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To:

Chief Environmental Health Officer

District Councils in England

Metropolitan District Councils

Unitary Authorities in England

London Borough Councils

The Clerk to the City of London

Date: 23 May 2013

Dear Chief Environmental Health Officer

Air Quality Grant Programme 2013/14

1. This is to invite you to apply to the 2013/14 Air Quality Grant Programme to support expenditure by your authority on measures to improve air quality and statutory duties for local air quality management (LAQM) under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995.

2. The Air Quality Grant Programme for 2013/14 is aimed at supporting eligible capital expenditure by local authorities on their air quality management duties under

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Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, with regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State for that purpose.

3. This letter and its Annexes set out the scope of the Air Quality Grant Programme. These explain the criteria against which projects will be assessed, the arrangements for supplying information in support of applications, the procedure for issuing grants, the Memorandum of Understanding (i.e. how we will work together), and the monitoring arrangements for approved projects.

4. The full set of documents to refer to are listed below:

- i. Covering Letter
- ii. Annex A: Eligibility and Criteria for the 2013/14 Grant Programme
- iii. Annex B: Application Form for the 2013/14 Grant Programme
- iv. Annex C: Grant Determination for the 2013/14 Grant Programme
- v. Annex D: Memorandum of Understanding

5. Eligibility for Defra's Local Authority Air Quality Grant Programme for 2013/14 is restricted to English authorities that have an exceedance of the EU limit value for nitrogen dioxide as determined by Defra's national assessment and/or Air Quality Management Areas for nitrogen dioxide. Air Quality Management Areas must have been declared on or before the 31 March 2013. A full list of eligible local authorities for the 2013/14 programme and eligibility and assessment criteria is provided in Annex A. Applications will only be accepted for assessment from eligible local authorities. Local authorities may submit applications in partnership with one or more other eligible authorities. When doing so one authority should be indicated as the lead authority for the project.

Grant Application and Allocations

6. Authorities applying for the grant should complete the application form at Annex B.

7. Applications must be submitted to air.quality@defra.gsi.gov.uk by 28 June 2013. Late applications will not be accepted. Appraisal of applications will be undertaken in July with decisions made in August.

Applications for capital grant will be considered for the following types of projects:

- Projects that contribute to reductions in emissions and/or concentrations of NO_x, NO₂ and PM₁₀, provided that there are exceedances of NO₂ objectives and/or NO₂ EU limit values within the local authority boundary.

- Projects that support work to review and collate research and monitoring evidence that can improve our understanding of the effectiveness of air quality measures and share best practice.
- Projects aimed at achieving improved air quality through, for example, influencing behaviour and/or raising awareness to support public health objectives. This includes projects in partnership with local Directors of Public Health.

8. Eligible applications will be assessed against:

- Quality of the proposed project
- Proposals to evaluate the effectiveness of the project
- The plan to disseminate findings more widely
- The extent to which the project outcomes are more widely applicable/reproducible
- The extent to which the project provides value for money
- The suitability of this funding opportunity for the project
- Whether or not additional or match funding has been identified for the project and the overall proportion of match-funding available

Projects which involve multiple partners and/or deliver benefits to or across more than one local authority will also be prioritised in the assessment process.

9. Defra will write to all local authorities who submitted applications to inform them if their bids have been successful. The Local Authority will then need to submit a Project Plan setting out information including the milestones within the project, the timescales for delivery and the spend profile throughout the project period. Defra will insert this Plan into the Memorandum of Understanding and submit to the Authority for approval.

10. Once approved, the local authority will then be issued with the finalised Memorandum of Understanding for signature. On countersignature by Defra, payment will be made to the local authority.

11. Projects to be funded by the Grant are required to be of less than two-years' duration unless agreed in advance with Defra. There is no minimum time-frame but it is anticipated that the majority of projects will be between six and twelve months duration.

12. Applications can be accepted from single authorities or by clusters of authorities submitting joint-applications. Authorities may submit up to 4 projects (2 alone and 2 jointly). A guide price for allocations is for projects between £10,000 and £60,000 in

total but applications for amounts outside this range will be accepted for consideration.

13. Grants cannot be paid out for any work undertaken prior to countersignature of the Memorandum of Understanding. The local authority must notify Defra promptly should there be any significant changes to the project scope or if the project cannot be completed for any reason. Grant repayment will be sought if a local authority does not carry out the project, or does not need the full grant allocation to undertake the project and funding remains unspent at the end of the project period.

Arrangements for London

14. As with last year, Defra has agreed a coordinated approach with the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL). To support efficient allocation of grant funding and to reduce duplication the GLA and TfL will work with boroughs to co-ordinate grant applications in London. Funding from the Mayor's Air Quality Fund and Local Implementation Plans (LIPs) is eligible match-funding for the purposes of the Defra bid assessment process. Further guidance is available from Elliot Treharne, GLA Air Quality Manager (Elliot.treharne@london.gov.uk).

Monitoring of Projects and Grant Expenditure

15. The local authority will be required to provide Defra with a progress report by November 2014, and, if the project is ongoing after this date, a final report at the end of the project termination date, as stipulated in the Memorandum of Understanding. Progress report templates for this purpose will either be made available on the LAQM section of Defra's GovUK website or emailed direct to authorities.

16. Applications should be sent by email to: air.quality@defra.gsi.gov.uk
Hard copies by post are not required but a postal address is available on request.
Telephone enquiries: 020 7238 1674.

Completed application forms should be sent to Defra by 28 June 2013.

17. A copy of this letter has been sent for information to the secretaries of the Local Government Association (LGA), the Greater London Authority (GLA) and London Councils.

Yours sincerely

Sean O'Byrne

Atmosphere and Local Environment (ALE)

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