

Merton Council

Council

21 September 2022

Supplementary Agenda 5 - Amendments

24 Amendments

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- Labour Amendment to Conservative Motion (ULEZ)
- Liberal Democrat Amendment to Conservative Motion (Council Tax)
- Labour Amendment to Liberal Democrat Motion (Cost of Living and Schools)
- Liberal Democrat Amendment to Item 14 (Amendments to the Constitution)

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Full Council 14th September 2022

Conservative Group Non-strategic theme motion ULEZ

Council notes that on 4th March the Mayor of London announced his plan to expand the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) from its current boundary of the North and South Circulars to cover almost all of Greater London, including Merton. These plans ~~w~~could see the ULEZ expanded by 29th August 2023, subject to the current consultation which Merton Council has formally responded.

~~Council notes that, whilst the ULEZ was originally introduced covering the same area and with the same boundaries as the Congestion Charge Zone, on 25th October 2021 it was expanded by 18 times its original size to its current boundaries. Council therefore notes that this significant change took place less than a year ago and that the ramifications have yet to be fully assessed.~~

Council notes that although Merton enjoys high levels of transport connectivity, there are some lower income areas, particularly in the eastern edge of the Borough that are affected by poorer transport accessibility and do consequently have relatively higher levels of car ownership. due to the limited public transport options in Merton, many residents and families need access to a car to live their daily lives and to travel to work. TfL figures show that 64 per cent of Merton households own a car and ONS figures show that 60 per cent of London households earning between £23,192 and £29,546 own a vehicle.

Council notes that expanding the ULEZ to Merton will impact financially burden many residents facing economic hardship, particularly lower income residents in areas with poor public transport accessibility that are more dependent on a private whose vehicle, s do not meet the ULEZ standard with a daily charge of £12.50 every time they drive their car. For families that drive every day this will mean additional costs of over £4,500.00 per year. This charge will also apply to family members and carers driving into London, thereby creating an additional burden for families, the elderly and those in care.

Therefore, Council welcomes the response to the proposed extension of ULEZ submitted jointly by the Leader of the Council and by the Cabinet member for Transport where:

- The Council recognised the importance of tackling the challenges of toxic air pollution, the climate emergency, traffic congestion but thorough consideration should also be given to the cost-of-living crisis.

-The Council considered supporting measures including a more generous scrappage to mitigate the impact of switching to electric vehicles or retrofitting to become ULEZ compliant. An enhanced scrappage scheme should only be made available to residents in the expanded zone and not offering those in the existing ULEZ zone a second chance of funding.

-The Council noted that the proposals include considering a large-scale and targeted vehicle scrappage scheme to support Londoners, including, for example, those on

low incomes, disabled people, charities and businesses. It is therefore disappointing that the consultation does not provide a firm commitment or adequate details to assess the adequacy of any scheme. The scrappage scheme has to go further and consider retrofit options to save embodied carbon and consideration given to extended measures such as annual travel cards and bike ownership for those who wish to scrap their car.

-The Council requested further details that demonstrated the adequacy of the proposed scrappage scheme and mitigating measures on mitigating the impact on all residents including those on low income and other vulnerable groups, particularly those in areas with poor public transport options. The Council also wanted TfL to go further and plan for active travel and public transport enhancements in low PTAL areas.

-As an employer, the Council also stated its concern about the negative impact identified in the IIA on employees working in social and health care, who rely on a vehicle for essential work journeys. The Council strongly urged TfL to give particular consideration to how the scrappage scheme and wider support measures could be extended to key workers such as nurses, doctors, teachers, police, ambulance and fire brigade workers, as well as those on low to modest incomes who require a vehicle to perform essential work duties or those working shifts at unsociable hours.

-The Council went on to state that the impact on small businesses requires deeper consideration and greater support needs to be offered to small businesses and the self-employed where cars or vehicles are an essential part of the trade and their jobs can't be undertaken by bike or public transport; for example construction workers, tradespeople, delivery drivers.

