



## **CABINET REPORT**

Date Written	March 2020
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Service Area	Community Regeneration
Committee Division	Cabinet
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	25 <sup>th</sup> March 2020

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

# **LOCAL TRANSPORT FUND: ULTRA LOW EMISSION VEHICLES & RESILIENT ROADS FUNDS**

## **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The Welsh Government has provided two new funding streams within the Local Transport Fund. Firstly, the Resilient Roads Fund will address disruptions caused by severe weather to the highway network, and improve the performance of the highway network through better journey reliability and journey times to encourage people to switch to sustainable transport. Secondly, the Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) Transformation Fund will be for the provision of charging infrastructure for taxi and private hire vehicles, electric vehicle charging hubs (focused on the seven Valleys Taskforce Strategic Hubs and other urban areas with potential to support a wide variety of electric vehicle charging needs) and the provision of Green Fleet.
- 1.2 The Resilient Roads Fund will deliver schemes that improve infrastructure on key public transport links and cycle ways. The long term benefits will see further confidence in public transport infrastructure, giving rise to an increase in commuters using the networks. Better accessibility to cycle/walking routes will see an increase in commuters actively travelling to work places, schools etc.
- 1.3 The ULEV Fund by providing charging infrastructure at taxi ranks, transport hubs and relevant public spaces will deliver the necessary infrastructure to satisfy the current and future energy demand for electric vehicles operated by the public transport and taxi service providers. This will contribute to the goals identified in the current climate crisis and contribute towards the Cardiff Capital Regions KPIs of (i) 25,000 jobs; (ii) £4BN Private Sector Leverage; and (iii) Uplift in GVA (either direct or indirect).

1.4 MTCBC has submitted an application for £535,000 for the Resilient Roads Fund 2020/21 and an application, on behalf of the Cardiff Capital Region, for £6,502,299 for the Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Transformation Fund 2020/21.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION that**

2.1 The new Local Transport Fund opportunities from the Welsh Government be noted and the submission for Resilient Roads and Ultra Low Vehicle Emission Transformation funds for 2020/21 be approved.

## **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Welsh Government has provided two new funding streams within the Local Transport Fund. Firstly, the Resilient Roads Fund will address disruptions caused by severe weather to the highway network, and improve the performance of the highway network through better journey reliability and journey times to encourage people to switch to sustainable transport. Secondly, the Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) Transformation Fund will be for the provision of charging infrastructure for taxi and private hire vehicles, electric vehicle charging hubs (focused on the seven Valleys Taskforce Strategic Hubs and other urban areas with potential to support a wide variety of electric vehicle charging needs) and the provision of Green Fleet (please note that Council vehicle fleets are currently not eligible and the fund is targeted at taxi and public transport “fleets”).

3.2 With regard to the Resilient Roads Fund, the bid submission for MTCBC will be for a variety of schemes for the sole purpose of ensuring critical highway infrastructure in the County Borough have increased resilience against the threat of flooding and the increased threat that climate change is likely to impose. The schemes are intended to ensure that the people of Merthyr Tydfil enjoy a high standard quality of life by reducing the impact of climate change on transport links.

3.3 The schemes will primarily address highway flooding issues across the County Borough. In the short term, the introduction of the schemes will improve public transport links and cycle ways. The long term benefits will see further confidence in public transport infrastructure giving rise to an increase in commuters using the networks. Better accessibility to cycle/walking routes will see an increase in commuters actively travelling to work places, schools etc.

3.4 If no action is taken and the schemes are not implemented we will see a reverse effect with less people using transport networks, drainage systems degrading further with the potential of catastrophic failure of critical infrastructure. The Local Authority would then be further financially burdened needing to find revenue from already strained capital budgets.

The highway drainage schemes will:

- Reduce the impacts and frequency of surface water flooding to the highway network.

