



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
The Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards,
Westminster, London,
SW1A 2HQ

8th February 2021

Re: HVO and national air pollution

Dear Rishi,

The World Health Organisation estimates that around 7 million people die every year from exposure to fine particles in polluted air, leading to stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases and respiratory infections, including pneumonia.

The recent inquest in the UK into Ella Kissi-Debrah's death has concluded that air pollution exposure was a contributory factor into her death. The ruling has made this a landmark case putting air pollution at the top of the agenda and demonstrates the clear need to take action as soon as possible. As long-term strategies to improve air quality are being agreed and implemented, we must embrace the transition technologies available today and start to clean up the air we breathe.

Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil Fuel (HVO) is one of these transition technologies, which is a direct substitute for diesel with no modifications required to the diesel engine. HVO can reduce carbon emissions on heavy goods vehicles by an average of 90% (dependent on feedstock) and independent tests on heavy goods vehicles have demonstrated reductions of up to 29% on NO₂ and 85% in Total Particulate Matter (TPM).

The HVO pump price is higher than diesel which is a barrier to its widespread adoption. The duty on HVO is the same as diesel. Steps taken to realign the duty on both fuels to deliver a similar pump price could have a positive impact in lowering emissions.

This could be introduced through a rebate system through the HMRC on HVO and adjust the duty on diesel to balance the shortfall.

This proposal will significantly reduce carbon output from diesel vehicles in the UK. With targeted use at urban HGVs such as waste collection vehicles, it will also reduce NO₂ and Total Particulate Matter (TPM) emissions, some of the most detrimental substances to human life.



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I would be keen to hear your views on how the Treasury could support these measures and to play a central role in the mitigation of roadside air pollution which is having a profound and adverse impact on public health nationwide.

Thank you.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Barry Sheerman'.

Barry Sheerman MP

Member of Parliament for Huddersfield and Chair of the Westminster Commission on Road Air Quality