



Department  
for Transport

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Local and Combined Authority  
Transport Officers in England  
outside London

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Zero Emission Transport City pilot programme**

As the sector that contributes the most to the UK's emissions, transport has a major role to play in meeting the challenges of delivering net zero carbon emissions by 2050. We must increase the share of trips taken by public transport, cycling and walking, making these modes the natural first choice for all who can take them and reducing motor traffic in urban areas. The Department for Transport is therefore seeking cities with the ambition and capability to make radical changes to take part in a "Zero Emission Transport City" (ZETC) pilot programme.

We intend to work with a very small number of local authorities on a ZETC pilot programme, aiming to demonstrate practical ways to decarbonise transport systems in city centres. These pilot projects will deliver the commitment in the Prime Minister's 2020 active travel plan, "Gear Change", to support "at least one small or medium-sized city which wants to create a zero-emission transport system, with extensive bike lanes, an all-electric (or zero-emission) bus fleet, and a ban on nearly all petrol and diesel vehicles in the city centre, with deliveries made to consolidation hubs and the last mile being done by cargo bike or electric van".

The pilots will demonstrate how a mix of zero carbon transport initiatives in a small number of different locations can provide efficient, affordable and accessible city centre transport options. We aim to generate learning that can be transferred to other towns and cities, building on the upcoming toolkit to support local authorities to deliver more sustainable transport measures, as announced in the Transport Decarbonisation Plan. The pilots will also coordinate investment from a range of innovation and modal delivery funds to maximise benefits. As well as providing up to £500,000 of development funding to each of the authorities that submits a successful Expression of Interest, the Department has also ringfenced funding to run an ambitious e-cargo pilot programme in the chosen ZETCs, which will explore options such as consolidation hubs and other infrastructure to facilitate last mile delivery. We will look at maximising access to wider funding streams relevant to implementing ZETCs, including for active travel, traffic restriction measures, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure over the next three years.

In practice, we recognise that these pilots are only likely to be successful in places that are far advanced in decarbonising their transport systems. To avoid the need for a time-consuming funding competition, which would be unduly burdensome on local authorities, the Department has therefore assessed places likely to be suitable. We have considered cities' potential to deliver the four interventions described in Gear Change, with details of the assessment criteria at Annex A. Initial assessments suggest that Oxford and Bristol are the only places that meet all of these criteria. The Department therefore invites Oxfordshire County Council and the West of England Combined Authority to submit expressions of interest to take part in this pilot scheme by **Friday 18 February 2022**. If any other authority can demonstrate that a city in its area meets, or will meet, all of the key criteria and that it also has the political will to drive forward this challenging agenda, please get in touch by **18 February**. London boroughs will not be eligible, and our expectation is that support will be targeted at small and medium-sized cities rather than the largest conurbations.

The Department will assess the Expressions of Interest against the criteria set out at Annex A to decide how to award the development funding. We hope to confirm in March the authorities shortlisted to progress to the development phase. We will then work with the shortlisted authorities for six to nine months to support the production by each of a detailed business case setting out what they would do to become a ZETC. This development process will include advice from DfT's analytical, finance, and economic experts, as well as regular working group meetings bringing together key stakeholders. The e-cargo bike pilot will attract separate investment from DfT; for other interventions the business case will need to set out how authorities would expect to meet funding needs, including local contributions, private or commercial contributions, and central government funding.

### **How to apply**

The authorities named above and any other local transport authority that can demonstrate that it includes a town or city which meets the selection criteria in full should write to the Department setting out how that city meets the criteria at Annex A (max. 1000 words). This must include confirmation that your local authority has the political commitment to deliver all four elements of the Zero Transport Emission City pilot scheme:

- extensive cycle lanes
- a zero-emission bus fleet
- restrictions that discourage petrol and diesel cars, taxis and light vans in the city centre
- deliveries made to consolidation hubs and the last mile being done by cargo bike or electric van

As part of this, you must confirm you are willing to:

- Run an ambitious, fully-funded e-cargo bike pilot that combines cycle provision with active travel infrastructure and micro-consolidation hubs
- Gather data and participate in any required monitoring and evaluation activities to maximise learning and tracking of carbon reduction benefits.

These are all pass/fail criteria, so please do get in touch if you are unsure whether your area would qualify.

We do not expect detailed proposals of activities or funding yet, but you should provide a high-level indication of the activities for which you are likely to seek funding, and which central government funds you intend to use. We would expect this to be aligned with the decarbonisation proposals in your Local Transport Plan. Please also include a short annex (up to one page) setting out the proposed activities to undertake during the development phase, and whether you would undertake these in house or contract them out. This should cover all four elements of a ZETC and may include a mix of existing plans for infrastructure/activities and new interventions that will require funding. This information should be sent to [Walking.Cycling@dft.gov.uk](mailto:Walking.Cycling@dft.gov.uk) by **Friday 18 February 2022** with the subject line "ZETC Pilot [Name of Authority]". Your letter must confirm that the aims of the ZETCs are supported by the leader of the council. Inability to deliver commitments of the ZETC may impact future funding bids.

Please get in touch with [Walking.Cycling@dft.gov.uk](mailto:Walking.Cycling@dft.gov.uk) if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R Furness', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rupert Furness

## Annex A – Zero Emission Transport City Assessment Criteria

Pass/fail Criteria	Metric
<p>Small or medium sized city</p> <p>England only</p> <p>Excludes London</p>	<p>City Authority has a population 75,000 - 500,000 people</p> <p>Population based on <a href="#">ONS estimates of the population from mid-2020</a></p>
<p>High potential for restrictions that discourage petrol and diesel cars, taxis and light vans in the city centre</p>	<p>Implemented or committed zone that restricts petrol and diesel cars, taxis and light vans in the city centre. This must include restrictions on privately owned vehicles in certain areas of the city. For example, a category D Clean Air Zone or similar.</p>
<p>High potential for a zero-emission bus fleet</p>	<p>Either a) applied for Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) funding or b) outlined requests for zero emission bus funding through Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)</p>
<p>High potential for extensive bike lanes</p>	<p>At least 15% of adults cycling once a week, from Active Lives Survey 2018-19 data (<a href="#">CW0302</a>)</p>
<p>Political commitment to deliver a Zero Transport Emission City pilot scheme, including monitoring and evaluation activities and an ambitious, fully-funded e-cargo bike pilot</p>	<p>Application must confirm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the aims of the ZETCs are supported by the leader of the council</li> <li>• evaluation will be built into the design of the pilot and considered when designing other ZETC-related interventions</li> <li>• commitment to delivering an e-cargo bike pilot scheme.</li> </ul>