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**Subject:** E-scooters: Trial Extension

**Importance:** High

*To all local authorities and operators holding live trials*

**Ministers have approved an 18-month extension of the current e-scooter trials to 31 May 2024.**

The extension will be restricted to existing trial areas only and will allow us to gather further evidence where gaps are identified, building on the findings of the current evaluation.

The Queen's Speech in May this year announced the Government's intention to introduce legislation on the future of transport in the new parliamentary session as part of a Transport Bill. We anticipate using powers to create a new independent low-speed, zero emission vehicle (LZEV) category, and to subsequently create regulations that will legalise e-scooters under new rules, as well as proposing new powers for local transport authorities to manage rental operations for pedal cycles, e-cycles and e-scooters through a rental permit scheme. We will continue to engage with you while legislation is being developed and will also consult publicly before any secondary regulations for e-scooters and the rental schemes are made.

The move towards a new regime means that the trials continue to have significant value, as well as providing a practical example of how better regulation can encourage responsible use. We continue to gather trip data and monthly incident reports to inform policy development. We are also keen to use the extension to allow local authorities to share lessons learned, amongst themselves and with non-trial areas, in preparation for the introduction of rental permit schemes under the new legal framework. This will be facilitated by the Department and we will be in touch shortly with further details.

We understand that some local areas may be unable to extend current contracts and may need to carry out new procurements, which could result in new operators joining the trials. We will be contacting local authorities individually over the next two weeks to gauge how many authorities are affected. If we need to open a vehicle approvals window to facilitate new operators joining the trial, it will also be open to existing trial operators who need to deploy new models.

Existing VSOs will continue to run until 30 November 2022. Local authorities can choose to withdraw from the trials or continue with an extension to 31 May 2024. As with previous extensions, we hope that all areas will want to continue, but there is no compulsion. **The deadline for local authorities to let us know their decisions will be 31 October 2022.** This is to give us sufficient time to issue new VSOs.

There will be two meetings next week to discuss the trial extension, one for operators and one for local authorities. I will send out invitations later today. In the meantime, if you have any questions please contact is at [micromobility@dft.gov.uk](mailto:micromobility@dft.gov.uk).