

**LEZ Leadership Group Meeting
5 May 2020
By teleconference**

Attendees

Michael Matheson, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity (Chair)
 Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform
 Cllr Lesley Macinnes, (City of Edinburgh Council)
 Andrea Mackie (City of Edinburgh Council)
 Ewan Kennedy, (City of Edinburgh Council)
 Cllr Anna Richardson, (Glasgow City Council)
 George Gillespie, (Glasgow City Council)
 Cllr Lynne Short, (Dundee City Council)
 Cllr Mark Flynn, (Dundee City Council)
 Ewan Gourlay, (Dundee City Council)
 Cllr. Sandra Macdonald, (Aberdeen City Council)
 Gale Beattie, (Aberdeen City Council)
 Janice Milne, (SEPA)
 Hugh Gillies, (Transport Scotland)
 Stephen Thomson, (Transport Scotland)
 Sara Grainger, (Transport Scotland)
 Pete Grant, (Transport Scotland)
 Carole McRae (Health Protection Scotland)

Apologies

Dr Colin Ramsay, (Health Protection Scotland)

Subject	Discussion and actions
Welcome and review of previous actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HG welcomed everyone to the meeting and agreed with MM to chair the teleconference meeting. • No comments were received about the previous minute issues, action points and outcomes. All present confirmed were content and no changes required.
Postponing LEZ PfG commitment to introduce LEZs by 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ST provided an overview of the rationale for postponing the LEZ PfG commitment to introduce LEZs by 2020 in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. ST noted issues including the pressures on local authority committees, Traffic Commissioner for Scotland staffing and underlying pressures being felt by the transport sector to cope with COVID-19 (particularly the bus sector). <p>City of Edinburgh Council</p>

- LM sought clarity on the open-ended nature of the postponement and whether a timescale would be set for the introduction of the LEZs post 2020.
- ST stated that advice had been provided to the Cabinet Secretaries that the introduction of LEZs would be sought in the quickest time possible given the COVID-19 impacts but that a review every 2 months would seem appropriate (this point was reiterated by MM later in the meeting)
- LM sought clarity on the delay to the LEZ Regulations and how this might impact on the introduction of LEZs post 2020.
- ST confirmed that whilst the air quality team in TS were significantly redeployed to COVID-19 tasks, the goal was still to work on the development of the Regulations in a way that produced the Regulations in the first quarter of 2021.
- LM noted that the need to not use the powers of the Traffic Regulation Condition (TRC) was welcomed.

Glasgow City Council

- AR noted that the TRC that would have been applied for December 2020 is up in the air but there would need to be flexibility in the development of the next phase of a TRC
- The target date for LEZ enforcement of all other vehicles in Glasgow is December 2022, so the use of the LEZ Regulations to the timescale noted by ST is fine with GCC
- AR noted that the impact of COVID-19 on the transport network in Glasgow will be significant and will influence future plans for the city in terms of how it might or will look

Dundee City Council

- MF noted the TRC issue and the use of the Regulations to deliver LEZ introduction and enforcement.
- MF noted that the air quality modelling undertaken for Dundee up to this point may now not be reflective of the transport patterns in the city post COVID-19

Aberdeen City Council

- SMcD agreed with the points and answers already provided.
- ACC have paused their LEZ consultation

Cabinet Secretaries

- MM called for the LEZ postponement to be communicated, with emphasis being placed on the fact that the postponement is not open-ended and could shift into delivery in 2021.
- MM called for the LEZ introduction date to be reviewed every 2 months over the next 12 months if needed but this idea of postponement should not be viewed as one that extends into multiple years

- MM noted that there was a need for both progress and pragmatism in the introduction of LEZs (in tandem with other factors which are currently affecting Scotland).
- RC called for the communication on the LEZ postponement to focus on the positive elements that can arise from this approach, such as the roll out of more active travel. Specifically, the **opportunity to rethink LEZs in the context of the opportunity for a bold vision for the future of transport, and the pace of introduction once we restart.**
- The narrative around the LEZ postponement should **not just focus on a bounce back to the pre-COVID-19 status**, given the uncertainty around how people who previously used public transport might view public transport post COVID-19.
- RC noted that post COVID the cities could be very different to pre-COVID-19.
- RC called for the LEZ introduction to be **framed against the backdrop of green economic recovery** which should include a strong transport element.
- MM noted the serious practical implications being faced by both bus operators and bus manufacturing industry. Currently operators are not in a position to procure new buses and there is no manufacturing capacity to produce new vehicles.

Councillor observations

- LM agreed with the observations about the bus sector, with declining revenue for Lothian Bus.
- LM called for lines to be issued on the merits of public transport rather than private cars (in the wake of public transport not being used during COVID-19 pandemic). This would help drive and promote the health benefits during business commutes
- SMcD noted that ACC had introduced a green budget in March, with LEZs being part of the jigsaw to reimagine Aberdeen city centre.
- LS noted that Dundee operates a bus service which is a sister company of National Express, so it could be easy to lose buses out of Dundee, but harder to attract them back to Dundee
- AR stated that there was a need to act now during the recovery phase of COVID-19. AR noted the positive element of reduced traffic but asked what gains can be achieved in the long term as people living in the city see what the city could look like with reduced traffic numbers.

ACTION: TS to develop communication lines on the postponement of the LEZ and tie in with the 4 local authorities to obtain their views.

Funding for local authorities in 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ST provided an overview of the funding available from Scottish Government to local authorities in 2020/21. • ST noted the pressure on the resource budget, with a particular pressure on the communications budget in comparison to previous years. There was also a likely pressure on the resource budget for the suite of actions LAs were likely to call for support on. ST noted that one LA had tentatively suggested that a request for £450K might arise this year, which would exceed the budget envisaged by the Scottish Government. <p>ACTION: TS to contact local authorities with an outline of the funding available in 2020/21.</p>
AOB Next meeting and possible topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comments
Date and time of next meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC – Meetings are due to happen every 3 months, so a meeting in early August will be sought.