

Ieuan Wyn Jones AC/AM  
Dirprwy Brif Weinidog /Deputy First Minister



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref

Bethan Jenkins AM  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

DD/MM/YY

## CARBON ABATEMENT TECHNOLOGIES

Further to the Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery Questions on the 27 February, I am responding with further detail on our Alternative Fuel and Powertrain cluster. You also stated in the chamber that the UK Government has made funding available for local authorities for carbon abatement technologies and I have responded on this issue.

The Accelerate Clusters Programme is an ERDF match funded initiative that concentrates on the establishment and development of emerging technologies as well as the identification and exploitation of niche markets in the Automotive Sector and beyond.

As a part of the Accelerate Clusters Programme, the Alternative Fuels and Powertrain Cluster has been key in pushing forward various technologies associated with reduction of emissions from vehicles.

The programme has had some notable successes, including the development of an Electric/Hydrogen Fuel Cell Midi Bus, a brand new all-electric city vehicle (the ZeCar) as well as attracting Connaught Motor Company, the team behind the world's first green high performance hybrid sports coupe, to set up its global manufacturing and research and development headquarters in Wales.

The programme has provided support of a highly practical nature to the vehicle (named GWAWR) entered by Dr Graham Sparey-Taylor into the Panasonic World Solar Car Challenge held in Australia in October 2007. The vehicle was built using, Welsh technology, skills and components and won the award for the most environmentally friendly build.

The programme has also been successful in leading improvement in the standards of technology plus opening up of markets for BioFuels, Gas Blended fuels, Hydrogen Storage systems, Battery Advancements and Ultra Capacitors.

You specifically mentioned availability of UK Government funding for local authority vehicles and queried how much will be available in Wales the forthcoming financial year. The UK Government no longer provides local authorities with funding for carbon abatement technologies as you have stated. Funding was previously provided through the 'Clean Up' programme and extended to Wales and funded by the Welsh Assembly Government. In its final full year of operation of 2004/05, approximately £715k of grant support was provided. In 2006 the Department for Transport conducted a review into the effectiveness and suitability of the programme and determined it did not provide suitable value for money and was not compliant with EC State Aid rules. The programme was subsequently suspended in England and Wales.