

WORKPLACE PARKING LICENSING (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2022

Briefing from Transform Scotland

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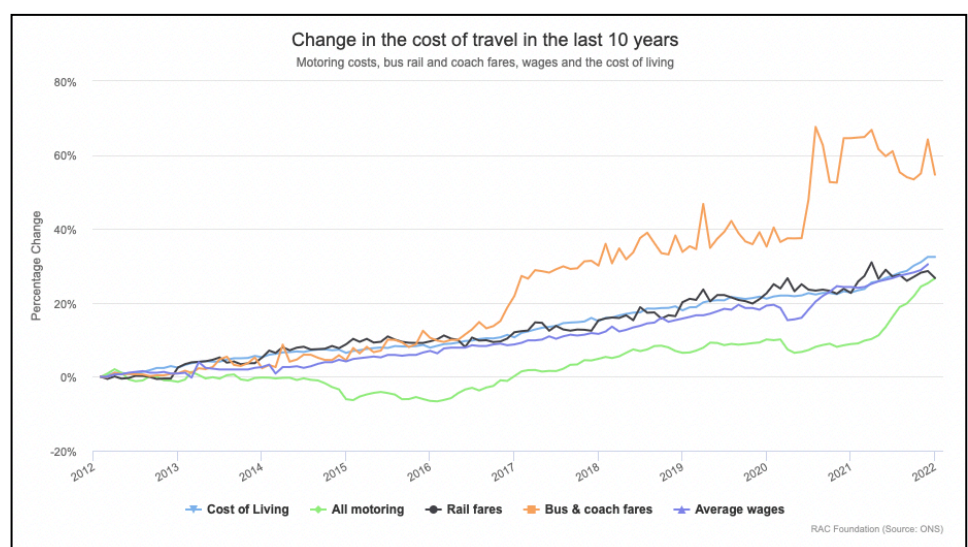
1. Key Points.

- Existing measures to reduce emissions from transport are not sufficient and demand management measures to reduce car use will be necessary to meet climate targets.
- The Workplace Parking Levy can generate income for public transport projects and rebalance the cost of private car use versus public transport use.
- The successful implementation of the Workplace Parking Levy in Nottingham demonstrates the benefits gained for reducing congestion, improving public transport and attracting investment.
- As a discretionary power for local authorities, the Workplace Parking Levy allows local authorities to use this tool for traffic management where appropriate to the local context.

2. The need for traffic demand management.

Road transport accounts for 24% of all of Scottish emissions, meaning that road transport alone is a larger emitter than any other sector of the economy.¹ To meet the Scottish Government's climate targets significant reductions in emissions from road transport will be required. However, electrification of fleets will not be sufficient to deliver the necessary carbon reductions, so a reduction of road transport will be required in addition to the increased uptake of electric vehicles.² The Scottish Government has recognised this in the introduction of its target to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030. This is a laudable target but reversing the trend of increasing car mileage in Scotland will require some form of demand management intervention that encourages drivers to reduce the number of car trips or distances travelled.

A factor that has contributed to the increase in car use over the past decade, while bus use has fallen, is the relative cost of driving. While the cost of bus use, the most widely used public transport in Scotland, has increased far above the level of the cost of living and average wages over the past decade, the cost of driving has continuously risen less than wages or the cost of living. This has effectively made driving cheaper over time while bus use has become significantly more expensive.³



RAC Foundation 'Transport Price Index', based upon ONS data.

This trend has affected the poorest in Scotland most adversely. Bus travel is disproportionately used by people on lower incomes while higher car use is associated with higher income. So while people on lower incomes are being hit by increasing transport costs, people on higher incomes are benefiting from lower costs.

Putting in place demand management measures that address the cost of driving could both discourage unnecessary driving in targeted areas or at targeted times, while also providing an income stream that could be used to provide improved public transport services.

3. Workplace Parking Levy - A success in Nottingham.

The City of Nottingham was the first UK city to successfully introduce a Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) in 2012 as a demand management tool to address congestion. All employers in Nottingham with more than 10 parking spaces are required to pay a levy for each parking space that they provide for employees (£428/year/space in 2021/22). The levy is charged to the employer but can be passed on to the employees who are using the spaces, which 80% of large employers in Nottingham do.

The WPL has been shown to have reduced congestion in the city⁴ and by 2018 it had raised £53 million in revenue.⁵ This revenue helped fund public transport improvements in the city, including a significant extension of the tram network. These improvements have increased take up of public transport and have attracted further investment to the city.⁶

4. The Workplace Parking Levy as an effective demand management measure for Scotland.

In Scotland the Workplace Parking Levy was introduced as a discretionary power for local authorities in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, which would function similarly to the Nottingham WPL. Under the Scottish scheme NHS properties, GP surgeries, hospices and blue badge parking spaces are exempted from the charge. There is also scope for local authorities to exempt other groups or specify rates for particular types of spaces, vehicles or times.

The WPL is well-placed to deliver wide benefits to a town or city, while not being overly burdensome:

- It targets peak time congestion by discouraging commuting by car
- It reduces pollution in towns or cities by targeting commuter traffic
- It provides an income that can be ringfenced for sustainable transport projects
- It supports a more efficient use of space by discouraging an overprovision of parking
- It can easily accommodate exemptions for blue-badge or emergency vehicle parking
- As it is charged to employers it is relatively simple to administer.

Since the introduction of the WPL in Nottingham a number of other local authorities across the UK have expressed an interest in setting up their own WPL scheme, including Edinburgh and Glasgow. Both cities have set their own targets for traffic reduction going beyond the 20% Scottish Government target, setting their targets for reducing car kilometres to 30% by 2030.^{7 8} To allow them to reach this target, the Edinburgh and Glasgow councils will need to have effective tools at their disposal. As a discretionary power, the WPL will not affect those local authorities that choose not to make use of the power but it is essential that those local authorities that have deemed that it is a suitable measure in their local area retain the right to use this tool. It is therefore crucial that the WPL remains available as a discretionary power for local authorities to make use of to support reaching Scotland's climate targets.



References:

- 1 <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/carbon-account-for-transport-no-12-2020-edition/>
- 2 <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/50354/decarbonising-the-scottish-transport-sector-summary-report-september-2021.pdf>
- 3 <https://www.racfoundation.org/data/cost-of-transport-index>
- 4 <https://spice-spotlight.scot/2019/05/10/the-proposed-workplace-parking-levy/>
- 5 <https://transform.scot/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Sue-Flack-Presentation.pdf>
- 6 <https://spice-spotlight.scot/2019/05/10/the-proposed-workplace-parking-levy/>
- 7 <https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s40132/7.4%20-%20City%20Mobility%20Plan%20-%20Mode%20Share%20Target.pdf>
- 8 <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewSelectedDocument.asp?c=P62AFQDNZLDXT1NTZ3>

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We campaign for walking, cycling and public transport to be the easiest and most affordable options for everyone. Our diverse membership brings together public, private and third sector organisations from across Scotland. We are a registered Scottish charity (SC041516).