



Clean Air
Greater
Manchester

Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan

January 2021

Introduction

Greater Manchester (GM) is made up of 10 local authorities – Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. Action needs to be taken in GM to improve air quality, now and for future generations. Air pollution is linked to a range of very serious health conditions, contributing to the equivalent of around 1,200 early deaths in GM every year.

Government has directed GM to introduce a category C charging Clean Air Zone across the region, to bring nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels on local roads within legal limits in “the shortest possible time” and by 2024 at the latest.

As air pollution does not respect geographic boundaries, all 10 local authority areas have worked together to develop a joint Clean Air Plan to improve air quality.

Clean Air Plan consultation

Between 8 October and 3 December 2020, GM held a public consultation on the key elements of the charging Clean Air Zone, and the proposals for the supporting funds. At the same time, a consultation on the proposed GM Minimum Licensing Standards for hackney carriages and private hire vehicles took place. The consultations ran in parallel to allow those impacted and/or interested to have a complete view of all the proposed changes to vehicles, and the potential support available for vehicle upgrades.

The consultation took place in autumn 2020, so that the 10 GM local authorities would be able to meet the timescales to implement a charging Clean Air Zone in spring 2022. Subsequently, this would help to ensure the achievement of NO₂ compliance in “the shortest possible time” and by 2024 at the latest, as required by the Ministerial Direction.

The impacts of COVID-19 on air quality

GM did see brief, short term improvements in air quality due to the pandemic, but as the economy opened again in the second half of 2020, road traffic levels grew quickly, almost reaching pre-pandemic levels by late 2020. Coupled with this, the economic uncertainty led to a significant reduction in the purchase of newer, cleaner vehicles.

Analysis has shown that the pandemic won't lead to a big enough long-term reduction in harmful nitrogen dioxide air pollution on our local roads to meet legal limits without a Clean Air Zone.

As GM sets out to build back better from the pandemic – with the objective of delivering a sustainable and green recovery – it is important that everyone in the city-region benefits from improved air quality.

The GM Clean Air Plan forms an important part of our post-lockdown recovery, by supporting businesses, bus operators and taxi and PHV owners and drivers to invest in low-emission commercial vehicles.

The impacts of COVID-19 on the proposals

The Government has asked Greater Manchester to progress the Clean Air Plan based on proposals developed before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Work is under way to assess and understand all the information gathered through the autumn 2020 consultation. Further work is also taking place to understand the economic impact of COVID-19 on people and businesses affected by the plans, as this may alter the level of support funding needed from government.

This will help shape the final Clean Air Plan, which will be put to decision makers in the ten Greater Manchester local authorities as soon as possible and no later than summer 2021.



Clean Air Zone

What is a Clean Air Zone?

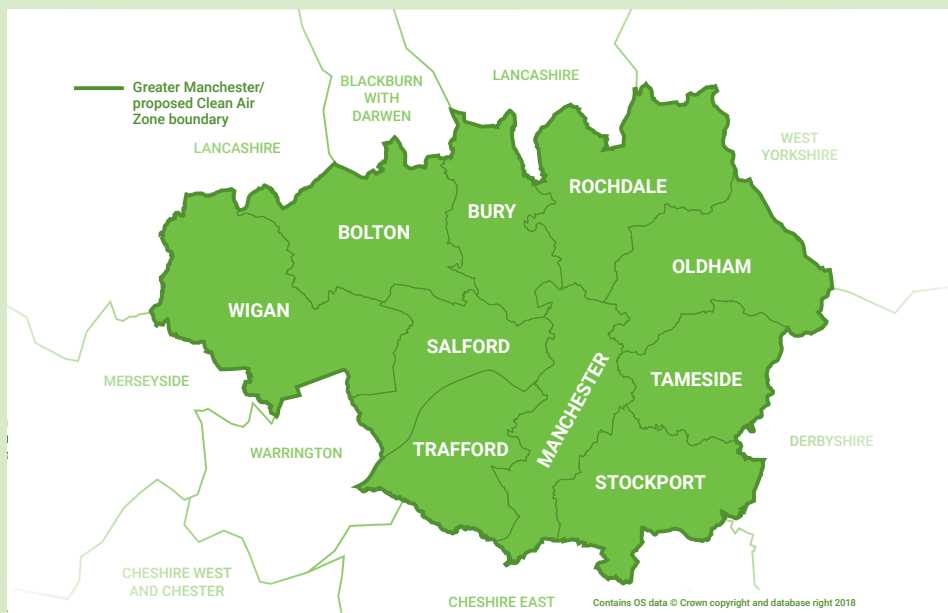
This is a designated area which certain higher polluting vehicles would pay a charge to travel in.

Vehicles which do not comply with the required emissions standards would pay a daily charge for each day on which they drive into, out of, within or through the Clean Air Zone. Failure to pay the daily charge would result in the issue of a penalty charge notice (PCN) requiring an additional payment.

