

Unfortunately we were unable to attend the meeting held in Leeds on 14 February. However, we do have some thoughts on certain aspects of local government funding with regard to transport, and specifically with regard to potential road user charging and workplace parking levies. Our views are contained in our forthcoming submission to the consultation on the Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber, and the relevant extract is below.

Transport-demand management

- Should RSS be recommending that local authorities consider local area-wide road charging schemes?
- **Response**-such schemes should only be introduced as part of a national policy framework. The implications for displacement of investment, attracting staff and the costs of operating are too extensive to leave this to individual local authorities. If introduced, the charges should be proportionate to the problem. Only certain parts of the region have congestion, and then only at certain times. We recognise that this issue needs to be tackled, but believe there is a danger that a clumsy approach could do extensive damage to the region's attractiveness as a location for business and to the competitiveness of indigenous companies. RSS should recommend that local authorities introduce charging schemes only as part of a national framework, and that they should apply only at times and in places where there is a demonstrable congestion problem that is likely to respond to a charging scheme.
- Should RSS be placing greater emphasis on workplace parking levies (partly as an income stream to fund public transport improvements)?
- **Response**-the SWYMMS study showed that the way society has evolved means that many peoples' journeys to work do not lend themselves easily to being made by public transport. Additionally, congestion is not merely a result of employment-many of the worst problems are caused by the school run. A workplace parking levy would be a tax on jobs, and place additional costs on hard-pressed manufacturers. If improved public transport is believed to be a desirable goal, then the funding for that should come from general taxation as the benefits would be felt across many sections of the community. RSS should recommend that workplace parking levies are not introduced due to their potentially damaging effect on the region's economy.

Kind regards

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