

Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment v3 - optional ECIA review

Reference: ECIA551529870

Submitted: 13 October 2023 09:09 AM

Executive summary

Title of policy / decision: FP/243/09/23 Zero Emission Bus Regional Area Funding Bid for Electric Buses in Basildon

Policy / decision type: Cabinet Decision

Overview of policy / decision: The proposal is to agree to submit a bid to the second Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas scheme (ZEBRA 2) to secure central Government funding to introduce electric buses in Basildon in cooperation with bus operator First. This is in line with our stated aim of electrifying buses in Basildon, as included in the Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership. Funding will be provided by the commercial sector and by the Department for Transport (DfT) with ECC managing the grant payment process. As this is at this stage a bid, with no certainty of success and given the short notice for submission (15th December 2023, announced by DfT in September 2023) and given the need to involve a private sector partner, (First Bus UK) whom will need to make a significant financial commitment through the bid, some aspects of the bid outcome remain unclear at this time. The bid will be assessed by DfT against the criteria set out in its Green Bus Calculator and application form which have only recently been issued. These will cover most aspects of the environmental benefits and impacts deriving from the scheme, which we cannot at this time quantify.

What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?: To authorise the submission of a bid to the DfT before the 15th December 2023 to fund the introduction of zero emission (at tailpipe) buses in Basildon and the accompanying infrastructure in First's Basildon garage. This will reduce carbon and pollutant (i.e. NOx, SOx and particulate) emissions across the town with the concomitant air quality and health benefits for residents and make bus use more attractive for residents as a modal choice. It will also allow for the introduction of new skills and jobs (to do with the installation and maintenance of electric drive train and charging infrastructure for buses).

Executive Director responsible for policy / decision: Mark Ash (Climate, Environment and Customer Services)

Cabinet Member responsible for policy / decision: Cllr Lee Scott (Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport)

Is this a new policy / decision or a change to an existing one?: New policy / decision

How will the impact of the policy / decision be monitored and evaluated?: Success of the bid will be seen through

- a) the introduction of a significant number zero emission (at tail pipe) buses in Basildon.
- b) reduced carbon and pollutant outputs. These will be set out through the DfT Green Bus Calculator (GBC) and measured once the fleet is in operation.
- c) reports to DfT.

Will this policy / decision impact on:

Service users: No

Employees: No

Wider community or groups of people: Yes

What strategic priorities will this policy / decision support?: Strong, Inclusive and Sustainable Economy, High Quality Environment, Health, Independence and Wellbeing for All Ages

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Economy?: Infrastructure, Green growth

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Environment: Net zero, Transport and built environment, Green communities

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Health: Healthy lifestyles

What geographical areas of Essex will the policy / decision affect?: Basildon

Digital accessibility

Is the new or revised policy linked to a digital service (website, system or application)?: No

Equalities - Groups with protected characteristics

Age

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Low

Disability - learning disability

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Low

Disability - mental health issues

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Low

Disability - physical impairment

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Low

Disability - sensory impairment

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Low

Sex

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Low

Gender reassignment

Nature of impact: None

Marriage / civil partnership

Nature of impact: None

Pregnancy / maternity

Nature of impact: None

Race

Nature of impact: None

Religion / belief

Nature of impact: None

Sexual orientation

Nature of impact: None

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: For older people. Older people are disproportionately heavy users of bus services, so will benefit from the cleaner engines, fewer emissions and quieter, smoother drive.

For disabled people: Disabled people are disproportionately heavy users of bus services, so will benefit from the cleaner engines, fewer emissions and quieter drive as above, plus the buses will provide an additional flexible space in addition to the mandatory wheelchair space – this space can either be suitable for a second wheelchair user or at least 2 unfolded pushchairs or prams. The buses must also be compliant with the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 (PSVAR) and be compliant with the Accessible Information Regulations, with an induction loop to aid direct communication between drivers and passengers who use a hearing aid. This will therefore be beneficial to users with a disability, and older users who may require improved accessibility.

First vehicles have an Acoustic Vehicle Alert System (AVAS) fitted to all electric vehicles. The AVAS system generates sound for nearly silent electric vehicles to improve the safety of vulnerable road users such as people with sensory disabilities, cyclists, and children.

For Women: Women are disproportionately heavy users of bus services, so will benefit from the cleaner engines, fewer emissions and quieter, smoother drive. Women statistically live longer than men so will also benefit disproportionately from the positive impacts for older people and disabled people set out above including additional space available for pushchairs etc when not in use by wheelchairs.

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: There are no negative impacts

How could you strengthen any positive impact(s)?: We will work with our private sector partner to maximise the number of zero emission vehicles in their Basildon Fleet, maximising the benefits from the transition and take use the opportunity to advertise and market the improved services, attracting more bus users and promoting modal shift.