A Clean Air Zone is not the same as a Congestion Charge Zone. The purpose of a Clean Air Zone is to improve air quality by encouraging drivers to upgrade to a cleaner vehicle. It is not designed to tackle congestion.

What area will the GM Clean Air Zone cover?

The consultation set out that all roads within GM¹ will be included in the Clean Air Zone, with the exception of those roads managed by Highways England, such as motorways and trunk roads. You can see this in detail by visiting cleanairgm.com/clean-air-zone-map







How will it operate?

The consultation set out that it would operate 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Those non-compliant vehicles liable to pay the charge would pay using the Government's online portal.

Discounts and exemptions were also proposed for some vehicle types. Some exemptions being temporary, some being permanent.

What are the proposed daily charges for non-compliant vehicles?

A non-compliant vehicle which is not subject to one of the proposed discounts or exemptions would be subject to the following daily charges:

Vehicle type	Proposed daily charge at consultation
 Buses and coaches	£60
 Taxis/private hire vehicles	£7.50
 HGVs	£60
 Vans and minibuses	£10

Failure to pay the daily charge would result in a penalty charge notice (PCN) of £120, in addition to the daily charge.

¹ There is a proposal to exclude a small stretch of the A555 from the junction with the B5166 in the west to the junction with A523 in the east (from Styal Road to the Macclesfield Road junction). This is to enable movements between Poynton and Handforth (which are towns located in the district of Cheshire East), to continue uncharged, given the expectation that implementing a charge would result in local journeys returning to the roads that the A555 was designed to reduce.

Proposed Clean Vehicle Funding support

At the time of the consultation, GM was seeking a package of funding from Government totaling over £150m. This funding aims to support owners and registered keepers of non-compliant vehicles with the cost of upgrading, and to mitigate the negative social and economic effects of the Clean Air Zone on the most affected businesses and individuals.

So far, £41m has been confirmed by Government and further awards are anticipated.

This funding is broken up into the following proposed funds: Clean Commercial Vehicle Fund, Clean Taxi Fund, Clean Bus Fund and Hardship Fund. There are also proposals for a vehicle finance scheme¹, a 'try before you buy' electric hackney carriage trial scheme and electric vehicle charging points across the city-region, which would be for use by hackney carriages and private hire vehicles (PHV) only.



Buses

Proposed support for those eligible and with a non-compliant bus which is used on a registered bus service in GM.

Grant of up to £16,000 per vehicle for replacement or retrofit.

Bus operators will not be offered access to the vehicle finance scheme.

No proposed cap on number of vehicles per applicant.



Hackney carriages

Proposed support for those eligible with a non-compliant hackney carriage licensed with one of the GM authorities.

£10,000 per vehicle for a running costs grant or a contribution for vehicle finance, for a replacement zero emissions capable wheelchair accessible vehicle.

or

£5,000 grant towards an LPG retrofit.

UK government grant available of up to £7,500 for purchasing a new zero emissions capable vehicle.

Limit of eight vehicles per applicant.



Private hire vehicles

Proposed support for those eligible with a non-compliant private hire vehicle licensed with one of the GM authorities.

£1,000 grant or vehicle finance contribution towards replacement to a compliant petrol or diesel vehicle.

or

£2,000 grant or vehicle finance contribution towards replacement to a hybrid or plug-in hybrid.

or

£2,500 running costs grant for replacement with a zero emissions capable vehicle.

or

£5,000 grant or vehicle finance contribution towards replacement of a minibus or Wheelchair accessible vehicle.

Limit of 10 vehicles per applicant.



Vans

Proposed support for those eligible with a non-compliant van.*

A grant of £3,500 per vehicle for replacement or vehicle finance contribution.

Limit of 10 vehicles per applicant.



Heavy Goods Vehicles

Proposed support for those eligible with a non-compliant HGV.*

A grant of up to £5,500 per vehicle for replacement or vehicle finance contribution. Limit of 10 vehicles per applicant.

or

A grant of up to £16,000 per vehicle for retrofit. Limit of five vehicles per applicant.



Coaches

Proposed support for those eligible with a non-compliant coach.*

Grant of up to £16,000 per vehicle for replacement or retrofit or vehicle finance contribution.

Limit of 10 vehicles per applicant.



