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North East Combined Authority

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NORTH OF TYNE COMBINED AUTHORITY

North East Joint Transport Committee

Tuesday, 19th September, 2023 at 2.30 pm

Meeting to be held in the Bridges Room, Gateshead Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead, NE8 1HH

AGENDA

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Joint Transport Committee will take place on Tuesday 17 October at 2.30pm in the Bridges Room, Gateshead Civic Centre.

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NORTH OF TYNE COMBINED AUTHORITY

NORTH EAST JOINT TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

DATE: **18 JULY 2023**

Meeting held: Bridges Room, Gateshead Civic Centre

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor: M Gannon (Chair)

Councillors: E Scott, K Kilgour, G Sanderson, M Meling, G Miller

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors: Councillor J Miller, Durham City Council

Statutory Officers: M Barker (Monitoring Officer – Transport)
E Goodman (NECA Finance Manager)
T Hughes (Managing Director, Transport North East)

Officers: P Meikle, R Forsyth-Ward, J Bailes, H Jones, L Keating, P Holmes, A Flynn, S McNaughton, M Wilson, R Watson, M Kearney, C Masserella, T Male, S Stewart.

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Nick Kemp and Councillor Carl Johnson.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

15. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2023

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

16. 2022/23 REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGAMME OUTTURN

The Committee received a report providing the outturn position in relation to the 2022/23 Transport Revenue Budget and Transport Capital Programme.

The outturn position shows that expenditure was within the budget against the grants paid to Durham, Northumberland and Nexus. Where grants are paid to other organisations for the delivery of transport services (ie Durham, Northumberland and Nexus), the grant is fixed for the year, the report provided details of how the grant has been applied by each organisation to the provision of public transport services.

Durham County Council and Northumberland County Council both reported overall underspends against the grant (£0.755 and £0.648m respectively), mainly arising from savings on concessionary fares reimbursement to bus operators, with these savings being partly diverted to fund increases in the budgets required for supported bus services. Nexus reported a surplus after exceptional items of £7.034m which primarily arose from the receipt of £19.351m unbudgeted grant support from Department for Transport (DfT) which was received during the year and which will not be repeated in 2023/24.

There was a small planned deficit on the Tyne Tunnels revenue account (£0.156m) arising from the decision taken by the Tyne and Wear Sub Committee to delay the toll increase until May 2023. The deficit has been met from Tyne Tunnels reserves.

Expenditure on the Transport North East Core budget was £0.929m resulting in a small surplus of £0.041m which will be available to contribute to expenditure in 2023/24. £15.744m was expended on revenue grants and projects including payments to Durham, Northumberland and Nexus of the Local Transport Fund grant made available by DfT.

The report identified that total capital expenditure incurred on transport schemes was £220.375m during 2022/23 against the revised programme of £258.534m, an underspend of £38.159m (15%). The majority of this underspend relates to slippage in relation to the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) Tranche 2 programme (£13.857m), Metro Asset Renewal Plan (£10.662m), and Metro Replacement (£10.531m). There has been no loss of funding arising from the slippage and the works are forecast to take place in 2023/24, requiring the budgets to be reprofiled.

Most of the capital works undertaken in the year have been funded through government grants awarded (216.971m) with elements of the Nexus capital programme and the Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist tunnels works funded by reserves (£3.404m) held specifically for this purpose.

At 31 March 2023, JTC reserves totalled £34.353m, including amounts held on behalf of Nexus, with £3.257m earmarked for specific projects or service areas

and an unallocated general reserve of £1.096m. This is compared with a position at 31 March 2022 of a total £31.174m (£30.241m earmarked reserves and £0.933m unallocated general reserve).

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee noted the report.

17. 2023/24 REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee received a report to update on the initial forecast of outturn for the 2023/24 transport revenue and capital budgets, based on the position as at May 2023 and factoring in the outturn position for 2022/23.

The report covers all areas of the revenue and capital budget including the transport levies and grants to Durham, Northumberland and Nexus, Transport North East (TNE) and the Tyne Tunnels.

Any over or underspends against the budget for the three main organisations delivering transport services on behalf of the JTC are retained within the reserves of these organisations and will be considered in the setting of the transport budgets for future years.

At this early stage in the year, Durham County Council is forecasting a small overspend against the transport grant of £0.207m relating to increased costs on subsidised bus services.

Northumberland County Council forecast of outturn shows a projected underspend against the transport grant of £0.350m relating to concessionary fares reimbursement.

Nexus is forecasting use of reserves to balance the budget for the year of £8.652m, which is 8% more than the amount originally expected. This is primarily due to costs on Metro, specifically pressure on High Voltage (HV) power costs for the year, which are estimated to be £2.641m higher than the original budget. However, Metro fare revenue and interest on investments are likely to exceed the budget for the year and the upside on these budgets will be reflected in the forecast as the certainty over this grows.

A small deficit is forecast on the Tyne Tunnels revenue account, estimated at £0.057m which is lower than the original budgeted deficit for the year (£0.412m) and which will be met from Tyne Tunnels reserves.

The report included a breakdown of the capital and revenue budgets for 2023/24 for the delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) through the North East Enhanced Bus Partnership. Revenue proposals total £76.891m and the capital programme is £40.892m, in line with the grant offer agreed with DfT in March 2023.

Proposals for a budget for 2023/24 and 2024/25 totalling £3.07m are set out to support the Transport Devolution workstream which will enable TNE to complete

devolution transition tasks needed so that the new Cabinet and Mayor are well placed to decide on new policies in 2024, and to start delivering improvements on the ground at an early stage. This will be funded through external grants and earmarked reserves with no local authority contributions requested.

The report also provided the Joint Transport Committee with details of the 2023/24 capital programme plans, together with expenditure and forecasts of the outturn position based on the position as at May 2023. Included in the revised programme is the impact of the 2022/23 outturn position where slippage on a number of schemes means that budgets have been reprofiled into the current financial year.

The report identifies that total capital expenditure on Transport capital schemes of £279.071m is forecast and it is proposed that the revised programme budget, taking into account the 2022/23 outturn and new grant approvals is agreed by the JTC. This is an increase of £40.077m compared to the original programme for the year which mainly arises through the inclusion of £40.982 BSIP capital interventions.

Expenditure to May 2023 totalled £12.640m – 5% of the forecast total capital expenditure for the year.

Most of the capital works during the year will be funded through government grants awarded (£270.813m) with elements of the Nexus capital programme and the Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels (TPCT) works funded by reserves (£8.258m forecast) held for this purpose.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee:

(a) Noted the report
(b) Agreed the revised budget and capital programme for 2023/24 taking into account resources received since the original budget was set and slippage and reprofiling arising from the 2022/23 outturn
(c) Approved the capital and revenue budget for the delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan through the North East Enhanced Bus Partnership as set out in section 2.30
(d) Approved the budget for the tasks required to prepare for the transition to the proposed mayoral combined authority

18. BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN – CAPITAL PROGRAMME APPROVALS

The Committee received a report proposingthe release of £33,290,872 Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding for investment in two major bus infrastructure programmes.

Bus Priority Infrastructure – Tranche 1	£20,250,872
Intelligent Transport Systems	£13,040,000

The release of funding is subject to the successful appraisal of Business Cases and due diligence in line with the North East Transport Assurance Framework, it is therefore proposed to delegate authority to the Managing Director Transport North East to make the payments once all relevant requirements have been satisfied.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee

a) Agreed in principle to the release of £20,250,872 of BSIP capital funding for the "Bus Priority Infrastructure – Tranche 1" programme, noting that £2,025,087 of this funding will be released early to assist scheme promoters with development of the programme;
b) Agreed in principle to the release of £13,040,000 of BSIP capital funding for the "Intelligent Transport Systems" programme
c) Delegated authority to the Managing Director Transport North East, following consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, to carry out all relevant tasks to implement Joint Transport Committee's agreement once successful appraisals of scheme have been completed in line with the North East Transport Assurance Framework, including the payment of funding and the establishment of Grant Funding Agreements.

19. TRANSFORMING CITIES FUND TRANCHE 2 RESIDUAL GRANT FUNDING

The Committee received a report proposing the release of £3,249,489 from the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) Devolved Pot and £249,964 of Active Travel Fund Round 2 (ATF2) underspend, to the following schemes:

Durham City Active Mode Connectivity	£2,500,000
Ponteland to Callerton Cycleway Phase 2	££518,000
East Gateshead LCWIP Phase 1	£481,453

The release of funding is subject to both the agreement of Active Travel England (ATE) and the Department for Transport (DfT) and the successful appraisal of Business Cases and due diligence in line with the North East Transport Assurance Framework. It is proposed to delegate authority to the Managing Director Transport North East to approve grant funding once all relevant requirements have been satisfied.

The report also recommended that the Joint Transport Committee (JTC) supports the objective of securing funding for the Shields Ferry Landing Scheme at the earliest possible opportunity, and endorses the principle of securing the early release of City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funds to support delivery of this scheme. The report established the principle that any underspend on the TCF funded Metroflow scheme would be utilised to provide a contribution towards the Shields Ferry Landing Scheme and there would be a proportional reduction in the ask of CRSTS funds should underspend materialise.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee

a) Agreed in principle to the release of £,2500,000 of funds to the Durham City Active Mode Connectivity scheme and £518,000 of funds to the Ponteland to Callerton Cycleway Phase 2 scheme from the TCT devolved pot.
b) Agreed in principle to the release of £231,489 of funds from the TCF devolved pot and £249,964 of Active Travel Fund Round 2 underspend to the East Gateshead LCWIP Phase 1 scheme.
c) Delegated authority to the Managing Director Transport North East following consultation with the Section 73 officer and Monitoring Officer to carry out all relevant tasks to implement the JTC's agreement once successful appraisals of schemes have been completed in line with the North East Transport Assurance Framework, subject to the agreement of the DfT and ATE. This will include the payment of grant funds and the establishment of Grant Funding Agreements.
d) Endorsed the principle of securing the early release of City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funds to support the delivery of the Shields Ferry Landing scheme, and subject to Department for Transport (DfT) agreement, agree to submit a bid totalling up to £12,760,000 of CRSTS funds to the Government.

20. TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report which provided an update on progress made across a number of Delivery Plan categories in implementing the objectives of the North East Transport Plan and achieving the vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.'

The remainder of the North East's BSIP funding (£45.6m) was confirmed by the Department for Transport (DfT) on Friday 30th June. This means the full indicative £163.5m of BSIP funding has now been confirmed. The funding is being used to deliver the new £1 under-21 single bus fare which is in operation across Tyne and Wear, Northumberland and Durham alongside further planned initiatives coming in summer/autumn.

Three trains out the new Metro fleet have been delivered to the region with a further two deliveries scheduled for this summer. One of the new Stadler trains successfully completed its first test run on the network on 1 July as part of the detailed preparations to get it ready for entering service at the end of the year.

Metro and bus operators rose superbly to the challenge of moving people to two concerts being held on 10 June – Sam Fender at St James Park and Pink at the Stadium of Light. A number of messages were received praising the efficiency of the service and the friendly, helpful staff, with JTC Chair Cllr Martin Gannon adding to the praise, saying: "Metro and bus services operated smoothly and were very well received by concert-goers and the wider public".

The rail industry has launched a 3-week consultation on a programme of closing ticket offices and redeploying the staff there as passenger facing support. Under

the proposals, all ticket officer in this region, other than Newcastle Central Station, would be closed.

Following approval at last month's JTC, the North East Active Travel Strategy has been adopted region-wide. It outlines a regional ambition to ensure that, by 2035, over half of all short journeys in the region will be made by active travel modes – benefiting the environment, public health and the local economy.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee noted the report.

21. BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN - FARES PACKAGE: MULTI-OPERATOR, MULTI-MODAL TICKETS

The Committee received a report proposing a budgetary allocation of £17,514,000 of Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding for investment in a fares package covering multi-operator and multi-modal day tickets which are intended to be launched in September 2023. The budgetary allocation also covers the cost of reduced price tickets for young people aged 21 and under, previously agreed by the Committee.

The day tickets will be sold through "Network One", the existing multi-operator ticketing company in the region, and will be available for use on all participating bus operators, and on the Tyne and Wear Metro and Shields Ferry.

The proposal:

- Creates new adult multi-operator day tickets covering unlimited travel in Northumberland and Country Durham
- Reduces the price of existing adult multi-modal products covering travel in Tyne and Wear and region-wide travel
- Is in addition to the "Under 22" fares already approved by the Joint Transport Committee, but also creates a £3 regionwide day ticket

Approval was also sought of the Joint Transport Committee to vary the Capped Fare Scheme that was previously approved by the Committee, to incorporate the proposed fares to those already covered by the Scheme.

The proposals are intended to make travel by bus more affordable and attractive, in line with the targets set out in the region's Bus Service Improvement Plan. Modelling shows that the proposed fares could grow overall bus patronage by as much as 1,094244 trips each year, which would represent a 15.7% uplift in comparable products.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee

a) Confirmed the budgetary allocation of £17,514,000 of Bus Service Improvement Plan funding to cover the cost of reimbursement to bus operators and Nexus of the multi-operator and multi-modal fares to be set out in the BSIP Capped Fares scheme

b) Approved the variation of the BSIP Capped Fare Scheme as set out in the report.

22. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee agreed to exclude the press and public during consideration of item 12 by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

23. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2023

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee agreed the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2023.

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 19 September at 2.30pm in the Bridges Room, Gateshead Civic Centre.

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NORTH OF TYNE COMBINED AUTHORITY

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: **19 September 2023**

Subject: **Transport Budget 2024/25**

Report of: **Chief Finance Officer**

Executive Summary

This report summarises the proposed process and timetable for the approval of the levies and other budgets relating to the Joint Transport Committee (JTC) for 2024/25. The report sets out the context and initial strategy for the development of the budget proposals for 2024/25 and into future years.

The budget proposals will be further developed and consulted upon in the coming months, and decisions on the levies and other aspects of the transport budget will be taken by the JTC on 16 January 2024. 2024/25 will be the first year of the proposed North East Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) covering the whole of the North East, and the budgets agreed by the JTC will be adopted by the MCA on its creation.

Proposals for the Durham and Northumberland levies will be driven by the Transport budgets for those authorities which are being prepared in tandem. The Tyne and Wear levy is largely determined by the grant required by Nexus to maintain current operations, with £2.1m currently retained to fund costs relating to the former Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority and contributions to the work of Transport North East (TNE). It is recommended that this retained levy amount is kept at the same level for 2024/25 and that this amount is held constant over the MTFS planning period.

The current recommendation is for the topslice of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated Transport Block grant funding towards the TNE team to be maintained at the current level of £0.500m (equal shares equating to £0.063m per authority). It is testament to the considerable success of the TNE team in successfully attracting external funding that this has been maintained at the same level since the creation of the team, despite a considerable increase in activity and responsibility over recent years.

Based on initial estimates, it is anticipated that it will be necessary to seek an increase in the Tyne and Wear levy in both 2024/25 and 2025/26, as reported during the 2023/24 budget setting process, in line with the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) previously noted. Initial forecasts suggest an increase to the levy of 3.7% (£2.5m) will

be required in 2024/25 and a further 3% (£2.1m) increase in the levy applied in 2025/26. A further increase of 3% (£2.17m) is also now anticipated for 2026/27. These increases are necessary to ensure the unavoidable base budget pressures can be funded and is in addition to savings and efficiencies being achieved and Nexus using significant reserves to balance its budget over the next three years: £4.8m in 2024/25, £5.5m in 2025/26 and £3.8m in 2026/27. Should the proposed increases not be supported then there will be a need to impact front line service delivery.

In order to set a break-even budget on the Tyne Tunnels, an increase will be required to the tolls for Class 2 and Class 3 vehicles in 2024/25, which will become applicable from May 2024. Under the constitution of the JTC, this is a decision for the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee (TWSC) and a decision will be made by that committee in January 2024.

Members will be aware that increases in the shadow toll, which is used to determine the contract payments to the concessionaire (TT2), are calculated with reference to the Retail Prices Index (RPI) measure of inflation.

Unless the actual tolls keep pace with this increase, the Tyne Tunnels account will not be balanced and income generated will fall short of the expenditure incurred in servicing the debt charges and meeting the contractual obligations to TT2.

This report underpins the development of the detailed Transport Budget proposals for 2024/25 and the refreshed MTFS which will be brought to the JTC for consideration in November.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to receive this report for consideration and comment, which will inform the development of the Transport budget proposals 2024/25 report from the NECA Chief Finance Officer to the November meeting of this committee.

1. Background Information

1.1 The JTC receives funding from a variety of sources including the levies on Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear councils, Tyne Tunnels tolls income, grant funding and interest income. This funding is used to deliver the objectives of the JTC through the delivery of public transport services via Durham and Northumberland councils and Nexus, and the work of TNE who work on behalf of the JTC to provide it with relevant information and policy choices and deliver its policies at a regional level.

1.2 In line with the Transport Levying Bodies Regulations, the transport levies must be issued by 15 February preceding the commencement of the financial year in respect of which they are to be issued.

1.3 This report summarises the process and timetable for the approval of the levies and other budgets relating to the JTC and sets out the initial strategy for these budgets in 2024/25 and future years. The proposals will be developed and consulted upon in the coming months, and decisions on the levies and other aspects of the transport budget will be taken by the JTC on 16 January 2024. Decisions on the Tyne Tunnels tolls will be taken by the TWSC on 18 January 2024.

2. Proposals

Budget Context

2.1 The 2024/25 budget preparations are taking place in the context of continued pressure and uncertainty in the economy and particularly on local authority finances.

2.2 The Bank of England (BoE) in its quarterly Monetary Policy Report published on 3 August 2023 set out that inflation in the UK had begun to fall but is still too high. In June, CPI was 7.9%, well above the Bank's 2% target. Bank Base Interest rates have been raised to 5.25% with further increases anticipated over the Autumn, with inflation now forecast to fall to around 5% by the end of this year and reaching the BoE 2% target by early 2025.

2.3 Inflation is creating significant budget challenges for all local authorities and the JTC's delivery partners, who have been faced with significant increases in energy bills, increasing wage bills and supply chain costs and increased demand for services.

2.4 Public transport usage in the region has not yet fully returned to pre-pandemic levels, with bus passenger numbers having plateaued since September 2022, at between 77% and 84% of pre-Covid levels. This has had a significant impact on bus operators' finances and routes across the North East have seen commercial cutbacks over the last two years, which has placed considerable demand on the budget for provision of secured services.

Timetable and consultation

2.5 Appendix 1 sets out the timetable of when proposals will need to be considered to enable the Transport budget and levy decisions to be taken by the JTC on 16 January 2024. The timetable meets the need for consultation on the 2024/25 budget proposals, as set out in NECA's constitution (in its role as Accountable Body for the JTC).

2.6 The NECA constitution sets out the process which must be followed to ensure that appropriate and effective consultation takes place with all members and key stakeholders on the content of the budget.

2.7 The initial high-level draft budget principles for 2024/25 contained in this report will be developed further and subject to consultation with the JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 October with updated detailed proposals being brought back to the JTC on 21 November. Detailed proposals will be referred back to the JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 December.

2.8 Taking into account the outcome of this consultation, final proposals in relation to the transport budget and levies will be considered at the JTC meeting on 16 January 2024.

2.9 The levies and transport budget decisions for 2024/25 will need to be agreed by the JTC even though it will cease to exist once the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA) is established. Following the January meeting of the JTC, the NTCA Cabinet and NECA Leadership Board will agree to issue the levies and the Transport Budgets will form part of the NEMCA budget framework once it is established.

Transport North East

2.10 Since its creation in 2018 to support the JTC, the TNE team has been working at full capacity to develop and lead delivery of a broad and ambitious transport programme on behalf of the region. This includes work on the Bus Service Improvement Plan/Enhanced Partnership which came into effect this year; Policy and Strategy work such as the Zero Emission Vehicles Strategy and Active Travel Strategy; management of externally funded programmes such as Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) and Active Travel Fund (ATF); management of the Tyne Tunnels contract and work on Rail Partnerships and local rail across the region.

2.11 TNE is funded from a variety of temporary and permanent funding sources, including a topslice of the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block grant, contributions from the transport levies, interest income earned on cash balances and external grant funding including City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement revenue capacity grant (CRSTS), TCF grant, ATF grant and Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding.

2.12 At the last meeting of the JTC, a budget of £3.130m was agreed for work in 2023/24 and 2024/25 to fund the transport workstreams required for the

move to the proposed MCA. This has seen a considerable increase in workload for the team with work on Bus Reform, a refresh of the Transport Plan, the development of the CRSTS programme as well as other elements already under way.

2.13 Detailed budget proposals for TNE will be presented to the JTC in the November budget report, taking into account the latest information about the availability of grant funding. However, as a planning principle it is proposed that for 2024/25 the contributions from the JTC's constituent local authorities are maintained at the current level, i.e. a £0.5m topslice from the LTP Integrated Transport Block (on an equal shares basis of £0.063m per local authority and Nexus).

Transport Levies for Durham and Northumberland

2.14 Durham County Council and Northumberland County Council currently deliver a range of transport services through a delegation from the Joint Transport Committee, with those activities funded by separate transport levies. Budget proposals for Durham County Council and Northumberland County Council are being worked up by those authorities, and these will drive the calculation of the levies and the Transport Grants for these areas for 2024/25. Draft proposals will be included in the report to the November meeting of the committee.

2.15 The contributions from Durham, Northumberland and the five Tyne and Wear authorities towards the accountable body costs of transport activity will be maintained at £10,000 for each constituent authority. The top slice from the Tyne and Wear levy will be retained at £2.1m, which includes historic costs including financing charges inherited from the former Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority (TWITA).

Population Updates – Tyne and Wear Levy Distribution

2.16 In accordance with the Transport Levying Bodies Regulation, the Tyne and Wear Levy for 2024/25 must be issued by 15 February 2024.

2.17 The measure of population which must be used to apportion the Tyne and Wear Transport levy between the constituent authorities is the total resident population at the relevant date of the area of each Authority concerned (the relevant date being 30 June in the financial year which commenced prior to the levying year).

2.18 The Office for National Statistics (ONS) Mid-Year Population estimates for 2022 are scheduled for release in September 2023 (they were not available at the time of compiling this report) at which point the impact of the population distribution on the allocation of levy costs between the Tyne and Wear councils can be shared.

Nexus

2.19 The majority of the Tyne and Wear levy (£65.7m in 2023/24 – 97%) is required to fund the revenue grant to Nexus for the delivery of transport services in the Tyne and Wear area. The MTFS for Nexus has been refreshed, and based on initial estimates, it is anticipated that it will be necessary to seek an increase in the Tyne and Wear levy in both 2024/25 and 2025/26, as reported during the 2023/24 budget setting process, in line with the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) previously reported. Initial forecasts suggest an increase to the levy of 3.7% (£2.5m) in 2024/25 and 3% (£2.1m) in 2025/26 would be required to assist Nexus in balancing its budget and meet the unavoidable base budget pressures it will face. An increase of 3% (£2.17m) is also now anticipated to be requested for 2026/27. These increases are in addition to savings and efficiencies being achieved and Nexus using significant reserves to balance its budget over the MTFS planning period: £4.8m in 2024/25, £5.5m in 2025/26 and £3.8m in 2026/27.

2.20 The MTFS underpins preparations for and making the most of the new fleet of Metrocars, which will begin to come into service at the end of this year, builds on investment in safety and security and operations, which is helping to improve performance, and provides stability for the transition from the JTC to the MCA.

2.21 The MTFS continues to place reliance on use of reserves to balance the budget. This is possible because reserves were increased in 2022/23, as reported to the JTC at its meeting in July. The 2022/23 outturn was more favourable than expected following receipt of significant additional government grant funding, including late funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) provided on 31 March 2023, meaning a surplus of £6.3m was achieved last year.

2.22 The 2023/24 outturn will also be more favourable than the original budget, since Metro fare revenue and interest on balances are outperforming the 2023/24 budget. This will reduce the reliance on reserves by £4.9m, from an originally anticipated £8.0m to £3.1m.

2.23 There are a several risks and opportunities contained within the updated MTFP:

- Continued use of reserves to balance the budget, this is not sustainable over the longer term but provides stability for now;
- Metro Revenue Grant (MRG) indexation – no indexation in 2023/24 has been assumed and DfT provided Nexus with £3.3m in 2021/22 in lieu of MRG not being indexed in future years;
- Inflation (both pay and non-pay) and the cost of high voltage power;
- Metro fare revenue;
- Bus support – secured services and Concessionary Fares;
- New Fleet / Timetable changes;
- Local Government Pension Scheme 2025 valuation.

Tyne Tunnels

2.24 The Tyne Tunnels are accounted for as a ring-fenced account within the JTC budgets, meaning that all costs relating to the Tunnels are wholly funded from toll income received and Tyne Tunnels reserves, with no call on the levy or other government funding.

2.25 The JTC receives all of the toll income from the vehicle tunnels in the first instance, and payments are made under the contract to the concessionaire, TT2, based on traffic levels. Sums retained by the JTC meet costs associated with the Tunnels, primarily interest and principal repayments on borrowing taken out to fund the New Tyne Crossing project, and client costs associated with the management of the contract with TT2.

2.26 Payments to TT2 under the concession contract increase annually in line with RPI. The financial model for the Tyne Tunnels and the repayment of the debt incurred in the New Tyne Crossing project assumes that tolls will be maintained in real terms to match the rise in contract payments to TT2 and service debt financing on the tunnels. To allow a break-even position on the Tyne Tunnels revenue account to be maintained, it is therefore assumed that toll increases will be applied where possible, in line with the Order under which the tunnels have the power to charge tolls.

2.27 The toll charged to users of the Tunnels can be increased in line with RPI (to a round 10p figure). Levels of inflation, as described in section 2.2-2.3, remain such that it is forecast that an increase will be required for both Class 2 and Class 3 vehicles (estimated to be 0.20p and 0.40p respectively). A recommendation will be presented to TWSC at their January meeting about the level of this increase. As a budget planning principle, it is proposed that the increase in line with RPI be applied as soon as possible, which is expected to be with effect from May 2024.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

3.1 The NECA constitution requires that consultation on budget proposals be undertaken at least two months prior to the budget being agreed. Proposals for consultation will be presented to the JTC at its meeting in November, and this report sets out the context and issues around the budget for 2024/25.

4. Alternative Options Available

4.1 This report is for information.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

5.1 Financial forecasts will be updated and more detail presented to the JTC at its meeting in November 2023, with a view to recommending formal agreement of the budget and levies in January 2024.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

6.1 The budget assumptions and principles presented in this report are designed to support the achievement of the Transport policy objectives of the JTC.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

7.1 The financial and other resource implications are summarised in detail in the body of the report where they are known. Further details which are developed as part of the budget development and consultation process will be identified in reports to the November 2023 and January 2024 meetings of the JTC.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report which is for information. The JTC must ultimately approve its transport budget and levies unanimously.

9. Key Risks

9.1 Appropriate risk management arrangements are put in place in each budget area by the delivery agencies responsible. Reserves are maintained to help manage financial risk to the authority.

