle Line as this is where the challenges of congestion and air quality are currently greatest. We understand that such a system could be effective in encouraging the use of more environmentally friendly vehicles and smarter payment systems would minimise the opportunity to evade payment of the Congestion Charge.

2. Would the increase in the value of a PCN cause you any particular difficulties or hardship, or unfairly penalise any particular group of road users? If so, please record your thoughts below.

Heart of London is predominantly interested in the potential impact of the increase on businesses in the West End. We agree with the increase in the value of the PCN, and do not think it would unfairly burden businesses, as long as there is sufficient flexibility for loading and servicing across the Red Route network.

3. If you have any other concerns or comments about our proposals, please record them below.

We do not have any concerns about the proposals to increase the value of Penalty Charge Notices. We offer our support to this plan, provided that our minor comments set out in our responses to questions 1 and 2 are taken into consideration.

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