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16 November 2021

Dear Lord Paddick,

POLICE, CRIME, SENTENCING AND COURTS BILL: SPEED CAMERAS

I am writing to follow up the debate in Committee on amendments 156 and 163 on local authority power to manage speed and traffic light offence enforcement (Official Report, 08 November 2021, columns 1504 - 1510), and my offer to write in response to the question on using speed cameras to enforce 20mph zones and the extent to which they are self-financing.

Enforcement of speed limits is for the police and it is for the police and the local authority to decide whether to install speed cameras and how they wish to operate them. This is a local decision in which the Department for Transport does not become involved.

The Department is providing £260 million in 2021/22 to local highways authorities in England, outside London, through the Integrated Transport Block for small scale transport schemes, including road safety measures. The Integrated Transport Block is not ring-fenced, allowing authorities to spend their allocations according to their own priorities. It is therefore for each authority to decide how it allocates its resources and which transport improvement projects to support. This could include decisions on the installation of speed cameras.

Money from fines, including speeding fines, goes to the Treasury to support general expenditure on public services. That would include services that motorists will benefit from, such as healthcare, policing, local government grants and transport. Fines revenue does not go back to the local authority or police, and is not earmarked for cameras. However, if a driver attends a rehabilitation course offered by the police then the police receive an administration fee to contribute to the cost of enforcement (clause 68 of the Bill puts the charging regime on a statutory footing). An independent review of these courses found that drivers attending them were less likely to reoffend, so making our roads safer.

I am copying this letter to Lord Tope, Lord Berkeley, Lord Sandhurst, Lord St John of Bletso, Baroness Hamwee, Baroness Randerson and Lord Rosser, and will also place a copy in the library of the House.

Sharpe of Epsom,

LORD SHARPE OF EPSOM OBE

The Lord Paddick
House of Lords