Levelling up - Priority areas & cohorts

Children and adults with SEND, learning disabilities or mental health conditions (taking an all-age approach)

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Low

Children on Free School Meals

Nature of impact: None

Working families

Nature of impact: None

Young adults (16-25 who have not been in education, training or employment for around 6-12 months)

Nature of impact: None

Residents of Harlow

Nature of impact: None

Residents of Jaywick and Clacton

Nature of impact: None

Residents of Harwich

Nature of impact: None

Residents of Basildon (Town) housing estates

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Low

Residents of Canvey Island

Nature of impact: None

Residents of Colchester (Town) - Housing Estates

Nature of impact: None

Residents of Rural North of the Braintree District

Nature of impact: None

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: For Children and adults with SEND, learning disabilities or mental health conditions: Children and adults with SEND are disproportionately heavy users of bus services, so will benefit from the cleaner engines, fewer emissions and quieter drive as above, plus the buses will provide an additional flexible space in addition to the mandatory wheelchair space – this space can either be suitable for a second wheelchair user or at least 2 unfolded pushchairs or prams. The buses must also be compliant with the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 (PSVAR) and be compliant with the Accessible Information Regulations, with an induction loop to aid direct communication between drivers and passengers who use a hearing aid. This will therefore be beneficial to users with a disability, and older users who may require improved accessibility

For Residents Of Basildon: The introduction of zero emission buses is will reduce carbon and pollutant (i.e. NO_x, SO_x and particulate) emissions across the town with the concomitant air quality and health benefits for residents and make bus use more attractive for residents as a modal choice. It will also allow for the introduction of new skills and jobs (to do with the installation and maintenance of electric drive train and charging infrastructure for buses).

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: n/a

How could you strengthen any positive impact(s)?: We will work with our private sector partner to maximise the number of zero emission vehicles in their Basildon Fleet, maximising the benefits from the transition and take use the opportunity to advertise and market the improved services, attracting more bus users and promoting modal shift.

Equalities - Inclusion health groups and other priority groups

Refugees / asylum seekers

Nature of impact: None

Homeless / rough sleepers

Nature of impact: None

People who experience drug and alcohol dependence

Nature of impact: None

Offenders / ex-offenders

Nature of impact: None

Victims of modern slavery

Nature of impact: None

Carers

Nature of impact: None

Looked after children / care leavers

Nature of impact: None

The armed forces community (serving personnel and their families, veterans, reservists and cadets)

Nature of impact: None

People who are unemployed / economically inactive

Nature of impact: None

People on low income

Nature of impact: None

Sex workers

Nature of impact: None

Ethnic minorities

Nature of impact: None

Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities

Nature of impact: None

People with multiple complex needs or multi-morbidities

Nature of impact: None

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: Introducing electric buses in Basildon will have no exceptional impact on any of the specific groups set out above, beyond the general benefit for all residents from reduced carbon and pollutant (i.e. NO_x, SO_x and particulate) emissions across the town with the concomitant air quality and health benefits and improved attractiveness of bus services to residents as a modal choice, the introduction of new skills and jobs (to do with the installation and maintenance of electric drive train and charging infrastructure for buses).

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: n/a

Equalities - Geographical Groups

People living in areas of high deprivation

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Medium

People living in rural or isolated areas

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Low

People living in coastal areas

Nature of impact: None

People living in urban or over-populated areas

Nature of impact: Positive

Extent of impact: Medium

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: Basildon is ranked 136th nationally and 5th within Essex for overall deprivation. Less well-off people are disproportionately reliant of bus services to access employment, the wider transport network, health, education and shopping services.

Bus networks to be focused around areas of greater deprivation for this reason (greatest passenger potential) and this is the case in Basildon users of bus services, with the bus network focused around Pitsea North West (1st highest deprivation level out of 16 wards), Vange (2/16), Pitsea South West (3/16), Lee Chapel North (4/16), St Martins (5/16), Fryerns (6/16). Source: <https://www.basildon.gov.uk/BasildonBoroughProfilePeople>

Areas of higher levels of deprivation tend to have higher levels of road based pollution and suffer from higher incidences of health issues related to pollution. Some routes travel to Southend, and consequently travel through rural areas, and providing these with zero emission buses should the bid be successful.

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: n/a

How could you strengthen any positive impact(s)?: Ensure that all buses in the Basildon depot are replaced with electric buses.

Families

Family formation (e.g. to become or live as a couple, the ability to live with or apart from children)

Nature of impact: None

Families going through key transitions e.g. becoming parents, getting married, fostering or adopting, bereavement, redundancy, new caring responsibilities, onset of a long-term health condition

Nature of impact: None

Family members' ability to play a full role in family life, including with respect to parenting and other caring responsibilities

Nature of impact: None

Families before, during and after couple separation

Nature of impact: None

Families most at risk of deterioration of relationship quality and breakdown

Nature of impact: None

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: Introducing electric buses in Basildon will have no impact on any family group in particular – it will provide health benefits to all groups through improved air quality due to the vehicles having zero emissions.

