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Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

Our Ref: C15

County Councillor Warren Goldsworthy  
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport  
Lancashire County Council  
County Hall  
Preston  
PR1 8XJ

Dear Warren,

**RE: Preston Bus Gates – An Open Letter from Preston Business Improvement District and the NWL Chamber of Commerce**

We are writing on behalf of the North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce Transport & Infrastructure Policy Committee and Preston BID to address an issue that affects both local businesses and the wider community in Preston.

We have been informed by Preston's Business Improvement District (BID) levy payers about concerns related to the fines imposed by the city's bus gates. Currently, Preston operates three bus gates located on Fishergate (from Mount Street to Corporation Street), Butler Street at the junction with Fishergate Hill, and Tithebarn Street. These gates restrict all vehicle access except for buses, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Motorists caught entering these restricted areas can face fines of up to £70. To date, the revenue from these fines has exceeded £3.7 million, specifically from the Corporation Street gate alone. This money is paid to Lancashire County Council and then redistributed across the region at the council's discretion.

We recognise that Preston's road network, especially in the city centre, is in need of significant upgrades. The Fishergate project, for example, has not yet delivered the expected improvements and many arterial roads are in poor condition.

While we understand the council's desire to increase its revenue, we believe that fining drivers for honest mistakes is unfair, particularly when the proceeds are allocated to projects outside Preston. Therefore, we request that a proportion of the revenue generated from bus gate fines be hypothecated and invested directly into improvements within Preston.

As representatives of local businesses and BID levy payers and under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, we request transparency regarding the allocation of funds collected from these fines. Specifically, we seek information on the proportion of these funds spent in Preston and the tangible benefits that ensue for the city.

Additionally, given the high number of drivers unintentionally infringing on the bus gates and the council's financial gain from these violations, we would like to propose some potential solutions to address this ongoing issue:

1. **Limit operating hours:** Since buses do not operate 24/7, restricting the bus gate hours could reduce unnecessary fines and benefit the city's night time economy.
2. **Implement warning notices:** First time offenders should receive a warning letter, informing them of their infringement and that future violations will incur a fine.
3. **Improve signage:** Signs should be clearer and more visible, similar to successful approaches used in other cities, to ensure drivers are adequately warned before entering restricted areas. We acknowledge that the existing signage complies with regulations but we are genuinely concerned that it is easily overlooked.

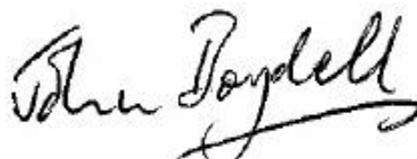
We understand that Preston's bus gates are now a permanent feature of the city's traffic management strategy. However, as a committee representing local businesses and BID levy payers, we request clarity from the council regarding the allocation and use of funds generated from these fines.

We look forward to your response and to understanding how the council intends to address these concerns, ensuring that the system benefits both the city and its community.

Yours sincerely,



Steve Peters  
**Chair - Transport & Infrastructure  
Committee  
NWL Chamber**



John Boydell  
**Chair -  
Preston City Centre Business  
Improvement District**