

From: Trisha Hewitt <trisha.hewitt@tamarcrossings.org.uk>
Sent: 08 December 2023 14:32
To: Trisha Hewitt
Subject: re press release on Joint Committee's decision on funding the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry

Good afternoon

Please see below a copy of the press release re the decision by the Joint Committee on the future funding of the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry. We will be adding this to the website and sending to the local media this afternoon.

kind regards

Trisha

Plans to develop new way forward for funding and operating Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry backed by Joint Committee

8 December 2023

Plans to develop a new way forward for funding and operating the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry have been backed by members of the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Joint Committee.

The aim of the Tamar 2050 programme is to secure the long-term future of the crossings by increasing income and reducing costs. It will bring together existing activities into a single transformational programme and will be further developed in partnership with the local community and businesses which use the crossings.

During the past two years a number of measures at Tamar Crossings have produced efficiencies and savings of more than £10 million. These have included moving to contactless payments at both the bridge and the ferry, successfully trialling a new method to replace the 'rockers' which support the Bridge, negotiating a new energy contract, reducing energy consumption through a range of measures include replacing bridge street lighting with more energy efficient LED units, and increased marketing of the Visitor Centre.

The 2050 programme will build on this work by:

- reviewing how the crossings currently function and identifying further ways of improving efficiency
- exploring further ways of keeping toll prices as low as possible whilst providing greater certainty for regular users of the crossings – this will include continuing to lobby for financial support from the Government and progressing the adoption of indexation to help avoid big jumps in toll prices
- investigating marketing opportunities
- investigating further options for using technology to improve the efficiency of the tolls including free flow tolling through the use of ANPR cameras and potential changes to the current plaza such as 'card only' booths

The programme will be developed through engagement with local stakeholders and will also seek to invest in local talent by providing more apprenticeships for local people and building on existing women in STEM events. The Joint Committee has also committed to investigate ways of making the ferries carbon neutral and to be more actively involved in the wider transport agenda for the River Tamar.

Following today's decision, a further report setting out the impact of the Joint Committee's recommendations on the budget for 2024-25 will be presented at an extraordinary meeting of the Joint Committee on 12 January 2024.

The Tamar 2050 programme, budget and recommendation for toll increases will then be considered by both Cornwall Council and Plymouth City Council.

Changing the rates for cash tolls requires authorisation from the Government. If the request to increase tolls is approved by the parent authorities a formal request will be submitted to the Department of Transport. This will mean that any increase in cash tolls is not likely to come into effect until November 2024.

Ends

Notes to editors:

The Tamar Bridge provides a key link for the trunk road network supporting the economy of the region, as well as the daily lives of those in Plymouth and South East Cornwall. The crossing is used by up to 50,000 vehicles on a busy weekday.

The Torpoint Ferry is Britain's busiest inland waterway ferry crossing. The 5,500 vehicles and many hundreds of pedestrians relying on the crossing each day are provided with a 24 hour service throughout the year.

The Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry are jointly owned by Cornwall Council and Plymouth City Council. The two crossings are operated together as a single business- Tamar Crossings - by the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Joint Committee on behalf of the two councils.

In accordance with the Tamar Bridge Act both crossings are funded on a "user pays" principle by toll income. This means that the money needed to operate, maintain and improve the two crossings comes from toll charges. No funding is received from Central Government or from the owners of the crossings – Plymouth City Council and Cornwall Council.

Trisha Hewitt

Communications Manager Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Joint Committee

Phone: [07946654121](tel:07946654121)

Web: www.tamarcrossings.org.uk

[Tamar Bridge Office, Pemros Road, St Budeaux, Plymouth, PL5](#)

Address: [Address: 1LP](#)