- Reduce road closures and subsequent high traffic volumes causing congestion and delays to local transport.
  - Where possible, the introduction of sustainable highway drainage systems will enhance the local landscape, improve water quality, amenity and biodiversity.
  - Improved quality of life for Merthyr Tydfil residents by reducing the potential impact of flooding in communities.
- 3.5 The new Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Transformation Fund seeks to provide charging infrastructure at taxi ranks, transport hubs and relevant public spaces where it has been identified would be beneficial to taxis, private hire, community transport and bus operators. A number of vehicle charging hub locations have been identified to cater for a wide variety of charging needs. Also, a range of incentive processes will be reviewed for the take up of Battery Electric Vehicles for taxis, Private Hire, buses and community transport.
- 3.6 The programme will contribute towards the Cardiff Capital Regions KPIs of (i) 25,000 jobs; (ii) £4BN Private Sector Leverage; and (iii) Uplift in GVA (either direct or indirect). It will also help deliver the vision and objectives of the 'Regional Industrial and Economic Plan', including the four Grand Challenges of AI & Data Economy, Clean Growth, Ageing Society and Future of Mobility, including wider City Deal objectives eg. Digital, Skills, Energy etc.
- 3.7 Finally, it will help the Welsh Government meet their goal of zero emissions from bus and taxi by 2028.

## 4.0 SCHEME OUTPUTS

- 4.1 The Council's bid for Resilient Roads Fund for 2020/21 will maintain connectivity throughout the County Borough during periods of severe weather, and provide greater resilience of the highway network against surface water flooding caused by severe weather and climate change. It will also reduce levels of traffic congestion along key transport corridors during severe weather that will address air quality issues due to vehicle emissions. In addition, it will also improve walking and cycling networks in order to comply with active travel standards.
- 4.2 The Council has submitted a bid to the Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Transformation Fund on behalf of the Cardiff Capital Region. This includes:

**A Programme of Regional ULEV Taxi Events.** Engagement with the taxi trade is essential to get buy-in to proposals. Events provide a platform for stakeholders to find out more about ULEVs and could include Q&As about vehicles and infrastructure, vehicle demonstrations and trials, case studies and opportunities for feedback. Events can stimulate uptake by providing an opportunity for taxi drivers to gain exposure to ULEV options and to encourage discussion and take up.

**A Charge Point Network for the Cardiff Capital Region.** Plug-in vehicles require a charging network to enable long distance travel and to make them a viable option for those without off-street parking. This is often seen as a “chicken and egg” problem, and by providing the infrastructure, it removes one of the barriers to adoption of ULEVs. This activity includes mapping the existing infrastructure provision and understanding and providing additional infrastructure where it is required to meet the needs of additional ULEVs.

**A Regional Package of Supporting Measures.** Providing financial incentives to taxi drivers, community transport and bus operators to encourage the uptake of ULEVs. Although the total cost of ownership of EVs is generally lower than conventionally fuelled vehicles, the initial capital cost is usually higher and therefore a financial incentive can help to overcome this.

## **5.0 REGIONAL COORDINATION AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

- 5.1 MTCBC agreed to submit the bid for ULEV funding on behalf of the Cardiff Capital Regional Transport Authority (CCRTA). If the funding bid is successful, then MTCBC will work with the CCRTA and the Office of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal in developing the framework for scheme delivery. MTCBC, as with the Metro Plus Programme, will be responsible for the overall project & finance management on behalf of the partnership, delivering claims and progress reports to Welsh Government. This will be led by the Strategic Infrastructure Programme Manager.
- 5.2 The Regional Transport Authority’s monthly management group will monitor and manage the overall progress of the project.
- 5.3 MTCBC in its capacity as lead partner will coordinate agreed partnership agreements with all partners. All partners will prepare agreed financial claims against their profile and submit progress report templates. MTCBC will collate all financial claims and reports to Welsh Government.
- 5.4 If the Resilient Roads Fund application is successful, the schemes will be delivered by MTCBC’s Engineering Department.

## **6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 MTCBC has submitted an application for £535,000 for the Resilient Roads Fund 2020/21 and an application, on behalf of the Cardiff Capital Region, for £6,502,299 for the Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Transformation Fund 2020/21.

## 7.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
<b>1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives</b>	4 of 4	0 of 4	0 of 4
<b>2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Involvement</li> </ul>	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
<b>3. Protected Characteristics</b> <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	10 of 10	0 of 10	0 of 10
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>	1 of 1	0 of 1	0 of 1
<p><b>Summary:</b>            People will have better access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure at transport hubs and interchanges to improve their working and everyday life, bringing people and places together in a way that promote behavioural change. The resilience of transport networks will be enhanced.</p> <p>No negative impacts have been identified.</p>			

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**COUNCILLOR GERAINT THOMAS**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR**  
**REGENERATION & PUBLIC**  
**PROTECTION**

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
CCR ULEV Taxi Business Case	February 2020	Office of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***