Furthermore, the Council recognises that the administration is also working with TfL on a faster upgrade to a zero-emission bus fleet in Merton and on increasing the roll out of rapid charging points in the borough.

Given the need for measures to counter the cost-of-living impact on low-income households, small businesses, charities and disabled residents:

- Merton Council calls upon the Leader of the Council to write to central government to urge them to fund the most generous scrappage scheme to support residents transition to sustainable transport modes, should ULEZ be expanded, to improve air quality and support residents through the cost-of-living emergency.

~~opposes measures to push up the cost of living in Merton by imposing taxes and charges on Merton residents who rely on motor vehicles without providing them with realistic alternatives. Council notes that the Mayor of London has set aside almost £400 million towards expanding the ULEZ and related projects, and suggests this money would be better spent on such measures as:~~

- ~~- a faster upgrade to a zero-emission bus fleet;~~
- ~~- increasing the roll out of rapid charging points.~~
- ~~- encouraging more freight consolidation schemes.~~
- ~~- bringing back the previous Boiler Cashback Scheme to encourage Londoners to upgrade their boilers to reduce household emissions~~

~~- financing a generous scrappage scheme to support Londoners in replacing their vehicles~~

~~Furthermore, council recognises that the administration has:~~

- ~~- Failed to introduce low emission bus zones in the town centres as specified by a Conservative motion passed in February 2019;~~
- ~~- Failed to provide any dates and times of meetings with TfL regarding low emission bus zones as was promised by Cabinet Members in the September 2020 and February 2021 meetings of the council;~~
- ~~- Failed to provide details of discussions with TfL to reduce the financial burden of the ULEZ on Merton residents;~~
- ~~- Imposed taxes on parked cars which has had no meaningful reduction on air pollution;~~
- ~~- Failed to embrace technology led solutions to the pollution crisis which have been implemented by other London boroughs notably LB Wandsworth and LB Waltham Forest.~~

~~Therefore, council calls upon the Leader of the Council to:~~

- ~~- Ensure that his administration makes air quality a priority by implementing low emission bus zones in the town centres, with a quarterly report being provided to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel detailing the steps that have been taken and listing the dates of meetings with TfL;~~
- ~~- Writes to the Mayor of London to demand that he abandons his plans to harm Merton's families and businesses by expanding the ULEZ to Merton and to use the £400 million he has set aside for it on fairer and more effective ways of improving London's air quality.~~

~~Cllr Eleanor Cox — Cllr Michael Paterson — Cllr Nick McLean~~

Motion now reads

Council notes that on 4th March the Mayor of London announced his plan to expand the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) from its current boundary of the North and South Circulars to cover almost all of Greater London, including Merton. These plans could see the ULEZ expanded by 29th August 2023, subject to the current consultation which Merton Council has formally responded.

Council notes that although Merton enjoys high levels of transport connectivity, there are some lower income areas, particularly in the eastern edge of the Borough that are affected by poorer transport accessibility and do consequently have relatively higher levels of car ownership. TfL figures show that 64 per cent of Merton households own a car and ONS figures show that 60 per cent of London households earning between £23,192 and £29,546 own a vehicle.

Council notes that expanding the ULEZ to Merton will impact residents facing economic hardship, particularly low income residents in areas with poor public transport accessibility that are more dependent on a private vehicle.

