



# Public announcement for West Yorkshire Combined Authority's application for DfT ZEBRA2 funding

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The government's Department for Transport (DfT) are helping local transport authorities bring Zero Emission Buses (ZEBs) into their areas through funding grants, which contribute to the costs for bus operators to buy ZEBs and charging equipment. This funding is known as Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) and West Yorkshire Combined Authority are currently delivering a project, in partnership with bus operators, to introduce 136 ZEBs on routes in Bradford, Leeds, and Wakefield. These new ZEBs will replace the worst polluting diesel buses, which is a significant priority for West Yorkshire in addressing both the carbon and air quality emissions of traffic in our key centres.

In September 2023, DfT launched their second round of ZEBRA funding (ZEBRA2), providing a further £129 million to deliver more ZEBs and chargers by 2025. West Yorkshire Combined Authority has worked with district partners and local bus operators proposing possible ZEBRA2 funded projects to apply for. Each proposal had to consider the DfT's funding rules, routes suitable for zero emission buses, and the bus operators' own financial position to invest in a project.

Only one proposal met the requirements for a strong application, which is in partnership with First Bus for routes in Leeds. This ZEBRA2 application is to replace 41 diesel double decker buses with battery electric ZEBs. These will operate from First Bus's Hunslet depot at Donisthorpe Street in Leeds, where new charging equipment will be installed.

The proposal will electrify both city centre and cross-city routes, directly saving 58,621 tonnes of carbon, 20,754kg NOx and 519kg PM 2.5 in total over 17 years, directly supporting air quality improvements in some of the most deprived areas of Leeds. These new, high quality and accessible ZEBs will also reduce noise at the depot, on local roads and in key noise-sensitive destinations.

**The bus services and routes proposed to be electrified include:**

- Route 33/34 – Leeds-Otley – 12 Double Deck ZEBs
- Route 1 – Beeston-Leeds-Lawnswood – 8 Double Deck ZEBs
- Routes 6/8 – Leeds-Holt Park – 21 Double Deck ZEBs

As West Yorkshire received funding under the first ZEBRA funding round, DfT guidance states a submission from West Yorkshire Combined Authority will have a lower priority than proposals from Local Transport Authority areas which did not receive ZEBRA1 funding. This means that whilst this application is a strong one, there is no guarantee that it will be successful, and in this case, the project described above would have to be funded from a different source.

The DfT's decision on successful ZEBRA2 applications is expected by the end March 2024.