



## **Tamar Crossings Joint Committee to commence public consultation on Tamar Tag admin fee**

The Tamar Crossings Joint Committee met on Monday 12 January for an Extraordinary Meeting to consider proposals relating to the Tamar Tag monthly account administration fee.

Members agreed that a **public consultation and engagement exercise** will be undertaken before any decision is made on changing the fee. During this period, the monthly admin fee will **remain at 80 pence**.

Committee members emphasised their shared aspiration for the crossings to be cheaper for local people and, in the long term, free - particularly for residents of South East Cornwall who have historically been considered disadvantaged by the charge. However, they also recognised that this ambition can only be achieved with external funding or full cost recovery for the ferry and bridge, to support essential maintenance and long-term investment. And so the Joint Chairs will be writing to the Members of Parliament for Plymouth Sutton and Devonport, Plymouth Moor View, South East Cornwall and North Cornwall and the Secretary of State for Transport requesting that the government introduces a Devon and Cornwall Infrastructure Revenue Grant of £499,999 per annum to support the Tamar Crossings.

The crossings are currently entirely toll-funded, with no support from central government, despite the Tamar Bridge providing a connection for key Highway routes between Devon and Cornwall. Anna Gelderd MP, Fred Thomas MP, Luke Pollard MP and Ben Maguire MP, and key officers of both Councils will be called on to look at what support Central Government can give to Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferries, to reduce costs so that toll or fee increases are avoided, and to work towards the abolition of Tolls, for the benefit of the economy and residents of both Plymouth and South East Cornwall.

The consultation will allow residents, Tamar Tag users and stakeholders to share their views on future options, including the proposed increase. A budget of up to **£10,000**, funded from existing allocations, has been approved to deliver the exercise and the results will be reported to a future meeting of the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee has a legal duty to deliver a balanced budget and maintain a prudent reserve of £3 million. Current reserves are forecast to fall below £1.4 million by March



2026 and, without action, into deficit in the years following if it continues to operate at a loss.

The Joint Committee welcomes this consultation process as an opportunity for open and meaningful dialogue with Tamar Tag users, local residents and stakeholders. Tamar Crossings hopes the process will support informed, respectful discussion about the future of the crossings, helping to balance affordability for local people with the need to maintain safe, reliable and sustainable services for the long term.

Chief Officer Philip Robinson, who will lead the consultation, commented "I welcome the opportunity to consult with users of the crossings and local residents and provide some further detail and context over the proposal to increase the Tag Administration fee, as well as detail around the alternatives to raising income. I encourage everyone to get involved. In the meantime, our work to reduce operating costs will continue at pace."

Updates on the consultation process will be published in due course at: [www.tamarcrossings.org.uk/news](http://www.tamarcrossings.org.uk/news)

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**Notes to editor:**

The Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Joint Committee is a local government committee formed by five councillors from each of the two Joint Authorities, Plymouth City Council and Cornwall Council. A special coalition between these two authorities began in 1950, when together they constructed a bridge across the lower reaches of the Tamar to secure the prosperity of the region. The Joint Authorities also took the opportunity to acquire joint possession of the Torpoint Ferry, at the time owned solely by Cornwall County Council, putting the control of these two vital local crossings of the Tamar together under the control of one governing body.

The Visitor and Learning Centre, Bridging the Tamar, opened in 2019 and showcases the heritage of both the 20th century Tamar Bridge and Brunel's iconic 19th century Royal Albert Bridge.



The Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry remain critical components of the region's transport infrastructure helping to safeguard the economic wellbeing of Plymouth and South East Cornwall.

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