



Environment & Energy Board

Date	9 September 2021
Report title	Infrastructure for Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy Consultation
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Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Environment & Energy Board is recommended to:

- (1) Review and provide feedback on the draft Infrastructure for Zero Emission Vehicle (IZEV) strategy (given in background papers)

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the board on the progress of the development of the Infrastructure for Zero Emission Vehicle (IZEV) Strategy, provide some initial insights from the consultation process and layout a timescale by when the final strategy document will be available for publication.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Infrastructure for Zero Emission Vehicles (IZEV) Strategy is being developed in recognition that the regional, and indeed national, ambition of transitioning to zero emission vehicles will need to be underpinned by co-ordination between not only transport-led initiatives but also the underlying energy infrastructure needed to service the new types of vehicles.

Key tenants of the IZEV strategy

- 2.2 In order to achieve the West Midlands' commitment to net zero by 2041 (#WM2041) system changes need to be made. Transport within the region currently contributes to (approximately) 30% of carbon emissions, and is the UK's greatest sectoral contributor to carbon emissions.
- 2.3 Although there have been a significant number of improvements in spatial planning reducing the need to travel, as well as behaviour change incentives aimed at improving air quality, there is still an under-provision of infrastructure needed to provide zero carbon travel when necessary. By implementing key infrastructure to support the transition to zero emission vehicles away from in-situ combustion engines, carbon savings can be made, helping to achieve net zero by 2041. There are also significant co-benefits for air quality improvements.
- 2.4 Energy Capital, working alongside TfWM and other organisations, have identified several barriers within the region reducing the take up of zero emission vehicles by the general public and private industry:
- A gap between transport, electricity and gas sectors who undertake planning and investment of projects needed to provide this necessary infrastructure (e.g., charge points, charging hubs, hydrogen refuelling etc.)
 - Hesitancy from the private sector to switch from fossil fuel consuming transport to zero emission transport due to the lack of infrastructure available to support their day-to-day activities (e.g., freight, company fleets, delivery vans, etc)
 - Current low consumer demand for zero emission vehicles disincentivises the private sector from providing the infrastructure in the near term, resulting in consumer demand remaining low, and infrastructure not implemented
- 2.5 The public sector is uniquely positioned to support the transport sector in implementing key infrastructure. The IZEV strategy is being developed to:
- Bridge the gap between parties planning infrastructure, helping to support each system to communicate requirements ahead of need
 - Utilise planned public sector investment in transport to provide the infrastructure needed to begin the transition to zero emission vehicles and de-risk future private sector investment
 - Exploit our geographic position by delivering transport infrastructure to support the national market

Consultation process

- 2.6 The IZEV strategy was released in draft form to industry stakeholders who were invited to provide their feedback. This was done over a series of in-depth workshops focusing on the provision of electrical infrastructure, alternative fuel infrastructure and the specific role of the public sector in catalysing the changes required. Feedback was also sought through email and questionnaire for those not able to make the sessions.

2.7 The feedback will now be considered in the final version of the IZEV strategy which will be written up as companion document informing the upcoming Long Term Transport Plan (LTP). This process is due to be completed by the end of September 2021.

2.8 Early insights from the consultation process:

- Respondents strongly support the Strategy's position that the public sector needed to take a leadership role in bringing forward the necessary infrastructure to support the transition to zero emission vehicles.
- Respondents recognised the risks around the challenge of sufficient grid capacity for the projected energy system requirements to support zero emission vehicles. A further risk was recognised around the possibility of developers 'land banking' potentially key locations for charging infrastructure without immediate plans for bringing these sites forward until demand builds.
- Respondents wanted to see further support for local initiatives already undertaken such as Ansty CLEAN hub and Tyseley Energy Park which supports multi-model transport shifts as well as supports the transition of larger vehicles to zero emission modes.
- Respondents felt that more could be done to support both public and private fleets to switch to zero emission modes and that the public sector should be demonstrating and normalising the technology adoption.
- Respondents felt that hydrogen and alternative fuels had a role to play, particularly in the transition of larger vehicles but that the provision of infrastructure was a clear barrier. It was recommended that the West Midlands, as the geographic heart of the distribution network, should have a series of refuelling stations capable of servicing large vehicles with range of fuel options (hydrogen/high powered charging/other alternative fuels) until the technology pathway is clearly set. This would give confidence to commercial operators to make strategic decisions on their fleet earlier and give greater carbon and air quality benefits.

Next steps:

2.9 The next steps are to consider the feedback from the consultation process in the drafting of the final strategy.

2.10 The strategy contains an outline action plan for delivery. If agreed, then these actions will require further resources to progress. The funding for these resources may be sought internally or could be sought from the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) or similar central agencies depending on their nature.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no immediate financial implications as a result of the proposals within this paper.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 None from this report.

5. Equalities Implications

- 5.1 The IZEV Strategy has been written with Fairness and Equality as its first driving principle. The strategy is designed to address inequalities that may arise if the market were left to decide the provision of infrastructure to support the transition of zero emission vehicles.

6. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 6.1 The transition to zero emission vehicles has the potential to support the West Midlands automotive industries and supply chain.

7. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

- 7.1 West Midlands Combined Authority Area

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 None.

9. Schedule of Background Papers

- 9.1 IZEV Consultation slide pack