Therefore, Council welcomes the response to the proposed extension of ULEZ submitted jointly by the Leader of the Council and by the Cabinet member for Transport where:

- The Council recognised the importance of tackling the challenges of toxic air pollution, the climate emergency, traffic congestion but thorough consideration should also be given to the cost-of-living crisis.
 - The Council considered supporting measures including a more generous scrappage to mitigate the impact of switching to electric vehicles or retrofitting to become ULEZ compliant. An enhanced scrappage scheme should only be made available to residents in the expanded zone and not offering those in the existing ULEZ zone a second chance of funding.
 - The Council noted that the proposals include considering a large-scale and targeted vehicle scrappage scheme to support Londoners, including, for example, those on low incomes, disabled people, charities and businesses. It is therefore disappointing that the consultation does not provide a firm commitment or adequate details to assess the adequacy of any scheme. The scrappage scheme has to go further and consider retrofit options to save embodied carbon and consideration given to extended measures such as annual travel cards and bike ownership for those who wish to scrap their car.
 - The Council requested further details that demonstrated the adequacy of the proposed scrappage scheme and mitigating measures on mitigating the impact on all residents including those on low income and other vulnerable groups, particularly those in areas with poor public transport options. The Council also wanted TfL to go further and plan for active travel and public transport enhancements in low PTAL areas.
 - As an employer, the Council also stated its concern about the negative impact identified in the IIA on employees working in social and health care, who rely on a vehicle for essential work journeys. The Council strongly urged TfL to give particular consideration to how the scrappage scheme and wider support measures could be extended to key workers such as nurses, doctors, teachers, police, ambulance and fire brigade workers, as well as those on low to modest incomes who require a vehicle to perform essential work duties or those working shifts at unsociable hours.
 - The Council went on to state that the impact on small businesses requires deeper consideration and greater support needs to be offered to small businesses and the self-employed where cars or vehicles are an essential part of the trade and their jobs can't be undertaken by bike or public transport; for example construction workers, tradespeople, delivery drivers.
- Furthermore, the Council recognises that the administration is also working with TfL on a faster upgrade to a zero-emission bus fleet in Merton and on increasing the roll out of rapid charging points in the borough.

Given the need for measures to counter the cost-of-living impact on low-income households, small businesses, charities and disabled residents:

- Merton Council calls upon the Leader of the Council to write to central government to urge them to fund the most generous scrappage scheme to support residents transition to sustainable transport modes, should ULEZ be

expanded, to improve air quality and support residents through the cost-of-living emergency.

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Liberal Democrat group Amendment to the Conservative group Motion – Council Tax Freeze, in the names of Cllr Jil Hall and Cllr Victoria Wilson

Add the following wording at the beginning of the Motion :

Council notes that since 2016-17 that local government settlements have been based on the assumption that local authorities apply the maximum available increase in Council Tax.

Council believes that such assumptions force local authorities to either hike Council Tax or slash services, and as such that budget decisions can only properly be made as understanding about Government support develops

And amend the final sentence to read:

This Council calls upon the Cabinet to ~~begin to prepare~~ examine, as part of the budget process and with the cost of living emergency in mind, the impact ~~on the basis~~ of freezing Council Tax or providing generous rebates for the 2023/24 financial year.

So that Motion now reads

Full Council 14th September 2022

Conservative Group Non-strategic theme motion

Council Tax freeze

Council notes that since 2016-17 that local government settlements have been based on the assumption that local authorities apply the maximum available increase in Council Tax.

Council believes that such assumptions force local authorities to either hike Council Tax or slash services, and as such that budget decisions can only properly be made as understanding about Government support develops

This Council calls upon the Cabinet to examine, as part of the budget process and with the cost of living emergency in mind, the impact of freezing Council Tax or providing generous rebates for the 2023/24 financial year

Cllr Nick McLean Cllr Daniel Holden Cllr Thomas Barlow Cllr Max Austin

Cllr Eleanor Cox Cllr Andrew Howard Cllr Michael Paterson

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Labour Amendment to the Liberal Democrat – Non-Strategic theme motion – Council, 14 September 2022

Cost of Living Emergency – Impact on Schools

Council notes:

The deleterious effect of the Cost of Living emergency on the borough as a whole and welcomes the administration's response in establishing a £2million Cost of Living Emergency Fund, maintaining one of the country's most generous Council Tax Support schemes, continuing the provision of Free School meals to those eligible during school holidays, setting up a series of Cost of Living events across the borough and building on its status as a London Living Wage employer to ensure Merton becomes a London Living Wage accredited authority;