10. Equality and Diversity

10.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

11. Crime and Disorder

11.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 The NECA Constitution (in its role as accountable body for the JTC) requires that consultation on its budget proposals be undertaken at least two months prior to the budget being agreed. To achieve this, draft proposals for consultation will be brought to the committee at its meeting in November.

12.2 Individual schemes which may be supported through the funding will be subject to proportionate consultation as appropriate.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

13.1 There are no other impacts arising from this report.

14. Appendices

14.1 Appendix 1 – Budget Timetable 2024/25 – Joint Transport Committee

15. Background Papers

15.1 JTC Budget 2023/24 – Report to JTC 17 January 2023
https://northeastca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023.01.17-JTC-Agenda-Pack.pdf

16. Contact Officers

16.1 Eleanor Goodman, NECA Finance Manager,
eleanor.goodman@northeastca.gov.uk

17. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

Appendix 1 – Budget Timetable 2024/25 – Joint Transport Committee

Date	Meeting/Event	Action
19 September 2023	JTC	Budget principles in relation to JTC/Transport budgets and summary of timetable and proposed consultation.
26 October 2023	JTC OSC	Examine initial budget principles and consultation proposals and make any recommendations to the JTC.
21 November 2023	JTC	Consider draft Transport budget proposals and any feedback from JTC OSC.
28 November 2023	NTCA Cabinet	Consider draft Transport budget proposals and implications regarding transport levy for constituent authorities as part of the budget consultation process.
28 November 2023	NECA Leadership Board	Consider draft Transport budget proposals and implications regarding transport levy for constituent authorities as part of the budget consultation process.
14 December 2023	JTC OSC	Consider updated budget proposals as part of consultation process.
16 January 2024	JTC	Approve transport revenue budget and transport levies. Approve transport capital programme.
30 January 2024	NECA Leadership Board	Note the decision of the JTC and issue transport levies to NECA constituent authorities.
30 January 2024	NTCA Cabinet	Note the decision of the JTC and issue transport levies to NTCA constituent authorities.
15 February 2024	Levy letters issued to constituent authorities	Date by which transport levies must be issued in line with the Transport Levying Bodies Regulations.

North East Combined Authority
DURHAM • GATESHEAD • SOUTH TYNESIDE • SUNDERLAND

NORTH OF TYNE COMBINED AUTHORITY

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: **19th September 2023**

Subject: **Transport Plan Progress Report**

Report of: **Managing Director, Transport North East**

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on progress made across a number of Delivery Plan categories in implementing the objectives of the North East Transport Plan and achieving the vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.'

As part of work to refresh the North East Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), the Big Bus Conversation campaign was relaunched between 31st July and 8th September 2023. Feedback is currently being compiled and will help to inform improvements being made to the bus network using the region's BSIP funding.

The Secretary of State for Transport, Mark Harper visited the North East in August, taking the opportunity to inspect one of the new Stadler Metro trains and the Nexus Learning Centre, and to ride on both the Metro and a Go North East 'Voltra' bus.

Following an extension to the original deadline, the train operators' consultation into plans to close hundreds of ticket offices in England ended on 1st September. Under the proposals, all ticket offices in this region, other than that at Newcastle Central station, would be closed. The JTC responded to the consultation and the response is available as Appendix 1.

From December 2023, TransPennine Express are proposing to reduce the frequency of TPE services from Newcastle to Leeds/Manchester to 1 train per hour (compared to 1.5 trains an hour at present).

The decision on whether or not to dual the A1 between Morpeth and Ellingham has been delayed for a fourth time until 5th June 2024.

Consultation on Transport for the North's (TfN) second Strategic Transport Plan closed on 17th August. TNE's response, whilst welcoming the vision and ambitions of the Plan, highlighted the need for progress on delivery of the key transport infrastructure priorities needed to level up the north.

The North East has been awarded £1.137m in revenue 'capability' funding from the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund. This will enable all seven local authorities and TNE to build capacity to deliver EV charging infrastructure.

Traffic levels using the Tyne Tunnels continue to increase, with an estimated 1.52m journeys through the tunnels in June. This reflects the improved capacity and faster journey times due to the barrierless system and improvements to the A19.

Recommendations

The Joint Transport Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report.

1. Background Information

1.1 The North East Transport Plan sets out a vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East' through the delivery of transport improvements under seven policy areas. Recent developments in the transport field are discussed below, organised by policy area.

2. Public transport, travelling by bus, Metro, ferry and on demand public transport

2.1 Bus travel

BSIP Funding – At its July meeting, the release of £50.8m of BSIP funding was approved by the JTC which will help make sustainable travel much more affordable and quicker for passengers across the North East.

£17.5m will fund a package of multi-modal and multi-operator fares products for all age groups, building on the successes of the 21 and under single launched in May this year. The 21 and under day ticket launched on 3rd September to align with the start of the school year. We're working collaboratively with partners on the launch of our new adult day tickets. We had intended to launch these in September however final details are being worked through with partners and the product is expected to launch later in the Autumn.

In addition to the major fare schemes, £33.2m will also be invested in bus infrastructure programmes including bus priority measures and upgrades to traffic signals.

Big Bus Conversation 2023 – As part of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) refresh, the Big Bus Conversation ran from 31st of July till 8th September 2023. Feedback was gathered at several in person events and via an online survey which will feed into the BSIP refresh project. This will help us deliver improvements to the bus network using BSIP funding. A summary of feedback will be provided in due course.

2.2 Metro

Tackling anti-social behaviour – During August, a new campaign was launched targeting anti-social behaviour on the Tyne and Wear Metro system. The campaign – titled “not big, not clever, not here” – is a response to feedback from customers calling for more to be done to improve security on the network.

The campaign, which builds on the investment already made in policing, extra security teams, and improved CCTV, involves a new and more efficient system for customers to make reports directly to the Metro control room by discreetly sending a text message from a mobile phone to report any form of anti-social behaviour, such as vandalism, graffiti or abusive and threatening actions.

The system sends an alert directly to a screen on the customer service desk at Metro’s South Gosforth control room, from where the appropriate action can be taken swiftly, and security staff deployed where required.

Making public transport more autism-friendly – Nexus have received an Autism Friendly Award from the National Autistic Society, in recognition of a range of actions (including training for frontline employees, detailed guides to support journeys, signage improvements and easily accessible online information) they have carried out to make travel in the region autism friendly.

Nexus are the first public transport provider in the region to achieve this award and over 100 frontline employees, including Customer Service Advisers on Metro, ferry crew and bus station staff, have received autism awareness training.

Secretary of State visit to the North East – In August, the Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper visited the region. He was shown one of the region’s new Stadler Metro trains at the Nexus Learning Centre, tried out the training simulator and took a trip on the Metro and also on a Go North East Electric bus.

2.3 City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement

As part of the developing City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement programme for the region, TNE have procured consultancy support to provide additional project management and transport planning capacity to assist Local Authorities with preparing and assembling a programme of local /regional schemes. This support will be in place for 12 months. In addition, further project specific development funding will be provided through CRSTS revenue funds following independent assessment of the programme. This will be reported to Members at the October JTC meeting.

3. Connectivity beyond our boundaries

3.1 Rail

Ticket office closures – Following an extension to the original deadline, the consultation into the plan to close hundreds of ticket offices in England closed on 1st September, with 680,000 responses received. In this region, it is proposed to close ticket offices at Alnmouth, Berwick upon Tweed, Bishop Auckland, Durham, Hexham, Morpeth and Sunderland. The ticket office at Newcastle Central station would remain open.

A formal consultation response was submitted before the original deadline on behalf of the North East Joint Transport Committee expressing our concerns.

Leamside Line campaign – The region's campaign to re-open the Leamside Line is looking ahead to the next All Party Parliamentary Group meeting in the Autumn.

A new Leamside Line video is in development and filming took place across various points of the line, including Wardley, Follingsby, Washington and Ferryhill, during the summer. The film will include drone footage and animation showing the route's geography in parallel to the East Coast Main Line.

Work is underway to compile case studies with businesses to outline the benefits the line will bring to the region.

TransPennine timetable

From 11th December 2023, TransPennine Express (TPE) plans to reduce the frequency of TPE services between Newcastle, Durham and Leeds/Manchester to 1 train per hour (compared to 3 trains every 2 hours at present, and 2 trains per hour pre-pandemic).

It is understood that this is a temporary measure to allow TPE to address its significant driver training backlog and other issues that have led to poor performance.

The JTC's long-standing policy position is that there should be 2 trains per hour between the North East and North West, and the reduction runs contrary to that, even if temporary. We are concerned that this will damage the economic interests of the North East and further reduce the attractiveness of rail travel.

We are seeking confirmation from TPE that this is a temporary measure and will remain so. The restoration of 2 trains per hour from the North East to the North West should be the longer-term goal, and TPE must work with industry partners to produce a plan for this.

A positive side effect of this change is that the hourly TPE service will call at Chester-le-Street, significantly increasing the number of services calling there.

Durham Coast line – The planned additional semi-fast Northern service on the line (calling at Newcastle-Sunderland-Hartlepool-Thornaby-Middlesbrough only) is unlikely to be operational until the December timetable change due to delays in platform works at Hartlepool.

Industrial Relations – The Rail Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) Union announced strike dates which took place on 26th August and 2nd September.

The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) Union also carried out 'action short of a strike' from 7th August till 12th August.

Northumberland Line – Work continues at pace on the Northumberland Line. Some of the headline developments in recent months include:

- A new underpass was recently installed at Palmersville Dairy. The underpass replaces Palmersville Dairy Level Crossing and will improve safety for pedestrian and cyclists in North Tyneside whose routes currently require them to cross the line.
- Works on the station platform at Seaton Delaval re-commenced w/c 7th August ending a period of disruption initiated by the presence of Great Crested Newts. Blyth Bebside station works commenced w/c 14th August.
- The Bedlington South Switches and Crossings (S&C) and station track works were successfully completed by the contractor during a blockade in August.
- Work continues on the retailing and ticketing upgrades to enable Nexus smartcards and tickets, including pay as you go, to be accepted on the line.

East Coast Main Line Disruption – Weekend engineering works will take place on the East Coast Main Line (ECML) between Newcastle and Edinburgh from Saturday 16th September to Sunday 8th October. The disruptions are outlined in further detail below:

- Most Newcastle-Edinburgh and Newcastle-Northumberland rail services will not run. Train Operators are providing a limited number of bus replacement services.
- The smaller number of Newcastle-Edinburgh trains that do run on these dates will take a diversionary route via Carlisle. Passengers should expect journey times to be up to 2 hours longer.
- Most operators will however continue to run Berwick-Edinburgh rail services on Saturdays only.
- Short-notice disruptions to all services between Newcastle and Edinburgh are possible.

3.2 Transport for the North

Transport for the North Strategic Transport Plan 2 – Consultation on Transport for the North's (TfN) second Strategic Transport Plan closed on 17th August. TNE's response, whilst welcoming the vision and ambitions of the Plan, highlighted the need for delivery of the key transport infrastructure priorities needed to level up the north. In this region, these include addressing the capacity limitations on the ECML

between York and Newcastle (including re-opening of the Leamside Line), improvements to A19 junctions North of Newcastle, and upgrading sections of the A1 and A69.

3.3 Roads

A1 Allerdene Bridge – The Allerdene Bridge, which spans the East Coast Main Line and was built to reduce congestion on the A1 in Gateshead, partially opened for traffic on 1st September. The bridge is initially open only for those leaving the carriageway at junction 67 and over the coming months other lanes of traffic will gradually be moved over. National Highways hope that this will keep traffic flowing on the route, which they have described as "one of the most congested highway links in North East England."

A1 Dualling Decision – The DfT were expected to make a final decision on whether to dual the 13-mile stretch of the A1 between Morpeth and Ellingham on 5th September. However, they have announced that this decision has been delayed for a fourth time until 5th June 2024.

In response, Cllr Martin Gannon said: "The A1 Morpeth to Ellingham dualling scheme is greatly needed to improve connectivity, safety and journey times on this strategic route for the North.

"Sadly, this further delay doesn't come as much of a surprise following a frustratingly drawn-out process. We will work with partners to seek clarification from Government on how we can break this stagnated stage and get on with delivering this vital scheme for our region."

4. Making the right travel choice

4.1 Go Smarter Go Active – Go Smarter Go Active is the region's campaign dedicated to getting more people across the North East to walk, wheel or cycle as part of their everyday journeys. It supports the region's active travel strategy by providing a range of tools, training, and resources to assist in active travel choices. The campaign is supported by a website which has been visited by over 6,000 users. This website also provides maps, travel itineraries and news and blogs.

Funded by the UK Government's Active Travel Capability Fund, a range of events have been held during the spring and summer by local authorities across the region, all under the Go Smarter Go Active banner. These have ranged from cycle training within schools and the community, guided rides, maintenance skills and fix your bike events to community open days.

Over 20 events have been planned right across the region. We plan to continue to grow and develop the offer of Go Smarter Go Active and will undertake evaluations working with Active Travel England.

4.2 Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs)

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund – The North East has been awarded £1.137m in revenue 'capability' funding from the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund, managed by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV). This will enable all seven local authorities and TNE to build capacity to deliver for EV charging infrastructure.

This is the full amount we applied for and will be paid over the next two financial years in equal instalments.

The North East's indicative allocation from the LEVI capital fund is £15.8million. Following the submission of the expression of interest in May we have been invited to proceed to the next stage of the process and to submit an application form by 18 November 2023.

4.3 Tyne Tunnels

Since the Tyne Pass barrierless system was brought into operation in 2021, increasing numbers of drivers are choosing to use the Tyne Tunnels. Traffic is now significantly higher than it has been in the last few years. June 2023 saw an estimated 1.52m vehicle journeys through the tunnels, compared with the previous year where June 2022 saw a total 1.51m vehicle journeys made. Whilst the rise in traffic will be in part due to the effects of displaced traffic from other river crossings, TT2 considers that the main reason for the higher traffic levels is the improved capacity and faster journey times provided, particularly at peak times due to the barrierless system at the Tyne Tunnels and other A19 improvements such as Testos and Silverlink which have also improved journey times on this stretch of road.

Compliance – Since the Tyne Pass system was introduced, there has been a gradual improvement in the percentage of customers paying the toll on time. Compared to last year's 3.48% non-compliance level, the reported non-compliance rates in June of between 2-3% represent an estimated total of 5,000 fewer UTCN's in this reporting period.

Payment system improvements – In response to customer requests, TT2 are planning to make improvements to the toll payment system to provide the option to pay by GooglePay and ApplePay, and to also deliver an enhanced user interface.

The system changes will require the TT2 website and app to be unavailable for a short period of time and there will be a requirement for all account holders to reupload their card details following the system change. TT2 will deliver a comprehensive communications plan about the changes, including notifying customers with accounts ahead of time and extending the payment window for all customers whose payment deadline falls within downtime. Any customers who are unable to make a payment during the extended payment window and subsequently receive an unpaid toll charge notice can appeal through TT2's normal process and each appeal will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

TT2 are currently undertaking extensive testing to identify any issues before proceeding with the switch so that it is a safe and secure transition. The timings for

the change have not been confirmed at the time of writing, however they will be planned so as to minimise disruption resulting from the downtime of the website and app. TNE are supportive of TT2's improvements to customer service as well as the proposed steps to mitigate the impact. The relevant officers will be kept informed of the developments before, during and after the system changes, and will continue to monitor the impact on customers.

Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels – Although the pedestrian tunnels remain a vital access route which continue to be open to the public free of charge 24/7, there have been a number of short-term closures attributable to mechanical faults with the vertical lifts on each end, this is believed to be caused by the weather given their location and constant exposure to the elements. Such closures have been rare and are expected to become significantly less likely once capacity is improved by the provision of an additional lift at each end, once the inclined lifts are ready for public use this Autumn.

5. Private transport: travelling by car and using road infrastructure

5.1 National Highways Consultation – National Highways recently undertook a public consultation on documents feeding into the third road investment period programme (RIS3). The documents were:

- Initial Route Strategy – This document outlined the guiding principles for RIS3 investment.
- Connecting the Country – This outlined the long-term strategic vision to 2050.
- 20 individual route strategies – These strategies set out the ambitions for individual routes on the Strategic Road Network, 2 of which were relevant to the North East (London to Scotland East (North) and the North Pennines)

TNE developed responses to the consultations to ensure that our regional priorities are reflected in the RIS3 proposals. Our responses highlighted the importance of decarbonisation and safety, ensuring that the network meets the needs of non-motorised users as well as vehicular traffic, and the necessity to invest in our key North East schemes, in order to cut delays and unlock important regional development sites.

6. Transport Usage Trends

6.1 Across the region, public transport passenger numbers were relatively high throughout the month of July, with bus usage at 120% of 2022 levels and Metro usage at 105%. The number of cyclists passing our sensors at selected sites across the region was down by around 19% in July 2023 compared to June 2023. Overall, through July 2023 traffic levels across Tyne and Wear were similar to July 2022 levels. July 2022 traffic levels were generally above pre-Covid levels.

7. Reasons for the Proposals

7.1 This report is for information purposes.

8. Alternative Options Available

8.1 Not applicable to this report.

9. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

9.1 Next steps are set out under the respective items, where applicable.

10. Potential Impact on Objectives

10.1 Successful delivery of the various transport schemes and investment proposals outlined in this document will assist the JTC in delivering its objective to maximise the region's opportunities and economic potential.

11. Financial and Other Resources Implications

11.1 The report provides an update and overview of progress against the seven Delivery Plan categories in implementing the objectives of the North East Transport Plan and achieving the vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving north-east.'

11.2 The North East Transport Plan includes proposed / required investment totalling £7 billion to achieve the aims and ambitions of the JTC, the majority of which is dependent on future funding decisions by central government. The financial and other resource implications aligned to the plan were agreed as part of the Transport Budget and Levies 2021/22 report to the JTC on 19 January 2021 and in subsequent reports to augment and amend the budget as appropriate.

12. Legal Implications

12.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

13. Key Risks

13.1 Appropriate risk management arrangements are in place for each programme of work overseen by the delivery agencies responsible.

14. Equality and Diversity

14.1 Successful delivery of schemes to improve public transport, walking and cycling will help to address transport-related social exclusion and create a fairer society.

15. Crime and Disorder

15.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications associated with this report.

16. Consultation/Engagement

16.1 Many of the schemes and proposals outlined in this report have been, or will be, the subject of engagement with appropriate stakeholders or the wider public.

17. Other Impact of the Proposals

17.1 No specific impacts.

18. Appendices

18.1 Appendix 1 – Response from North East Joint Transport Committee to Transport Focus in relation to rail ticket office closure consultation

19. Background Papers

19.1 None.

20. Contact Officers

20.1 Tobyn Hughes, Managing Director, Transport North East

Tobyn.hughes@transportnortheast.org.uk

21. Sign off

21.1
- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

22. Glossary

22.1 All abbreviations or acronyms are spelled out in the report.

North East Joint Transport Committee

Gateshead Council
Civic Centre
Regent Street
Gateshead
NE8 1HH

By email:

ticketoffice.Northern@transportfocus.org.uk
ticketoffice.LNER@transportfocus.org.uk

21 July 2023

Dear Transport Focus

Response from North East Joint Transport Committee to Transport Focus in relation to rail ticket office closure consultation

I write in relation to the station ticket office consultation, to provide feedback on behalf of the North East Joint Transport Committee (NEJTC), that co-ordinates policy on behalf of the two Combined Authorities in North East England, namely the North of Tyne Combined Authority and the North East Combined Authority.

To summarise our feedback to the consultation:

- The NEJTC **objects to the proposed closure of ticket offices at Alnmouth, Berwick-Upon-Tweed, Durham, Hexham, Morpeth and Sunderland**. This is on the grounds that some ticket types will no longer be capable of being retailed at those stations, and it will not be possible to pay in cash. This will have a detrimental impact on rail passengers. Further, in the case of Hexham, Morpeth and Sunderland, staffing provision will be reduced with a detrimental impact on customer service, disabled access and provision of disabled toilets.
- The NEJTC considers that **the process of consultation is unfair to passengers and stakeholders** by being opaque, complex to engage with, unduly short, and inadequate information has been provided particularly in relation to Equality Impact Assessments.

We note that Transport for the North will be providing consultation comments in relation to the two train operators in which it has a specific interest – Northern Trains and TransPennine Trains. The Urban Transport Group will also be providing comments on behalf of its member city region authorities which include our region. We fully support the feedback of both bodies.

In addition, many of our individual councils will be responding directly to the consultation, and we support and endorse the comments made. Northumberland County Council, Durham County Council and Sunderland City Council are particularly negatively impacted by the proposals.

I would urge you to take the serious concerns set out below, and those of our constituent authorities, into account when providing feedback to the train operators and to the Secretary of State for Transport, and object to any closures to ticket offices until they have been addressed.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Martin Gannon
Leader of Gateshead Council and Chair of the North East Joint Transport Committee

cc Northern Trains, LNER and Secretary of State for Transport

Response from the North East Joint Transport Committee to rail industry proposals to close station ticket offices

About the North East

1. The North East is a large area with over two million residents covering an extensive geography that includes some of the most rural parts of the country. Our Transport Plan is subtitled “moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East”, and in it we articulate how we want local people to make healthy, sustainable travel choices. That includes greater use of our public transport network, in which we are investing heavily.

2. Rail is very important to the communities of the North East, although its coverage is limited. Nevertheless, there are large distances between our towns and cities, and indeed between our region and other parts of the United Kingdom, and this means that rail is the only realistic form of public transport available to some communities. For people who do not own a car or who choose not to drive, this makes rail links essential for travel to education, work, medical appointments, and leisure.

3. In this context proposed closures of rail ticket offices are incongruous and run counter to what we are trying to achieve. We need to make rail services more attractive, more inclusive and more accessible. We are concerned that the proposals set out in the current consultation appear to be sacrificing service quality for financial reasons, and in doing so risk making rail services less attractive, inclusive and accessible.

4. In the Tyne and Wear urban area the vast majority of rail-based links are provided by the Tyne and Wear Metro. The Metro is a highly accessible public transport system that carries over 35 million passengers each year. Relevant to this consultation, the Metro does not have station ticket offices or conductors on trains; all ticket sales are made via station Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs), online, or by a Pay-As-You-Go smartcard called “Pop”. All Metro platforms are fully accessible via ramps and lifts, and level boarding is a standard design feature which is about to be further improved by a new fleet of trains which feature a retractable accessible step.

5. Our experience of changing passenger retailing on the Metro, having closed our own network of retailing outlets two years ago, makes us confident that changes to the rail ticket retailing environment are possible and can be effective at improving customer service. However, it also demonstrates how important it is to make sure that customer needs, especially those of disabled or vulnerable passengers, are properly considered and provided for in advance of any proposed change being made.

Approach to consultation

6. The approach taken to this consultation is at best confusing and opaque. This is reinforced by the consultation being carried out by multiple individual train operators when in fact it is an industry-wide proposal. Furthermore a 21-day consultation period for such a large-scale and high impact set of proposals is wholly inadequate. Even more so because of the complex nature of the consultation as already described.

7. We believe it is all but impossible to expect the members of the public who will be most impacted by these proposals to be able to get a full sense of what is proposed:
    a. How is a member of the public expected to know which train operator is Station Facilities Operator for the stations that they use most regularly?
    b. How are disabled users expected to find and decipher the information that tells them the actual impact on them as a user of their local station?

8. We do not consider that this consultation is being conducted in a manner that is fair to station users or reasonable, and we believe that the people who are most likely to be impacted by the change (disabled, older and vulnerable people) are least likely to be able to engage meaningfully with the consultation. We note that the consultation materials are not advertised as being in an accessible format for those passengers who have visual impairments or other requirements. We feel that people with disabilities are one of the passenger groups most likely to benefit from a local ticket office, and who will therefore be most impacted by the proposed closures. This needs to be rectified.

9. We believe that the consultation is unfair in four ways:

    a. lack of transparency of process;
    b. highly complex, hard to access, and sometimes inaccurate consultation materials;
    c. different customer propositions proposed by different operators; and
    d. an absence of Equality Impact Assessments during consultation.

Lack of transparency of process

10. The consultation proposals have been published by individual train operators, and yet consultation feedback is to be provided directly to Transport Focus. What process then follows is not entirely clear, but it would appear that Transport Focus is expected to pass feedback on to train operators, but also to make objections where appropriate to the Secretary of State following a statutory process. It is wholly unclear how the views of rail users or stakeholders can influence the proposals.

Highly complex, hard to access, and sometimes inaccurate consultation material

11. Each train operator is consulting separately over the proposals relating to stations for which they are the Station Facilities Operator (SFO). Very few people are likely to know who the Station Facilities Operators are for the stations that they use, particularly as these are often different between the origin and destination station.

12. Our team of professional transport planners has found it very difficult to work through large quantities of consultation materials and supporting information, some of it in spreadsheets, produced by different train operators in completely different formats. One train operator has provided us with a "ZIP" file containing multiple files (but no index, by way of random example one file containing details of proposals at 9 stations is called "Annex B TSA Major Change TOC Input SL8 2023 V1.1.xlsx") that contains some analysis of impacts – we don't believe this ZIP file has been provided to the wider public.

13. One operator has emailed several times during the consultation to provide further detailed information. Another operator has provided no analysis of impacts at all, it simply states on its website what the revised service offering will be.

14. On the subject of websites, we have noticed several discrepancies between the information provided in the consultation and operators' websites. For example, Northern Trains' consultation materials say that Morpeth is currently staffed from 0630-1240, whereas Northern's website says it is 0630-1700. Under these circumstances it is hard to see how impacted passengers are expected to meaningfully engage with the consultation.

Different customer propositions proposed by different operators

15. The proposals made by the two relevant train operators in our region are quite different. LNER's information has a link to the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) website that says: "These proposals are designed to move staff out of ticket offices and onto station platforms and concourses to support better, face-to-face interactions, with the potential to close ticket offices in a number of locations". This appears to be the case in LNER's proposal but much less so in that of Northern Trains.

16. Broadly speaking, LNER's proposals are to replace ticket office staff with customer service staff on platforms with operating hours unchanged and therefore access to most station amenities preserved. Northern Trains on the other hand is proposing to reduce the hours of coverage of station staff significantly, and this gives rise to a number of issues as set out below.

17. In the North East there are a number of examples of nearby stations serving similar communities on the same line having different SFOs, for example Berwick-Upon-Tweed (LNER) and Morpeth (Northern Trains). As Morpeth has Northern Trains as its SFO it will see a reduction in staffing hours, whereas Berwick-Upon-Tweed with LNER will not. The onus here would be for local residents to effectively respond twice to the consultation in different ways which feels unnecessarily complex and time consuming.

18. This difference in proposed customer offering by different train operators is hard to understand, and makes responding to the consultation difficult. Given that Northern Trains and LNER are both part of the government-owned operator DOHL, and have been for some time, it is hard to understand why such different approaches to both consultation and the proposals themselves have been taken.

