



Department
for Transport

TORBAY COUNCIL



Zero Emission Regional Areas Scheme 2021 to 2022 Application Summary

Expression of Interest from Torbay Council



Outline

Number of Zero Emission Buses	DfT funding ask
19	£3.9m

Torbay consists of three towns and further village areas. There are two AQMAs. Torbay's ranked 38th most deprived upper tier local authority (2019) and 27% of Torbay's population live in the 20% most deprived areas in England. The area is a levelling up priority. There are currently no zero emission buses operating in the area.

The proposal covers one of the AQMAs as well as areas defined as 'most deprived'.

The infrastructure would be installed at the Stagecoach depot, Torquay Cary Parade and the Bus Station in Paignton.

The initial services that would have zero emission vehicles introduced are:

- **31**, covering Torquay Town Centre to the north of Torquay, running through the AQMA;
- **35a/c**, a circular service covering Torquay Town Centre, areas to the north, west and south of Torquay including planned growth areas, and major health and retail destinations including Torbay Hospital; and
- **122**, a service connecting the west of Torquay, Torquay Town Centre, Torquay/Paignton sea front, Paignton Town Centre and areas to the south of Paignton.

Additional infrastructure in Paignton Bus Station allows for expansion of the fleet electrification to Paignton town services in the future. Similar work will be targeted at Brixham although the area is more remote, particularly from the depot, and requires further consideration with regards to charging infrastructure.

Policy Connections

This proposal is an affordable and deliverable scheme targeting services that do not meet the quality expectations of the National Bus Strategy, serve the communities amongst those most deprived, serve the town centres, the hospital and travel through the AQMA.

Decarbonisation of the bus fleet is the critical. The Council's vision is a zero emission bus fleet by 2030 to link with our carbon neutrality target.

Torbay Council have committed to form an EP by March 2022. Discussions have also commenced on the content of the BSIP.

We are keen as an authority, working with our partners, to act now. There are key interventions that can start to make an immediate impact to the way the customers return to the bus network in a safe, accessible and reliable way. This includes investing in on board audio/visual next stop

information on key routes, investing in service enhancements, and through the Town Deal investment in a new bus interchange.

The existing LTP has moved to its final delivery phase and makes clear that public transport is a significant priority. The strategy sets out key objectives including:

- Deliver and support new development and economic growth
- Work with communities to provide safe, sustainable and low carbon transport choices
- Strengthen and improve the public transport network

The next step to achieving these objectives is decarbonisation of the bus fleet. Delivering that alongside significant active travel interventions and electric charging for those that need it goes a substantial way to creating a decarbonised transport network that tackles what is currently the largest carbon emitting sector in Torbay. Funding from here allows that work to begin.

A significant community benefit will be the improvement to air quality both within the AQMA and the town centre with high quality bus services to the deprived areas most in need.

The Council has a community and corporate plan, emphasising the working partnership between the authority and community. We want Torbay and its residents to thrive.

We want Torbay to be a place where we have turned the tide on poverty and tackled inequalities.

We want Torbay to be the premier resort in the UK where our built and natural environment is celebrated and where we play our part in addressing the climate change emergency.

There are many themes set out in the community and corporate plan that are positively affected through this proposal, from tackling inequality by providing high quality public transport for the community to access, to being the premier resort in the UK with the clear message of supporting improved air quality and establishing a high quality place, to addressing the climate change emergency and reducing carbon emissions.

Economic growth is essential if we are to turn the tide on poverty in Torbay. We want to achieve clean, green and inclusive growth delivering long term future prosperity and an improved quality of life for all of our residents, especially those living in our most deprived areas. Connecting the communities most in need with jobs in the town centre, at Torbay Hospital, and the other employment areas in a zero emission sustainable way will have a positive impact on this.

Through the respective procurement processes we will seek wherever possible to increase the use of local suppliers and maintainers, particularly for the infrastructure. Stagecoach will train their local colleagues accordingly for vehicle maintenance which will be a significant uplift in the skills base.

This proposal builds on investment already committed to the area with Torquay harbourside undergoing significant improvements to public realm through the Town Deal; the significant investments through High Streets Fund in Paignton where the bus and rail station interchange is, Torbay Hospital redevelopment programme with buses accessing that site, and a new railway station at Edginswell that will be adjacent bus stops for one of these proposed services. All of these funding proposals have support of various bodies across the area and all support a far wider

vision of levelling up, building back better and enhancing the unique qualities of the local economy. All those investment areas are served by the routes proposed within this bid.

Air Quality

This proposal directly addresses an Air Quality Management Area, Hele Road in Torquay.

The service 31, included within this proposal, travels along Hele Road (also in an area 'most deprived') with the current timetable providing six buses per hour through the core of the AQMA where the levels of NOx are at their highest.

Through various measures that have been taken there has been an improvement in air quality in this area and the introduction of electric buses will create a further and potentially final step change, not only directly improving air quality with reduced emissions but also positively enhancing the quality of place for the residents, supporting a levelling up of the deprived area.

Whilst there are no known air quality concerns through the town centre and around the harbour, this proposal will convert 18 bus movements per hour to zero carbon in the town centre, which is 47% of journeys on that road. Around the adjacent harbour area, the 122 also interacts making a total of 24 bus movements per hour zero carbon, offering a substantial air quality improvement in that area.

The services 35a/c also serve Torbay Hospital. This is receiving significant Government investment to redevelop the site and to become a sustainable hospital.

In terms of the climate emergency the transport sector, excluding aviation and shipping, accounted for 30% of Torbay's 2016 emissions, making it the largest sector after buildings. Transport emissions are projected to fall but despite this transport is projected to still be responsible for 57% of Torbay's emissions in 2050. A combination of technological and behavioural changes will be required to transition to electric vehicles and active travel. Both the evolution of vehicle technology and the development of charging infrastructure will be needed.

Area and Services Maps