The failings of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition Government that, according to research undertaken by Carbon Brief, has made energy bills in the UK nearly £2.5 billion higher than they would have been if climate policies had not been scrapped;

Since 2011 London Borough of Merton has invested nearly £2 million installing nearly 1.5MWP of solar panels at 29 of the borough's schools; and since 2013 the Council has worked with our schools to promote energy saving, including through loft insulation in 19 schools and upgrading to LED lighting at 4 high schools and a number of primary schools.

Merton's schools across the UK are facing, including increased energy, staffing and maintenance costs;

The lack of Government support in helping schools address these cost increases;

The likelihood that, without additional funding from central Government, schools will have little choice but to deal with these additional costs by cutting back on teachers & support staff, teaching hours and/or other cuts that will adversely affect the education of children across the UK in Merton.

Council Requests :

The Leader of the Council to write to the new Secretary of State for Education ~~our MPs asking them~~ to press the m Government to immediately provide additional emergency funding for schools;

Relevant Cabinet members and Officers work with local schools to improve all schools' energy efficiency. ~~after consulting local schools, to present a paper to Cabinet as soon as possible on the extent of the funding shortfall caused by the Cost of Living emergency on local schools and outlining the options available to the Council in providing assistance to local schools;~~

~~If the paper includes confidential information, that information to be made available to all Councillors on request.~~

Motion now reads

Council notes:

The deleterious effect of the Cost of Living emergency on the borough as a whole and welcomes the administration's response in establishing a £2million Cost of Living Emergency Fund, maintaining one of the country's most generous Council Tax Support schemes, continuing the provision of Free School meals to those eligible during school holidays, setting up a series of Cost of Living events across the borough and building on its status as a London Living Wage employer to ensure Merton becomes a London Living Wage accredited authority;

The failings of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition Government that, according to research undertaken by [Carbon Brief](#), has made energy bills in the UK nearly £2.5 billion higher than they would have been if climate policies had not been scrapped;

Since 2011 London Borough of Merton has invested nearly £2 million installing nearly 1.5MWP of solar panels at 29 of the borough's schools; and since 2013 the Council has worked with our schools to promote energy saving, including through loft insulation in 19 schools and upgrading to LED lighting at 4 high schools and a number of primary schools.

Schools across the UK are facing increased energy, staffing and maintenance costs;

The lack of Government support in helping schools address these cost increases;

The likelihood that, without additional funding from central Government, schools will have little choice but to deal with these additional costs by cutting back on teachers & support staff, teaching hours and/or other cuts that will adversely affect the education of children across the UK.

Council Requests :

The Leader of the Council to write to the new Secretary of State for Education to press them to immediately provide additional emergency funding for schools;

Relevant Cabinet members and Officers work with local schools to improve all schools' energy efficiency.

COUNCIL MEETING – 14 September 2022

Proposed Amendment to paragraph 2.4 of the Amendments to the Constitution report in Agenda item 14.

Proposed by Cllr Simon McGrath

Seconded by Cllr John Oliver

To add the following to the end of paragraph 2.4:

“In all circumstances at least one member of each Group will be permitted to see any exempt document.”

So that the paragraph now reads:

2.4. Part 22 and 23 of Part 4B which detail the access rights to documents by members and by members who are members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. General practice at Merton has been that all group office staff and all Councillors are automatically provided with access to all restricted documents, however there is no automatic legal right for all Councillors to this information and it is not good information governance practice to have such a wide circulation of confidential information. Council is therefore asked to note that the practice of an unrestricted circulation of exempt reports or appendices will cease and such documents will only be provided to Councillors who have a statutory right to see such documents if they request such documents and can demonstrate a ‘need to know’ to the Monitoring Officer. In all circumstances at least one member of each Group will be permitted to see any exempt document.

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