

MTUA Press Release - Outcome of meetings on Thurs 1 Feb and Fri 2 Feb 2018 on Mersey Tunnels Tolls

The Transport Committee (formerly known as 'Merseytravel' committee) had their annual budget meeting on Thursday (1st) and the Liverpool City Region had their budget meeting today (2nd). As well as the budget there were proposals that cash tolls for the coming year go up (cars from £1.70 to £1.80). Tag tolls would stay the same as they are now (cars £1.20) except that between 7pm and 7am Monday to Saturday and all day Sunday there would be a reduction in the tag tolls (cars would be £1.00).

Thursday's meeting agreed to recommend the toll proposals, though six councillors voted against and two abstained.

At today's meeting a vote on the tolls increase was forced by Phil Davies, the Leader of Wirral Council, who said that he had had many representations from people who opposed any increase.

There are only seven people who can vote on the level of tolls. Steve Rotheram the Metro Mayor voted first and voted in favour of the tolls increase. Phil Davies and Ann O'Byrne, representing Joe Anderson the Liverpool City Mayor, both voted against the increase. Ian Maher, Leader of Sefton Council, and Derek Long, representing St Helens, both voted for the tolls increase. There was no one there from Knowsley and Rob Polhill, the Leader of Halton Council abstained. As it was three for the tolls increase and two against, the increase was carried and the cash tolls will go up at the beginning of April.

Representatives of the Mersey Tunnels Users Association were at the meeting. After the meeting, John McGoldrick from the MTUA said -

"It is ironic that it is Steve Rotheram who in effect is increasing the tolls, as he has said that 'I don't like tolls' and in his election manifesto spoke about reducing tolls, he said nothing then about increasing them."

"Today's meeting was told that toll increases were needed to cover the cost of running the Tunnels. But with this increase, it is forecast that they will actually make over £12 million profits from the Tunnels. It is a scandal that drivers and businesses who use the Tunnels are treated as nothing more than a source of cash for Merseytravel's pet schemes and that the public are misled about what the tolls are used for."

"Councillors complained at the meetings about spending pressures, yet at the same time they are spending over £400 million on new trains. Trains which in every other part of the country are provided by Rolling Stock Leasing companies and which are not funded by tolls. Our area has to suffer so that Merseytravel can have their own train set."

"With the opening of the Mersey Gateway last October our region is split into two by tolls. This does not apply anywhere else and we urge everyone to sign [the petition which calls for all Mersey tolls to be scrapped](#)"

Ends