

**Larry Bryant**  
**(By email)**

Our reference: MGLA221122-3747

19 Decemeber 2022

Dear Larry Bryant

**EIR Response – Electric and Hydrogen Bus manufacturers**

Thank you for your request for information which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 21 November 2022. Your request has been considered under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004.

You requested:

Can I request to see the Mayor's communications with Electric and Hydrogen Bus manufacturers named Irizar, Arrival, Alexander Dennis, BYD, Equipmake, Optare, Switch Mobility, Volvo, Ryze Hydrogen, Wrightbus and Bamford Bus Company from 1st December 2021 to present day under current Mayor Sadiq Khan.

Our response to your request is as follows:

Please find attached the information the GLA holds within the scope of your request.

Some of the content within the incoming correspondence from Wrightbus is being withheld as it falls under the exception in Regulation (5)(e) (confidentiality of commercial or industrial information) of the EIR.

The purpose of this exception is to protect any legitimate economic interests underlying commercial confidentiality. In this case the redacted content relates to sales / costs. This information is commercial in nature because it relates to the per-unit prices. The information is not trivial, nor in the public domain and was provided to the GLA on a confidential basis and therefore protected by the common law of confidence. Disclosure of this information would prejudice the ability of Wrightbus to achieve best value for money in future negotiations. The confidentiality of this information is therefore required to protect the legitimate economic interests of Wrightbus because disclosure could affect their negotiating position and ability to operate an effective sales process.

In applying this exception, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information. We acknowledge that there is a general public interest in transparency in relation to high level communications between the public and private sector with regards to transport related matters. Providing detailed information held by public authorities is in keeping with the Government's

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transparency agenda and promotes accountability and greater public participation. However, on balance, we consider that it is not in the public interest for the GLA to release information that would prejudice the commercial interests of a third-party.

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference MGLA221122-3747.

Yours sincerely

## **Information Governance Officer**

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>

# Request for information - Communications between the Mayor and Electric and Hydrogen Bus manufacturers

Date: 17 February 2022


From Wrightbus Chief Executive  
To Mayor of London

I am writing in response to your recent exchange with Assembly Member Pidgeon regarding hydrogen buses in London at the Mayor's Question Time on 10 Feb.

I'd like to update you on the performance of the existing fleet of hydrogen buses in London, as well as a new financing model which we have created that would allow TfL to buy more zero emission buses despite the challenging times. I would also like to invite you to visit our site in Ballymena when you visit Northern Ireland in the near future to see the EV and fuel cell technology in our manufacturing plant.

I'm pleased that you remain enthusiastic about the role that UK-made hydrogen buses can play in decarbonising TfL's bus fleet, as well as helping to sustain and create manufacturing jobs across the country at the same time. As you may know, our hydrogen buses include parts sourced by 42 UK companies, making them a true 'Made in the UK' success story. Wrightbus' hydrogen buses have now travelled 336,000 miles in London, saving 562,500kg of carbon from being emitted on streets across the capital (Compared to EU6 diesel equivalent bus). As you may recall from when we met at the launch of the bus fleet, the driver feedback on these buses has been very positive and we understand customers are enjoying the smoother and quieter ride.

In your discussion with Assembly Member Pidgeon, you mentioned that hydrogen buses cost around £600,000, while battery electric equivalents cost £400,000 and that this "does prohibit going for hydrogen".



Furthermore, through our new sister company, FUZE, we are bringing together asset finance and leasing to offer a complete funding solution for the hydrogen and battery electric ecosystems required for the deployment of zero-emission bus fleets. In practice, what this could mean for TfL is that we could enable the procurement of more zero emission buses for a monthly fee which is comparable to diesel today for operators in most cases.

Jo Bamford, Executive Chairman of Wrightbus, and I would be delighted to discuss our latest UK-made zero emission bus products and financing options if you were able to find the time to visit our manufacturing site in Ballymena.

I would also like to take this opportunity to update you on the recent decision to temporarily withdraw the TfL hydrogen buses from service. During a routine inspection in Aberdeen of one of our hydrogen double decker buses in operation there, we identified an issue with a rear mounting bracket. After further investigation, we've made the decision to carry out preventative maintenance across the entire fleet, which we intend to take place at the Perivale depot. I am keen to highlight that this is a mechanical problem and not a hydrogen fuel-related issue. We're working around the clock to get these buses back on the road as

soon as possible and are collaborating with the Metroline.

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Date 30 March 2022  
From Mayor of London  
To Wrightbus Chief Executive

Thank you for welcoming me to the Wrightbus site in Ballymena on 7 March and for your earlier email of 17 February regarding zero emission buses in London.

I am grateful for the important role that Wrightbus is playing in supporting the rollout of zero emission buses in London, which are critical to tackling toxic air pollution and reducing carbon emissions in our city. It was wonderful to meet in person some of the skilled workers whose jobs are supported by London's investment in zero emission transport. I look forward to continuing to work with you to drive this critical transition forwards.

There is no UK recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic without a London recovery and there is no London recovery without a properly funded transport network in the capital. Wrightbus is a shining example of the wider benefits that investment in London's transport system generates across the UK. Our investment in further zero emission buses is dependent upon the government providing Transport for London (TfL) with a long-term capital funding deal and I would welcome your support in calling on the Department for Transport to engage constructively with TfL to resolve this uncertainty without delay.

Finally, as you know, I believe trade unions are a vital part of any workplace. I was glad to be able to meet with Unite representatives whilst at Wrightbus and I want to encourage you to consider formal recognition of Unite at the site.