Minibuses

Proposed support for those eligible with a non-compliant minibus.*

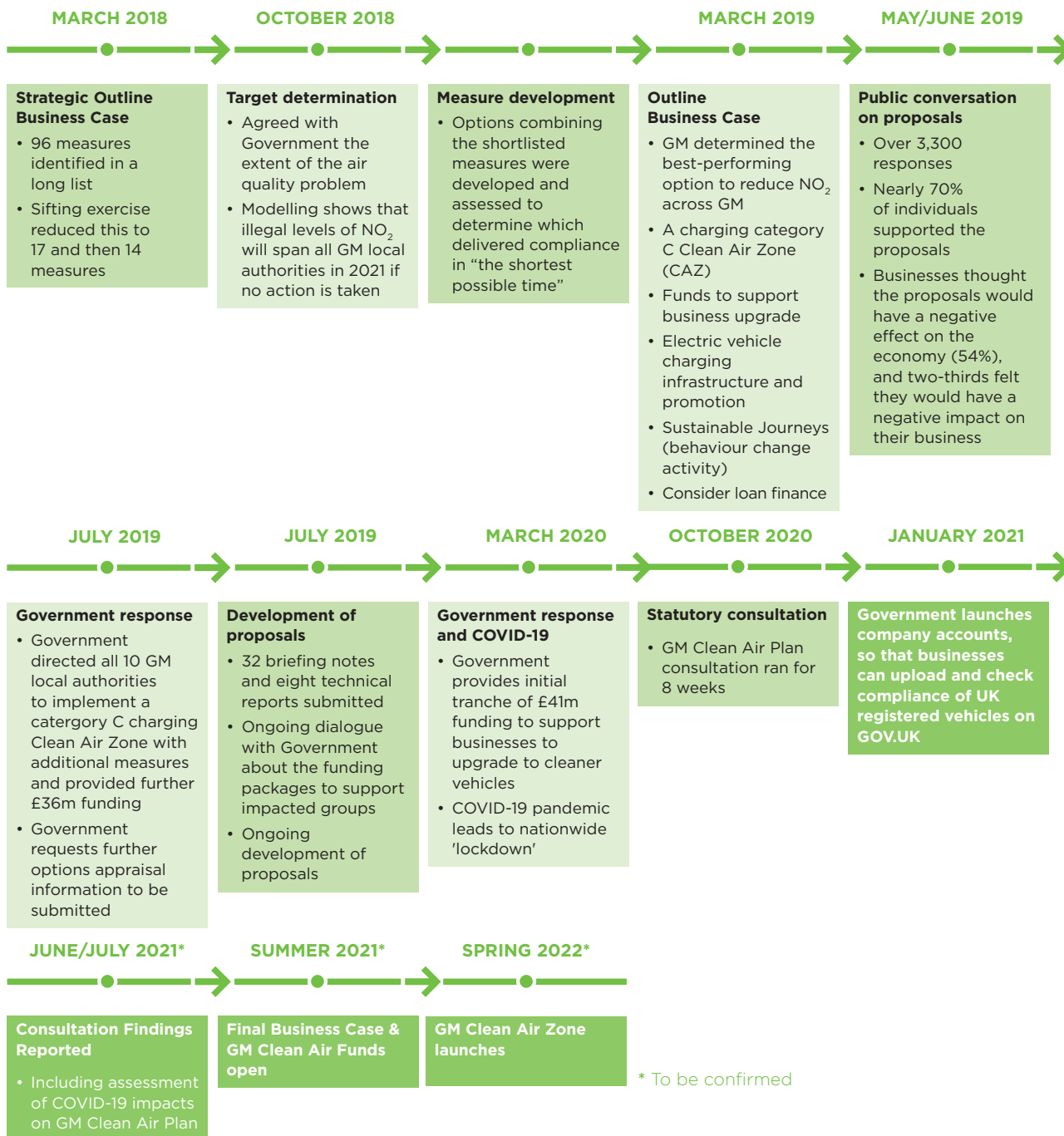
A grant of up to £5,000 for replacement or vehicle finance contribution for replacement of minibuses (which are not licensed taxis or PHVs or used on a registered bus service in GM).

Limit of 10 vehicles per applicant.

*The proposed eligibility criteria at consultation was that these funds would be available for vehicles registered in GM, small and micro businesses, sole traders, charities and social enterprises, private owners, initially targeted towards individuals and the smallest businesses with the oldest vehicles.

¹ The proposed vehicle finance scheme would offer a financial contribution towards vehicle finance for upgrade to for up to 90% of the value of the vehicle.

The journey so far



Next steps

Following the close of the consultation, GM will:

- Review the feedback received.
- Consider the information and evidence gathered, so that it can understand the economic consequences that COVID-19 has had on vehicle owners and trade groups affected by the GM Clean Air Plan and Minimum Licensing Standard proposals.
- Undertake the subsequent equalities, air quality and emissions impact assessments; this work will be vital to inform future decisions on each aspect of the final plan.

Following this, a final plan will be developed for consideration by decision makers as soon as possible and no later than summer 2021'.

To find out more about the proposals and to sign up for updates, visit cleanairgm.com

For media enquiries, call **0161 244 1055** or email info@cleanairgm.com