

International treaty: [MS No.2/2018] Amendments to texts and various annexes to 1998 Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants and 1998 Protocol on Heavy Metals

Published title: Amendment of the text of and annexes I, II, III, IV, VI and VIII to the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants [and] Amendment of the text of and annexes other than III and VII to the 1998 Protocol on Heavy Metals

News story: Enforcement Undertakings accepted from United Utilities

United Utilities have paid £155,000 to environmental charities as part of two Enforcement Undertakings (EUs). The EUs were offered to the Environment Agency after the company admitted causing sewage to pollute two watercourses in the summer of 2016.

Benefit to environment

EUs are a new kind of restorative enforcement sanction. Polluters can make an offer to the Environment Agency to pay for or carry out environmental improvements as an alternative to any other enforcement action and the Environment Agency decides whether this is acceptable.

In July 2016, a blockage in a sewage detention tank in Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire, caused sewage to overflow to the River Goyt, resulting in discoloration to the river downstream to New Mills, and sewage fungus being deposited on the river bed for at least a kilometre. Although no fish were found to have been killed, there was a short-term but significant impact on invertebrate life and the river habitat, in which fish such as trout and bullhead normally thrive.

In August 2016, a blockage in a sewer in Millbrook, Tameside, caused an overflow through a dislodged hatch cover, resulting in a similar impact on a shorter stretch of Swineshaw Brook which runs to the River Tame.

The EU offers were accepted by the Environment Agency in October 2017 and

were completed in January 2018. United Utilities made a total of £155,000 in donations to the Wild Trout Trust, the Ramblers Association and the Healthy Rivers Trust. This money will be used to fund environmental improvements and research in the affected catchments and to restore endangered footpaths.

The company also spent a further £10,000 removing rubbish from Swineshaw Brook and also paid the Environment Agency's incident response and investigation costs in full. In response to both incidents United Utilities had acted quickly to stop the pollution and resolve the cause. As part of the EUs the company also committed to improving their infrastructure and asset maintenance schedules in order to reduce the likelihood of this happening again.

Mike Higgins, an Environment Officer with the Environment Agency, said:

Enforcement Undertakings allow polluters to positively address and restore the harm caused to the environment and prevent repeat incidents.

They offer quicker and more directly beneficial resolution than a court prosecution and help offenders who are prepared to take responsibility for their actions to voluntarily make things right. We will continue to seek prosecutions against those who cause severe pollution or who act deliberately or recklessly.

Please report any environmental issues to the Environment Agency's 24 hour Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

[News story: Government funding boost for bus industry in drive to improve air quality](#)

Updated: First year funding figure for Southampton City Council corrected to £1,177,835.

Funding will be awarded to 20 local authorities as part of the Clean Bus Technology Fund, which was launched in 2017 and is run by the Joint Air Quality Unit.

[Speaking at the UK Bus Summit at London's QEII Centre](#) on 8 February 2018, Transport Minister Nusrat Ghani set out how the money will enable older vehicles to meet minimum emissions standards, and contribute to better air

quality.

Speaking at the Bus Summit, Transport Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

Buses and coaches are hugely important to those who rely on them and to the communities in which these people live and work.

Road transport is going to change dramatically over the next couple of decades – and we have to make sure that the bus industry is ready to benefit from those changes.

We have to move away from nose-to-tail car traffic at peak times, endless engine idling, stop-start travel and rising pollution and carbon emissions. Rather than contributing to the problem – buses and coaches very much form part of the solution.

The money will allow councils to retrofit vehicles with technology to reduce tailpipe emissions of nitrogen dioxide, as part of a drive to help ensure that more buses and coaches can contribute to improving air quality in UK cities.



Environment Minister Therese Coffey said:

Poor air quality affects public health, the economy and the environment, which is why we are determined to do more.

I am delighted to see so many high quality applications to the Clean Bus Technology Fund and, as a result, the government has decided to bring forward funding meaning that we will award nearly £40 million to retrofit more than 2,700 buses.

This is another way which the government is delivering on its commitment to improving the environment within a generation and leave it in a better state than we found it.

Alongside this, the Department for Transport will use the [Bus Services Act](#) as a way of encouraging councils and bus companies to look at measures to encourage the public to use buses.

In 2016, government invested £30 million through the [Low Emission Bus Scheme](#), which helped put over 300 new low emission buses on the roads, with a further £11 million and 150 buses being announced in 2017.

Winners

Clean Bus Technology Fund 2017 to 2019 winners	Number of buses	2017/18 funding	2018/19 funding
1. West Yorkshire Combined Authority	156	£1,368,000	£1,474,200
2. Bristol City Council	81	£1,047,800	£1,167,000
3. Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council	79	£828,000	£674,180
4. Leeds City Council	75	£0	£1,371,000
5. Transport for West Midlands	364	£1,500,000	£1,500,000
6. Leicester City Council	109	£1,101,581	£1,101,581
7. Oxford City Council	83	£938,910	£724,020
8. Coventry City Council	104	£0	£1,500,000
9. Nottinghamshire County Council	112	£1,373,265	£0
10. Transport for Greater Manchester	170	£1,500,000	£1,500,000
11. North Tyneside Council	69	£862,600	£339,000
12. Nottingham City Council	171	£1,500,000	£1,196,517
13. Transport for London	500	£1,500,000	£1,500,000
14. Sheffield City Council	117	£560,000	£1,386,800
15. Liverpool City Region Combined	149	£1,499,586	£1,497,277
16. Southampton City Council	145	£1,177,835	£1,500,000
17. Derby City Council	152	£1,500,000	£798,330
18. Essex County Council	60	£1,072,500	£0
19. South Tyneside Council	29	£232,500	£252,000
20. Newcastle City Council	43	£180,000	£510,000
Totals	2768	£19,742,577	£19,991,905

Further information

In November 2016 the Department for Transport announced a further £100 million to support low emission buses. Of this, £40 million was put towards the Clean Bus Technology Fund, and £60 million was dedicated to new low emission buses. From the £60 million, £11 million was used to fund the best of the bids which had initially narrowly missed out on funding from LEBS, supporting the purchase of a further 150 low emission buses. The remaining £49 million will be used to fund the next round of the Low Emission Bus Scheme.

By 15 September this year (2018), 5 local authorities are required to set out their final plans for bringing nitrogen dioxide concentrations within legal limits in the shortest possible time. A further 23 local authorities are required to set out their initial plans by the end of March, with final plans by the end of the year.

In August 2017, the [Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership launched the Clean Vehicle Retrofit Accreditation Scheme](#), with government funding support.

Roads media enquiries

Media enquiries

020 7944 3021

Out of hours media enquiries

020 7944 4292

Switchboard

0300 330 3000

[Notice: The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds: application made to abstract water NPS/WR/025697](#)

The Environment Agency consult the public on certain applications for the abstraction and impoundment of water.

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- which Environment Agency offices you can visit to see the application documents on the public register

- when you need to comment by

Notice: Environment Agency: proposal made to revoke licences 8 February 2018

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