



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London
London City Hall,
Kamal Chunchie Way,
London - E16 1ZE

Thursday 23 June 2022

Dear

Sadiq

RE: Public Consultation on Ultra-Low Emission Zone Expansion

I am writing to you today as part of the public consultation on the proposed ULEZ expansion which would include my constituency of Dagenham and Rainham if implemented. Whilst I share your concerns about air quality, and have campaigned against waste incineration for five years, I also have reservations about the economic impact this will have on working people in my constituency. The policy stands to have a disproportionate effect on low-pay commuters living in areas like Barking and Dagenham and Havering, and in its current form I cannot endorse it in good conscience.

As the Member of Parliament for Dagenham and Rainham I would like to draw your attention to a number of issues which have been raised with me by constituents, **and urge you to delay the expansion of the ULEZ until a number of key concerns have been addressed.**

Can people afford to get to work?

The ULEZ charge for non-compliant vehicles is £12.50 per day which will cost working people an extra £62.50 for a five-day-week. Many low paid commuters can't afford public transport at £70.30 per week for a 1-6 travelcard, and most cannot afford to buy an electric or other compliant vehicle to be exempt from the incoming ULEZ charge.

Considering these figures, it is unlikely that key workers such as carers or teachers who currently drive to work will switch to public transport at a higher cost. **If Transport for London are serious about improving air quality and reducing the reliance on cars, then the daily cost of ULEZ for key workers and those on minimum-wage/low-pay should be reduced.**

Can people afford to upgrade to a ULEZ compliant vehicle?

Electric cars and other compliant vehicles range from £15k-£50k for a standard model which meets the ULEZ requirements. The population across my constituency are high on the deprivation scale and with a looming cost of living crisis already taking hold, soaring energy costs, and stagnant wages across all sectors, many are struggling just to make ends meet.

Jon Cruddas MP
Member of Parliament for Dagenham and Rainham, incorporating South Hornchurch and Elm Park
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The existing scrappage scheme needs revision if it is going to work for low-pay commuters. There must be an application process which is permanently accessible, and it should be open to people not claiming a benefit if they can demonstrate that they do not have sufficient savings to purchase a new vehicle. The cost of a ULEZ compliant vehicle must also be reflected in the current grants available for both car and motorcycle applications.

Does the London transport system work for people living in Greater London?

As I understand it, cuts to services and staff which run parallel to the ULEZ expansion are a result of the Covid bailout conditions set by the Government. However, it seems counter intuitive to lay off hundreds of underground staff, reduce the routes on the bus network, and then expand a scheme which promotes reliance on the public transport system. Until serious investment is put into increasing connectivity in areas like Dagenham and Rainham, making a transport network fit for the 21st Century, then we cannot ask people choose it over their personal vehicle.

I regularly hear the term 'London is moving East', and yet the 'zoning' system continues to fail East London. Following the Olympics, adjustments were made to the zones in order to serve investors, developers, businesses, and new residents living in Stratford. So, changes can be made.

In a few short years Dagenham and Rainham will see thousands of new homes built, London's largest film studios completed, and Billingsgate, Smithfield and New Spitalfields market relocating to my constituency. With all this investment, why are we still in Zone 5/6 when equidistant locations in West London are in Zone 3/4? **Cheaper transport fares achieved by re-zoning would provide a buffer for people as the ULEZ is introduced.**

Final remarks.

As a society we cannot trade off working people's ability to feed their families against their right to breathe clean air. It just doesn't balance. Furthermore, my constituents stand to be disproportionately affected by the cost-of-living crisis over the next few years – victims of a government hell bent on driving up inflation whilst driving down living standards. They cannot bear the brunt of the costs associated with the ULEZ expansion.

Air pollution is rightly high on the public health agenda, not least because we are coming out the other side of a global pandemic. However, as the Member of Parliament for Dagenham and Rainham **I am urging TfL to consider a delay to the ULEZ expansion until the economic situation of families in my constituency and neighbouring areas improves.**

Kind regards

Jon Cruddas MP

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