

# ANNEX 5: OFFICER RESPONSES & PROPOSED CHANGES

## **Residents and businesses within the ZEZ Pilot**

For ZEZ Pilot residents' vehicles a 90% discount is proposed, and which will apply to August 2030. A 90% discount is also proposed for vehicles registered to and operating from businesses in the ZEZ Pilot, with this applying to August 2025. These are considered sufficient notice periods for residents and businesses within the ZEZ Pilot, with several schemes also to be developed to support the transition to zero emissions. These discounts apply to residents' and businesses' "own" vehicles only. The vast majority of vehicles coming into the area to service a home or business (e.g. deliveries, tradespeople etc.) will not benefit from these discounts.

## **Blue Badge holders**

For Blue Badge holders (or international equivalents) and Disabled Tax Class vehicles, a 100% discount is proposed until August 2025, with a review of this discount to take place in consultation with affected road users and to be decided by December 2024. Any extension to this discount would require a further public consultation.

## **Temporary disabilities**

The formal consultation sought views on broadening the Blue Badge Holder discount to cover people with disabilities who do not hold a Blue Badge or equivalent, for example, people with a disability of a temporary/transient nature, such as mental health issues or a broken leg. Whilst this was supported by some who responded to the consultation, there is currently no recognised mechanism available to facilitate this. A local scheme would therefore need to be devised, but this would likely be difficult to administer and could be open to abuse. It is therefore not proposed to change the scheme so that those with temporary disabilities have an exemption or discount. Other charging schemes such as London's Congestion Charge and ULEZ do not provide any exemptions/discounts for people with temporary disabilities.

## **Construction traffic**

It has been suggested that discounts should be made available for construction traffic, especially for projects that are currently or soon to be underway, however, it is not proposed to give discounts for construction traffic. The ZEZ scheme will encourage construction traffic (goods and staff) to consolidate and/or use less-polluting vehicles and/or enter the zone outside of the charging hours.

## **Church access to parking**

Some churches in the ZEZ Pilot area are concerned about the negative impact the charges will have on increasing travel costs for staff/volunteers. There may be other

organisations whose business is supported by people working in a voluntary capacity. It is however not proposed to give discounts to people driving to churches. There is not considered to be sufficient difference to other city centre businesses to justify subsidising such journeys. Other charging schemes such as London's Congestion Charge and ULEZ do not provide any exemptions/discounts for churches. Behavioural change will be encouraged by the ZEZ scheme with churches also eligible to apply for discounts for any vehicles that they have registered to their premises in the Pilot area.

### **People with health or care responsibilities**

Concern has been raised that the ZEZ Pilot could impose unfair financial burden on those people carrying out health or caring duties for people living in the zone, whether in a professional or personal capacity. It is therefore proposed to offer a 100% discount to professional care and health workers' vehicles whilst carrying out formal duties. Exact details of this discount are to be developed ahead of scheme implementation. It is not considered feasible to extend this discount to include non-professional carers.

### **Private Hire Vehicles**

Some Private Hire companies/drivers have invested heavily in clean vehicles in the last few years and in some cases have a large fleet of hybrid electric vehicles which despite being relatively clean, fall into the £4 'CAZ' charging band for the ZEZ. Some Private Hire operators do not feel it is fair that they will need to pay £4/day to drive in the ZEZ Pilot (and– if it is approved – the wider zone) and have asked for a 100% discount.

Officers consider that Private Hire vehicles should pay a ZEZ charge, as they contribute to city centre transport emissions and no alternative 'path' to a zero emission fleet has been agreed for these vehicles, as it has for Hackney carriages and local buses. However, officers recommend instead a transitional discount which would effectively allow certain hybrid Private Hire Vehicles to be charged as ULEVs (i.e. a lower rate) for the first five years, in recognition of (i) their relatively low emissions and (ii) their role in maintaining accessibility for people with disabilities (including non-blue badge holders with temporary or transient disabilities). It is proposed that this would only apply to hybrids emitting less than 100 grams of CO<sub>2</sub> per km.

### **Powered two-wheelers**

The consultation material stated that the charging bands would apply to all vehicles including powered two-wheelers such as mopeds and motorbikes. Following consultation feedback highlighting challenges with the application of Euro standards to powered two wheelers, officers have confirmed that the data held by DVLA would be insufficient in many cases to determine a powered two-wheeler's Euro standard.

Officers consider powered two-wheelers should nevertheless pay a ZEZ charge (other cities have simply exempted them). To avoid the DVLA data problems,

officers recommend all powered two-wheelers are charged solely according to the level of CO<sub>2</sub> they emit, without reference to Euro standards. The number of vehicles that this will affect in the Pilot scheme will be small and the introduction and operation of the scheme will enable this aspect of the charging system to be monitored ahead of the wider scheme being developed.

### **Proposed discount for students arriving/leaving at the beginning and end of university term**

It is proposed to grant a 100% discount to the ZEZ charge for students driving into the Pilot ZEZ area only for the purpose of delivering or collecting personal belongings at the beginning and end of each of the three university terms. This discount will only be available to students who are considered by their colleges to be suffering acute financial hardship with colleges applying to the council for the discount on behalf of the students in question.

### **Exemptions for people forced to drive in the Pilot ZEZ as a result of planned road closures**

It is proposed to grant limited temporary exemptions to deal with planned road closures where normal compliance with the scheme is not possible. Such exemptions will be granted only if there is no other route available that would allow the driver to avoid entering the Pilot ZEZ.