

From: Sinead Burrows [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 January 2026 10:12
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: enquires@tamarcrossings.org.uk
Subject: *IMPORTANT* Tamar Tag Account Fee Increase

Importance: High

Dear Councillor Andrew Long and Councillor Anne Freeman

I am writing on behalf of Saltash Town Council in relation to the recent proposal to increase the Tag Account fee.

Saltash Town Council seeks clarification on several points:

1. Rationale for the Proposed Increase

We note that the recent toll rise earlier this year was presented as a measure intended to balance the budget for approximately three years. In that context, we would be grateful for an explanation as to why an additional increase to the Tag Account fee is now being proposed.

2. Impact of Potential Reduction in Tag Usage

It has been suggested that many low-use Tag holders may cancel their accounts if the fee is increased. This could lead to more drivers using cash or card payments, thereby reducing throughput at the crossing. Has this potential behavioural shift been assessed, and what impact on overall throughput has been modelled?

3. Consequences for Traffic Flow and Congestion

Any reduction in flow through the toll lanes has an immediate effect on congestion within Saltash, including delays to vehicles accessing the town centre. In light of this, we ask why the toll booths are being refurbished for long-term use while comparable crossings, such as the Humber Bridge, are proceeding towards free-flow, ANPR-based systems. Dartford has operated free-flow tolling for many years, and yet free-flow options here are still in the early stages of consideration. We would appreciate further insight into the reasoning and timeline for this approach.

4. Benefits of Tag Usage Within Cost Rationale

Tag users effectively pre-pay for multiple crossings and require no manned transaction at the point of use, thereby reducing operational and collection costs. We would welcome clarification on how these efficiencies have been factored into the rationale for increasing the Tag Account fee.

5. Engagement With Saltash as a Major Stakeholder

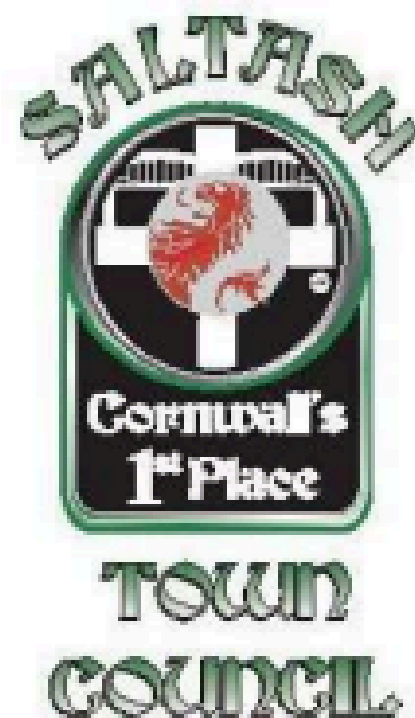
As the community with the largest concentration of regular crossing users, Saltash Town Council is disappointed that the recent press release did not reference the town among key stakeholders. Furthermore, despite repeated assurances over the past year, we have yet to receive details of any meaningful community engagement. We request an update on when this engagement will take place and how Saltash residents will be involved.

We look forward to your response to the points raised above and await the outcome of the Extraordinary Meeting on 12th January.

Many thanks

28 October 2023

To whom it may concern



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Saltash Town council are pleased to be asked to give their views on the Tamar Crossing consultation.

Saltash Town Council considers that the Tamar Crossings and in particular the Tamar Road Bridge are key parts of our towns infrastructure, and play a large part in our towns life. Many residents use the bridge on a daily basis to access employment and education, many others use it to access healthcare, leisure and for shopping trips.

At recent Town Council meetings there has been a focus on congestion in and around Saltash caused by delays on the bridge and the knock-on impact of this congestion to the public and businesses just trying to get around our town. Anecdotally, residents have informed us that journey times across the bridge have increased, thus traffic ends up being queued through Saltash, primarily impacting North Road/New Road and Fore Street through the Town Centre. This has significant negative impact on local residents who sometimes feel trapped in their own homes, or have to put up with queues of traffic right outside their door. This is inevitably leading to increased pollution which has well documented impacts on peoples health and wellbeing. Further, this is having a negative impact on businesses trying to take or make deliveries within the town and further afield. At a recent meeting of the Town Council, it was deemed a priority to resolve the congestion by the Saltash Chamber of Commerce.

We ask you to urgently look to resolve whatever is behind the additional delays that appear to be the cause of serious traffic congestion in and around Saltash, and implement mitigation to relieve this congestion which is having financial and health impacts on people's lives.

One suggestion is to automatically open the toll plaza barriers when congestion rises above a certain threshold, thus removing any toll payment time that is contributing to the delays. We suggest you consider this and possibly run a trial to see if it helps to reduce congestion and its impact.

A longer term suggestion is to find a way to remove those tolling related delays, and that could primarily be through utilising Automatic Number Plate Recognition, thus allowing near 'free flow' of traffic, which should reduce delays and therefore congestion.



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In terms of tolling levels, Saltash Town Council would like you to carefully consider the impact of increasing tolls, and keep any increase to an absolute minimum, if at all. We would encourage better management of the organisation and assets through external review of your operating methods, that includes looking at alternative income generation methods to reduce any toll increases.

Saltash Town Council would support an increased differential between those with and without Tamar Tag accounts, and whilst it would mean that visitors to Cornwall or less frequent bridge and ferry users would pay proportionally more, it is felt that this would be more easily absorbed by these infrequent users.

Ultimately you must maintain a safe and efficient pair of crossings, we would support strong negotiations with National Highways in terms of them paying a substantive contribution for operation of the A38 across the bridge and A374 across the ferry, and other efforts to provide a better funding solution for the crossings going forward.

There have been some criticism of your survey, and we are unsure why you haven't informed all account holders in regard to the consultation, as you hold those details. The range of questions and possible options in our opinion is not well designed, which may make some people feel unable to, or are minded not to complete what they consider to be a poor survey.

So, to reiterate, please keep the tolls as low as possible, look seriously at an increased differential, or increased discount level for account holders. Please also keep at the top of your 'to do' list mitigation measures to reduce and eventually eliminate traffic congestion caused by bridge delays, and look at the suggestion to allow 'free flow' when congestion impacts traffic flows through Saltash.

We would welcome further engagement and are always pleased to welcome representatives at our meetings.

Submitted by Councillor Richard Bickford
Mayor of Saltash 2023 - 2024
On behalf of Saltash Town Council



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