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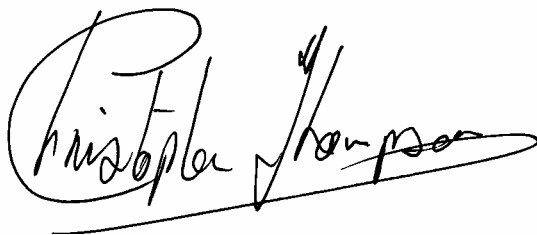
Dear Mr Liddle

### **WESTRANS RESPONSE TO THE TOLLED BRIDGES REVIEW**

I enclose the West of Scotland Transport Partnership Joint Committee's response to the consultation document on the review of tolled bridges.

Please note that a hard copy of this response along with the Respondent Information form has been posted to you.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Chris Thompson  
Convener of WESTRANS

**If phoning or visiting, please ask for Mr R Mortimer**  
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## **WESTRANS Response to Tolled Bridges Review – Phase Two Consultation**

### **Introduction**

1. WESTRANS welcomes the recognition by the Scottish Executive that there is a need to carry out a review of Tolled Bridges in Scotland. Our response relates principally to the Erskine Bridge, the only tolled bridge in the WESTRANS region.

### **The Tolling Issue**

2. While the consultation does not specifically ask whether the Erskine Bridge should have tolls, this is the fundamental issue for the west of Scotland. The Partnership believes that tolls on the Erskine Bridge should be abolished. The abolition of tolls will benefit communities in the region; in particular people living in West Dunbartonshire and Renfrewshire giving them improved access to employment, healthcare, leisure etc. This action would be consistent with the Scottish Executive's social inclusion and economic development policies.
3. WESTRANS recognises that there will be costs associated with long term maintenance of the bridge, but these should be met from central government funds, as is the case for the maintenance of other components of the trunk road network. Tolls would be appropriate on the Erskine Bridge, only if they were required to manage traffic demand on the bridge, and that is unnecessary at present.

### **A Strategic Road System**

4. The Erskine Bridge cannot be considered in isolation. It should be considered in conjunction with other associated River Clyde crossings. The Erskine Bridge, the Clyde Tunnel and the Kingston Bridge are strategic crossings important to the economy of the whole of Scotland, and the strategy should take account of this road network. Changes to the Erskine Bridge will have implications for use of the Clyde Tunnel, the Kingston Bridge and the road system in general in Glasgow. The future effects of the completion of the M74 should also be considered. It is important that the implications, including congestion, safety and air quality are fully understood. We are aware that modelling work has been undertaken by consultants for the Scottish Executive to establish traffic flow implications for different toll levels and if tolls were abolished. That information should be made available to consultees to inform decision making.
5. With regard to signing, it is custom and practice to identify tolled sections of the network on road signs and to sign alternatives avoiding the tolls e.g. via Great Western Road in the case of the Erskine Bridge. Schedules 19 and 32 of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Direction 2002 make provision for these signs. This signing (and any associated traffic) could be removed if tolls were removed from the Erskine Bridge.

### **Management of the Bridge**

6. In the current circumstances, WESTRANS believes that the management of the Erskine Bridge should remain part of the trunk road system and continue to be the responsibility of the Scottish Executive