

SNP roll-out of low emissions zones 'unrealistic'

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The timescale for the SNP's drive to create low emissions zones in Scotland's cities is unrealistic and causes concern to thousands of motorists, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

Transport minister Humza Yousaf confirmed today that trial zones will be in place by 2018, with Glasgow likely to be the first city to introduce restricted access.

Scotland's four biggest cities will have low emissions areas by 2020.

It means drivers will face potentially hefty fines, while bus companies may be forced to upgrade entire fleets while maintaining current service levels.

Scottish Conservative transport spokesman Jamie Greene said while the party was broadly supportive of the Low Emission Zones, and the objective they seek to achieve, much detail was still lacking and many people are justifiably concerned about the unrealistic timescales for roll-out.

Earlier this year, the SNP confirmed it wanted to phase out diesel and petrol cars several years ahead of the rest of the UK and other European countries.

This is despite transport experts saying that the infrastructure is not in place to manage the zones, and that motorists are clearly not ready for being banned from their own cities.

Scottish Conservative transport spokesman Jamie Greene said:

"The SNP confirmed today that low emissions zones will be in place by 2018.

"Well that's just 24 days away, which is why so many are concerned about this unrealistic timeframe.

"There are many serious and substantial questions which the transport minister was unable to answer today.

"We support the potential positive outcomes that the zones could create, but are very concerned about the timescale and lack of detail.

"Many thousands of law-abiding everyday drivers will be affected by these

restrictions, as will city residents and local businesses.

“Why should they be penalised for car purchase decisions they took before the zones were introduced or announced?”

“People in Scotland’s cities will be justifiably concerned about possibly being banned from driving to and from their own doorsteps.

“Those concerns must be listened to by the Scottish Government if it pushes ahead with these plans.”