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: n/a

Climate

Does your decision / policy involve development or re-development of buildings or infrastructure?: Yes

Have you calculated the predicted operational energy demand and the carbon emissions (both operational and embodied) impact of the development / infrastructure / building?: No

Does your proposal align with the Net Zero Carbon (in operation) definition being promoted through best practice and emerging planning responses at ECC?: No

Have you assessed the upfront embodied carbon emissions (building life cycle stages A1-A5) of your proposed project and have you set targets in line with best practice to reduce embodied carbon emissions?: No

Your development needs to be resilient to projected climate risks including flooding, overheating and subsidence. Please outline how you will achieve this: The assessment is being completed by our commercial partner, First Essex Buses. Currently it is unclear what level of development will be required (ranging from bus charging points to an electrical substation, depending on the number of vehicles and charging requirements) and we will actively work with our commercial partners as the bid develops to ensure any development will be in line with ECC and Government green and emission requirements.

First have previously worked with Norfolk County Council on a previous ZEBRA bid and so we are confident they will work proactively with ECC.

There is no risk from coastal erosion as Basildon is not on the coast. The land is within flood zone 1 has a low

probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. It is not expected that there will be any additional water infrastructure as it will solely be installation of electrical bus chargers and perhaps an electric substation.

The design for electric infrastructure will counter heating issues resulting from electrical generation.

Does your decision / policy take place in, or make use of, existing buildings or infrastructure?: Yes

The use of existing buildings will always have a climate impact because it requires energy consumption. Please outline how you will mitigate against this impact: The building (Basildon Bus Depot) is owned by our commercial partner, First. The number of vehicles using the site will not increase, and there will be an increased energy consumption due to the electrical bus charging. We will work with the local DMO to allow for this, and overall, there will be less emissions in the local area as buses will no longer use fossil fuels (reduction in carbon emissions overall).

We will work with First to consider ways to mitigate the impact of any additional energy consumption, and seeks ways to improve the energy consumption of the building.

Does your decision / policy involve elements connected to transport, travel or vehicles? This includes travel needs / requirements of both service users and staff (including staff you're planning to recruit): Yes

Where are staff or service users coming from and how are they travelling?: The introduction of electric buses in Basildon will replace some or all of the existing diesel bus fleet, which will have no negative impact on how service users will travel; rather, new electric buses may improve modal shift and may encourage new passengers. This will reduce carbon emissions in the area. It will have no impact on ECC staff.

If car travel is unavoidable, are you specifying electric cars and vehicles?: No

What is your transition plan to introduce electric vehicles?: additional car travel is not required as part of this scheme

Are you undertaking a procurement exercise?: No

Does your decision / policy involve the purchase of goods or materials?: Yes

Have you considered making use of goods / materials that already exist in the organisation, or using second-hand equipment?: N/A

Will you purchase goods that are durable and long lasting, and can be easily maintained or repaired?: N/A

Will you source goods / materials from a local provider where possible?: N/A

Will you use goods or materials made with recycled content and / or recyclable at the end of their life?: N/A

Will any waste be generated by this decision? This includes waste from construction, waste generated by service users / staff, and waste generated by replacing existing products / materials with new: Yes

Most of our activities will generate waste so it is important that this waste is managed properly. Generally, the more waste produced the greater the greenhouse gas impact. What approaches are in place to maximise reuse, recycling and composting of any waste generated by this decision? Please specify how you are:

Measuring the amount of waste being generated and setting targets to reduce, for example setting reuse requirements: This will be undertaken by our commercial partner, First Buses

Requiring recycling - such as setting targets for waste recycled, or providing facilities to recycle: n/a

Operating the service in a digital way to reduce use of material resources: n/a

Sharing goods and services with others to reduce resource use: n/a

Donating or selling materials and products that are no longer required to keep them in use elsewhere: n/a

Avoiding over-packaged or difficult to recycle goods: n/a

Avoid single-use items, in particular single use plastic: n/a

Recycling and composting waste where applicable: n/a

Where will waste be treated and disposed of? This includes general rubbish and recycling: n/a

Nature of impact

Built Environment / Energy: Positive

Sustainable Transport / Travel: Positive

Waste: Negative

Extent of impact

Built Environment / Energy: Medium

Sustainable Transport / Travel: High

Waste: Low

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: Specific data is not available at this stage.

Conversion from diesel to electric buses will have a beneficial impact on the environment and reduces energy and waste impacts as electric buses have a longer service life. They are also more energy efficient than diesel buses.

What actions will be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts, including timescales?: specific data not known at this stage.

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: None

Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

Does your ECIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more of the groups / areas identified?: No

Details of person completing the form

I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance: I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance

Date ECIA completed: 03/10/2023

Name of person completing the ECIA: Jemma Goldwater

Email address of person completing the ECIA: jemma.goldwater@essex.gov.uk

Your function: Climate, Environment and Customer Services

Your service area: Highways & Transportation

Your team: IPTU

Are you submitting this ECIA on behalf of another function, service area or team?: No

Email address of Head of Service: helen.morris@essex.gov.uk