Absence of Equality Impact Assessments

19. Perhaps most importantly of all, we note that a number of train operators have not carried out Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) at this stage. Northern Trains, which is reducing its hours of staff coverage at many stations, is asking members of the public to assess the impact on them in order for it to be able to complete their assessment. We believe that this is wholly unacceptable.

20. Notwithstanding our earlier comments about how difficult it is for disabled and vulnerable people to find the relevant information and engage with this consultation, Northern Trains should already have sufficient knowledge of its own stations and facilities, as well as the law relating to disabilities, in order to produce a draft EqIA at each station where it proposes to make a change. Only Northern Trains knows how it intends to mitigate such issues as access to platforms for people with reduced mobility, the use of touch-screen TVMs by people who are blind or have visual impairments, and the provision of accessible toilets. Passengers and user groups can then comment on the draft EqIA with all of the relevant information set out in front of them.

Comments applicable to both Northern Trains and LNER

21. We accept that passenger needs are changing when it comes to the retailing of tickets and welcome the principle that ticket office staff may be better deployed elsewhere on stations. However, we have a number of concerns over the way in which these changes are proposed to be implemented, that we believe will be detrimental to our passengers and local communities.

Concern that staffing may be further reduced through time

22. The proposed change in the staff role from working in ticket offices, which cannot be closed without due process being followed, to customer assistants working on platforms, gives rise to a concern that the role could be reduced or phased out in future. That would be detrimental to rail passengers and run counter to the RDG's claim that the proposals are "designed to move staff out of ticket offices and onto station platforms and concourses to support better, face-to-face interactions".

23. We would like to see some form of binding wording, potentially through a change in the prevailing legislation or in delivery contracts, which meant that future changes to staffing hours would require further consultation, including with the Local Transport Authority, and approval from the Secretary of State.

Lack of suitable alternatives for ticket types that cannot be sold at TVMs

24. It seems to us that the proposals are being made prematurely. Significant numbers of ticket types are not available either through TVMs or online retailing apps, and cash transactions (which are still important to some in society) will not be possible at most stations. We are informed that some work is being undertaken by the rail industry to make TVMs more accessible, to allow more products to be retailed through TVMs, and to increase retailing through third parties such as convenience stores. Until the rail industry has put these solutions in place it seems that ticket offices are the only solution.

25. Closing ticket offices before these solutions are in place will lead to people unnecessarily paying more for their tickets, and some people will not be able to pay at all. This is an unreasonable burden on local people, many of whom are feeling the impact of the cost of living crisis. Whilst we have no reason to doubt the overall figure of only 12% of ticket sales taking place at ticket offices (albeit with significant variations at each station and in different regions), it seems to us that the stated 12% of people who still buy tickets at ticket offices do so for a particular reason, rather than simply not wishing to use a TVM. That will include buying tickets that are not available at TVMs which include many types of discounted tickets; paying in cash; and receiving enhanced assistance or advice.

Lack of recognition of the wider role of ticket offices

26. Furthermore, ticket offices provide a much wider range of supportive services than simply selling tickets. Whether providing timetable and real-time departure information, local directions and visitor information, or simply reassurance and advice about the journey ahead, we believe that many millions of customer interactions each day are not captured by the 12% figure of ticket sales. Most stations are community assets as well as travel hubs,

whose appearance and facilities form part of the image and functionality of the villages, towns and cities that they are part of.

27. This is exemplified by the case of Sunderland where for decades the passenger concourse has been run-down, providing a very poor impression of the city to both residents and visitors alike. After many years of trying and failing to get the rail industry and government to resolve the problem, the City Council has invested £27 million of local funding (part of which is sourced from the Transforming Cities Fund) and as a result, a new concourse is now nearing completion. This revitalised station will soon offer attractive, modern and welcoming facilities which are integrated with the city centre and we expect it will be a great source of civic pride. At the heart of this anticipated development is a new station ticket office which is now threatened by this consultation.

28. Furthermore, several stations in the North East affected by these proposals, in particular Durham, Alnmouth, Hexham and Berwick-Upon-Tweed are gateways to major tourism and UNESCO World Heritage sites and deal with thousands of national and international visitors, many of whom will be seeking information about onward travel. Platform-based staff may be able to replace some of these functions when they are present, however the "roving" nature of their role means that they will be in high demand at times, and it seems highly probable that they will not be able to service all customers' needs in the way that a ticket office would have done.

29. We note that one station in the North East, Newcastle, will retain its ticket office. It is suggested in the consultation that passengers who still require the services of a ticket office for discounted tickets can travel there. We do not understand how this can work in practice, given that the passenger will require a ticket to travel to the hub station in the first place – for which they will have to pay full price.

Specific comments on Northern Trains' Consultation

Reduction in staffing hours at Northern's stations

30. Northern Trains is proposing to reduce the hours its customer-facing staff are present at most stations in the North East, in addition to changing their role to "Journey Makers". This runs contrary to the RDG's statement which is about enhancing customers' experience. The reasoning behind reduced hours of staff coverage is unclear, indeed there is no explanation given as to why certain stations are proposed to have certain levels of "Journey Maker" staffing at particular times:

	Alnmouth	Hexham	Morpeth	Sunderland
Weekday current	0640-1315	0715-1730	0630-1700*	0655-1800
Weekday proposed	0630-1300	0900-1230	0630-1200	0800-1500
Saturday current	0640-1315	0815-1415	0630-1300*	0655-1800
Saturday proposed	0630-1300	1000-1330	0630-1200	0800-1500
Sunday current	1040-2100	Closed	Closed	0900-1700
Sunday proposed	1100-2100	None	None	None

(*we note that in its consultation materials Northern Trains state that Morpeth ticket office is currently open on weekdays and Saturdays from 0630-1240, whereas Northern's website Morpeth Station | Trains to Morpeth & Times | Northern (northernrailway.co.uk) says it is open weekdays 0630-1700 and Saturdays 0630-1300).

31. In the absence of any other stated rationale and given that reduced staff coverage is unlikely to "enhance customers' experience", we assume that the reduction in the hours of staff coverage is a cost-saving measure. This is not mentioned in Northern Trains' consultation materials and we believe that the operator's passengers and stakeholders are owed a transparent explanation.

32. Additionally, no rationale has been given as to why some stations outside the North East will retain ticket offices (e.g. Hartlepool) when other, busier stations (e.g. Morpeth) are to lose them.

33. Northern Trains has not explained how certain amenities for disabled people, available today, will be provided when "Journey Makers" are unavailable – either because they are performing another function at the time, or because it is outside the hours that they are present. This includes access to accessible toilets, responding to "call-for-help" alarms, and support to cross to otherwise inaccessible platforms. Three of the stations operated by Northern Trains in our area are proposed to have the hours of customer-facing staffing reduced significantly; it is therefore likely that there will be widespread impacts that need to be examined and explained to the passengers that are affected.

34. This goes to the point that we make above in relation to Equality Impact Assessments. We would expect to see these set out, albeit in draft form, in a way that clearly shows how Northern Trains intends to mitigate issues such as access to platforms for people with reduced mobility, the use of touch-screen TVMs by people who are blind or have visual impairments, and the provision of accessible toilets. Passengers and user groups could then comment on the draft EqIA with all of the relevant information set out in front of them.

Whilst some information has been made available to us in spreadsheets, this is not in a form that is accessible to impacted users. Furthermore, based on this information it appears that there are no additional mitigations being proposed when the hours of reduced staffing means that a station is unstaffed when previously the ticket office staff would have been able to assist.

Morpeth and Alnmouth

35. Further to our comments made above on Morpeth, we note that for historic reasons the Station Facilities Operator at Morpeth and Alnmouth is Northern Trains, despite them being major stops on the East Coast Main Line served by numerous long-distance train operators. It is now highly anomalous that Morpeth will only have a visible staff presence for a short window each day (0630-1230) whereas other similar East Coast Main Line stations will have customer-facing staff available throughout the operating day.

Sunderland

36. As noted above, Sunderland City Council has invested £27 million of local funding (part of which is sourced from the Transforming Cities Fund) and as a result a new concourse is nearing completion offering attractive, modern and welcoming facilities which are integrated with the city centre and will be a source of civic pride. At the heart of the development is a new station ticket office which is now threatened by this consultation. We are not aware of any specific consultation with either Sunderland City Council, with ourselves in our role as the Local Transport Authority, nor with Nexus as the Passenger Transport Executive for Tyne and Wear.

Hexham

37. Hexham station's platforms are connected by a footbridge, and there is no lift. We understand that, where required, people with reduced mobility are assisted by ticket office staff to cross the live railway line using a foot crossing. Furthermore, Hexham has waiting rooms and accessible toilets. Northern Trains has not explained how any of these passenger amenities will be provided during the hours when "Journey Maker" staff are not scheduled to be available.

Objections

38. Given the comments we make above, we object to the proposed ticket offices closures affecting North East stations on the following grounds:

	Ticket choice reduced	Cash payment no longer possible	Staffing hours reduced	Disabled toilet amenity reduced	Concerns over disabled access	Visitor information reduced	Local investment not considered
Alnmouth	X	X					
Berwick	X	X					
Durham	X	X					
Hexham	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Morpeth	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Sunderland	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

39. I therefore request that you advise Northern Trains and LNER not to proceed with the proposals to close ticket offices at those stations, and notify the Secretary of State accordingly.

40. We also believe that the consultation itself is being conducted in such a way that it is very difficult for passengers to meaningfully engage with it, and the more impacted the user (e.g. because of a disability or other vulnerability), the less likely they are to be able to engage with the proposals and make their views heard.

41. I therefore request that you advise Northern Trains and LNER to suspend the current consultation until such time as they are able to provide clear, transparent and properly evidenced proposals in such a way that rail users and passengers can properly understand, engage and respond to them.

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NORTH OF TYNE COMBINED AUTHORITY

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: **19 September 2023**

Subject: **Discharge of Transport Functions by Durham County Council**

Report of: **Portfolio Holder for Transport for Durham County Council**

Executive Summary

When NECA approved its constitution in April 2014, it delegated to Durham County Council transport functions contained in Parts 4 and 5 of the Transport Act 1985 and Part 2 of the Transport Act 2000. The NECA operating agreement requires that the relevant Portfolio Holder provides reports when required to the North East Joint Transport Committee advising on how the delegated functions have been exercised.

This report covers the discharge of the powers delegated to Durham County Council in the period April 2022 to March 2023 and covers the following areas:

- Organisational arrangements
- Bus Service Network
- Concessionary Fares
- Multi-Operator Ticketing Scheme
- Community Transport (CT)
- Home to School/Social Care Transport
- In House Bus Fleet
- Travel Response Centre
- Public Transport Information
- Real Time Passenger Information
- Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership
- Wheels to Work County Durham

The report identifies that the Covid-19 pandemic has continued to have a very substantial impact on activity in 2022/23 and continues to have major repercussions on transport arrangements in County Durham.

Recommendations

North East Joint Transport Committee

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report.

North East Joint Transport Committee

1. Background Information

1.1 When NECA approved its constitution in April 2014, it delegated to Durham County Council transport functions contained in Parts 4 and 5 of the Transport Act 1985 and Part 2 of the Transport Act 2000. These primarily relate to securing socially necessary bus services, concessionary travel, and ticketing on local passenger transport services. Durham's Cabinet approved the delegation of these functions at its meeting of 16 April 2014 to the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder, Economic Regeneration.

1.2 During 2018, responsibility for transport functions became vested in a statutory Joint Committee comprising of representatives of the new North of Tyne Combined Authority and the North East Combined Authority. It was agreed in a Deed of Cooperation entered into by the seven constituent councils, that the transport functions delegated to the two counties would remain the same pending any decision by the new Joint Committee. No changes to the delegations have been proposed.

1.3 Attached at Appendix A is an account of the discharge of transport functions for 2022/23 agreed by Durham County Councils Corporate Director for Regeneration, Economy & Growth and Transport Portfolio Holder, Economy and Partnerships. Appendix A was reported for information to Durham County Council's Cabinet meeting on 12 July 2023.

2. Proposals

2.1 Members are requested to note the contents of this report.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

3.1 The NECA operating agreement requires that the relevant Portfolio holder provides reports when required to the North East Joint Transport Committee advising on how the delegated functions have been exercised.

4. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

4.1 These are identified as far as practicable in Appendix A.

5. Potential Impact on Objectives

5.1 The report describes how Durham County Council is discharging transport functions delegated by NECA.

6. Financial and Other Resources Implications

6.1 The transport functions will be funded by the levy issued by NECA to Durham County Council.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 This report is submitted in accordance with obligations contained in the Deed of Operation entered into by the constituent authorities on formation of the Combined Authority.

8. Key Risks

8.1 None specific in this report.

9. Equality and Diversity

9.1 None specific in this report.

10. Crime and Disorder

10.1 None specific in this report.

11. Consultation/Engagement

11.1 None specific in this report.

12. Appendices

12.1 Appendix A – North East Combined Authority (NECA) – Durham County Council Transport Activity Report 2021/22

13. Background Papers

13.1 The North East Combined Authority Constitution

The North East Combined Authority Deed of Operation dated 29 April 2014

The North East Combined Authority Deed of Cooperation dated 4 July 2018

14. Contact Officer

14.1 Cathy Knight, Integrated Passenger Transport Strategic Manager, Durham County Council, cathy.knight@durham.gov.uk, Tel: 03000 268512

15. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

North East Joint Transport Committee

Appendix A

North East Combined Authority (NECA)

Durham County Council Transport Activity Report 2022/23

Introduction

1. This report covers the discharge of the powers delegated to Durham County Council in the period April 2022 to March 2023. The Covid-19 pandemic has naturally continued to have a very substantial impact on activity in this year and continues to have major repercussions.

Organisational arrangements

2. The County Council continues to undertake its passenger transport functions through an 'Integrated Passenger Transport Group' (IPTG) in line with Government's best practice guidance. The IPTG delivers public transport, home to school transport, Special Education Needs (SEN) transport and adult social care transport. It also has close links with health, clinical commissioning groups and the North East Ambulance Service.

3. Integrating transport in this way is especially important in more rural areas, enabling the authority to create packages of work across sectors to maximise the use of vehicles and staff, ensure full use is made of existing local bus services for education and social work purposes and deliver consistency of standards across different modes. The opportunities to integrate commissioning and delivery of local authority transport with non-emergency healthcare transport have also helped to deliver a simpler and more understandable service for the user.

4. The Council also values the benefits of the harmonisation of policy and delivery across the economic development, planning, housing and transport functions. This approach ensures that we can maximise transport's contribution to economic growth in the County.

Bus Service Network

5. The diverse geography of County Durham, including its many rural destinations, creates complex travel demands highlighting the importance of transport across our rural County. The local bus network plays a key role in our ambitions for County Durham and our wider plan for both transport and the economy.

6. A comprehensive network of bus services operates across almost all the county, although frequencies and coverage are reduced during later evenings and on Sundays, reflecting lower demands for travel.

7. Services operating without subsidy from Durham County Council ("commercial services") provide a high proportion of the network in most of County Durham. Go North East (53%) and Arriva (42%) provide the majority of the services across the county. Three other firms also run locally significant bus services without subsidy. Most of the main towns of County Durham have at least two operators providing locally significant services without subsidy.

State of Commercial and Subsidised Networks

8. Until the impact of the Covid pandemic from March 2020, much of the bus network had been quite stable for a number of years in terms of the level of service and the service routes, although there have been periodic adjustments to details. However, following temporary changes in the initial pandemic in 2020, more substantive changes occurred in 2021/22 with further changes continuing into 2022/23.

9. The temporary government funding that has sustained bus operators and transport authorities through the effects of the pandemic reduced from September 2021 and was set to expire at the end of March 2022, then extended to the end of September 2022. The government asked operators and transport authorities to consider what the sustainable network would be in the light of the ongoing impact of changes in travel behaviour, taking into account the impact on the commercial viability of services and the funding available for securing services under subsidy contracts.

10. Arriva and Go North East reduced the scale of their commercial (unsubsidised) bus services in this period, mainly with effect in April (Arriva) and July (Go North East). The changes by Go North East were extensive and included the closure of their depot at Chester-le-Street. The smaller operator sector also saw reductions, with Scarlet Band ceasing to trade in October 2023.

11. New subsidised service contracts were arranged to sustain services where the commercial withdrawals would have left communities with no service or lost important links. This was integrated with the replacement of DCC existing contracts where in most cases the contract period expired in October 2022.

12. The government's Bus Recovery Grant for operators and equivalent Local Transport Fund for transport authorities was subsequently extended to March 2023, and then the end of June 2023. It continues to be an important underpinning of the viability of the network, amounting to over £3 million in 2022/23.

13. Shortages of drivers continued to be an issue thoughout 2022/23, with Arriva and Go North East making temporary reductions in timetables in autumn 2022.

14. Arriva restored some of the reductions from October 2022, when their staff position appeared to be improving, but worsening recruitment and retention issues caused significant unreliability on services up to March 2023.To address this, in February 2023 Arriva advised they would not be able to continue to operate two services under subsidy contracts that had been expected to extend beyond their initial contract period.

15. Go North East largely addressed its driver shortage following a pay settlement and recruitment drive, although the closure of Chester-le-Street depot caused issues for some services.

16. Bus usage has continued to be affected by the impact of changes in travel behaviour. Total bus journeys boarding in County Durham increased from 15.6m in 2021/22 to estimated 17.7m in 2022/23, but remain about 20% below pre-pandemic levels.

17. The net spend on local bus service in 2022/23 increased to £3.288million in 2022/3 (after taking into account Local Transport Funding of £1.574million).

18. All operators in County Durham joined the government's initiative that temporarily capped single fares at £2 from January 2023. (This was initially funded to March 2023 and subsequently extended to June 2023) This has resulted in extra patronage, although actual fares income has declined materially, so this scheme has only been possible with the temporary funding.

Concessionary Fares

19. Reimbursement payments under Durham's concessionary fare scheme for older and disabled people form the major element of the County Council's spending on public transport. Largely fixed price arrangements have been negotiated with the two major operators, with "cap and collar" provisions to handle deviations from expected volumes.

20. In line with government guidance, in 2022/23 reimbursement payments to operators commenced a transition from the exceptional arrangement that had applied in 2020/21 and 2021/22/. Cabinet agreed to redirect the consequential saving in the Concessionary Fares budget to enable additional support for bus services in County Durham up to March 2024

Multi-Operator Ticketing Scheme

21. The multi-operator ticket schemes contained in the region's Bus Service Improvement Plan were not able to be implemented in 2022/23 due to delays in the confirmation of government funding.

Community Transport (CT)

22. The CT sector in County Durham has largely maintained its operations during 2022-23. However for most groups the scale of activities remains below pre-pandemic levels..

Home to School/Social Care Transport

23. Home to school and social care transport forms a considerable part of Durham's operations, with a total spend of approximately £30million, net spend after income £26million. This includes school transport buses that are paid for by parents and or schools, supplementing the statutory free travel provided by the Council. In the 2022/23 school year, about 6,500 pupils received free travel to school from Durham County Council, with a further 3,000 pupils travelling under the non-statutory concessionary schemes.

24. Overall transport costs have increased materially and are forecasted to rise further in future years. This is largely explained by increases in SEN and special transport demand, increasing contractor prices and increasing expectations and demands from parents and schools.

In House Bus Fleet

25. The council operates an in house bus fleet with 15 buses and 19 drivers. These vehicles operate a range of services including adult social care journeys, for passengers with complex needs, and demand responsive transport (DRT) services. The Link2 DRT service provides transport for people who do not have a suitable bus service or are unable to access regular bus services due to mobility issues. The Access Bus provides once a week opportunities for members of the service to access main shopping destinations.

Travel Response Centre

26. The Council operates a Travel Response Centre (TRC) for the telephone booking of non-emergency Patient Transport Service (PTS) to health appointments, the Council's Link2 service and Access Bus.

27. The health booking service is delivered on behalf of the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups in County Durham under a Service Level Agreement. Following an eligibility assessment, patients are booked on to North East Ambulance Patient Transport Services. Patients and visitors who are ineligible for NHS patient transport are advised of alternative services providing access to hospitals or how to make their journey. With additional GP surgeries in North Durham included from 1 July 2022, the TRC now takes bookings for all GP practices in County Durham.

28. The TRC handled over 63,000 calls in 2022/23 compared to 55,000 calls in 2022/23 and 30,000 calls in 2020/21. This increase has been in response to the inclusion of additional GP practices from July 2022 as well as changes to health appointments and travel restrictions during and after the pandemic.

29. The health booking service is delivered on behalf of the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups in County Durham. Following an eligibility assessment, patients are booked on to North East Ambulance Patient Transport Services. Patients and visitors who are ineligible for NHS patient transport are advised of alternative services providing access to hospitals or how to make their journey.

Public Transport Information

30. The Council has continued to provide a comprehensive range of passenger information on local bus services operating within the County. This includes maintaining printed timetable displays at over 2,800 bus stops, providing 150 electronic information displays at bus stations and on-street stops and a web based interactive bus map. The interactive bus map shows bus routes and individual timetables for all registered services in downloadable format. A new and improved version of the interactive bus map will go live on 1 June 2022.

31. The Council has also continued to work in partnership with other local authorities in the region for the processing of public transport data (via Traveline Information Limited) for the regional and national data sets on behalf of Tyne and Wear, Northumberland, Durham and the Tees Valley local authorities. This data is

required for national and regional journey planning, NextBus, electronic displays at bus stops as well as being used by third party applications. Best practice on passenger transport information has also continued to be shared and advice provided to the Tees Valley and other local authorities through various working groups and contacts.

32. The Council has continued to act as the regional contact for national data issues and represent the region at national working groups and meetings. This includes taking an active role in working groups for the DfT Bus Open Data initiative that has changed the way that bus operators provide information about their registered services and make it easier for bus passengers to plan their journeys through access to routes and timetables data, fares and tickets data and real time information.

33. The new regulations require bus operators to publish route, fares and vehicle location data to a central web service called the Bus Open Data Digital Service (BODDS) from January 2021 with requirements being phased in until 2023.

34. The council has provided support to help bus operators meet the new regulations. This includes the council acting as an agent to provide timetable data to BODDS on behalf of seven small bus operators for services that operate in County Durham.

Real Time Passenger Information

35. The data management role for the North East Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) has continued to be shared by Durham County Council and Nexus. Durham is responsible for submitting public transport data to the regional data broker for County Durham and Tees Valley led services. Nexus is responsible for Tyne & Wear and Northumberland led services.

36. Officers are supporting the specification and procurement of a new RTPI system for the region that is anticipated to go live in April 2024. This system will provide more accurate and reliable data for the predicted arrival time of local bus services and inform the traffic control system to provide bus priority when appropriate.

37. A new contract has been awarded for the supply of new electronic passenger information displays at the new Durham and Bishop Auckland bus stations and other locations across the county. These displays will improve the quality and management of information displayed for bus passengers.

Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership

38. The Council has been actively involved in developing the region's Bus Service Improvement Plan and associated Enhanced Partnership in association with regional partners. On 4 April 2022 the region received a letter from DfT which offered indicative funding of up to £163,521,172. The letter did not constitute a formal or binding grant offer. There were a number of actions to be completed by the region before final funding could be confirmed. These were completed and funding has now been confirmed.

39. In addition whilst the funding amount is significant, being the largest indicative funding amount for any BSIP, it does not cover the costs for full delivery of all of the North East BSIP proposals. As such the region has prioritised proposals. Durham County Council's Cabinet received a report on 18 January 2023 highlighting the workstreams for Durham and details of the report can be found - Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday 18 January 2023, 9.30 am - Durham County Council.

40. The council has established the County Durham Local Bus Board. The board aims are:

    The overarching aim of the County Durham Local Bus Board is to allow representatives from across County Durham to meet with bus operators' representatives to increase understanding between the parties involved, specifically but not limited to, reporting and discussion of forthcoming bus service changes in the Council area and consideration of bus network planning work which may be carried out at a regional level. It may also include improved working arrangements for the discussion of bus service reliability such as service improvements, highway infrastructure measures, fares initiatives or information to the public.

    The County Durham Local Bus Board will not be a public meeting. Attendance at Board meetings will be by invitation only and is expected to include:

    - the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economy and Partnerships
    - a representative of each of the County Durham Area Action Partnerships
    - representatives of NEBus, the bus operators' association, encompassing the providers of services across the North East
    - a representative of the Disability Partnership
    - a representative of the Youth Council

The Board is not a decision-making body. Meetings will be chaired by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economy and Partnerships unless otherwise directed by the Cabinet Member.

Wheels to Work County Durham

41. The successful Wheels to Work (W2W) scheme has continued to expand and provide access to employment and training across County Durham. This scheme provides the loan of a scooter or bicycle until a longer-term transport solution can be found. The scheme is managed by Wheels to Work County Durham Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and supported by a range of external partners including ACE Motorcycles, Pulman Group and Halfords.

42. The scheme operated 46 scooters and supported 51 people into work or training during 2022/23. A total of 327 people have been supported since the scheme started. The scheme is supported by Durham County Council transport revenue budget and capital funding from the Local Transport Plan. The scheme has continued to secure external grant funding and recent successful funding awards has allowed the scheme to operate until March 2024.

43. Developments in 2022/23 include securing the support of Pulman Group to sponsor the scheme and enabled the introduction of a fleet of 16 new electric scooters. A fleet of bicycles has also been added to the offer and has supported 62 people getting access to work and training.

44. Durham County Council has continued to be represented on the Steering Group to lead the management of the scheme and explore additional funding opportunities.

Summary

45. Durham County Council has discharged the transport functions delegated to it by NECA for the 2022/23 through an 'Integrated Passenger Transport Group' (IPTG) in line with Government's best practice guidance. The IPTG delivers public transport, home to school transport, Special Education Needs (SEN) transport and adult social care transport. It also has close links with health, clinical commissioning groups and the North East Ambulance Service.

46. A broad range of services have been delivered across the spectrum of passenger transport functions with the Covid-19 pandemic having continued to have a very substantial impact on activity in this year and continues to have major repercussions.

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North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: **19 September 2023**

Subject: **North East Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Strategy**

Report of: **Managing Director, Transport North East**

Executive Summary

Development of this strategy meets the commitment set out in the North East Transport Plan which was to publish a North East Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Strategy and help deliver its vision of “moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East”.

Whilst significant work is underway to encourage the use of sustainable travel (walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport), travelling by car or van may be the only suitable option for some journeys and circumstances. The strategy, which is currently at a draft stage prior to public consultation, is therefore intended to help reduce the environmental impact of car/van travel by encouraging the switch to zero emission vehicles. The draft document builds on the North East ZEV policy which was approved by JTC in March 2022.

The strategy aim is to deliver reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East, wherever people need it. It will initially cover the period up to 2030 in line with national commitments to phase out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans.

The initial draft strategy focuses on the approach that: Excellent Infrastructure + Well Informed People = Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles

This report outlines an initial draft of the North East Zero Emission Strategy (attached as appendix 1) and seeks approval to delegate authority to agree a revised draft of the strategy progresses to public consultation. The consultation draft will include a prioritised list of potential sites for ZEV charge-points to be installed across the region, including in rural communities. Members are invited to provide feedback on the initial draft, and to agree in principle to the report progressing to public consultation.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to:

i. Review and discuss the initial draft North East ZEV strategy, and approve it in principle as a consultation document subject to:
    a) any amends that the Committee may wish to see being reflected; and
    b) the inclusion of recommended sites once the Enabling Study discussed in paragraph 2.9 has reached a conclusion.

ii. Delegate authority to the Managing Director Transport North East, following consultation with the Chair of the Joint Transport Committee, NECA Finance Director and NECA Monitoring Officer, to progress the report through public consultation once the sites recommended by the Enabling Study have been included.

1. Background Information

1.1 The North East Transport Plan, published March 2021, set a vision of “Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.” Within the North East Transport Plan, a commitment was made to develop and publish a North East ZEV Strategy.

1.2 Encouraging and enabling the uptake of ZEVs can have significant benefits including reduced carbon emissions and reduced air pollution which contribute towards improved health.

1.3 The move away from petrol and diesel cars/vans to ZEVs will also help to combat the ongoing climate emergency that has been declared by the region’s two combined authorities and seven local authorities. Delivery of these benefits will contribute towards achieving the vision and objectives set out within Transport Plan.

1.4 This initial draft North East Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Strategy sets out our aim: ‘reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East, wherever people need it.’

1.5 It builds on the 2022 North East ZEV policy, which outlined initial proposals on how the region will complement private sector charging facilities, support local authority charging initiatives and build a partnership with Northern Powergrid.

1.6 The strategy focuses on publicly available charging infrastructure. Private residential charge points, such as those on driveways, are outside the scope of this strategy.

1.7 The strategy will reflect national Government’s policy to end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans in the UK from 2030, with hybrid vehicles following in 2035, by supporting the transition to ZEVs in the North East.

2. Strategy Content

2.1 Development of this strategy fulfils a commitment made in the 2021-2035 North East Transport Plan and will help deliver the five objectives of the Plan:

- Carbon Neutral North East;
- Overcome Inequality and Grow Our Economy;
- Healthier North East;
- Appealing sustainable transport choices;
- Safe, secure network.

2.2 The lead policy of the Transport Plan is to help people to make the right travel choice and, recognising some journeys will continue to be made by car or van, increased use of ZEVs can enable us to decarbonise these trips by encouraging the switch to ZEV. It is not the aim of this strategy to encourage people who are already walking, wheeling, cycling or using public transport to switch to a zero emission vehicle. Instead, we want to promote the use of ZEVs for journeys which have to be made by cars and vans.

2.3 The strategy sets out how the region can help guide the delivery of public charge points and support and encourage people and businesses to make the transition to ZEVs.

2.4 Whilst the initial focus is primarily public electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure such as changepoints for cars and vans, the strategy also reflects the potential role of other ZEV infrastructure, such as Hydrogen refuelling for larger vehicles, and proposes some innovation schemes. Future refreshes may strengthen reference to other zero emission vehicles and infrastructure.

2.5 The initial draft strategy focuses on the approach that:

Excellent Infrastructure + Well Informed People = Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles

2.6 The initial draft strategy sets out an initial five-year delivery plan covering the period up to 2030, to reflect the UK Government's 2030 step 1 commitment to phase out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans. The document will be refreshed when appropriate.

2.7 In order to achieve the aim of reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East, the strategy proposes targeted investment in EV infrastructure at locations which are not commercially viable, such as remote rural areas and deprived urban areas with a high proportion of housing with no off street parking.

2.8 Research has informed the development of this strategy and has highlighted concerns around access to charging infrastructure and range anxiety as key factors affecting the switch from petrol or diesel vehicles. This strategy sets out how we can help overcome some of these challenges by working in partnership with the public and private sector.

2.9 An enabling study is currently being carried out by an independent supplier, in consultation with local authorities, to identify around 200 potential sites for the installation of EV charging infrastructure. As the study is not yet complete these sites have not been included in this initial draft of the strategy. They will however be included in the consultation draft strategy. Members may request a briefing if they would like to discuss the proposed sites.

2.10 The strategy will include a delivery plan setting out proposals for introducing more publicly available charge points, including within rural communities. The sites from the enabling study will be included in the delivery plan. The document will help the North East to underpin funding bids and puts the region in a strong position to proceed with pace in the provision of further public charge points.

3. Consultation / Engagement

3.1 An early draft of the strategy has been shared with the seven North East local authorities and a number of key stakeholders including Transport for the North, Nexus and Investment North East England. Their comments and feedback have been appropriately reflected in the initial draft of the strategy, appended to this report.

3.2 As part of the public consultation for this strategy, we will ensure that people who live or work in the region have the opportunity to influence and comment on this ZEV strategy.

3.3 It is proposed there will be a 5-week public consultation in Autumn 2023.

3.4 The consultation process will operate in line with the TNE consultation guidelines agreed with JTC.

4. Proposal

4.1 The proposal being put forward is for members to:

i) Review and discuss the initial draft North East ZEV strategy, and approve it in principle as a consultation document subject to:

a) any amends that the Committee may wish to see being reflected; and

b) the inclusion of recommended sites once the Enabling Study discussed in paragraph 2.9 has reached a conclusion.

ii) Delegate authority to the Managing Director Transport North East following consultation with the Chair of the Joint Transport Committee, NECA Finance Director and NECA Monitoring Officer, to progress the report through public consultation once the sites recommended by the Enabling Study have been included.

5. Reason for the proposal

5.1 The draft Strategy document provides a strategic overview of the region's current ZEV charging network and sets out plans to tackle the challenges that are faced at a regional level when transitioning to ZEVs. It builds on our ZEV policy and sets out a costed pipeline of schemes focused on supporting the shift away from petrol and diesel cars/ vans to ZEVs.

5.2 If required, Members will be provided with a separate briefing to discuss the potential sites identified by the Enabling Study before the Strategy is finalised for public consultation. Unfortunately, the expected completion date of the Enabling Study does not allow for sites to be included in the draft of the Strategy that is attached to this report.

5.3 Approving this report will avoid any delays to the public consultation and enable the draft strategy to be brought to this committee in December where endorsement will be sought.

6. Alternative Options Available

6.1 Option 1 - JTC approve the recommendations set out in this report.

6.2 Option 2 – JTC do not approve the recommendations in this report.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

7. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

7.1 Subject to approval from this committee the draft ZEV Strategy will go out to public consultation.

The Final ZEV Strategy will be taken to JTC for endorsement in December 2023 and published on the Transport North East Website.

We will seek funding opportunities to enable schemes in the delivery plan to be taken forward.

8. Potential Impact on Objectives

8.1 Successful delivery of the ZEV Strategy will assist in delivery of the North East Transport Plan objectives.

9. Financial and Other Resources Implications

9.1 Delivery of further ZEV charging infrastructure around the region, especially in locations where the commercial case for investment is less strong, will require external financial support. Publication of this strategy and the enabling study sites should assist in underpinning future bids for funding.

10. Legal Implications

10.1 There are no legal implication arising directly from this report.

11. Key Risks

11.1 Delay to public consultation will impact on production timescales for the strategy and it will not be possible to publish the document this financial year.

12. Equality and Diversity

12.1 A key goal of the strategy is to ensure that we have a comprehensive charging network by ensuring that some investment is focused specifically in rural areas and urban areas without off street parking. This will ensure that residents in all parts of the region can benefit from the opportunity to use zero emission vehicles, even in locations where there may not be a strong commercial case for investment.

The consultation process will seek to engage with as many people as possible.

13. Crime and Disorder

13.1 There are no crime and disorder implications for this strategy.

14. Other Impacts of the Proposals

14.1 No known specific impacts.

15. Appendices

15.1 Appendix 1 – North East Zero Emission Strategy – initial draft

16. Background Papers

16.1 North East ZEV Policy March 2022) https://www.transportnortheast.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/TNE-ZEV-Policy.pdf

17. Contact Officers

Rachelle Forsyth-Ward, Interim Assistant Director, Transport Strategy Rachelle.forsythward@transportnortheast.gov.uk

18. Sign Off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

19. Glossary

All abbreviations or acronyms are spelled out in the report.

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North East Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Strategy

September 2023 – initial draft

neca North East Combined Authority DURHAM • GATESHEAD • SOUTH TYNESIDE • SUNDERLAND

NORTH OF TYNE COMBINED AUTHORITY

Transport North East

DRAFT

Contents

Foreword

Back in 2021 when the North East Transport Plan was published, I stated that it was the first step in a journey towards a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East. Since then, we've been working hard towards our aim of delivering reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the region, wherever people need it. Our North East Zero Emission Vehicle Policy that we published last year was the next step, and this strategy builds on this, moving us further along on our journey to reach our goals.

We know that road transport contributes 37% to the North East's carbon emissions – the most out of any sector. To tackle the climate emergency our region faces, it is imperative that we increase use of green, sustainable transport. Whilst significant work is underway to encourage the use of sustainable travel (walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport), we recognise that travelling by car or van may be the only suitable option for some journeys and circumstances.

This strategy is therefore intended to help reduce the environmental impact of car/ van travel by encouraging the switch to zero emission vehicles (ZEVs).

It is not the aim of this strategy to encourage people who are already walking, wheeling, cycling or using public transport to switch to a ZEV. Instead, we want to promote the use of ZEVs for journeys which have to be made by cars and vans.

It is proven that electric vehicles (EVs) provide a cleaner, more sustainable option for motorists than standard petrol or diesel cars and indeed why the government has stipulated that all new cars and vans must be fully zero emission by 2035.

We want the transition to emission-free driving to be as easy and as accessible as possible for local people, and to happen as quickly as possible in light of the alarming climate emergency we all face. To do this, we believe that excellent infrastructure, along with well informed people is the right recipe for a seamless increase in zero emission vehicles.

I am very proud that the North East has constantly been at the forefront in championing the use of zero emission vehicles (ZEVs). Our region is home to Europe's most successful EV (the Nissan Leaf), the UK's only large-scale battery factory (Envision, Sunderland) and we continue to hold our position as a key global centre in emerging clean energy technologies.

Through this strategy, and by investing in EV infrastructure and supporting people to make the changes required, we can build those successes to deliver more zero emission vehicles on our roads, tackling air pollution and creating a better environment.

I do not underestimate the scale of the challenge ahead, but by working together, we can make the most of this opportunity, and make the North East a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving place to be.

Councillor Martin Gannon, Chair of North East Joint Transport Committee

Executive summary

Background

This North East Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Strategy sets out our aim to deliver reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East, wherever people need it.

It builds on the 2022 North East ZEV policy, which outlined initial proposals for how the region will complement private sector charging facilities, co-ordinate action with local authority charging initiatives and build a partnership with Northern Powergrid.

Development of this strategy fulfils a commitment made in the 2021-2035 North East Transport Plan and will help deliver the five objectives of the Plan:

- Carbon Neutral North East;
- Overcome Inequality and Grow Our Economy;
- Healthier North East;
- Appealing sustainable transport choices;
- Safe, secure network.

The lead policy of the Transport Plan is to help people to make the right travel choice. Whilst significant work is underway to encourage the use of sustainable travel (walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport), we recognise that travelling by car or van may be the only suitable option for some journeys and circumstances.

This strategy is therefore intended to help reduce the environmental impact of car/van travel by encouraging the switch to ZEVs. **It is not the aim of this strategy to encourage people who are already walking, wheeling, cycling or using public transport to switch to a zero emission vehicle. Instead, we want to promote the use of ZEVs for journeys which have to be made by cars and vans.**

The geographical area addressed by this strategy comprises the seven local authorities in the North East, (Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, Northumberland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, and Sunderland) soon to be brought together under a North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA).

Strategy content

The strategy represents a positive step to assist people who need to travel by car or van but wish to do so more sustainably, including those in rural areas or densely built urban locations with no off-street parking.

Whilst our initial focus is primarily public electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure such as changepoints for cars and vans, the strategy also reflects the potential role of other ZEV infrastructure, such as Hydrogen refuelling for larger vehicles, and proposes some innovation schemes. Future refreshes may strengthen reference to other zero emission vehicles and infrastructure.

This strategy will initially cover the period up to 2030, to reflect the UK Government's 2030 step 1 commitment to phase out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans. The document will be refreshed when appropriate.

The delivery plan of this strategy sets out a new prioritised list of 200 potential sites for public chargepoints. This has helped inform the region of the level of public investment which is required over the next five years.

This pipeline of clearly evidenced chargepoint locations on publicly owned land will be able to be taken forward as public funding becomes available. But the region's public charging network simply will not be able to increase at the scale and pace required with public funding alone. Whilst the North East is seeing ever-increasing investment from private chargepoint operators, significantly more private investment will be required across the region for chargepoints that are publicly available. This is why this strategy proposes the creation of an **EV partnership group** to work together with local authorities, the private sector and Northern Powergrid.

Research has informed the development of this strategy and has highlighted concerns around access to charging infrastructure, range anxiety and the cost of zero emission vehicles as key factors affecting the switch from petrol or diesel vehicles. This strategy sets out how we can help overcome some of these challenges by working in partnership with the public and private sector.

We believe that **excellent infrastructure** + **well informed people** will lead to an **increase in ZEVs**:

Excellent Infrastructure

+

Well Informed People

=

Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles

Current situation

The number of zero emission vehicles is growing but they currently make up just less than 1% of registered vehicles in the region.

As of May 2023, there were approximately 850 publicly accessible charging points in the North East, offering a range of different charging speeds. This figure includes chargepoints that have been delivered by both the public and private sectors which are all publicly available for use.

The majority of public chargepoint infrastructure is located in areas with high demand, which tend to be urban areas. Some chargepoints are located at public transport interchanges and Park and Ride sites enabling ZEV trips to form part of an integrated sustainable journey when entire journeys cannot be made by public transport. However, a significant proportion of the region's public charging network is very old and in some cases faulty or out of use.

Area of focus

The strategy mainly focuses on car and van drivers that will rely on the publicly available infrastructure network in the region to charge their electric vehicle, to deliver reliable public Zero Emission Vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.

According to the Energy Savings Trust, EVs are most conveniently and economically charged at home, but off-street parking, and therefore a home chargepoint, is not available to everyone. Public EV charging infrastructure therefore plays a crucial role in supporting the widespread adoption of ZEVs and making them more convenient for the general public.

Private residential charging (such as home charging on a driveway) is out of scope; however, the proposed delivery plan does include some publicly available residential on-street chargepoints.

Whilst hybrid vehicles (combining a petrol or diesel engine with an electric motor) produce lower emissions than conventional petrol and diesel vehicles, they do still produce emissions and are not classed as ZEVs. However, plug-in hybrid vehicles are considered in the medium term as many vehicles will require electric vehicle infrastructure to charge them.

Zero emission buses are included within the scope of the strategy but will mainly be addressed through the North East's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

Whilst we acknowledge that the cost of purchasing an EV can be prohibitive and prevent people from making the switch away from petrol/ diesel cars and vans, the we have no levers in which to influence the cost of EVs. Therefore, the cost of vehicles is outside the scope of this strategy. We will however aim to raise awareness of this issue and highlight its impact on EV take up in the region.

Key commitment statements

In order to put this strategy into action, and to overcome the identified challenges, we have created a list of clear key commitment statements linked to, **infrastructure**, **people**, and **vehicles**.

These commitments are aimed at supporting the delivery of this strategy, and how introducing excellent infrastructure plus well informed people will help to achieve the North East Transport Plan vision and objectives, by delivering reliable public ZEV charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.

Delivery plan

This strategy sets out a delivery plan with a list of proposed sites to create more publicly available chargepoints. The proposed investments and initiatives set out in this strategy broadly consist of:

- **The creation of an EV partnership board with the public and private sector;**
- **New public EV chargepoint infrastructure;**
- **Maintenance and upgrading of the existing public chargepoint network;**
- **Increased awareness and information for people to make the transition to ZEVs;**
- **Innovation schemes to develop ZEV technology;**
- **Flexible procurement framework (NEPO) available to deliver public EV chargepoint infrastructure.**

Successful delivery of this strategy will help ensure that future public ZEV infrastructure projects:

- Support both urban, suburban, and rural areas of our region;
- A data-led approach to help address competing pressures;
- Are sustainable and well maintained;
- Meet current and future legislative requirements;
- Plug the gap between public chargepoints installed by the private sector and home charging facilities – supporting local authority infrastructure plans and ensuring charging infrastructure is provided in areas that are not covered by commercial operators.
- Support all users, including those with disabilities whether visible or hidden, and restricted mobility.
- Are actively promoted, highlighting the benefits to the region, such as reduced CO2 emissions and improved air quality through the complete removal of localised and toxic tailpipe emissions.

Consultation

The draft of this strategy has taken into account feedback from key stakeholders, including that received from the North East local authorities and Northern Powergrid.

As part of the public consultation for this strategy, we will ensure that people who live or work in the region have the opportunity to influence and comment on this ZEV strategy.

Space for an image

Role of the region

Proposed regional and local roles and responsibilities to help support the development of ZEV infrastructure:

Our regional role	Local Authorities
Agreeing and monitor regional policy and standards.	Council and community-specific strategies including on-street and residential.
Sourcing funding at a regional level and co-ordinate delivery of regional programmes.	Local authority-specific funding and local delivery of regional funding.
Providing region wide information to motorists.	ZEV charging facilities at public-facing council facilities e.g. public car parks and on local highways.
ZEV charging facilities for long distance traffic, strategic Park & Ride sites and transport interchanges.	ZEV charging facilities for council fleets and employee workplace parking.
Co–ordinating regional strategy with private sector providers, Northern PowerGrid and national agencies.	Planning requirements for new build housing, workplace, retail etc.
Representing the region to the ZEV industry, regulators, government and other partners.	Liaison with communities, employers and businesses.

Table 1: Proposed regional and local roles and responsibilities

How this strategy is structured

Chapter 1 – Introduction and context
Provides the background to the strategy and the policy context.

Chapter 2 – Where we are now?
Explains the current situation and where we are now as of late 2023.

Chapter 3 – What are the challenges?
Sets out the challenges and barriers which need to be overcome.

Chapter 4 – Where do we want to be?
A key chapter describing where we want to be by 2030.

Chapter 5 – How do we get there?
Sets out how we will get there, the key commitment statements, and the proposed delivery plan.

Chapter 6 – Measures of success
Contains the proposed reporting metrics to measure success.

Glossary of terms used

BEVs	Battery Electric Vehicle
BSIP	North East's Bus Service Improvement Plan
CPO	Chargepoint Operator
EV	Electric Vehicle
EVCPs	Electric Vehicle Charging Points
HGVs	Heavy Goods Vehicles
LA	Local Authority
LA7	North East Local Authority seven councils (Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside, Sunderland, Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland)
LEVI	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure fund
LGF	Local Growth Fund
NE JTC	North East Joint Transport Committee
NEMCA	the proposed North East Mayoral Combined Authority
NEPO	North East Procurement Organisation
Nexus	the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive
NPG	Northern Power Grid
OZEV	Office for Zero Emission Vehicles
PPCP	Public-Private Commercial Partnership
REEVs	Range-Extended Electric Vehicles (REEV)
TfN	Transport for the North
TNE	Transport North East
ZEV	Zero Emission Vehicle

Introduction and context

What is the North East ZEV Strategy?

This is the North East's first region-wide Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) strategy which sets out our ambition to further develop and expand the North East's growing public ZEV charging network, building upon the North East ZEV Policy published in March 2022.

The aim of this strategy is to deliver reliable public Zero Emission Vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.

Whilst our initial focus is primarily publicly available electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure such as changepoints for cars and vans, the strategy also reflects the potential role of other ZEV infrastructure, such as Hydrogen refuelling for larger vehicles, and proposes some innovation schemes. Future refreshes may strengthen reference to other zero emission vehicles and infrastructure.

Significant work is underway to encourage the use of sustainable travel (walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport), we recognise that travelling by car or van may be the only suitable option for some journeys and circumstances.

This strategy is therefore intended to help reduce the environmental impact of car or van trips by encouraging the switch to zero emission vehicles.

It is not the aim of this strategy to encourage people who are already walking, wheeling, cycling or using public transport to switch to a zero emission vehicle. Instead, we want to promote the use of ZEVs for journeys which have to be made by cars and vans. This is because whilst ZEVs will still emit some very fine particles from braking systems and tyre wear, it is expected that the transition to electric vehicles will result in better air quality in the North East and lead to improvements in population health.

This document sets out how the region could help guide the delivery of public chargepoints and support and encourage people and businesses to make the transition away from petrol and diesel cars and vans to ZEVs.

The strategy sets out an initial five-year delivery plan covering the period up to 2030, to reflect the UK Government's 2030 step 1 commitment to phase out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans. The document will be refreshed when appropriate.

This regional document complements the work being undertaken by local authorities (LA) in delivering ZEV infrastructure, mainly electric vehicle (EV) chargepoints. We aim to add value by taking a strategic overview of the network to ensure that people can access reliable charging infrastructure wherever they need it. We will also work to ensure that charging points are inclusive to all users.

Whilst the make-up of the North East region is unique, with a mixture of urban, suburban and rural communities, we recognise that there are some common challenges that we face at a regional level, such as the provision of EV charging infrastructure in areas of old, high-density terraced housing without private off-street parking, as well as the need to ensure that our rural communities have equitable access to public charging sites. There is also a necessity to meet socio-economic challenges such as pockets of deprivation existing across the region in both rural and urban areas, often with poor public transport provision.

The region will need to help ensure residents from rural and urban locations with high levels of deprivation can also easily access affordable public charging infrastructure. This strategy therefore also proposes targeted investment specifically at locations which are not commercially viable for EV charging infrastructure.

The strategy sets out how we could complement private sector charging facilities, coordinate action with local authority charging initiatives and build a partnership with Northern Powergrid through the formation of a partnership board. We will look to support by providing public chargepoint infrastructure in areas that aren't commercially viable.

We hope that, if funded, the proposed interventions set out in this strategy will ensure that ZEVs are a viable option for our residents, businesses and visitors who need to make journeys by car or van.

Partnership working – public and private sector

The uptake of electric vehicles and EV charging is currently in the 'early adopter' stage of development. However, it is expected that within the next few years we will meet a tipping point, with electric vehicles reaching an 'early majority' stage.

The delivery plan of this strategy sets out a new prioritised list of 200 potential sites for public chargepoints. This has helped inform the region of the level of public investment which is required over the next five years.

This pipeline of clearly evidenced chargepoint locations on publicly owned land will be able to be taken forward as public funding becomes available. This strategy and its delivery can also strengthen future funding bids.

But the region's public charging network simply will not be able to increase at the scale and pace required with public funding alone.

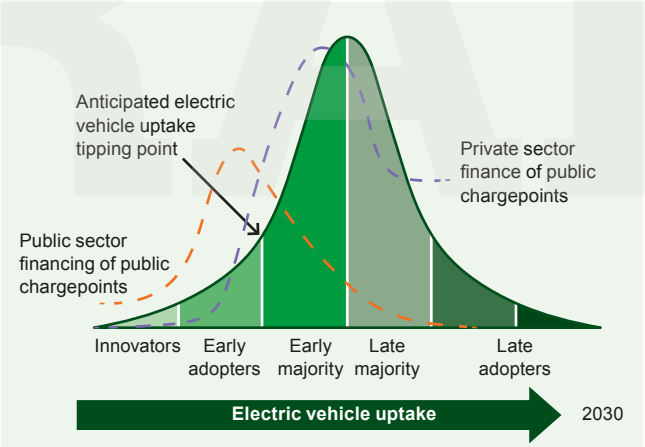


Figure 1: Public and private sector partnership working will be key over the coming years

Credit - Transport Scotland - *A Network Fit For The Future: Vision for Scotland's Public Electric Vehicle Charging Network* (2023)

Whilst the North East is seeing ever-increasing investment from private chargepoint operators, significantly more private investment will be required across the region for chargepoints that are publicly available. This is why this strategy proposes the creation of an EV partnership group. The purpose of the group will be to work together with local authorities, the private sector and Northern Powergrid, **sharing information and best practice**, to help create reliable public zero emission charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.

As EV uptake and chargepoint infrastructure grows, it is currently anticipated that public funding may tail off as EV ownership and private sector confidence increases. Figure 1 shows how both the public and private sector will need to collaborate public chargepoint installation over the coming years to 2030. However, is an ever-changing situation which we will keep under review.

Excellent Infrastructure

+

Well Informed People

=

Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles

Why is a ZEV strategy needed?

Background

Road transport was estimated to contribute 36% of the total carbon emissions of the North East (LA area) in 2022 – the most out of any sector, with the overwhelming majority of vehicles being petrol or diesel powered. These vehicles emit air pollutants from their tailpipes that are harmful to human health. These include nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide gasses and very fine particles (PM 2.5) which can contribute to respiratory and cardiovascular health conditions. In order to help tackle this, a move away from petrol and diesel vehicles towards zero emission alternatives is required.

The ZEV strategy builds on the recent North East Zero Emission Vehicle policy (2022).

This strategy document provides a strategic overview of the region's current ZEV charging network and sets out plans to tackle the challenges that are faced at a regional level when transitioning to ZEVs. We hope this strategy will facilitate further growth by addressing gaps in coverage and ensuring infrastructure access is inclusive to all users regionwide.

This strategy sets out a costed pipeline of schemes focused on supporting the shift away from petrol and diesel cars and vans to ZEVs.

The successful delivery of this strategy will help to achieve all five of our Transport Plan objectives by helping to tackle several of the region's transport challenges including carbon emissions, air quality, transport poverty and transport-related social exclusion. It is our belief that, by delivering a comprehensive and inclusive network of public charging infrastructure, together with clear positive messaging, we can overcome these concerns and people will feel more confident in switching to ZEVs. We have therefore structured this ZEV strategy to focus on the approach that:

Excellent Infrastructure

+

Well Informed People

=

Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles

By providing accessible infrastructure and addressing public concerns that deter the switch to ZEVs, we can encourage growth in the number of zero emission vehicles used to replace journeys currently made using petrol/ diesel vehicles.

What is a Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV)?

A Zero Emission Vehicle is defined in this strategy as any vehicle that does not emit any pollutants at the tailpipe, for example, Battery Electric or Hydrogen Fuel Cell vehicles and can include all types of vehicles including cars, vans, buses, and heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).

Battery electrics are likely to be the dominant choice for smaller ZEVs cars and vans, whereas Hydrogen fuel cells are expected to be the dominant choice for larger, heavier vehicles, including aircraft, trains, and ships. But this isn't an exact science as these two technologies are growing at significant pace. For example, some vehicle manufacturers are developing hydrogen fuel cell powered cars. Therefore, this strategy notes that both batteries and hydrogen fuel cells will likely play an important part in our greener future to power ZEVs.

Hybrid vehicles

Hybrid vehicles use more than one form of energy combining a petrol or diesel engine with an electric motor. Hybrid vehicles are a good start to transition over to zero emission vehicles.

Whilst hybrids produce lower emissions than conventional petrol and diesel vehicles, and some may use public chargepoints, they do still produce emissions and are not classed as ZEVs.

Plug in hybrid vehicles are considered in the medium term as many vehicles will require infrastructure to charge them, as we continue to make the transition over to vehicles with zero emissions on our roads.

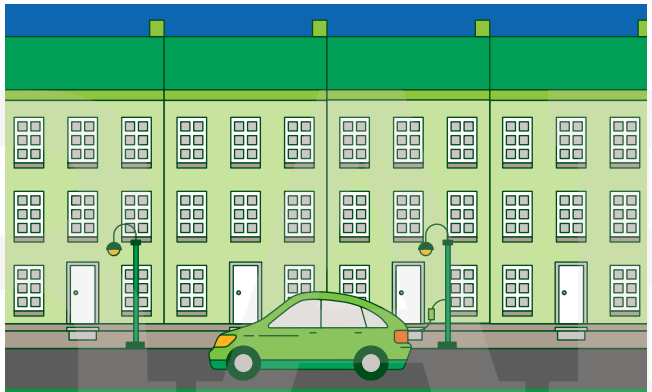
The UK government has declared that the ban of the sale of new hybrid vehicles will come in to effect in 2035, following the phase-out date for the sale of new petrol and diesel cars in 2030.

What is public charging infrastructure?

Public charging infrastructure is defined as the network of charging stations and related facilities that are available to the public for recharging ZEVs, mainly electric vehicles (EVs).

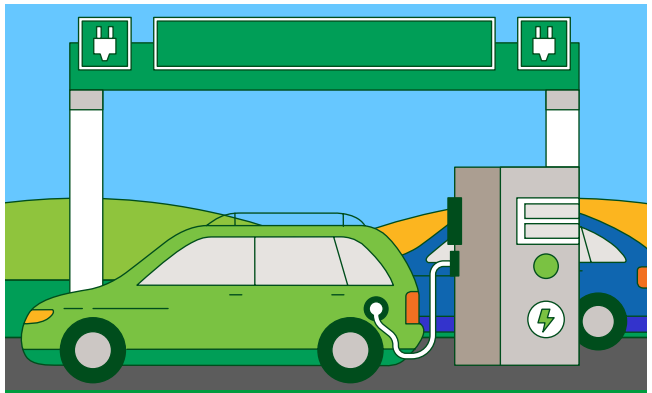
It includes chargepoints located in public spaces such as car parks, destination charging facilities with longer duration visits such as gyms, supermarkets, and shopping centres, as well as transport hubs and interchanges. It also includes on-street residential chargepoints, publicly available to serve vehicles parked on-street. Another type of public charging infrastructure is on-route charging, such as service stations on busy roads and motorways which use rapid and ultra-rapid charging to enable longer distance journeys. Depending on the EV type, these can charge a car or van from 0-80% charge in 30 minutes.

According to the Energy Saving Trust, EVs are most conveniently and economically charged at home, but off-street parking, and therefore a home chargepoint, is not available to everyone. Public EV charging infrastructure therefore plays a crucial role in supporting the widespread adoption of ZEVs and making them more convenient for the general public.



Residential on-street

Residential charging hubs



On route

Destination

North East Transport Plan

Vision

"Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East"

The North East Transport Plan published in 2021 outlines our region's transport aspirations up to 2035. It seeks to improve the health, environment, and economy of the North East by tackling regional issues such as air pollution, carbon emissions, transport poverty and transport related social exclusion.

Transport Plan Objectives

- Carbon-neutral North East;
- Overcome inequality and grow our economy;
- Healthier North East;
- Appealing sustainable transport choices;
- Safe, secure network.

The North East Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy is a key commitment within the Transport Plan.

Aim and objectives

The aim of this strategy is to **deliver reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East, wherever people need it.** We hope to deliver an excellent public charging network throughout the region, including areas which are not commercially viable to help support petrol and diesel car/van drivers transition to ZEVs.

This aim reflects national Government ambition to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030 and will ensure there is sufficient infrastructure throughout the region to enable this change.

The next page shows the North East Transport Plan objectives and how the roll-out of further public charging facilities could help to achieve them:

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The Vision

‘Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East’

The Objectives

Carbon-neutral North East

Electric Vehicle uptake in the region to match or exceed national average

Overcome inequality and grow our economy

Charging facilities and fair tariffs for every community regardless of wealth or rurality

Healthier North East

Improving air quality. Charging locations encourage use of public transport (Park and Ride), active travel and culture/heritage

Appealing, sustainable transport choices

High quality and accessible chargepoints with reliable public information

Safe, secure network

Chargepoints in safe and secure locations for you and your vehicle

Strategy and key commitment statements

North East Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy

- **Infrastructure** key commitment statements
- **People** key commitment statements
- **Vehicle** key commitment statements

Scope of this strategy

The North East Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy follows many levels of national and regional strategy and policy with numerous additional key players, including the private sector and Northern Powergrid (NPG). This strategy aims to help tackle the challenges that are faced at a regional level (discussed within the “what are the challenges” chapter) during the transition to ZEVs, however combined efforts will be required from all stakeholders and key players to ensure we can deliver reliable public ZEV charging infrastructure across the region.

The strategy focuses on EV drivers that will rely on the publicly available infrastructure network in the region to charge their EV, and how we will ensure that an excellent charging network is delivered throughout the North East. Zero emission buses are included within the scope of the strategy but will mainly be addressed through the North East’s Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

Whilst the focus of this strategy is primarily public electric vehicle changepoints for cars and vans, this document touches upon other ZEV infrastructure such as Hydrogen refueling for larger vehicles and the delivery plan includes some ZEV innovation schemes. Private residential charging is out of scope; however, the delivery plan does include some publicly available residential on-street chargepoints.

Whilst we acknowledge that the cost of purchasing an EV can be prohibitive and prevent people from making the switch away from petrol/ diesel cars and vans, we have no levers in which to influence the cost of EVs. Therefore, the cost of vehicles is outside the scope of this strategy but is recognised as a current barrier to switching. We will however aim to raise awareness of this issue and highlight its impact on EV take up in the region.

This strategy sets out in more detail how we will support sustainable, low carbon travel throughout the region, including rural areas, making clean alternative fuels a realistic and attractive option for the North East.

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What is covered in this strategy?

- Public electric vehicle charging infrastructure delivered by the region on behalf of our partners. This will cover destination charging and on-route charging infrastructure.
- Battery electric vehicles and hydrogen vehicles.
- Hydrogen refuelling infrastructure.
- Promotional and marketing activities delivered by the region for people and businesses.
- Plug in hybrid vehicles are considered in the medium term as they will require infrastructure to charge them.
- Cars, small vans, HGVs, taxis and private hire vehicles and fleets making use of the public charging network.
- Shared mobility services such as electric car clubs and the effective integration of ZEV provision with the wider transport network, such as through the provision of chargepoints at Metro stations.
- Zero emission buses are included within the scope of the strategy but will mainly be addressed through the North East's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

What is not covered?

- On-street residential charging schemes will be delivered by local authorities. However, we will look to allocate a proportion of regional funding for ZEV infrastructure to areas of high-density housing without off street parking, areas with limited public transport provision and remote rural communities.
- Private residential charging infrastructure (such as home charging on a driveway).
- VOs (hydrotreated vegetable oil), CNG (compressed natural gas) and biodiesel, are not included in scope because, despite being cleaner alternatives with lower tailpipe emissions than their conventional counterparts, they are not zero emission vehicles.
- E-bikes, E-cargo bikes, and E-scooters are covered under the North East Active Travel Strategy.
- EV charging facilities for council fleets.
- Prohibitive costs of electric vehicles – influencing the cost of EVs is outside of our remit.

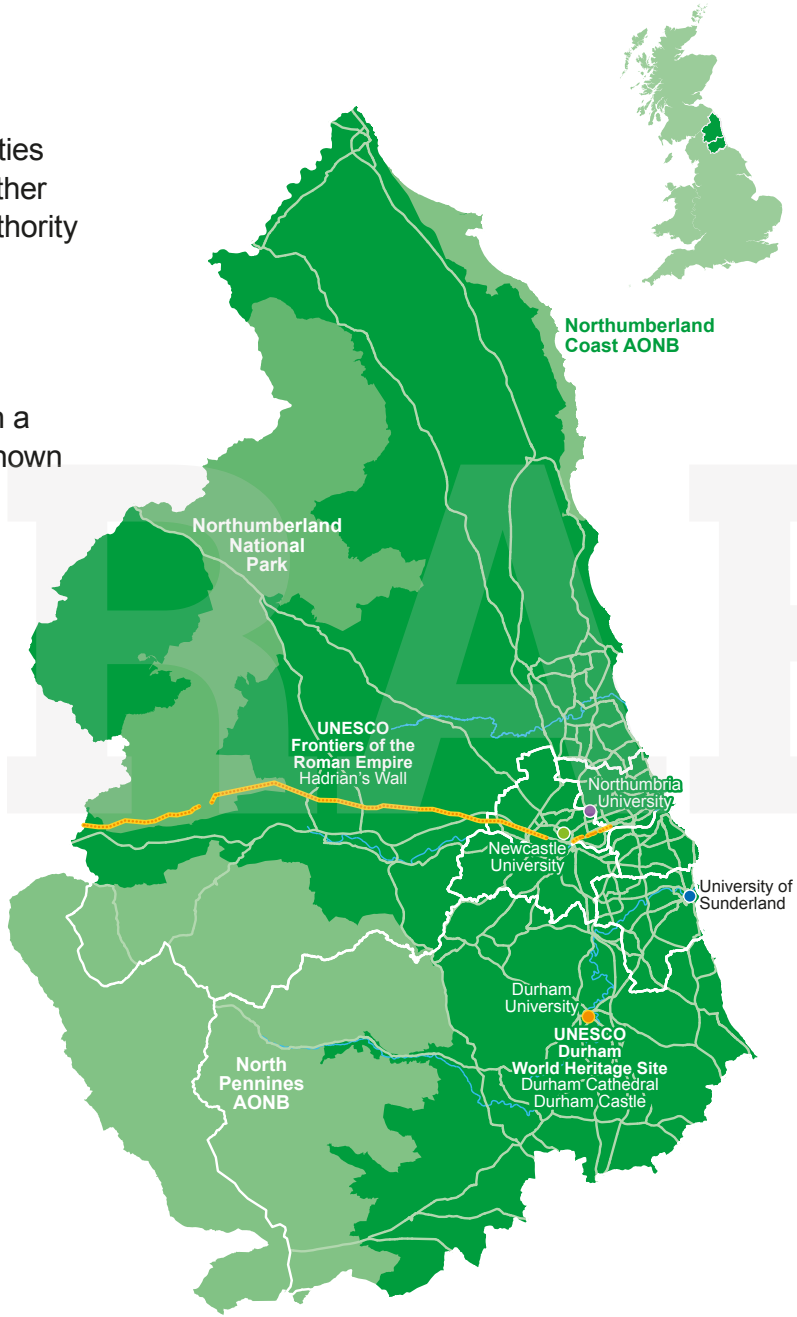
Area covered

The geographical area addressed by this strategy comprises the seven local authorities in the North East, soon to be brought together under a North East Mayoral Combined Authority (NEMCA).

Our region

North East England is a unique region with a rich history, stunning landscapes, and is known for its warm and welcoming communities.

The region is already leading the way with its green agenda and plans to boost the area's eco-credentials further could see residents and the transport authority making a substantial difference to the local environment and quality of life.



The North East region has pioneered a series of schemes with the aim of accelerating the uptake of ultra low emission cars and vans by both business operators and private car users. We are building upon initiatives such as the Plugged in Places Project which saw the installation of over 1,000 chargepoints in the North East, in order to make electric vehicles a practical and viable choice for many local motorists.

In recent years, our region has played a vital role in the manufacturing of electric vehicles as home to the Nissan plant in Sunderland, where the Nissan LEAF, one of the best selling electric vehicles globally, is manufactured. This has not only created employment opportunities but has also helped secure the North East region as a key player in the production of ZEVs.

As part of the UK's commitment to reducing carbon emissions, the North East has witnessed a significant increase in the availability of charging infrastructure and a growing number of public charging points can be found throughout the region. This strategy is needed to build on the strong progress made to date.

Policy context

National

Automated and Electric Vehicle Act 2018

The Automated and Electric Vehicles Act 2018 set out the regulatory framework to enable the deployment of world-class EV charging infrastructure across the UK.

Environment and Climate Emergency

The 2008 Climate Change Act sets out emission reduction targets that the UK must legally comply with. This was the first legally-binding climate change mitigation target set by a country. The Act committed the UK to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 80 per cent by 2050, compared to 1990 levels.

However, this was built upon in May 2019, with the UK being the first national government to declare that there is an environment and climate emergency,

The UK's 2050 net zero target legally requires the government to reduce the UK's net emissions of greenhouse gases by 100% relative to 1990 levels by 2050. Transport is the largest contributing sector to greenhouse gas emissions, representing around 27% of all UK greenhouse gas emissions in 2022.

Clean Air Strategy

The UK Government's 2019 Clean Air Strategy set out actions to reduce emissions of harmful air pollutants, including those emitted from vehicles. It noted significant improvements in air quality over recent decades, but cleaner transport will play a key role in reducing air pollution and meeting the government's objectives for the environment and public health. Transitioning to less polluting ZEVs and increasing charging capacity are identified as actions to support this.

Net Zero Strategy

In November 2020 the government announced a 2-step phase out of petrol and diesel cars. The first step is in 2030 with ban of the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles, and hybrid vehicles will follow by 2035.

By the time we reach 2030, the UK will need to have sufficient electric vehicle charging infrastructure in place to cope with the demands of electric vehicle charging. In line with this an initial £1.3 billion was announced in 2020 to accelerate the rollout of chargepoints for electric vehicles in homes, streets across the UK and on motorways across England.

To meet the overall net zero target, all transport emissions will need to be eliminated before 2050; as the average life of a vehicle in the UK is 14 years, phasing out of petrol and diesel engine vehicles should be achieved in advance of 2050. As part of the UK government's strategy to tackle transport emissions it published "*Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth*" in 2021 which brought forward the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel only engine cars and vans by 10 years, from 2040 to 2030. This also stipulated that all new cars and vans must be fully zero emission at the tailpipe from 2035.

Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate

The UK Government has pledged to deliver a ZEV mandate in 2024 to support the 2030 ban on new petrol and diesel car and van sales. The ZEV mandate requires manufacturers to ensure that an increasing proportion of the vehicles they sell are zero emission. Starting in 2024, manufacturers are required to ensure 22% of new car sales are zero emission vehicles. This percentage will then increase in significant leaps every year to 80% by 2030. The petrol and diesel van target trajectory will start at 10% in 2024, rising to 70% by 2030.

Policy context

Regional

Climate emergency declarations

Our two combined authorities and seven local authorities have all declared their own climate emergencies, introducing climate change plans and targets which centre around the need to reduce carbon emissions by at least 45%, with four of the authorities in the region committing to carbon neutrality by 2030.

Air quality management areas (AQMA)

In the North East seven air quality management areas (AQMA) have been declared where air pollution levels are likely to exceed the national air quality objectives. Local authorities with AQMAs must monitor air quality in these areas and devise a plan of action to ensure national targets are met in the future. Facilitating the uptake of ZEVs is highly likely to support better air quality in these areas.

North East ZEV policy (2022)

The policy forecasted the number of plug-in vehicles expected to be on the roads in the region and set out the levels of infrastructure which would be required to support future demand based on the UK government's Transport Decarbonisation plan growth scenarios and also taking into account a set of Future Travel Scenarios produced by Transport for the North.

The policy outlined initial proposals on how the region will complement private sector charging facilities, co-ordinate action with local authority charging initiatives and build a partnership with Northern Powergrid, assisting us to move towards a carbon-neutral North East.

A particular challenge the policy identified was the challenge of rolling out ZEV infrastructure to areas of high-density housing without off street parking and in remote rural communities, where there is unlikely to be a strong economic case for private sector investment.

The policy also set out set a series of visionary policy statements outlining the proposed direction for the region to follow to achieve where we want to be. These statements have been updated and expanded upon in this strategy in the form of key commitment statements.

This strategy directly flows from the policy document and further develops the work carried out in the policy and will sets out a costed pipeline of schemes focused on supporting the transition to ZEVs.

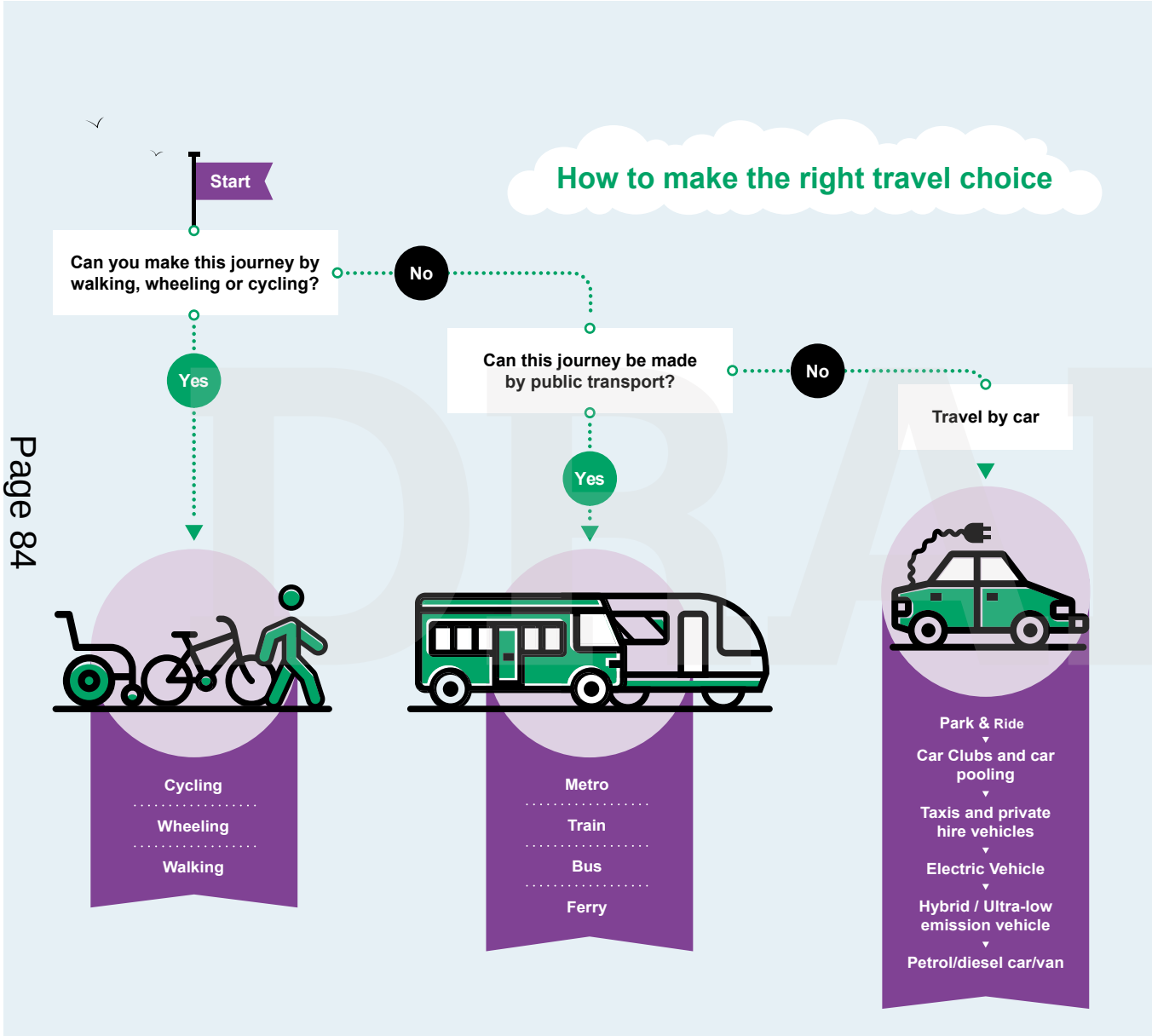


Figure 2: Making the right travel choice – decision tree

Making the right travel choice

As we decarbonise transport, making cars and vans zero emission is part of the solution, but relying solely on zero emission road vehicles isn't enough. The lead policy of the North East Transport Plan is 'helping people to make the right travel choice'. The 'decision tree' (as shown to the left) has been developed to help people consider their travel options when they need to make a journey. The decision tree helps people to consider whether the journey they are planning to make can be made by sustainable transport instead of by car/van.

If car users switched one journey a week to public transport, walking or cycling and people who don't have access to a car continue to travel sustainably this could potentially save around 214,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions a year, helping to reduce poor health caused by road traffic emissions.

Whilst we aim to encourage the use of walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport, we recognise that for a lot of journeys travelling by car or van might be the only option for certain journeys and personal circumstances and we'd like a ZEV to be used for these journeys.

December 2022 – North East devolution deal

A new devolution deal for the North East has been agreed that will see the allocation of significant new funding and powers to the region from May 2024. In total, the deal is expected to provide £4.2 billion of additional investment in to the region over 30 years, including a £1.4 billion investment fund alongside significant funding for transport, education and skills, housing and regeneration.

The deal would involve the creation of a new mayoral combined authority covering County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland, and is projected to create 24,000 additional jobs in the area and unlock £5 billion of additional private sector investment into the region.

In respect of commitments to ZEV infrastructure, the devolution deal text states:

The North East has ambitious plans to introduce a region-wide electric vehicle charging network and has recently introduced a Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) policy, an outline of the region's aim to lead the country in boosting the up-take of electric vehicles by developing and expanding charging facilities. The government recognises the aspirations of the North East Mayoral Combined Authority to improve public electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the region, which would increase the uptake of electric vehicles in the region and reduce carbon emissions by supporting all motorists in making the switch. Government is introducing a new £450 million local electric vehicle infrastructure (LEVI) scheme for local authorities to support local EV infrastructure delivery and will work with the North East Mayoral Combined Authority to ensure the area is well placed to respond once funding arrangements are announced.

Policy context

Local

Each of our seven local authorities is delivering plans to decarbonise transport emissions in their area by working towards, or having already produced a Zero Emission Vehicle or Electric Vehicle strategy for their local patch.

Clean air strategies have been incorporated in certain parts of the region including in Newcastle and Gateshead where a clean air zone (CAZ) has been introduced to help improve air quality by taking targeted action on high-polluting vehicles.

Nexus, which operates the Metro, the Shields Ferry and supporting bus services across Tyne and Wear are enabling further transport decarbonisation by aiming for ambitious reductions in greenhouse gas emissions whilst building a more resilient, reliable public transport network. In addition to this, it published an Environment and Sustainability Strategy in 2022.

Our local authorities are all working towards a reliable network provision for EV charging with plans to install more chargepoints. This strategy will complement the work being undertaken at a local authority level in delivering ZEV charging infrastructure to help us move the region to a greener and healthier future.

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Introduction and context – chapter summary

The delivery of a North East ZEV strategy will ensure a consistent approach to delivering reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East and helps achieve our Transport Plan vision and objectives by tackling the region's climate emergency, reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality. The transition to ZEVs could also help to address transport poverty and transport related social exclusion. The strategy will also assist with the government's target to phase out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars/vans by 2030 and hybrid vehicles from 2035.

This strategy will provide insight into planning and delivering a ZEV infrastructure network for people who live, work, and visit the North East by ensuring that all future public ZEV infrastructure projects:

- Support both urban, suburban, and rural areas of our region;
- A data-led approach to help address competing pressures;
- Are sustainable and well maintained;
- Meet current and future legislative requirements;
- Plug the gap between public chargepoints installed by the private sector and home charging facilities – supporting local authority infrastructure plans and ensuring charging infrastructure is provided in areas that are not covered by commercial operators;
- Support all users, including those with disabilities whether visible or hidden, and restricted mobility;
- Are actively promoted, highlighting the benefits to the region, such as reduced CO2 emissions and improved air quality through the complete removal of localised and toxic tailpipe emissions.

Where we are now?

Current ZEV infrastructure and vehicles in the North East

The North East is at the forefront of the ZEV agenda and is home to the Nissan LEAF, one of the world's first electric vehicles, the UK's first rapid filling station and research and design (R&D) centres working to identify alternative fuel sources.

It is important to note that the figures presented in this chapter includes publicly available chargepoints that have been delivered by both the private and public sectors. The North East is seeing increasing investment from private chargepoint operators.

To get an overall view of the current position of the region, this chapter focuses on two main areas: the current regional charging infrastructure and the size and make-up of the current ZEV fleet in the North East as of mid-2023.

Infrastructure

As of May 2023, there were approximately 850 publicly accessible charging points in the North East, delivered by both the public and private sectors. offering a range of different charging speeds ranging from 3.7kW to >50kW.

Local authority	Total devices	% of region	per 100k people
County Durham	222	26.2%	42.5
Gateshead	115	13.6%	58.6
Newcastle	114	13.5%	38.0
North Tyneside	50	5.9%	23.9
Northumberland	186	22.0%	58.0
South Tyneside	55	6.5%	37.2
Sunderland	104	12.3%	37.9

Table 2: Locations and number of publicly accessible charging points in the North East May 2023 (totals include both public and private sector chargepoints)

Table 2 above sets out the locations and number of publicly accessible charging points in the North East as of May 2023.

There are various options for charging an electric vehicle from slow to ultra-rapid and the most suitable solution will depend on the needs of the user. Ultra-rapid chargers are the fastest way to charge an electric vehicle (EV) and take a fraction of the time a slow or fast charger would take. However, the rate of which EVs are able to charge is ultimately dependent on the vehicle model. As a result, not all EVs on today's market are able to charge at 100-150kW.

EV charging is in the early adopter stage of market development and can be considered to be a relatively immature market. As yet, there is no one standard set of definitions for the description of charging type specifications. However, Table 3 below summarises current definitions from the Energy Savings Trust.

Energy Savings Trust	Low Speed	Standard	Fast	Rapid	Ultra Rapid
	<3.7kW	3 7kW to 8kW	8kW to 50kW	50kW to 150kW	150kW+
Public Charge Point Regulations 2023				Rapid	
	= 8kW		8kW to 50kW	50kW+	

Table 3: EV charging speed definitions

The UK government published Public Charge Point Regulations 2023 with the below definitions. In this strategy we have used the definitions from the Energy Savings Trust, which we also used in our Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding bid.

Approximately two thirds of the public chargepoints in the North East are *Fast* (defined as 8kW-50kW). On average, fast chargers in the region are situated 1.89km apart, but the gap can be up to 21.5km in some of our more rural areas. The vast majority of other chargepoints are *Rapid* or *Ultra-Rapid*, offering greater opportunities for a quick top-up at the edge of urban centres, along motorway services and in more rural locations. The average distance between rapid chargers is 2.77km but with some up to a maximum of 27.4km.

Map key:

- North East LA7 area
- SOSCI Chargepoints to be Installed
- 3kW
- 22-25kW
- 7kW
- 43-175kW
- Priority Blueprint Sites (being installed)
- Remaining Blueprint Sites (Identified)

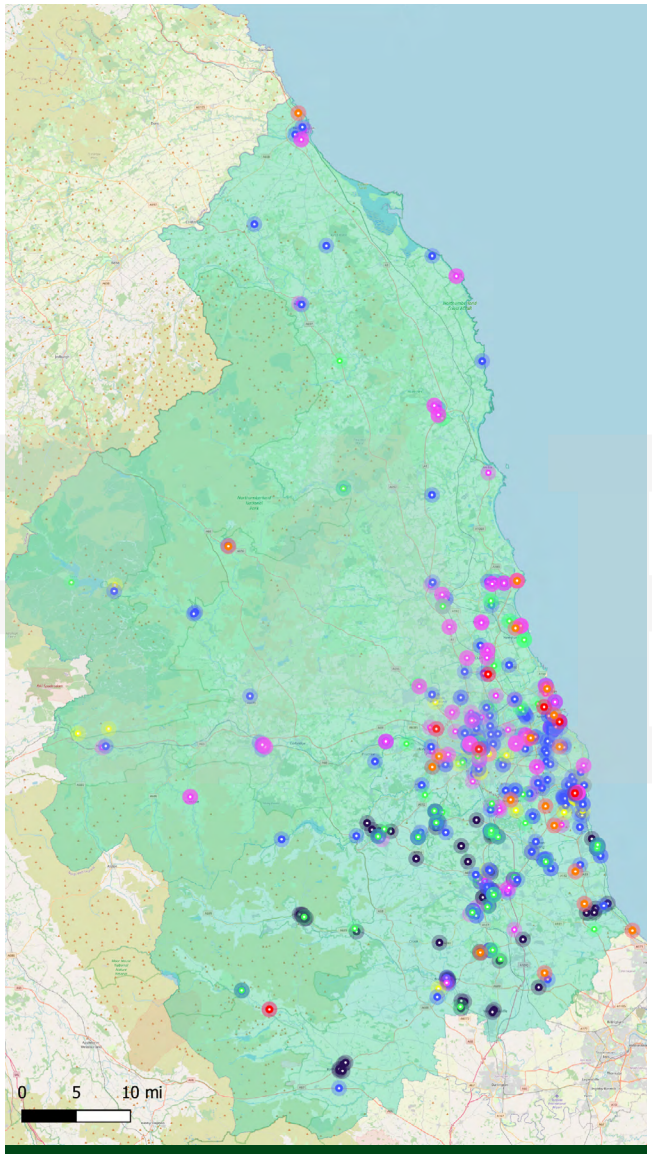

Figure 3: Existing and planned public EV charge point infrastructure across the North East (LA7 area)

Whilst EV charging infrastructure is situated in both urban and rural areas across the North East, around 75% of chargepoints are found in urban locations, with much of the infrastructure also in areas of higher population density (see Figures 4 and 5). Some of this infrastructure is located at public transport interchanges and stations, enabling ZEV trips to form a part of a wider sustainable journey. For example, there are charging points at 5 Metro stations (Jarrow, Kingston Park, Heworth, Northumberland Park and Stadium of Light), 2 local railway stations (Haltwhistle and Morpeth) and 1 park and ride site (Great Park). These publicly available chargepoints have been provided by both private and public sectors.

Location category	Devices	% of devices	Locations	% of locations
Council car park / on-street	354	42%	197	49%
Retail sites	230	27%	99	25%
Service stations	46	5%	17	4%
Hotel	44	5%	20	5%
NHS/ Hospital	103	12%	30	7%
Other	69	8%	40	10%

Table 4: Location categories of public chargepoints in the North East May 2023

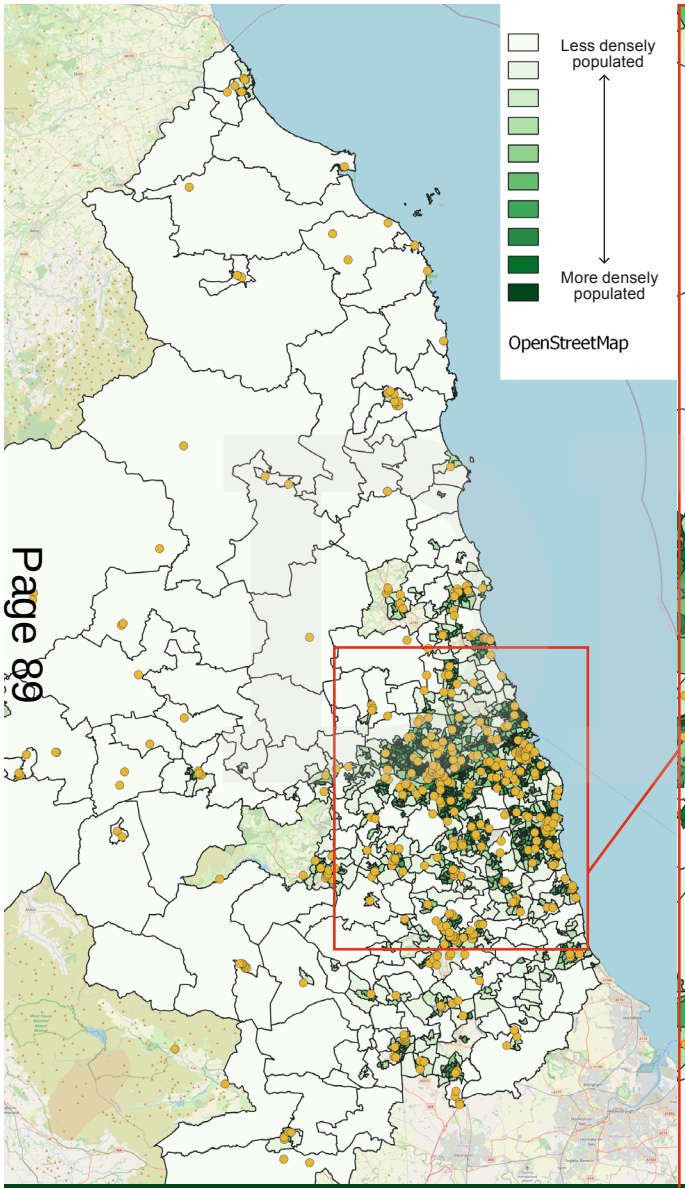

Figure 4: Chargepoints and Population Density

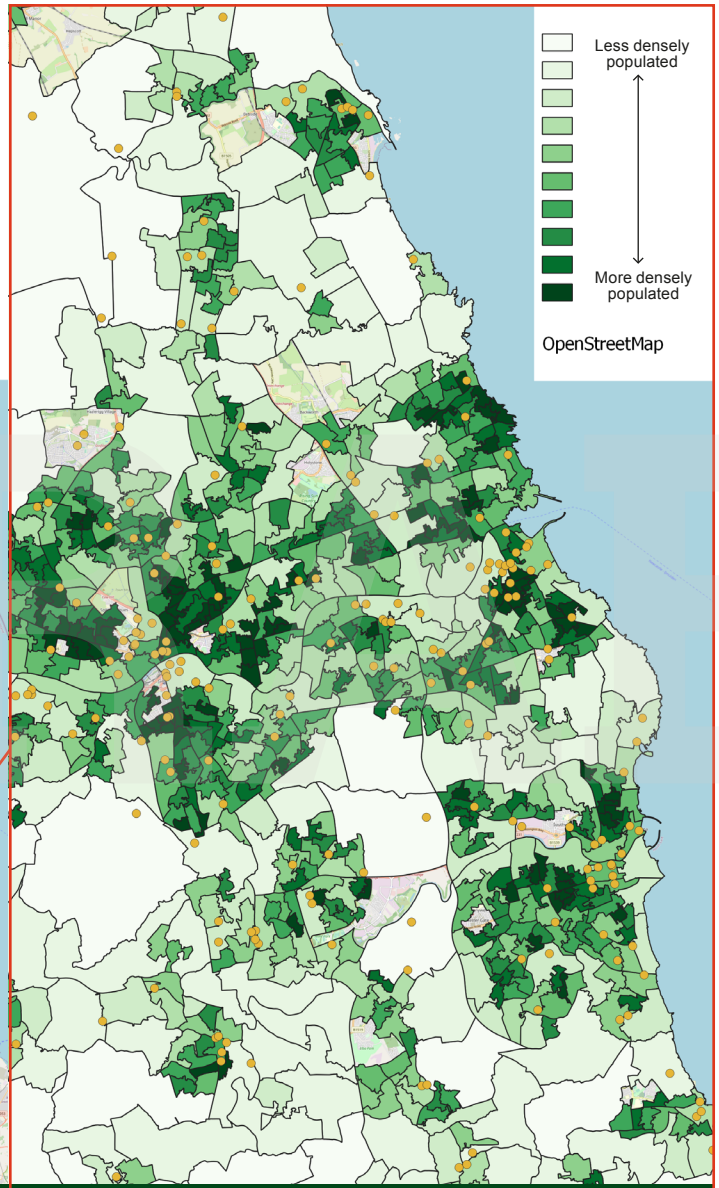

Figure 5: Chargepoints and Population Density, focus on Tyne and Wear

While there is a diverse range of chargers in use across the region and demand continues to grow; some of the region's public network hosted by local authorities are now relatively old, with a significant proportion of these chargers installed as early as 2011. As a result of the end of maintenance agreements and warranty periods, users across the region may discover that many of these chargers are either faulty or out of use with 42% of those surveyed as part of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area EV Charging Behaviour study in 2020 stating that the chargepoint they tried to use was sometimes not working. This can have an impact on confidence in infrastructure, which may have a knock-on impact on the uptake of ZEVs if not resolved. There is currently a lack of information on chargepoint reliability and this has been identified as a problem for EV drivers. This is discussed in the next chapter – **What are the challenges?**

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Projects

The North East has achieved significant success in the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure since the 2009 'Plugged in Places' programme was launched. We are experienced in bidding for ZEV infrastructure funding and delivering associated charging infrastructure.

Other examples of our region's strong track record in winning and managing ZEV funding are:

- **Funded by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to a value of £3 million, the Go Ultra Low North East (GULNE) programme has delivered the UK's first electric vehicle filling station and 11 new rapid charging hubs across the region since 2016 to support the increasing uptake of ZEVs.**
- **The region has also secured additional funding from OZEV of £500,000 to install rapid electric chargepoints for taxis and private hire vehicles at 10 locations across the North East. These are currently being installed, with eight of the chargers now in operation.**
- **The North East region has also been successful in bidding for £19.5 million from the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2 to boost transport decarbonisation. This funding will deliver a fleet of 52 electric buses and 92 electric vehicle chargers, including 26 rapid chargers at 36 different sites across the region.**
- **The region has secured funding of £349,580 from the LGF (Local Growth Fund). This will enable the installation of 7 EV chargepoints, one in each of our local authority areas. The chargepoints installed will be rapid charging over 50kwh.**
- **The LEVI (Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) funding is the largest amount of funding announced from the Department for Transport to date. The North East has an indicative allocation of £15.8 million to build capability to support local authorities to plan and deliver chargepoint infrastructure for residents without off street parking.**
- **North East Local Authorities have benefited from the government's On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) to increase the availability of on-street chargepoints in residential streets where off-street parking is not available.**
- **In 2022, South Tyneside Council became part of a world Vehicle to Grid (VG2) trial. V2G enables electricity from chargepoints to be sold back to the National Grid, to help alleviate pressure on it.**

Vehicles

ZEV uptake in the region has grown significantly in the last few years (see right, figure 6).

There are approximately 8,900 ZEVs licensed in the North East. This is around 0.9% of all vehicles in the region, which is below the figure for other regions in the North and the national average (see figure 7 on the following page). There are approximately 6,080 plug-in cars and vans privately licensed in the North East, with around a further 2,770 battery electric and range extended electric cars and vans licensed to company keepers. This is more than double the number of both company and private vehicles since mid-2021.

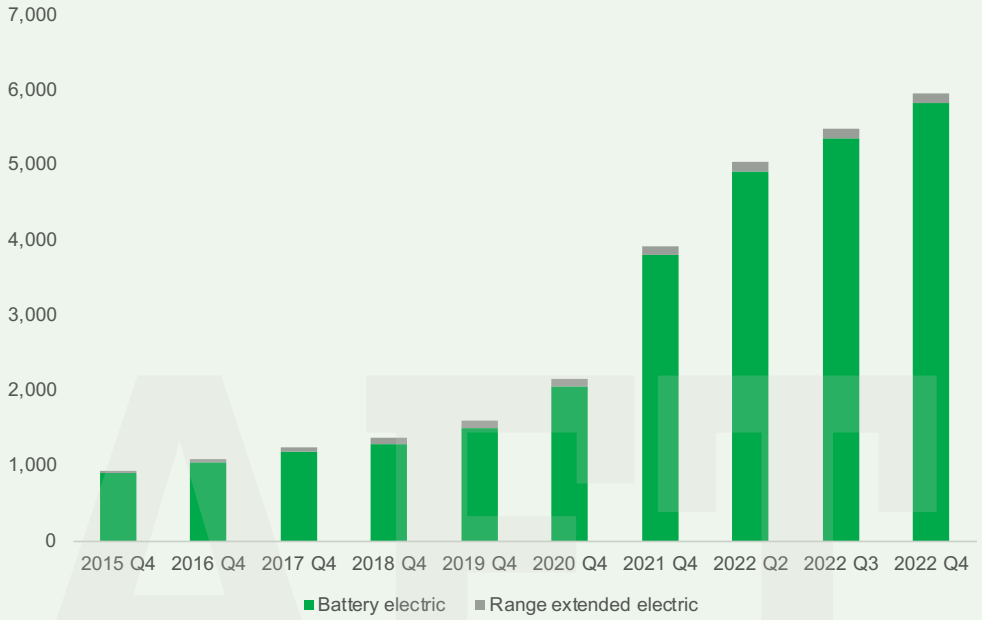

Figure 6: Growth of private Battery Electric Vehicle numbers in the North East (2015-2022)

LA7 (Total – all fuel types)	2022 Q4	% of EV fleet
Buses and Coaches	21	0.2%
Cars	12815	95%
HGV	10	0.1%
LGV	524	4%
Motorcycles	141	1%
Other Vehicles	5	0.0%
Total	**13516**	**100%**

Table 5: Makeup of the EV fleet

The region has seen the introduction of several shared electric car club vehicles for both public use and as corporate pool vehicles. New shared mobility solutions are being introduced providing users with the option of using either a bus or a car club vehicle to best suit their needs. In more remote rural areas such as large parts of Northumberland and Durham, where walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport are not always practical transport options, car clubs can provide a practical and cost-effective alternative to car ownership, especially for residents on low incomes, reducing overall car use whilst offering access to a car for longer journeys. The provision of a ZEV further enhances the environmental advantages of such schemes.

To date there are still limited ZEV options available to users of larger vans, freight heavy goods vehicles and specialist vehicles. Each sector is currently at different stages in their transition to zero emission vehicles due to the various logistical challenges for each vehicle type.

As of December 2022, there were 10 battery electric licensed heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) registered in the North East. However, the industry is still dominated by diesel, with over 11,500 such vehicles in the region.

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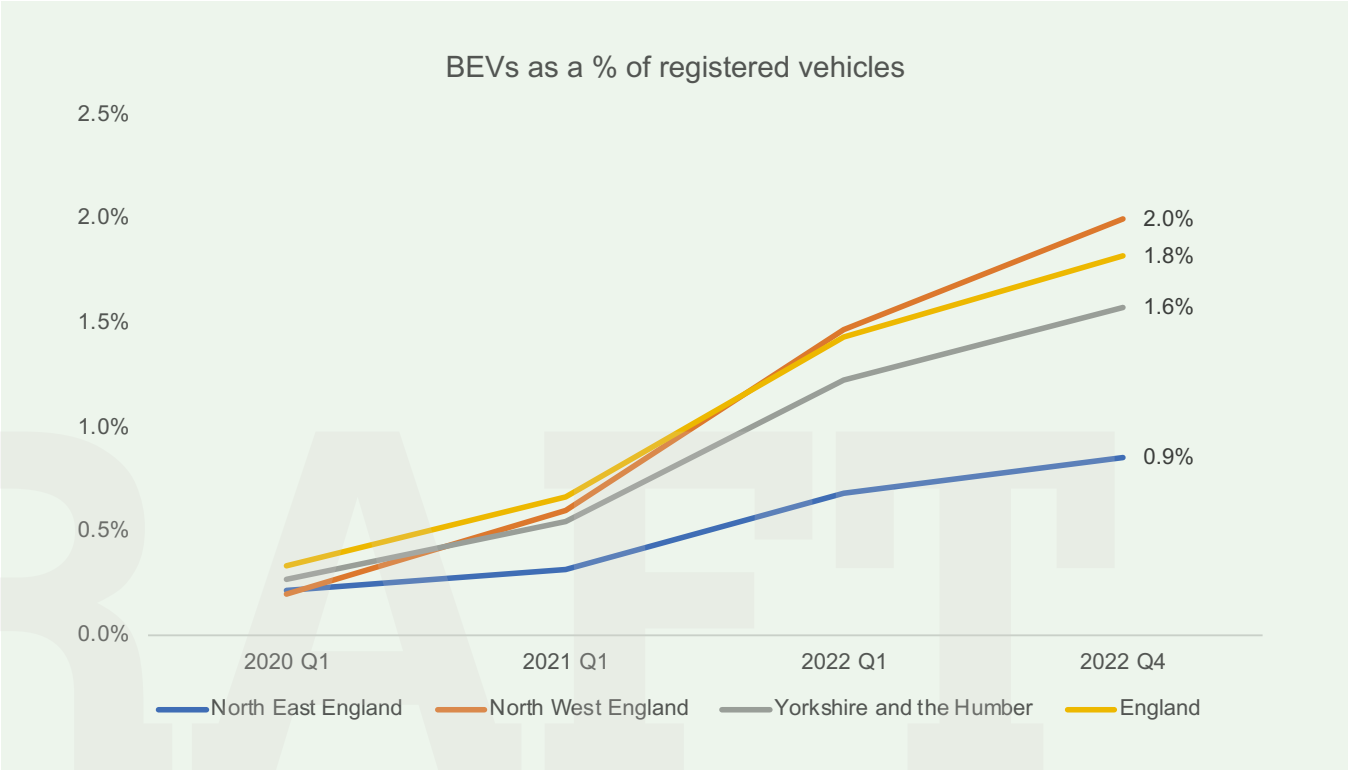

Figure 7: Battery Electric Vehicles as a percentage of regional vehicles (2020-2022)

Buses

The regional Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) published in October 2021 and refreshed in October 2022, outlined a commitment for all buses in the region to be either zero emission or the highest emission standard for conventional buses by March 2025. In April 2023, over 60% of the fleet in the North East meets the Euro 6 standard.

The region's three major bus operators (Arriva, Go North East, Stagecoach) are working towards lowering emissions from their fleets with considerable investment in new, modern low emission vehicles over the last decade and 52 more battery-electric buses are to enter service in North East England. It comes after the region was awarded a £19.5 million grant through the government's Levelling Up Fund as outlined earlier in this chapter.

In 2020, Go North East invested £3.7 million in new fully electric zero emission buses, which were partly funded by the Ultra-Low Emission Bus Scheme (ULEBS). Branded Voltra, the buses are powered by electricity that is sourced from zero emission supplies such as solar, wind and hydro. They operate services 53 and 54 between Newcastle, Gateshead, Bensham and Saltwell Park.

The fleet of 9 vehicles are capable of an all-day service from the power of one overnight charge. Go North East have subsequently purchased 9 more Voltra buses that run the Q3 service between Great Park and Wallsend. The Voltra buses run out of a new electric bus depot in Gateshead.

Source: Go North East – 'Voltra' electric bus – January 2023

Where are we now? – chapter summary

This chapter has laid out where we are now regarding charging infrastructure and the uptake of EVs in our region. The North East has an excellent record in the delivery of significant electric vehicle infrastructure projects that have a strong positive impact for our region, and we are continuing to seek funding to install additional infrastructure that will support the transition to ZEVs. This transition will impact all vehicle types and whilst significant progress has been made in the region, the numbers of ZEVs in the North East are still relatively low. The next chapter will focus on the challenges which need to be overcome in order to grow the uptake of ZEVs.

What are the challenges?

We have identified key challenges which we will need to help address in order to support the uptake of zero emission vehicles whilst developing and expanding the public charging network.

Although the North East is making steady progress with infrastructure expansion and take up of ZEVs, as shown within chapter 2 - *Where are we now*, the region must work to tackle the identified barriers to ZEV take up and the roll-out of public charge point infrastructure which include range anxiety, chargepoint coverage, the perceived reliability of infrastructure and the cost of electric vehicles.

It is our belief that, by delivering a comprehensive and inclusive public infrastructure network offer, together with clear positive messaging, we can support people and businesses to switch from petrol and diesel cars or vans to ZEVs. We have therefore structured this strategy on the below approach:

Excellent Infrastructure

+

Well Informed People

=

Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles

The findings from recent studies and surveys, as listed below, have helped us to better understand perceptions and barriers for local businesses and residents in making the transition to ZEVs. These sources provide reassurance that by developing and expanding the public EV charging network, together with up-to-date information and regular monitoring and maintenance, we will be able to support drivers make the switch to ZEVs.

Research studies

Regional:

- North East ZEV Infrastructure Delivery Model Research (2023)
- Making The Right Travel Choice: Research with North East residents and employers (2022)
- North East Transport Plan public consultation (2020/21)
- North East LEP area EV Charging Behaviour study (2020)
- North East Fleet Revolution (business-focused) (2020)
- Nexus Insight Panel: Electric vehicles (2019)

National:

- Department for Transport: Electric Vehicle Drivers: Attitudes and Behaviours (2022)
- Department for Transport: Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (2022)

The samples of these studies and surveys are not intended to be representative of the North East as a region but can be read as useful indicators.

Research findings have identified the following challenges and barriers which we will need to help overcome in order to support the transition to Zero Emission Vehicles:

Infrastructure

- Accessibility and availability of public charging infrastructure
- Reliability of current publicly available chargepoints
- Inclusive infrastructure and ease of use
- Having suitable power supply to meet demand

People

- Range anxiety
- Perceived and actual gaps in the charging network
- Provision of information
- Cost of public charging tariffs
- Perceived complex payment process

Vehicles

- Prohibitive cost of Electric Vehicles
- Challenges around the development and use of other ZEVs and alternative fuels

We must work towards tackling these challenges in order to ensure excellent infrastructure and well informed people in our region, which we hope will result in increased take up of zero emission vehicles.

Although the cost of electric vehicles is outside of our remit, research suggests that it is a current barrier to adoption.

Infrastructure

Accessibility and availability of charging infrastructure

The accessibility of charging infrastructure is frequently raised by consumers as a key consideration when choosing an electric vehicle. Public chargepoints that are readily available, easy to access, and reliable are pivotal for our region's continued transition to zero emission vehicles and tackling the below challenges will help us to achieve **Excellent Infrastructure**.

Concerns over access to current charging infrastructure was a common topic raised by research participants. Businesses and residents also said they felt that additional infrastructure was required to support EV usage.

"How are we expected to make the switch with a chronic lack of infrastructure and investment?"

87.69% agreed that more public chargepoints were needed in their local area.

North East LEP EV Charging Behaviour Study (2020)

"I think it's probably quite costly in terms of ensuring that there are enough electric car charging ports – which there are barely any where I am."

Lives in city / town in the North East

Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy – Resident research (2022)

A significant proportion of future ZEV owners in the North East will not have access to off-street private parking and will be reliant on public EV charging infrastructure. For example, 40% of housing in County Durham does not have a driveway or garage, and on average 47% of current terraced streets and flats in the North East are unlikely to have private parking facilities.

These drivers may not be able to benefit from residential charging and will therefore need to rely on the public EV charging network.

A third of EV drivers who took part in the North East EV Charging Behaviour Study (2020) stated they were reliant on access to public EV charging infrastructure, with the remainder using it to top-up between home charging. This highlights the increased importance of public EV charging across the region to support the switch to ZEVs.

"I can't actually get my car anywhere near my house. Because we have a communal car park for probably around 50 houses, which are all terraced houses. So even if I wanted to buy an electric car (EV) I couldn't, because I have no means of charging it."

Making The Right Travel Choice Strategy – Resident research (2022)

"Living in a terraced street with no private parking I do not see how an electric car could work."

North East LEP EV Charging Behaviour Study (2020)

Residents have indicated that they believe public charging provision at employment locations is also something which needs to be improved. 40% of those who responded to the North East EV Charging Behaviour Study stated that additional chargepoints at places of work was in their top two preferences for additional charging infrastructure. There was also agreement that additional on-route chargepoints, such as on busy roads and motorways, was a high priority with over half stating this was one of their top two preferences for future charging hubs. This further highlights concerns over insufficient access to public charging infrastructure in our region.

Some EV drivers require the opportunity to charge their vehicles around their usual daily activities, rather than at home. A national study by the Department for Transport (DfT) found that the most frequently used charging locations were at places of work, education and business/organisation car parks such as supermarkets and shopping centres, with 3 in 10 EV drivers using these locations to charge their EV at least once per week. The study also found that 74% of respondents have used a public charger within a business/organisation car park at some point, followed closely by service station/EV charging hub at 69%.

"Encourage charging stations at large workspaces and public buildings as this will be hugely beneficial."

North East Transport Plan public consultation response (2020/21)

The evidence base suggests that the level of concern around accessibility of EV charging infrastructure fluctuates depending on where people live or work in the region. This is a particular concern in our rural areas, which tend to have lower levels of public charging infrastructure. Some of our rural residents have told us that they want to switch to an EV but feel that they are unable to do so due to a lack of local charging infrastructure in their community. Respondents have also told us that they believe there is lack of charging infrastructure in rural areas of the region, particularly in Northumberland, which is affecting both residents and visitors to the region.

"The private sector isn't going to put them in some rural village in Northumberland, so someone has to fill the gaps."

North East LEP area EV Charging Behaviour study (2020)

"As I don't have off street parking at home, I'm not sure how I would be able to charge an electric car, therefore I would need there to be more public chargepoints in my area."

North East LEP area EV Charging Behaviour Study (2020)

Public chargepoint availability, whether perceived or actual, is a challenge which will need to be overcome. In some cases, there is a perceived lack of confidence in using the public charging network due to not being able to rely on a charger being available when a driver arrives. This has been a highlighted issue amongst current EV drivers in the North East with 62% of responses to a local study stating they "sometimes" found the chargepoint they intended on using was already occupied, and 24% stated that this "usually" happened. 87% of respondents were in agreement that additional public chargepoints were needed in their local area to meet demand, as they had doubts about there being sufficient infrastructure available to support their switch to a ZEV.

62% of potential EV drivers were put off buying an EV for their next car due to poor chargepoint availability.

North East LEP area Charging Behaviour Study (2020)

"The charging points are always busy, which can again be a barrier."

Large business, South Tyneside

Making The Right Travel Choice Strategy – Employer research (2022)

Reliability of current publicly available chargepoints

The perceived or actual unreliability of some public electric vehicle chargepoints has been raised as a concern for many current EV drivers. Older charging infrastructure can suffer from maintenance issues and occasional technical glitches. This has led to instances where drivers encounter unavailable or malfunctioning chargepoints, hindering their journey plans and causing frustration.

The North East Charging Behaviour Study (2020) highlighted that a large proportion of EV drivers found that a chargepoint they intended on using was non-operational when they arrived, and 40% claimed this "usually" happened.

If more people are to make the switch to ZEVs then they need confidence that the charging infrastructure will be maintained and operational. 2020 research found that satisfaction levels with the current North East charging network is fairly low, receiving an average rating of 3 out of 10, reflecting the current issue with poor chargepoint maintenance and slow repairs (North East EV Charging Behaviour Study). Local residents who took part in the study stated that they were unable to rely on the current public chargepoint network when making journeys in their EVs as there are too many chargepoints that are out of service, and they may end up running out of charge before getting home.

"The thing that is most frustrating about using an electric car is that hardly any rapid chargers in the region actually work. The network isn't reliable enough to drive somewhere without having at least enough battery left to get back home."

North East LEP area EV Charging Behaviour study (2020)

"Drivers cited needing more chargers, but they also felt strongly that the current estate needed better maintenance and quicker repairs, commenting that this had a detrimental effect on their satisfaction levels."

North East LEP area EV Charging Behaviour study (2020)

Inclusive infrastructure and ease of use

The layout and space surrounding public chargepoints has been highlighted as an issue for some drivers with restricted mobility. A disabled driver investigation user trial, carried out in County Durham, found that overall scores on experience were positive for those with mobility issues using charging infrastructure, with an average rating of 3.8 out of 5. However, it was found that 1 disabled user from the 13 that took part was unable to complete the tasks that were needed to charge an EV. Many participants also commented on difficulties when reading the information that was displayed on chargepoint screens as they had to bend to be able to read it, highlighting that this could cause falls for those with restricted mobility.

Bollard positioning was also a highlighted issue that was causing problems for some wheelchair users as they had issues reaching the chargepoint. Overcoming accessibility challenges for people with visible or hidden disabilities is crucial to promote inclusivity.

Chargepoint operators who engaged with our recent ZEV Infrastructure Delivery Model Research mentioned that accessibility issues are a particular concern, as additional land is often needed to make public EV charging infrastructure accessible for disabled users. Some chargepoint operators claimed that some landowners are not always willing to give up another bay under the same contractual conditions.

"Manual dexterity issues are a problem and bollards prevented close approach to get the plug inserted."

Scaling on Street Charging Infrastructure Project – Disabled Driver Investigations User Trial Report (2021)

"I'm disabled so getting out and trying to plug in an EV would be a trip hazard for me".

Department for Transport: Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (2022)

Having suitable power supply to meet demand

Future charging sites may not have the required power capacity to support the expansion of EV charging infrastructure. As EV take up grows there will be increased strain on the power grid to handle the electricity demand that is needed for drivers to charge their EVs. Identifying suitable sites which can utilise existing connections that have the capacity to support charging infrastructure which could be challenging, in some cases there may be a need for new connections to the grid which would be costly and require thorough planning and combined efforts to ensure infrastructure can be rolled out efficiently.

People

Range anxiety

Range anxiety is frequently referenced as a barrier to the take up of EVs with respondents telling us that they have concerns that they would run out of charge during a journey and not be able to recharge their vehicle. As well as sufficient infrastructure, it is important that we provide clear and accurate information that is easily accessible to help tackle range anxiety challenges. This will help us achieve **Well Informed People**.

Responses to the North East Charging Behaviour Study showed that limited range was amongst drivers' top reasons for not making the switch to a ZEV, with half of responses stating it was a major barrier. Interestingly, despite these concerns, 77% agreed that they could use an EV for most of their daily journeys.

There is some research to suggest current drivers would be reluctant to use their EVs for long distance journeys on unfamiliar routes due to uncertainties regarding where the next available chargepoint will be. A national study into EV behaviours found that 83% of drivers use their EV for short local trips, whereas only 19% were willing to use it for long distance journeys on unfamiliar routes due to range anxiety.

"It would be considerably more difficult, constantly having to think about 'where is the next charging point?' and having to add time into the journey and my plans."

Non-EV driver, Urban

Department for Transport: Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (2022)

"As my parents live a 400-mile trip away, until range gets up there, electric cars are not an option."

North East LEP area EV Charging Behaviour study (2020)

Despite average daily mileage being well within the range of an electric car, drivers throughout the region found some comfort in the reassurance of frequent public charging opportunities on their usual routes. Local research shows that the majority (41%) charge their car a few times each week, 27% reported charging most days and a further 25% said they charged every day.

Perceived and actual gaps in the charging network

A challenge which will need to be overcome is ensuring that chargepoint operators can provide EV chargers in locations where there may be limited commercial incentive. This can be seen through the fact that 80% of chargers are in heavily populated urban locations and reduced levels of infrastructure in more rural areas of the region which may have reduced demand. These gaps are adding to range anxiety amongst drivers throughout the region due to the limitations on charging opportunities.

There are also current issues with securing public EV charging sites at urban locations. This is due to the scarcity of suitable land in these locations, as they are often already heavily built up. There is also the need to obtain planning approval to install infrastructure which can be a lengthy and complex process.

Research shows that some EV drivers want to be able to access chargepoints on their usual routes so that extensive planning is not required to make a journey and they are not at risk of running out of charge.

"Having to plan in advance when and where to charge... That goes closely with fitting charging into a busy routine. I'd literally have to leave my car and get a cab."

Non-EV driver, Urban

Department for Transport research: Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (2022)

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Range anxiety is also a major concern amongst some businesses, with approximately 80% of those who engaged in the 2020 Fleet Revolution programme stating this to be one of the key barriers to incorporating ZEVs within their fleet.

Provision of information

There is a lack of awareness on EVs, including range capabilities and the infrastructure that is available in the region. There is a need to change public perceptions that there are no chargers in their area through education and promotion of the regional public EV charging estate. The North East EV charging behaviour study asked drivers to rank their knowledge and awareness on EVs and found that the most common response was 5 out of 10, with 51% choosing 5 or below (1 being no knowledge and 10 being first-hand experience).

A similar study undertaken in the midlands found the most common response to be 8 out of 10. This indicates that there is scope for improvement on the awareness of EVs, in regard to both the infrastructure that is available and the range that EVs are capable of.

"After the cost of those vehicles (EVs), the next biggest barrier to me and anyone I speak to is lack of knowledge. Where will I charge it? How easy is it to do?"

North East LEP area EV Charging Behaviour Study

The lack of data (including its accuracy) around public EV chargepoints such as status, type, levels of use, and queue times is resulting in limitations on the level of up-to-date information available to the public, via apps or promotional campaigns. For example, we found that a popular chargepoint mapping tool which is available to the public only covered 84% of the actual regional chargepoints (NE Delivery Model Research, 2023) and there is no distinction between slow, fast, and rapid chargers at present, including if the site is operational or in use by another driver. This can cause issues for EV drivers who are trying to plan their journey in advance and are relying on a chargepoint to reach their destination.

Cost of public charging tariffs

The unique geography of the North East region with urban, suburban, and rural communities means that there is currently some variation on chargepoint tariffs. Publicly available chargepoint tariffs are decided upon by chargepoint operators. Operators use tariffs to create revenue to cover maintenance and energy costs and to support faster turnaround times at busier chargepoints. Tariff inconsistencies and perceptions of high charging costs could hinder the transition to ZEVs. For example, public chargepoints that are situated in areas which aren't usually commercially viable could be perceived as operators charging EV drivers at a premium to help make up for reduced revenue. Overcoming this challenge is crucial for promoting the switch from petrol and diesel cars and vans to ZEVs.

People have told us they expect to pay to charge a vehicle with 100% of responses to the North East EV Charging Behaviour Study (comprising both current and non-EV drivers) stating that it was right that some payment be introduced and 25% saying that they would much rather pay for a service that they knew was well maintained, reliable and working when they needed to use it. However, failing to offer a suitable charging tariff could potentially deter some drivers from switching to electric vehicles public chargepoints.

Perceived complex payment process

The complexity of payment methods at some public chargepoints has been highlighted by EV drivers as a barrier to using public charging infrastructure. Some current EV drivers respondents highlighted confusion with current payment methods. Uncertainty could be hindering further adoption and take up. For example, the need to have numerous cards or contactless card payment being unavailable at some sites.

"It has to accept contactless debit or credit card. It's crazy we still have chargers that don't do that. You go to a petrol station and pay with your card, no reason why you shouldn't be able to with a charger. I don't want to have to sign up with an account."

Non-EV driver, Urban

Department for Transport: Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (2022)

Although smartphone app payments showed to be a favourable option, current users have expressed frustrations with having to download several apps across different chargepoint providers and some stated that they refused to use public charging infrastructure as a result.

Some thought that some current payment processes were failing to deliver the "charge-and-go" experience that drivers are looking for, suggesting some have perceptions that current payment methods may be too complicated.

"The number of different cards, apps and accounts you need is harrowing. My wife refuses to learn how to charge the car as it's so complicated."

(EV driver, Suburban)

Department for Transport: Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (2022)

Having 10 different apps is just absurd and then you have 2-3 different physical cards, and they don't all accept the same payment. It's just a mess and is not ideal."

BEV driver, Urban

Department for Transport: Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (2022)

It is clear that convenience and simplicity are key factors that would help encourage the use of public charging infrastructure, and that an individual account that is recognised across all chargepoint providers was favourable to drivers. The use of Radio Frequency Identification Cards (RFID) payments linking payment to the vehicle in an automated process could be beneficial.

"Apps and RFIDs are definitely better and more popular at the moment, because contactless is quite expensive so they try to make the chargepoints cost effective. But on that basis, I think that could be improved in the future as it will be quickly outdated. They should have this inside the car – payment should just happen automatically."

EV driver, Rural

Department for Transport: Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (2022)

Vehicles

We strongly believe that providing **excellent Infrastructure** + **well informed people** will lead to an **increase in zero emission vehicles**.

However, the costs associated with switching to ZEVs are regularly referenced as a current barrier amongst consumers. Although the cost of electric vehicles is outside of our remit, research suggests that it is a current barrier to adoption.

Prohibitive cost of Electric Vehicles

Prohibitive costs may restrict the widespread adoption of electric vehicles as they tend to be considerably more expensive than the petrol or diesel equivalent. *Which?* found that buying the EV equivalent to many current petrol/diesel models could require up to £10,000 additional upfront costs. This could restrict many people from purchasing them, especially during the current cost of living crisis where disposable incomes are being hit by the rising costs of necessities, such as food, housing, and fuel. We have heard from some local residents that have expressed concerns on the cost of buying an electric vehicle.

"I would love to own one but find it hard to justify replacing my current car that cost me £3,000 and does 55mpg for a car that costs £30,000."

North East LEP area EV Charging Behaviour study (2020)

The North East EV Charging Behaviour Study found that the initial cost of hiring or buying a ZEV was referenced as a common barrier to uptake, with 52% of those who considered buying a ZEV telling us that they hadn't done so yet due to the costs that would be involved. National research from Aviva found that two-thirds of all drivers would be more likely to buy a ZEV if they were cheaper or subsidised by central government. The second-hand market is also currently underdeveloped due to ZEVs being a relatively new technological advancement. This can result in limited numbers of second-hand cars being available on the market for those who cannot, or do not wish to purchase a new vehicle.

"The cost of having an electric vehicle that is able to make long distance journeys is far too expensive and for out of town remote travel there are too few charging points."

"Make them more affordable – cost is the only factor stopping me buying one."

North East LEP area EV Charging Behaviour study (2020)

Another key issue adding to this challenge is the perceived lack of awareness of available grants and business-focused tax incentives. There is low awareness of financial support to assist businesses with purchasing ZEVs, with 95% of businesses surveyed as part of the Fleet Revolution programme stating that they were unaware of any tax incentives available to businesses to purchase electric vehicles.

"People don't understand the schemes, don't understand how the incentives work for electric cars. It's complicated and messy for an SME to implement. You need to be an accountant to understand how the tax benefits and incentives work, so how are staff going to navigate this? It needs to be easier to understand, to navigate. Make it easy and simple for both staff and business owners."

Small business, North Tyneside

Making The Right Travel Choice Strategy - Employer research (2022)

"Incentives for electric cars were strong 10 years ago, less so now. They can be tax efficient and are cheap to run. But those tax benefits are starting to wane."

Small business, South Tyneside

Making The Right Travel Choice Strategy - Employer research (2022)

Challenges around the development and use of other ZEVs and alternative fuels

The region is looking to help support the development of alternative clean fuels and ensure that the regional focus is not limited to electric batteries when it comes to zero emission vehicles.

Electrification is not the only potential solution for zero emission vehicles. Larger vehicles such as heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) may consider alternative fuels such as hydrogen to be the best solution going forward. It is vital that the transport sector explores and implements several different technology solutions to meet the UK's 2050 greenhouse gas emissions targets.

However, there are specific challenges around alternative ZEV fuels. For example, the expense and difficulty producing hydrogen fuel has been identified as a barrier to its further growth. There are currently only eleven hydrogen fuelling stations in the UK, so developing a refuelling infrastructure network could involve large costs and take several years to develop.

The distribution of hydrogen has also been identified as a technical challenge as it must be produced and compressed into storage tanks. For use in vehicles, it needs to be mixed with oxygen in a fuel cell to create the electricity to power the vehicle. The continued research, and development on the use of alternative fuels that do not emit any pollutants at the tailpipe will be crucial.

It is vital that other options are also explored going forward in order to reach decarbonisation targets.

'Need to consider hydrogen and futureproofing, not just focus on EVs.'

North East Transport Plan public consultation (2020/21)

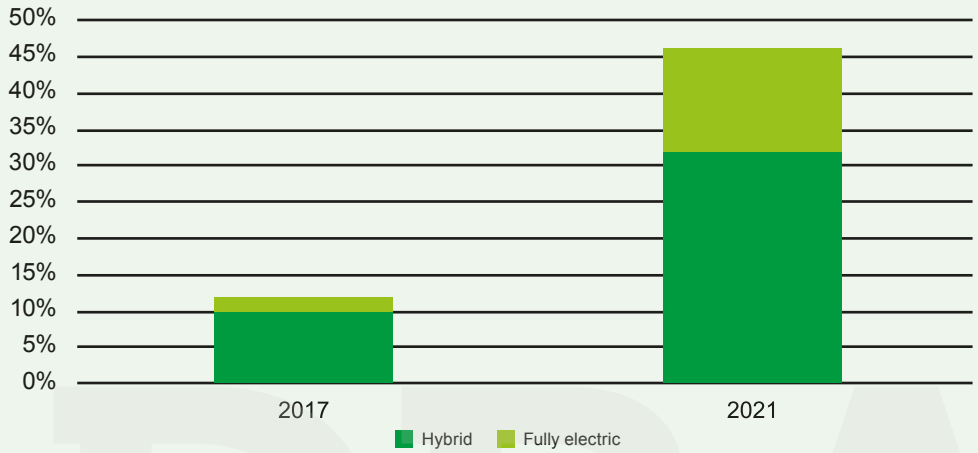

Figure 8: Aviva research into the type of EV planned for next purchase (2022)

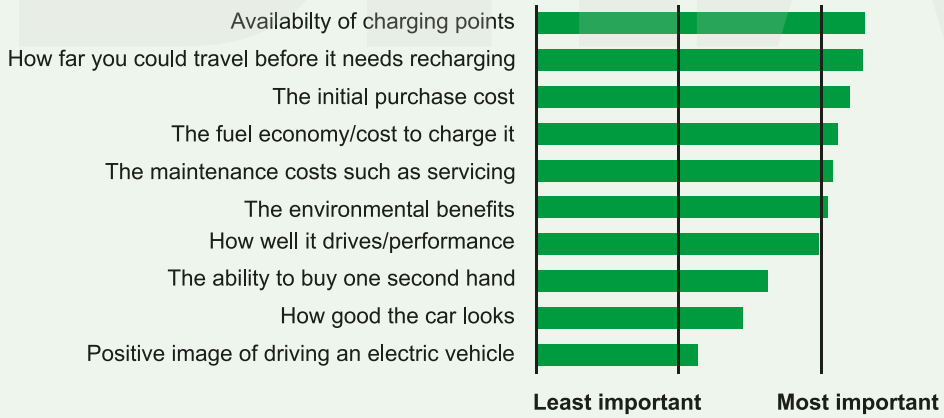

Figure 9: Factors that would influence drivers when considering buying an electric car (Nexus insight panel – Electric cars, 2019)

What are the challenges? – chapter summary

The feedback received from our residents and businesses strengthens our understanding of the barriers to ZEV uptake in the region and provides assurance that this strategy will help to address the challenges that the North East region is facing.

Although there are many concerns that current drivers have expressed, the number of people seriously considering making the transition to an electric vehicle or hybrid is growing at a significant rate. An Aviva survey in 2021 found that interest in purchasing an EV or hybrid vehicle was over 45%, showing a significant increase from 12% in 2017, as shown in figure 8.

Results gathered from Nexus' insight panel on electric vehicles (figure 9) help display the many important factors that influence drivers in the North East and help highlight that a combination of behaviour change measures and infrastructure expansion will be required. If we can address these challenges, it would enable and encourage more people and businesses to transition away from petrol/diesel cars and vans to ZEVs; helping to achieve our vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.'

Where do we want to be?

Background

The aim of this strategy is for **'reliable public zero emission charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.'** This is ambitious but can be achieved with the right level of investment and policy change.

By 2030 we want our region to be at the forefront of having made the transition to decarbonise transport, having cleaner air to breathe, and having a stronger, more inclusive economy.

We want to be in a position where the vision and objectives of the North East Transport Plan and the aim of the Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy are realised. Delivering this strategy will encourage the switch from petrol and diesel vehicle use to ZEVs in the region where active travel is not a suitable option for the whole journey. Benefits of this will include reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and improvements in public health and wellbeing from improved air quality. Inequalities will also be reduced as we will strive for charging facilities with transparent and fair tariffs will be available for every community regardless of wealth or rurality.

Chargepoints will be high quality, accessible, safe and reliable with public information available.

Successful delivery of this strategy will enable a future where excellent infrastructure and well-informed people will combine to create a significant increase in zero emission vehicles. It will be achieved through the public and businesses switching from petrol and diesel vehicle use to ZEVs for trips which need to be made by car. People will still be making the right travel choice for them, so if walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport are suitable options for all or part of the journey they will continue to do this. We want the public and businesses to only use their ZEV for essential car journeys.

With a reliable, accessible, and affordable public charging network, electric vehicle drivers will be able to confidently undertake journeys in the knowledge that they can charge their vehicle when they need to, and it will be easy, quick, and safe to do this, with an efficient payment system at a reasonable price. People will be well informed and know where chargepoints are located and how to use them. This will give the public the confidence to switch from their petrol and diesel vehicles to ZEVs.

By 2030 we want to have overcome the main challenges highlighted in chapter 3 of accessible, available and reliable infrastructure; range anxiety; and cost of vehicles and charging. This can be achieved by focusing on the following:

Excellent Infrastructure

+

Well Informed People

=

Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles

We must ensure that the region has the public charging capacity in place to cope with the impact of the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars/vans in 2030 and hybrid vehicles from 2035.

For this to be achieved, and to encourage a smooth transition, our public ZEV charging infrastructure will need to be much larger, more inclusive, and better integrated than it is today.

Chargepoints should be in places where people require them to be, including rural locations, helping to reduce transport poverty. Public charging must also be reliable and perceived as value for money.

Although this chapter focuses primarily on EV charging, we also want to enable progress with alternative green fuels such as hydrogen, which are likely to be required to fully decarbonise large vans and heavy goods vehicles over the next few years.

Excellent Infrastructure

People will be able to conveniently and reliably charge their electric vehicles wherever they need it regardless of if they live in urban, sub-urban, or rural locations. Charging should become second nature and a part of everyday life, just like refuelling a petrol or diesel car or van is today. Public electric vehicle charging infrastructure will also be in sustainable locations where possible, with excellent connections to the wider transport network, such as public transport. We want to be in the position where high quality charging infrastructure can be introduced speedily and efficiently in the right locations.

There will have been considerable progress made in ensuring public EV charging facilities are available in all parts of our region, both urban and rural, as well as in areas of high social deprivation, tackling both isolation and transport poverty.

The public sector will have successfully filled in the gaps left by the private sector, so charge point infrastructure is located wherever people need it.

The locations of public chargepoints will encourage the use of walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport as part of an integrated sustainable journey.

More public chargepoints will help to encourage tourism and help to attract visitors to the region by offering the assurance and convenience of EV charging, enabling tourists to explore and enjoy the North East without having to worry about charging limitations, overcoming challenges around ‘range anxiety’.

Information on public chargepoint locations at or on the way to tourist destinations will be provided to visitors to the region. This will also help to overcome challenges around range anxiety, by ensuring that people know that there is a public chargepoint in between villages and towns that they can rely on.

Accessible public charging infrastructure will cater to the diverse needs of all users, including those with physical disabilities, sensory impairments, or cognitive challenges. There will be ample space for wheelchair users, clear signage, tactile surfaces where appropriate, and easy-to-use interfaces which will enhance the user experience for individuals with disabilities. This is recommended by accessibility guidance.

Locations of chargers will not only be accessible for all, and placed at strategic locations, but they will also be safe and secure for drivers and their vehicles, with adequate lighting where possible.

It is hoped that by 2030 the public charging network will be reliable and well maintained and any faults will be rectified quickly.

Over time public EV chargers will be greatly improved so they can charge faster and more efficiently. This means people can charge quickly and get on with their journey rather than having to plan around potentially long charging waiting times which can disrupt their trip. Robust contracts between Transport North East, its regional local authorities and charge point operators (CPOs) will have been successfully implemented to accommodate technology advancements.

A prioritised list of public EV charger locations identified in this strategy will have been taken forward for delivery, working in partnership with local authorities, Nexus and other key partners such as electrical distribution companies. This will help ensure people can charge wherever they need to.

Concepts where “Charge and ride” will have been trialled and introduced enabling people can park their ZEV at Park and Ride sites, including transport interchanges, allowing users to slowly charge their vehicle whilst they use public transport (Bus, Metro and local rail) for the rest of their journey. This will have helped support the switch to ZEVs and help part of the journey to be moved onto public transport, in line with our “making the right travel choice” policy. Drivers will be able to charge their vehicle in a parking bay, improving the effectiveness of public chargepoints. Smart tariffs, smart charging and parking management systems will help to prevent possible parking issues.

We will be in a position where electricity output from the power grid at regional public charging locations is efficient as possible to ensure there is enough power to meet the necessary charging demand in 2030 and beyond.

We will also have forged even closer working relationships with other organisations involved in the provision of public ZEV infrastructure from both the public and private sector such as regional local authorities, central government, landowners, car park and public transport interchange providers, chargepoint operators (CPOs), and disability groups. The benefits of this to the user are expected to be an increase in chargers available regardless of ownership, with an increased awareness of issues around disabled access which are acted upon.

A consistent regional offer and message will be provided across both the public and private sectors for public EV charging, including the layout/design of the public charging locations, joint apps for payments and service information, and consistent messaging regarding public charging infrastructure. There will also be integration and alignment with public transport marketing and information.

In addition, there will be enhanced relationships with neighbouring local and regional authorities so there is a greater knowledge of the state of the public charger network in the surrounding area and their ambitions going forward.

This will ensure that for cross-boundary journeys which start or end in our region, there is a more joined-up approach to public charge point infrastructure provision, which is vital as these journeys may be over longer distances rather than being local based trips. It means that decision making on public charger locations will be more co-ordinated so there is no duplication, avoiding having two charger sites in the same location either side of our regional boundaries. It will also take into account future changes such as new housing developments near to regional boundaries with neighbouring areas or major new road infrastructure. It will result in a better value for money charging infrastructure which can meet the changing needs of the public going forward.

The development of hydrogen as an alternative zero emission fuel for heavy transport (large vans, heavy goods vehicles, buses and trains), will have advanced further over the next few years, leading up to 2030. We will have made progress with making use of the region’s expertise in exploring opportunities to test bed innovative clean energy solutions.

Well Informed People

People will have confidence in the North East's charging network and have an awareness on the availability and locations of public chargepoints, enabling people to plan and use charging facilities effectively. Reliable information will ensure that people know how to use the charging infrastructure and understand the benefits of ZEVs.

Information provision will be up-to-date and available before people make their journey. This includes the status of chargepoints, the expected tariff, the approximate queue waiting time, the exact location of the charger facilities within a site and how they can charge. This will lead to strong customer confidence and satisfaction. Regular updates on new public chargepoints will be provided to members of the public and third-party mapping services.

There will be strong engagement with businesses, ensuring employers and their staff have information relating to the benefits of ZEV and publicly available chargepoints to help support more sustainable travel

Increased levels of awareness and understanding will have contributed to improved confidence in electric vehicle switching, leading to a greater demand and use of public charging infrastructure.

Information on third-party ZEV car club services will be available regionally, providing easy access to electric vehicles close to bus interchanges, enabling convenient sustainable travel choices for residents and visitors to combine ZEVs with public transport. The region's network of public chargepoints will have been developed to account for local circumstances and needs, including rural areas.

The information provided at public chargepoints, along with the payment process itself, will be made straightforward and efficient for all users, achieved through adhering to agreed-upon design and accessibility standards.

Current and potential users of the network will have been fully engaged to shape its continued development, ensuring that public chargepoints are inclusive and cater to everyone's needs.

Vehicles

Having excellent infrastructure and well-informed people will have had a positive impact in supporting the transition to ZEVs away from petrol and diesel cars and vans.

ZEV uptake in the region will have significantly increased for purchased public vehicles, work vehicle fleets and public car hire opportunities, including in rural locations. EV uptake in the North East will match or exceed the national average.

More public chargepoints will have played a pivotal role in supporting businesses transition vans and vehicle fleets to zero emission vehicles.

Funding awards will result in a greater number of zero emission buses on our region's roads. The region will have monitored the uptake in zero emission vehicles including frequent reports on progress, leading up to 2030.

Our region will have strengthened its position as a world-leader in the development and manufacturing of electric vehicles and other zero emission vehicles technology and will continue to attract investment from global vehicle manufacturing companies, supporting the further growth of the advanced manufacturing and supply sector.

The potential of hydrogen technology will have been explored and developed for vehicle propulsion particularly as a means of decarbonising Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), the second largest contributors to UK transport emissions after cars.

The North East will continue to lead on innovation, research, and collaboration between academia, industry, and government to further shape the growth of Zero Emission Vehicles and associated technology.

Where do we want to be? – chapter summary

The aim of this strategy is *'reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.'* This chapter has set out what this will look like by 2030 if the strategy is successfully implemented. ZEV charging infrastructure will take a more prominent role in the North East, helping to meet its climate change declaration targets. This will be achieved through high quality and reliable public charging infrastructure throughout the region, complimented by its residents, businesses and employees being well informed on how to charge and on availability, tariffs, and the benefits compared to petrol and diesel vehicles.

This will help to ensure the switch from petrol and diesel vehicles regionally to ZEVs increases considerably by 2030 for journeys not suitable by walking, wheeling, cycling, or by public transport.

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How do we get there?

To achieve this strategy's aim of *creating reliable public zero emission charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it*, the Joint Transport Committee (JTC) will need to work in collaboration with central government (particularly the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles), local authorities, Nexus, the private sector, Northern Powergrid, and crucially local people to help enable an increase in the number of ZEVs across the region by further developing and expanding the North East's ZEV public charging network.

There is significant potential to greatly increase ZEV use across the region where walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport are not feasible options, but this is dependent on having much higher levels of public chargepoint facilities throughout the North East including rural areas and areas which aren't commercially viable. We need to collaborate with partners to make sure this happens.

Key commitment statements

In order to put this strategy into action, we have created a list of clear key commitment statements linked to, **infrastructure**, **people**, and **vehicles**. These commitments are aimed at supporting the delivery of this strategy, and how introducing excellent infrastructure and well informed people will help to achieve the North East Transport Plan vision and objectives, by delivering reliable public ZEV charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.

Actioning these commitment statements will lead to us overcoming the following challenges and barriers identified, whether actual or perceived, as outlined earlier in this strategy.

Infrastructure

- Accessibility and availability of public charging infrastructure
- Reliability of current publicly available chargepoints
- Inclusive infrastructure and ease of use
- Having suitable power supply to meet demand

People

- Range anxiety
- Perceived and actual gaps in the charging network
- Provision of information
- Cost of public charging tariffs/fees
- Perceived complex payment process

Vehicles

- Prohibitive cost of Electric Vehicles
- Challenges around the development and use of other ZEVs and alternative fuels

Excellent Infrastructure

+

Well Informed People

=

Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles

How we will interface with the private sector

The delivery plan of this strategy sets out a new prioritised list of 200 potential sites for public chargepoints. This has helped inform the region of the level of public investment which is required over the next five years.

This pipeline of clearly evidenced chargepoint locations on publicly owned land will be able to be taken forward as public funding becomes available. This strategy and its delivery can also strengthen future funding bids.

But the region's public charging network simply will not be able to increase at the scale and pace required with public funding alone. Whilst the North East is seeing ever-increasing investment from private chargepoint operators, significantly more private investment will be required across the region for chargepoints that are publicly available. This is why this strategy proposes the creation of an EV partnership group. The purpose of the group will be to work together with local authorities, the private sector and Northern Powergrid, **sharing information and best practice**, to help create reliable public zero emission charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.

What this chapter covers

This chapter sets out the recommendations for this strategy in the form of key commitment statements. It also includes a delivery plan providing a list of proposed regional schemes which we will seek funding to grow the public charging network, and to raise awareness and information so that people are well informed.

As we get closer to 2030, and with the sale of ZEVs increasing, we need to ensure the challenges for people moving to EVs (accessibility of infrastructure, range anxiety and the cost of vehicles and charging) are addressed. The following commitment statements will help to address these barriers, enabling people to move from petrol and diesel cars or vans to zero emission vehicles.

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North East Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy – key commitment statements

Infrastructure – key commitment statements

- We will work with partners on charging specifications to ensure minimum requirements and robust maintenance agreements are standard across the region, ensuring a more consistent and positive user experience.
- To achieve consistent high quality public facilities we will investigate the opportunity for a regional public EV charging infrastructure design framework.
- We will continue to grow partnerships across the region, working with public and private sectors to understand new opportunities for chargepoint infrastructure.
- We will work with partners to review and coordinate the deployment of charging in remote rural areas and areas of high social deprivation to address transport related social exclusion and transport poverty.
- We will consider sites from our 2023 refreshed regional zero electric vehicle enabling study and continue to seek existing and new funding opportunities to take these and future sites forward.
- We will undertake a future refresh of our existing regional zero electric vehicle enabling study to ensure that future priority sites continue to be identified to develop the region's public chargepoint network.
- We will seek opportunities to work with the private sector, with the aim of coordinating the installation of ZEV infrastructure in the region, ensuring that future demand is able to be met.
- We will take a flexible approach to filling the infrastructure gaps and monitor the deployment of public chargepoints across the region, reporting on progress.
- We will ensure that the government's accessibility standards are implemented regionally in future procurement exercises and infrastructure projects.
- We will continue to take advantage of our region's expertise and explore opportunities to test bed innovative clean energy solutions.
- We will continue to seek and apply for funding to install and maintain ZEV chargers across the region, especially in commercially unviable locations, for use by the public and the taxi and private hire industry.
- We will set up a ZEV partnership group to learn about what the public and private sector are doing with regards to EV infrastructure in the region, to avoid duplication whilst also supporting each other in installing EV infrastructure to get the best solutions to suit different needs and identify gaps in the network.

Infrastructure – key commitment statements

Local authorities and key stakeholders

- We will work in partnership with local authorities and their local communities to ensure that the delivery of chargepoints in both rural and urban areas which are necessary but perhaps not commercially viable to ensure that no community is left behind.
- We will work in partnership with the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) and our
- local authorities, to provide a key facilitation and coordination to ensure that the network continues to meet future demand and that regional standards are incorporated.
- We will work together with local authorities and Nexus to source suitable available land for future public EV charging, so the region has a prioritised list of potential sites to develop and install further public charging infrastructure.
- We will seek stronger links with planning departments to encourage the installation of chargepoint provision within new housing developments and other developments such as businesses to provide future provision.
- We will work in partnership with local authorities and key stakeholders to help identify and address planning issues early on such as consents, including rights of way for installing wires (wayleaves) for chargepoints.
- We will ensure that the deployment of public chargepoints align with local authority and Nexus plans.

Energy Sector (Distribution Network Operator)

- We will seek to enter into a strategic partnership with Northern Powergrid to make sure that the power network can support the installation of new EV charging infrastructure, both in terms of substation capacity and overall demand on the network.
- We will invite Northern Powergrid to be a member of the EV partnership group to give insight in to future plans, opportunities to identify whether there is grid capacity early on, and suggest alternative sites for public chargepoints if necessary.
- We will work in partnership to ensure that power capacity, connection issues and the need for new substations for chargepoints will be identified at an early stage, prior to funding.
- We will also investigate energy storage systems where there are restrictions on the grid to deliver charging infrastructure to ensure there is sufficient power capacity to enable the installation of chargepoints.

Private sector

- We will seek opportunities to work with the private sector (chargepoint operators, businesses and other organisations) to understand their long term plans for chargepoint delivery and development to ensure that there is no duplication, with the aim of coordinating the installation of ZEV infrastructure in the region, ensuring that future demand is able to be met.

People – key commitment statements

- We will embrace current work being undertaken on accessible and inclusivity standards for infrastructure and support our partners to ensure people with mobility/accessibility impairments are able to access and use charging infrastructure.
- We will engage with the people who live, work and visit the North East to understand their current and future infrastructure requirements to enable their transition to ZEVs.
- We will market and promote activities to support the uptake of Zero emission vehicles, particularly electric vehicles such as raising awareness and information on the location of chargepoints, how to use them, including payment and tariff information.
- We will seek revenue funding to support information on destination chargepoints for residents and visitors to help overcome challenges on range anxiety.
- We will continue to seek funding to install chargepoints for shared car club projects, particularly in rural areas and areas of high social deprivation, to help tackle challenges with social isolation and transport poverty.
- We will support a region-wide discussion on the approach to setting payment tariffs to deliver the best possible customer experience.
- We will procure a supplier to manage any chargepoints that are within our ownership, and they will be required to meet a set of minimum standards including maintenance and quality.

Vehicle – key commitment statements

- We will monitor the uptake in zero emission vehicles across the region and report on progress against projected growth.
- We will prioritise the use of cleaner, greener cars and vans.
- We will continue to seek funding opportunities to deliver zero emission buses.

Exploring other Innovation opportunities

- We will work with the region's universities, catapults, and national centres of excellence, covering digital, energy, and advanced manufacturing to test and monitor a wide range of ZEV related innovation projects.
- We will work with partners to identify funding opportunities and possible trials of alternative fuelled vehicles, to maintain momentum and create a critical mass of ZEV projects that could deliver significant regional benefits.
- We will work closely with the research and development sector to exploit hydrogen technology for vehicle propulsion and to deploy at scale if required, particularly as a means of decarbonising Heavy Goods Vehicle fleets.
- We will continue to monitor advancements in alternative clean fuel technologies and when appropriate, they will become a more prominent feature in future ZEV strategy refreshes, with the potential to develop hydrogen refuelling stations as well as other ZEV infrastructure.

Work currently underway

2023 Refresh of the Regional Electric Vehicle Enabling Study

In 2020, we commissioned a blueprint to deliver ZEV infrastructure. The study identified a substantial list of priority sites that can be taken forward as demand requires and funding opportunities arise.

The study was initially refreshed in summer 2022 to reflect changing priorities, sites which had been delivered, and the introduction of Metro sites.

A further refresh of the enabling study was commenced in June 2023, to look at EV infrastructure requirements over the next 5 years 2023-2028. Following completion of the sites identified and funded in the initial study, we have established a new prioritised list of 200 sites for public chargepoints. The enabling study also highlights passive infrastructure (existing underground electrical wiring) that can be used for future EV chargepoints when required. This will help us to future proof and ensure infrastructure can meet further demand.

We will use these further sites to seek available funding opportunities and will then work with partners to deliver reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it, ensuring that both urban and rural communities are covered. This work will complement the wider infrastructure projects being delivered by local authorities and agencies such as National Highways in delivering a network in the North East that supports the next stage of transition to electric vehicles.

The most recent funding to be released is the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund. The UK government announced £343m in capital funding to support the installations of EV chargepoint infrastructure for local authorities, these changepoints will primarily benefit residents without off-street parking.

There is also an additional £37.8m in capability funds to ensure that local authorities have the staff and capability to plan and deliver chargepoint infrastructure.

We will co-ordinate funding on behalf of our region to provide support and delivery of this strategy.

Proposed infrastructure delivery models

To enable the uptake of ZEVs required to meet the regions' forecasted demand and decarbonisation targets, it is important that the infrastructure is of a consistently high standard, and that as far as possible the user has a seamless experience across different chargepoints. This will be achieved through procurements which will enable long-term investment in the region's public EV infrastructure network.

This investment is needed to upgrade, operate and maintain the current public authority owned network, and to resource its expansion in order to secure a sustainable long-term future which aligns to our future commitments.

To manage the region's growing public EV infrastructure network, we need to contract and operate with chargepoint operators (CPO). Some of our existing network of chargepoints that were installed in 2011 have been left without an operation contract, these chargepoints were left broken and unusable. It is important to have the right contract in place going forward with a CPO to ensure chargepoints are reliable, accessible, safe and secure.

Local authorities need to agree a contractual agreement to operate EV infrastructure, the following are the different types of operating models that can be considered;

Contracts and Operation Model Types

Below is a description of all of the contractual agreements a local authority and a chargepoint operator can agree on to successfully operate the chargepoints:

Own and operate

The own and operate model offers the greatest level of control for a local authority however, it brings with it risks. With this model the local authority pays for all the capital costs, covers all operational costs and in return retains ownership of control, responsibility risks and revenue.

Concessionary contract

A Concessionary contract is an agreement with the local authority and the CPO that offers the right to deploy electric vehicle charging infrastructure with a local authority and CPO investment. This model puts some of the risk and funding back to the CPO. In this method the control over pricing and location is generally negotiable if an attractive “package” can be put together which attracts commercial investment. However, this allows rural and urban areas to be included and not left behind.

Joint venture

A joint venture is a separate business entity created by two or more parties, including the local authority and at least one service provider.

Public-private commercial partnership (PPCP)

PPCP is a flexible commercial arrangement that shares aspects of capital, operational cost control and risk between the service provider and public bodies.

Land lease

A land lease is a low risk, low revenue commercial arrangement for EVI (Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) procurement where the local authority retains little control over the resulting service by leasing land it owns to CPOs.

Our regional approach

After careful consideration of the various delivery model options, it could be beneficial to proceed with a flexible procurement framework to create reliable public zero emission charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.

The region has worked closely with the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) to produce an overarching procurement process in which a Framework will be established and awarded to the suppliers. This will be available for NEPO member Authorities (Contracting Authorities) to call off their requirements from, via Direct Award, Flexible Direct Award or by Mini Competition directly with the suppliers who were awarded to the framework.

The framework, to be initially established in October 2023, has a contractual term of 4 years, plus the option to extend for a further 2 years (2023 –2029). Contracting authorities can select to use one of the charge point operators who have been appointed to the framework for their charging infrastructure requirements. The contract includes flexibilities into call off arrangements for the local authorities to adapt in their own requirements.

The local authorities can use their own specific requirements depending on the requirements of the chargepoint projects including ongoing support and maintenance agreements, ensuring the reliability of our charging network.

By working in partnership with NEPO and our local authorities, we propose to provide a key facilitation and coordination role to ensure that the network continues to meet future demand and that regional standards are incorporated.

Providing this flexible approach for the region could help local authorities to use for their upcoming EV Infrastructure plans if they wish to use the framework. The framework is a flexible approach that local authorities can decide to use to suit their current requirements. We will continue to monitor the development of EV infrastructure and procurement contracts to ensure the best solution for the region.

Proposed regional responsibilities

To ensure that we keep up with ZEV charging demands and infrastructure for our region, we propose to complement the work of Local Authorities by working towards the agreement and monitoring of regional policy and standards on behalf of Local Authorities. We will source funding at a regional level and co-ordinate the delivery of regional programme.

Local Authorities will be responsible for council and community specific strategies including on-street and residential however, we will support our Local Authorities to stay up to date with current developments of ZEV infrastructure and the development of further technologies towards Zero Emission Vehicles.

Given the significant increase in public chargepoints which will be required to meet the aim of this strategy to deliver reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it, the region won't solely be able to depend on sites which do not require planning permission, such as the use of existing public car park spaces.

Where planning permission is required for new public chargepoint infrastructure we will work with the region's seven local authorities and Nexus to ensure, where possible, there is a consistent and joined-up approach to the installation and design of public charging facilities.

Proposed regional and local roles and responsibilities to help support the development of ZEV infrastructure:

Our regional role	Local Authorities
Agreeing and monitor regional policy and standards.	Council and community-specific strategies including on-street and residential.
Sourcing funding at a regional level and co-ordinate delivery of regional programmes.	Local authority-specific funding and local delivery of regional funding.
Providing region wide information to motorists.	ZEV charging facilities at public-facing council facilities e.g. public car parks and on local highways.
ZEV charging facilities for long distance traffic, strategic Park & Ride sites and transport interchanges.	ZEV charging facilities for council fleets and employee workplace parking.
Co–ordinating regional strategy with private sector providers, Northern PowerGrid and national agencies.	Planning requirements for new build housing, workplace, retail etc.
Representing the region to the ZEV industry, regulators, government and other partners.	Liaison with communities, employers and businesses.

Table 6: Proposed regional and local roles and responsibilities

Delivery plan

Our identified programme of proposed investment stems from the North East Transport Plan. The plan sets out a live programme of interventions, all of which were initially tested to ensure that they are consistent with the Transport Plan objectives and that they are deliverable.

All schemes that have been identified and delivered by the region will be fully developed as projects in accordance with the region's assurance framework or that of partners. This will demonstrate that all of the proposed improvements are socially acceptable, economically viable and deliverable as well as supporting the achievement of objectives nationally, regionally, and locally.

Our schemes are ambitious, and the total cost will be determined following the completion of the list of proposed sites (mid-September 2023 enabling study) to create more publicly available chargepoints.

But that is not the end of the process. All schemes will be subject to more rigorous testing and appraisal and will only be delivered where they have demonstrated, through detailed business case development, that they can appropriately contribute towards the delivery of the objectives.

If schemes cannot contribute towards objectives and don't support the Transport Plan, they will not be taken forward.

This strategy has utilised the Transport Plan pipeline and Nexus' (The Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive) capital pipeline schemes. We have identified schemes that will support North East objectives from the below delivery plan.

What are we proposing?

The proposed investments and initiatives set out in this strategy broadly consist of:

- **The creation of an EV partnership group with the public and private sector;**
- **New public EV charge point infrastructure;**
- **Maintenance and upgrading of the existing public charge point network;**
- **Increased information provision for people to make the transition to ZEVs;**
- **Innovation schemes to develop ZEV technology;**
- **Flexible procurement framework (NEPO) available to deliver public EV chargepoint infrastructure.**

Delivery

This programme will be delivered by the constituent authorities and Nexus within the North East, together with schemes being delivered by the region.

The region's Transport Programmes team will manage this programme and will be responsible for sponsoring the development of various schemes and projects that support this plan, as well as a series of region-wide initiatives.

Implementation of the interventions that are regional initiatives are within the control and will be delivered in accordance with the region's programme management and assurance frameworks.

In some cases, the region's transport programmes team will act as the promoter of schemes and will be responsible for delivery, but in most circumstances, delivery may be undertaken by another organisation, for example our constituent local authorities, with the region securing funding and providing technical assistance as required.

Programme Management and Assurance

The funding required to realise the ambitions of this strategy is substantial, however the region is fortunate to have a well established and endorsed Transport Assurance Framework in place which is proportionate to the nature, scale, and value of schemes.

The heart of our Transport Assurance Framework is a scalable series of gateways that provide our governance structure with the confidence that each component investment is delivering on the requirements of the programme and delivering the Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy and Transport Plan outcomes that have been attributed to that investment.

Our assurance framework has been developed in stages. Each stage represents a gateway in the process and approvals and reviews are applied at each stage.

Further information on our Transport Assurance Framework please visit: **www.transportnortheast.gov.uk** or contact **info@transportnortheast.gov.uk**.

Funding and Development options

The region will continue to work with government to secure funding through competition based funding, and longer-term devolved settlements to unlock schemes.

For certain investments, developer contributions will form a viable part of the financial model. We will work with the individual authorities to secure appropriate levels of contributions or works in kind where the investment is directly related to the development and is needed to mitigate the impact of the scheme in question.

Realising the ambition of this strategy will be partially reliant on the ability to secure the necessary powers and consents for delivery in terms of traffic regulation orders (TRO) and in some cases planning consent.

Alternative funding may be considered on a case-by-case basis, particularly where shared integrated priorities can be realised.

How do we get there? – chapter summary

Working in partnership with local authorities, the private sector and Northern Powergrid, together we will create reliable public zero emission charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.

Our schemes are ambitious, and the total cost will be determined following the completion of the list of proposed sites (mid-September 2023 enabling study) to create more publicly available chargepoints.

We will keep this pipeline updated and have plans in place to develop schemes, so they are ready for delivery over this time period.

Delivery plan 2023 – 2030 +

NOTE – initial list as of early September 2023. The enabling study refresh, due for completion in early September will lead to the creation of a comprehensive delivery plan containing a list of prioritised sites for publicly available EV chargepoints across the region.

Key	
	Infrastructure
	People
	Vehicles

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Timescales for Delivery
TNE50	EV Partnership Group	Transport North East	Setting up a partnership group with the public and private sector and Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) to support, build, and grow the EV charging infrastructure in the North East.	Shovel ready
NX15	Creating electric vehicle charging points across Nexus car parks	Nexus	EV charging infrastructure at all Nexus owned car parks.	Shovel Ready
NX16	Installing solar panels at Nexus infrastructure	Nexus	As a means of supporting EV chargepoints and the demand on the National Grid, installing PV on Metro infrastructure.	Shovel Ready
TNE18a	Fund replacement and upgrade of existing EV infrastructure	Transport North East	Plug funding gap to replace and or upgrade EV legacy equipment.	Shovel Ready
TNE18b	Electric Vehicle Infrastructure – Consider gaps in the network	Transport North East	This project will install publicly available EV chargers at 200 sites across the North East. The refreshed enabling study completed in September 2023 will provide 200 EV chargepoints sites and passive infrastructure to future proof areas going forward. Sites will be chosen based on the requirement for the charging infrastructure to be easily accessible to a range of different users; this will entail a set of criteria likely to include: • proximity to major employment sites; and, • proximity to popular tourist attractions.	Next 5 years

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Timescales for Delivery
TNE18c	EV Charging Residential Options	Local Authorities	The expansion of EV charging focused on residential areas where they lack off street parking. Initial estimates suggest a £15.8m of upwards of 1200 charging points.	Shovel Ready
TNE48	Promotion of public chargepoints and the benefits of ZEVs	Transport North East	A communications campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of zero emission vehicles, and the region's public chargepoint installations. Also raise awareness of ZEV car clubs available in the region.	Shovel Ready
TNE49	Accessibility forum (EV Chargepoint infrastructure)	Transport North East	The creation of a stakeholder forum specifically for disabled stakeholders to advise us/ delivery partners on accessibility needs for public chargepoint infrastructure.	Shovel Ready
TNE34a	Decarbonising Public Transport	Transport North East	Innovation securing funding and looking at alternative funding and finance options to support the greater roll out of low emission vehicles and vessels, incorporating electric, gas and hydrogen solutions.	Next 5 years
NX35	Enhancing the electric vehicle offer on the strategic road network	National Highways	Enhancing the EV offer on the strategic road network.	Next 5 years
GA51	EV Charging Improvements	Gateshead Council	Lack of convenient EV charging facilities in car parks owned by Gateshead Council - Provision of facilities.	Next 5 years
DU41	Electrification of P&R fleet	Durham County Council	Durham City currently suffers from poor air quality as defined by the Council's Air Quality Management Area and linked Air Quality Action Plan. To address this problem and reduce vehicle emissions within the city, it is proposed to convert Durham County Council's Park & Ride bus fleet from diesel to electric.	Next 5 years
SU30	Energy generation and storage projects in Sunderland	Sunderland City Council	Funding secured to provide roof mounted solar PV at Jack Crawford House, Washington BC, Sunderland Software Centre, Evolve Business Centre, and Transit Shed 7 at the Port. Solar Car Ports to be provided at Jack Crawford House and Evolve BC. Battery storage facility to be provided at Jack Crawford House and new Parsons depot. Planning application submission currently being prepared for this financial year.	Next 5 years

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Timescales for Delivery
TNE51	Go Smarter to Work Zero Emission Vehicles	Transport North East	Through engagement with businesses carry out employee travel surveys to inform current forms of commuting. Focused marketing, raised awareness and initiatives to promote ZEVs for necessary journeys that cannot be made by active travel or public transport.	Next 5 years
SU41	Zero Emission Refuelling Hub	Sunderland City Council	Sunderland City Council and Partners, are developing a project to deliver both hydrogen and rapid electric vehicle refuelling/charging at a single site.	Next 10 years
TNE34b	A regional energy package	Transport North East	Innovation - A regional energy package focused on generating energy on our transport assets, depots, stops and stations to support ZEV infrastructure and vehicles.	Next 10 years
TNE35	Future Fuels Innovator	Transport North East	Run an Innovator programme to examine future fuel technologies for all road vehicles, including hydrogen.	Next 10 years
TX22	Clean Ferry Ferry asset renewal programme	Nexus	The Shields Ferry is currently dependent on fossil fuels. A project working with universities and engineering specialists to help transition the ferry to run carbon free.	Next 10 years

Measures of success

The stated aim of this strategy is to deliver reliable public Zero Emission Vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East wherever people need it.

The key measures of success of this strategy therefore be an increase in the number of public EV chargepoint sites as well as an increase in the proportion of ZEVs in our region over the coming years to 2030.

We therefore propose to monitor the number of public EV sites and chargepoints as well as the proportion of ZEVs to vehicles in our region. Alongside these key metrics, we also propose to monitor CO2 road transport emissions in the region.

An increase in the proportion of ZEVs, mainly electric cars and vans, should lead to a decrease in road transport emissions.

Excellent Infrastructure

+

Well Informed People

=

Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles

By providing accessible infrastructure and addressing public concerns that deter the switch to ZEVs, we can encourage growth in the number of zero emission vehicles used to replace journeys currently made using petrol/ diesel vehicles.

We propose to monitor and report on these metrics annually to monitor the region's journey working in partnership to grow the number of public chargepoints and support the transition to ZEVs.

These reporting metrics align with the vision and five objectives of the North East Transport Plan. Below indicates how this delivering this strategy could help towards achieving them:

Carbon-neutral North East

Electric Vehicle uptake in the region to match or exceed national average

Overcome inequality and grow our economy

Charging facilities and fair tariffs for every community regardless of wealth or rurality

Healthier North East

Improving air quality. Charging locations encourage use of public transport (Park and Ride), active travel and culture/heritage

Appealing, sustainable transport choices

High quality and accessible chargepoints with reliable public information

Safe, secure network

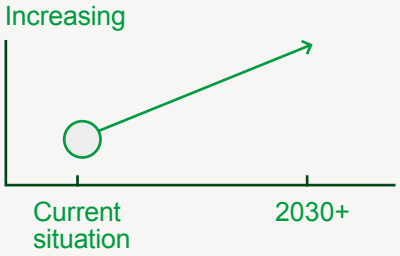
Chargepoints in safe and secure locations for you and your vehicle

Number of sites and chargepoints

We want to see an increase in the number of sites and chargepoints in our region.

Key insight

As of May 2023, we have around 403 locations with 846 chargers. An increase in the number of sites and chargepoints will mean that there are more opportunities to charge across our region and that more people at any one time can charge their ZEVs.

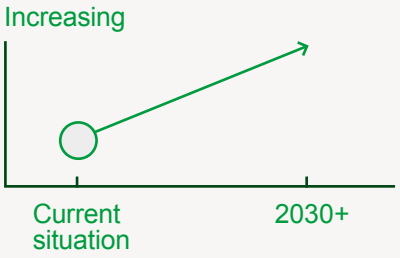


Proportion of ZEVs to vehicles in our region

We want to see an increase in the proportion of the regions vehicles that are zero emission at the tailpipe.

Key insight

Around 0.9% of all registered vehicles in the region are battery electric vehicles or range extended electric vehicles. This is around 8,900 vehicles.

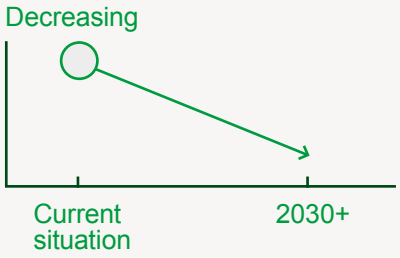


Road Transport Emissions

We want to see a decrease in the proportion of regional CO2 emissions from road transport.

Key insight

In the North East, road transport is responsible for around 36% of overall CO2 emissions.

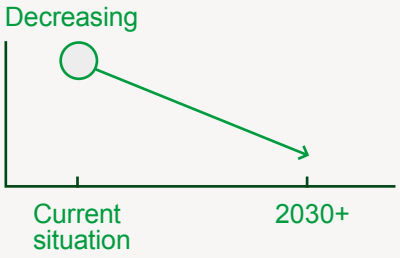


Climate Action

We want to see a decrease in the CO2 emissions per capita emitted using road transport.

Key insight

In 2021 in the North East, road transport emitted 1.43 tonnes of CO2 per person.



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