

The cost of Surrey's failed ULEZ challenge

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Surrey County Council spent £150,000 on a failed court challenge to the ULEZ expansion.

The county council together with the London boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Harrow and Hillingdon launched a legal challenge to the expansion of the zone, taking it to the High Court.

Objecting to the plans for the zone's expansions, district and borough councils along the border called for a scrappage scheme to be extended to Surrey residents, and for delaying the date of the expansion.

The expansion of the zone, which aims to cut harmful pollution in London, meant it reached down to the borders of Surrey, leading to concerns about residents travelling over the border for work, school or medical appointments.

Entering the zone in a non-compliant car, usually petrol cars registered before 2005 and diesel cars registered before September 2015, costs drivers £12.50 per day. But a ruling in July determined there was no legal impediment to the expansion, which came in to force in August.

Speaking at the time of the High Court's decision, the county council's leader, Councillor Tim Oliver (Conservative, Weybridge), said while the council respected the court decision, it was "incredibly disappointing".

He added: "This has always been about protecting Surrey residents, many of whom will now be significantly socially and financially impacted by the Mayor's decision as they go about essential, everyday journeys, without any mitigation in place to minimise this.

"Our concerns, which have never been addressed by The Mayor despite our continued efforts, forced these legal proceedings to ensure we did all we possibly could to have the voice of our residents heard."

A TfL spokesperson said: "Following the conclusion of the judicial review, the court ordered the claimants to pay our legal costs and to pay £280,000 on account, which has been received. We will be seeking the remainder of our costs in accordance with the order".

A county council spokesperson confirmed a £44,000 payment had been agreed for the further contribution last week rather than the full £56,000 as requested by TfL.

Surrey County Council has confirmed its total costs for the challenge come to £139,528.20. This figure includes a £100,000 contribution to TfL costs and a £39,528.20 contribution to the five councils' total costs.

TfL's costs will be split between the five councils which brought the challenge.

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