



Department
for Transport

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From the Parliamentary
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Our Ref: MC/382440

3 December 2021

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 29 November about e-scooters.

As you pointed out, privately-owned e-scooters are illegal to use on the road, cycle lanes or pavements. The Department recognises that people want to take advantage of the opportunities e-scooters can offer and we are committed to encouraging innovation in transport, but new modes of transport must be safe and secure by design. The Department has published an information sheet on powered transporters which is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/powered-transporters/information-sheet-guidance-on-powered-transporters.

You will be aware that the Department is currently running trials of rental e-scooters to assess their safety and wider impacts. This is part of the Government's Future of Transport regulatory review which will decide whether e-scooters and similar vehicles should be allowed on the road and, if so, what rules should apply to them. This will include how closely any potential rules for e-scooters should be aligned with those for bicycles. The evidence gathered during the trials will inform whether e-scooters should be legalised in the future. Until we have that evidence we cannot commit to a legislative timetable.

I note your concerns about the message sent by the e-scooter trials. We have put in place several measures to ensure the trials do not send out a message that wider e-scooter use is acceptable. The trials take place in clearly defined areas and it is a requirement that trial e-scooters are distinguished from private e-scooters by branding and colouring. Police, local areas and e-scooter operators have been working together in trial areas to make sure the public are clear about the rules. Several areas have held e-scooter awareness days and operators have used training material, advertising,

leaflets and publicity campaigns to reinforce the message. We work closely with trial areas and operators and are currently considering what further action could be taken.

I am also aware of retailers selling e-scooters for private use. It is not illegal to sell an e-scooter, however under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPRs) there is a general obligation for traders to give consumers sufficient information about goods and services at the point of sale, so consumers are not misled. The regulations ban commercial practices through which omissions and actions cause, or are likely to cause the average consumer to make a decision they would otherwise not make for example, to purchase goods or a service that they would otherwise not have purchased. The CPRs carry criminal penalties and are enforced by local authority trading standards officers.

Decisions on how to enforce road traffic offences, including on when to initiate a pursuit involving an e-scooter, are operational matters for the police, taking into account each particular set of circumstances. Any general policy within a force is a matter for the force's Chief Officer, who will decide how to deploy available resources in dealing with all the issues for which the force is responsible, taking into account any specific local problems and demands.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) leads on ensuring responsible business practices, but Ministers from this Department have written to retailers of e-scooters reminding them of their obligations. Specifically, in July of this year Rachel Maclean MP wrote again to retailers sharing with them the Department's concerns that retailers are not providing clear, visible and consistent information to ensure that their customers understand the law. She asked them to work with their sales and marketing teams to ensure that they are familiar with our guidance on privately owned e-scooters, to ensure that their customers are not misinformed, inadvertently or otherwise, about the law which applies to the use of e-scooters.

It is in everyone's interest that consumers can make properly informed decisions when buying these products. Officials from this Department are working closely with BEIS to tackle the illegal use of e-scooters, but I would advise you to contact BEIS directly with your proposals for ensuring retailers develop clear advice, given their remit in this area.

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Trudy". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

TRUDY HARRISON

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT