

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Let's talk about...

Transport

Local Transport Plan 4: 2025- 2045

Policy Review

Consultation Draft – June 2025



Cheshire West
and Chester

Table of Contents

1.0	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2.0	INTRODUCTION	5
3.0	ENVIRONMENT	7
3.1	National	7
3.2	Regional	13
3.3	Local	14
4.0	SOCIETY AND PLACE	16
4.1	National	17
4.2	Regional	23
4.3	Local	25
5.0	ECONOMY	31
5.1	National	31
5.2	Regional	33
5.3	Local	34
6.0	TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY	37
6.1	National	37
6.2	Regional	48
6.3	Local	52
7.0	CONCLUSIONS	57

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy review is the starting point for our case for change for the transport network. Combined with our evidence base, it will inform the direction of our Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), and all the policies and interventions within.

The vision of the LTP4 is to provide:

‘A fairer and more sustainable transport system which enables a stronger, thriving future’

To achieve the vision, we will prioritise:

1. *Tackling the climate emergency* and making sure that our transport networks are able to cope with a rapidly changing environment. We want to reduce the emissions from transport and achieve a net zero carbon emissions from transport by 2045, delivering the Council’s Climate Emergency Response Plan.
2. *Tackling the poverty emergency* and creating a more inclusive society, by making sure that everyone has affordable access to employment, education, health and other opportunities or opportunities. We want everyone to have access to a real choice of transport modes, so that they can easily get to work, learning, social and leisure activities.

In doing so, we will also seek to:

3. *Enable people to live healthier and happier lives* by giving us all the chance to be more active, reducing air pollution and noise, eliminating deaths and serious injuries on our streets, and making our transport networks safer for everyone.
4. *Grow our local economy in a sustainable and inclusive manner* by giving businesses the chance to grow, making it easier for people to get to work opportunities and making it easier to move goods and materials easily, efficiently, and reliably.
5. *Create and protect great places* with attractive, connected, greener neighbourhoods. Transport and travel is about much more than a means of getting around. We want transport and travel networks to play their part in creating and protecting special, beautiful and lively places that people can enjoy spending time in.

For this LTP4 policy review, we have identified that the vision and objectives can be defined through four policy themes. Transport and Connectivity is the central theme, alongside the supporting themes of Environmental, Economy, and Society. There are commonly overlaps between these policy themes. This policy review document is structured around these four policy themes, and reflects the direction provided in each subject area at a national, regional, and local level. Figure 1 provides a high-level reflection on the policy themes.

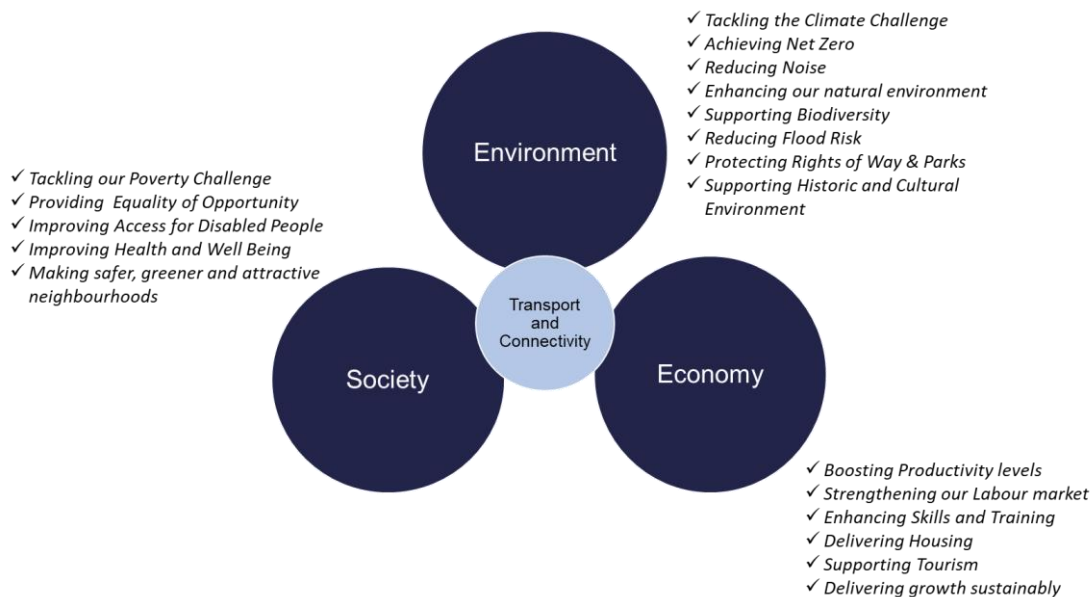


Figure 1: LTP4 Policy Themes

The four policy themes collectively cover policy areas of most relevance to the LTP process, reflecting the role of transport in achieving our climate related targets but also wider societal objectives.

In considering our priorities of tackling the climate emergency and poverty emergency, it is clear that transport has a critical role to play. Transport has been a major contributor to emissions in the past couple of decades but is a sector with ambitious plans to transition to cleaner and greener technologies. There will be a step-change towards electric vehicles (and potentially the use of other alternative fuels) which will be transformational. This is driven by a forthcoming government ban on the sale of diesel and petrol cars from 2030.

The switch to low emission vehicles will not be enough on its own, so there is a clear need to also reduce the volume of trips made by car. We therefore must support and enact policies and interventions which encourage modal shift in favour of public transport modes and active travel. We also need to be aware of the carbon impact we have when implementing our policies or constructing new schemes, and factor this into decision-making, as we adapt and enhance our transport system.

Transport can also be used as an enabler, to help our plans to address the poverty emergency across the borough. Poor or unaffordable transport connectivity is often associated with areas of greater deprivation. It becomes a barrier to improving livelihoods, as people feel limited in the places and opportunities they have close by. Providing better transport choices can be transformational, such as more convenient or reliable ways to access to education and skills, and employment. Making it simpler for people to get around, particularly without the need to own and pay for operating their own car, can help to reduce hardship and make people feel less 'time poor' when reducing travel time creates space for other activities which can be vital for health and quality of life

Transport links also bring investment into an area, making it more appealing to businesses which results in local jobs and economic growth. We can also work to more closely align land use policies with transport plans, to deliver more high-quality and sustainable places, which are appealing to people and enables communities to develop around happy and healthy living.

As we develop our LTP4, we will remember the four policy themes, and the way they are shown to interact and relate to each other within national, regional and local plans. Through the LTP process, we will set out a constructive plan that sets out how we will develop the transport system to place it at the centre of wider positive changes to the borough in order for our communities to become stronger and enable them to thrive as part of a sustainable future.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy review is the starting point for our case for change for the transport network and, combined with our evidence base, it will inform the direction of LTP4. The table below summarises those policies that are reflected throughout.

National Policy	Regional Policy	Local Policy
Environment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Change Act (Amended 2019) Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021) UK Carbon Budgets (6th budget 2020 & 7th budget 2025) Clean Air Strategy (2019) Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report – Air Pollution (2022) Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021) Environmental Improvement Plan (2023) Clean Power 2030 (2024) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TfN Transport Decarbonisation Strategy (2021) Cheshire & Warrington Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) - In Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheshire West and Chester Climate Emergency Response Plans (2020 and 2025) Cheshire West and Chester Low Emission Strategy (2018)
Society and Place		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Connected Society – Strategy for Tackling Loneliness (2018) The Inclusive Transport Strategy: Achieving Equal Access for Disabled People (2019) Get Active: A Strategy for the Future of Sport and Physical Activity (2023) Sport England Every Move: Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan National Planning Policy Framework (2024) English Devolution White Paper (2024) Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report – Health in Cities (2024) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TfN Connecting Communities (2023) Cheshire and Warrington Quality of Place Strategy (2019) Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership: Towards a Sustainable and Inclusive Cheshire and Warrington (2022) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheshire West and Chester Fairer Future Strategy (2021) Cheshire West and Chester Place Plan (2024 update) Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) (2015) Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two) (2019) Chester One City Plan (2022) Cheshire West and Chester Council Borough Plan 2024-2028 (2024) Cheshire West and Chester Housing Strategy 2025-2035 (2025)
Economy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Plan for Change UK Industrial Strategy (2017) <i>and the forthcoming new 'Invest 2035' UK Industrial Strategy</i> The Clean Growth Strategy (2017) Levelling up in the UK (2022) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (2023) Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan (2018) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Cheshire Inclusive Economy Prospectus and Action Plan (2021) Cheshire West and Chester Council: Medium Term Financial Strategy (2026-29)


National Policy	Regional Policy	Local Policy
Transport and Connectivity		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Investment Strategy (2017) (<i>Moving Britain Ahead</i>) <i>and the forthcoming new Integrated National Transport Strategy</i> • Future of Mobility (Urban) (2019) • Future of Transport (Rural) (2023) • Better Delivery: The Challenge for Freight (2019) • Future of Freight (2022) • Bus Back Better (2021) • Bus Services Bill (2024-25) • Great British Railways: The Williams – Shapps Plan for Rail (2021) <i>and the Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Bill (2024)</i> • Gear Change (2020) • Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) 2020 to 2025 (2020) <i>and the forthcoming RIS3.</i> • Taking Charge: the EV Infrastructure Strategy (2022) • Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate Update (2025) • The Highway Code • Plan for Drivers (2023) • Network North (2023) • Wales Transport Strategy (2021) • Welsh Government Response to Roads Review (2023) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TfN Strategic Transport Plan (2024) • TfN Freight and Logistics Strategy (2022) • TfN Major Roads Report (2021) • TfN Electric Vehicles Charging Infrastructure Framework (2022) • Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Digital Infrastructure Plan (2020) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Cheshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (2024) • Cheshire West and Chester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2020-2030 (2020) • Cheshire West and Chester Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy (2023) • Cheshire West and Chester Highways Asset Management Strategy (2019) • Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy (2016) • Cheshire West and Chester Revised Parking Standards SPD (2022) • Cheshire West and Chester Towards a Digital Borough 2021 to 2025 (2021)

3.0 ENVIRONMENT

3.1 National


3.1.1 Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2016)

Climate change is recognised as both the greatest global risk to health and the economy by the World Health Organisation and World Economic Forum, respectively. In 2016, the UK signed up to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. For the first time, it brought together all nations to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. The Paris Agreement's central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5°C.

 Paris Agreement on Climate Change - [Weblink](#)

3.1.2 Climate Change Act (Amended 2019)

The Climate Change Act (Amended 2019) addressed the increasing scale of the problem. The original Act in 2008 required the UK to reduce its emissions by at least 80% by 2050, against 1990 levels. A 2019 update committed the UK to set a legal target to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

 Climate Change Act (Amended 2019)- [Weblink](#)

Further information is set out in the UK Climate Budgets (see below).

3.1.3 UK Carbon Budgets

Carbon Budgets are five-year carbon emissions limits set by the UK Government. The UK is aiming for 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2050. The Climate Change Committee (CCC) publish independent advice on each carbon budget in advance of their publication.

The 6th Carbon Budget (2020) limited the volume of greenhouse gases emitted over the 5-year period from 2033 to 2037. The 6th Carbon Budget re-affirmed support for the globally agreed climate change pathways such as the Paris Agreement temperature goal to limit global warming to well below 2°C and pursue efforts towards 1.5°C for reducing emissions. Targets set included reducing emissions by 68% by 2030 (against a 1990 baseline).

Against these challenging targets, the CCC reported mixed success in its 2022 Progress Report to Parliament. *“Outside the bright spots of electric car sales and renewable electricity deployment, we have not seen the necessary tangible progress in a host of areas” and “Our current assessment is that there are significant risks or a policy gap for over a third of the emissions reduction required to meet the Sixth Carbon Budget.”* A further CCC progress report in 2024 highlighted only one third of the emissions reductions required to meet the 2030 target had been achieved. However, overall domestic emissions had decreased by 50% since 1990.





The carbon pathways analysis was added to in November 2024 when the Prime Minister announced a further target; to reduce emissions by 81% by 2035 (against the same 1990 baseline).

The 7th Carbon Budget will soon be published covering the 5-year period from 2038 to 2042. CCC has published its statutory report which advises Government on the budget. It recommends that the 7th Carbon Budget retains similar pathways to the previous versions, albeit with some additional emphasis added including in relation to the importance

“The public need to be involved – over half the emissions reductions we identified to reach Net Zero actively involve people, whether by choosing to purchase low-carbon technologies like electric cars, or by making different choices, for example on their travel or diets”.

Climate Change Committee 2022

of increasing use of sustainable fuels including road and rail network electrification, the need for more technological advancements in aviation fuel, and better collaboration between transport and other sectors such as energy and industry.

-  6th Carbon Budget (2020)- [Weblink](#)
-  CCC Progress in reducing emissions (2022)- [Weblink](#)
-  CCC Progress in reducing emissions (2024)- [Weblink](#)
-  CCC statutory report on 7th Carbon Budget - [Weblink](#)


Implications

Despite a positive UK response to the global emergency, progress needs to continue which will require further policy decisions and actions. Through LTP4, we can set policies which are positively aligned to encouraging more sustainability in the way the transport system operates and the way people choose, and are able to, travel. We will therefore be making our contribution to the wider UK response as well as delivering improved local conditions for residents in the CW&C borough.

3.1.4 Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021)

The Government's Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener contained a ten-point plan for a green industrial revolution. The intention is to build back better, support green jobs and accelerate to Net Zero. Relevant to transport, the strategy focusses on priorities around accelerating the shift to zero emission vehicles and promoting travel behaviour change through cycling and walking interventions. Key policies around transport in this strategy include:

- Zero Emission Mandate, ending sales of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030 (later adjusted to 2035 but the current government administration has consulted on the best approach to returning to a 2030 date – see Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate Update 2025, section 6.1.12)).
- Funding of grants for EV infrastructure and supporting of electrification of UK vehicles and their supply chains.
- Trialling zero emission HGV road freight; £5bn investment across public transport and active travel.
- Significant investment in rail electrification.

-  Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021)- [Weblink](#)

Implications


National policy sets a clear direction on the need to reach a Net Zero position, and it offers guidance on how different sectors must contribute. In respect of transport, the electrification of parts of the transport system offers opportunities. Through LTP4, we can seek policies which promote and enable the smooth and timely transition of the road vehicle fleet to electric power, including providing the charging infrastructure network which will be required. We can also build our LTP4 approach around reducing the need to travel and encouraging more trips to be made by sustainable modes, rather than private car, in order to support the Net Zero aims.

3.1.5 Clean Air Strategy (2019)

HM Government Clean Air Strategy 2019 sets out how we will tackle all sources of air pollution, making our air healthier to breathe, protecting nature and boosting the economy. Air quality is the largest environmental health risk in the UK. It shortens lives and contributes to chronic illness.

Road transport, domestic shipping, aviation, and rail are responsible for a significant proportion of air pollutant emissions, 50% of nitrogen oxides, 16% PM2.5 and 5% NMVOC. Transport has a key role to play in reducing emissions and meeting government's objectives on the environment and public health.


The document sets out the scale of the problem (28,000 to 36,000 deaths attributable annually to man-made air pollution, and positive health outcomes with improvements in air quality. The strategy re-states commitment to zero emission vehicles. It also sets out policies and investment to reduce emissions by modal shift, with a focus on a long-term shift away from road freight, and local car journeys replaced by active travel and public transport.

 [Clean Air Strategy \(2019\)- Weblink](#)

3.1.6 Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report – Air Pollution (2022)

The Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2022 sets out the effects of air pollution on health, as well as presenting achievable solutions. It presents evidence of how air quality improvements in London have reduced childhood asthma hospital admissions. It also reflects on how minimising air pollution can reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, strokes, and lung cancer.

The report suggests that urban planning can help ensure that new neighbourhoods be designed in a way that reduces vehicle dependency, through the creation of compact mixed-use neighbourhoods. Urban planning should also encourage active travel through prioritising the provision of infrastructure for cycling and walking. Evidence shows how active travel promotion and use reduces air pollution emissions and also reaps significant health benefits. There is clearly scope for increasing active travel. Cycling in the UK accounted for just 3% of trips by mode in 2020, compared to 28% in the Netherlands.

 [Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2022 - Weblink](#)

Implications

There is clear evidence on the impact which poor air quality has on public health, and a definite relationship between transport emissions and poor air quality. Through LTP4 we should seek to define an approach which will improve the operation and efficiency of the transport system but also reduce the impact which travel has on poor air quality in order to improve public health outcomes within the borough.

3.1.7 Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021)

Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain makes the case that decarbonisation makes sense even without the global imperative of climate change. This strategy re-states that the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans will be phased out by 2030, and all new cars and vans will be zero emission at the tailpipe by 2035. This policy was later adjusted to 2035 but is now in the process of being reverted back to its original position by the current government (see Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate Update 2025, section 6.1.12).

It suggests that a decarbonised transport network does not simply mean changing how we power our vehicles. It means we should make better use of limited road space for all users, and provide more mobility options, especially for short journeys that dominate UK travel".

The six strategic priorities set out in the document are:

"Decarbonisation will deliver fundamentally better transport, for everyone, every day".

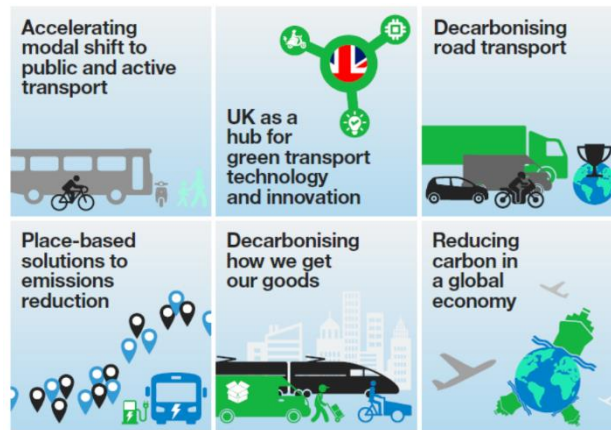


Figure 2: GOV.UK (2021) Six Strategic Priorities.

This policy requires decarbonisation and transport improvements to be delivered at a local level by making quantifiable carbon reductions a fundamental part of local transport planning and funding. LTPs will need to set out how local areas will deliver ambitious, quantified carbon reductions in transport in line with carbon budgets and net zero. Future funding will become conditional on local areas' ability to demonstrate how they will reduce emissions over a portfolio of transport investments through LTPs, and this will become a focus of engagement between central and local government.

Implications

Linked to the climate emergency is the need to decarbonise many industries and sectors. There is a clear direction that the transport system can and must contribute. Through LTP4, we can define policies which support and accelerate the decarbonisation of different travel modes and follow the principle that funding should be prioritised to programmes and initiatives which support decarbonisation.

To support development of the strategy, DfT commissioned deliberative research to understand the complexities and drivers of current and sustainable travel behaviour. Their findings summarised:

- To make people feel capable of change: introduce 'try before you buy' schemes and link environmental impact and travel choices more explicitly.
- To provide the opportunity for change: a gradual transition to more sustainable modes over a number of years can be more realistic, address the negative perceptions of cycling and cyclists, increase the visibility of electric vehicle infrastructure.
- To motivate people to change: address the safety concerns of cycling, focus on leisure journeys as a first step, highlight social & community benefits to appeal to a wider set of motivations and engage a broader audience.

A broad sample of 11 – 18-year-olds were engaged to better understand their travel experiences, their attitudes towards the environment and how transport factors into this. The research found that environment was more top of mind in this age group compared to older age groups, and they were surprised to learn how much transport contributed to carbon emissions. This made them feel it was more important for individuals to take responsibility.

DfT Research 2020

DfT produced an update in 2022 which set out progress. Key findings included:

- In 2021, over 18% of new cars sold had a plug, up from 3% in 2019.
- The way goods are delivered is changing fast. Nine electric HGVs on the road in 2022, joining over 1000 electric delivery vans.
- Increased access to electric vehicle charging points, with over 31,000 public charge points now in place.
- New body Active Travel England launched, overseeing delivery of 134 cycling, and walking schemes.
- 2000 new zero emission buses on the road.

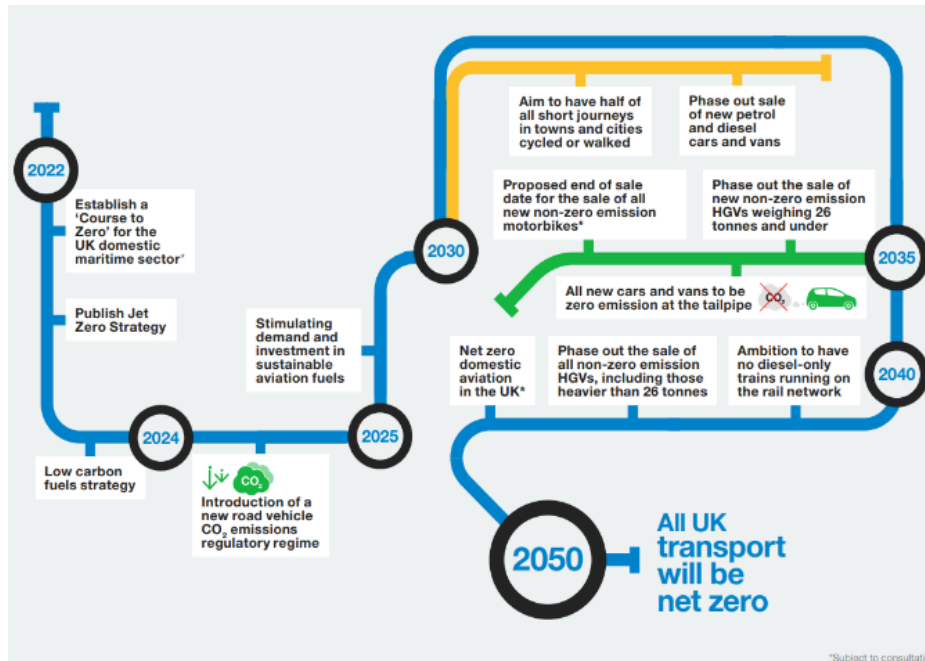


Figure 3: Net Zero Pathway to 2050

The Transport Decarbonisation Plan identified that additional interventions above the current baseline are required to achieve a net zero transport system by 2050, represented in Figure 4 below as the difference between the blue and green lines. In 2023, the DfT published additional information on the assumptions used to develop the decarbonising transport projection (green). Key assumptions include:

- 70-100% of car sales are ultra-low emission vehicles by 2030
- Electrification of 84% (13,000 kms) of all unelectrified railway tracks
- Net zero domestic aviation by 2040
- Long-term ambitious investment in cycling and walking
- Domestic shipping emissions reduced close to zero by 2050.
- Increases in average car occupancy.
- Reduced emissions from heavy goods vehicles and vans.
- 15% reduction in annual trip rates between 2022 and 2050

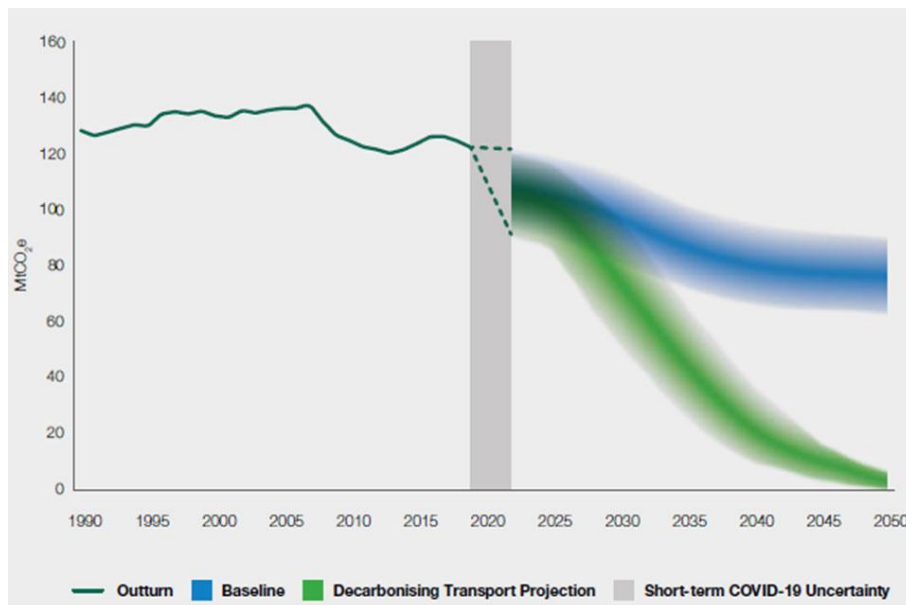


Figure 4: DfT 2021, Transport decarbonisation pathway



Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021) - [Weblink](#)



Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain: One year on review (2022) - [Weblink](#)



Assumptions used to develop decarbonising transport scenarios (2023) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

Decarbonising the transport network requires a change in approach, and potentially radical and wide-reaching changes to how things have operated in past decades. This will include a transition to electric vehicles, but also reductions in travel demand, and substantial increases in the use of sustainable travel modes such as buses and trains. Behaviour change will be key, and through LTP4 we can set out actions we can take that will give people the capability, opportunity and added motivation to make changes to how they travel in order to support wider decarbonisation aims.

3.1.8 Environmental Improvement Plan (2023)

The Environmental Improvement Plan sets out national goals relating to how the environment will be improved. For example, it makes a commitment that everyone in England should live within a fifteen-minute walk of a green or blue space. This seeks to promote access to sport and physical activity, improved physical and mental health and wellbeing, and reduced air pollution.



Environmental Improvement Plan (2023) - [Weblink](#)

3.1.9 Clean Power 2030 (2024)

Clean Power 2030 (released December 2024) is the government's main policy document related to energy policy. It set out various commitments, including:

- Changes to the planning process and consents to streamline the process for critical infrastructure and energy projects.
- Changes to how renewable and nuclear projects are procured to make contracts easier.
- Reform of the electricity market, to provide more support to low-carbon flexible capacity and to address sector-specific barriers.
- Changes to the electric grid network connection process to prioritise viable renewable projects.
- Initiatives to improve skills and capabilities across the workforce and to increase co-ordinated planning across the supply chain.

Central to the government's energy plans is the formation of 'Great British Energy' as a publicly-owned energy company, and the creation of the National Wealth Fund which will be used to facilitate investment.

The LTP4 is impacted by the national energy strategy, particular the plans to support a transition of the transport sector to running using more sustainable vehicle technologies, including low emission vehicles across private ownership and public transport fleets. Electric vehicles will require significant amounts of electricity to be available from the grid, and an expanded network of charging facilities that can be powered at all times of the day.



Clean Power 2030 (2024) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

The direction for the UK energy sector closely interacts with the plans we can make for the transport system and will increasingly do so if we are to increase use of electric power as part of decarbonising how we

travel. Transport is not the only sector which is looking to increase the use of electric power in place of previous technologies, and so the national energy strategy must provide confidence it can accommodate the requirements of the whole economy. Whilst this is a national issue rather than a local one, LTP4 must recognise the linkage between how transport choices can be adapted and the wider demands on the energy grid.

3.2 Regional

3.2.1 TfN Transport Decarbonisation Strategy (2021)

At a regional level, the Transport for the North (TfN) Transport Decarbonisation Strategy sets out a range of scenarios and policy interventions to contribute to 2050 Net Zero. In the UK, surface transport is the largest contributing sector to greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 22% of all emissions in 2019, of which more than 95% are from road transport. Furthermore, transport emissions have actually grown overall since 2013, despite modest falls in the last few years.

The North had 8 million registered cars in 2018. Large and SUV cars, which typically have higher emissions intensity, made up nearly one quarter of those cars, and just under one third of new car sales that year. This reflects a national trend over the last two decades of a gradual increase in the purchase of larger cars.

TfN believes that an acceleration towards a zero-carbon transport network must be at the heart of public policy making and investment decisions. Its ambition for the North is to travel faster and further than national policy and maximise the clean growth opportunities that decarbonisation can provide for the North. Through their Decarbonisation Strategy, Transport for the North are committing to a regional near-zero carbon surface transport network, achieving a near-zero emissions (0.5 MTCO_{2e}) surface transport network in the North by 2045.


TfN suggest it will be challenging to bridge the 2030 policy gap with policies which take time to have an effect. For context, TfN have compared the outcomes of various scenarios against their

decarbonisation trajectory; any gaps between the scenario and decarbonisation trajectory imply that there is a gap, where policy will need to be written.

Demand management and mode-shift policies that can be implemented quickly will be essential. Post 2030s, decarbonisation largely relies on transition to ZEVs, but a requirement for significant levels of transition to zero emission HGVs pre-2035 is necessary to remain within the carbon budget.

The document sets out an evidence base summary on policies required to achieve behaviour change (modal shift & demand management), including:

- Encouraging mode shift to walking, cycling, micro-mobility and public transport, including Demand Responsive Services (DRT).
- Disincentivising car use and avoiding unnecessary travel (road user charging, parking policy, access restrictions, incentivising working from home).
- Encouraging the uptake of shared mobility and developing the concept of Mobility as a Service (MaaS).
- Introducing more restrictive parking standards at new developments.
- Improving freight efficiency and a significant shift to rail.
- Ensuring transport and land-use planning processes encourage sustainable choices.

 TfN Transport Decarbonisation Strategy (2021) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

In partnership with TfN, all Northern Transport Authorities are committed to playing their part in taking policy decisions that will help to narrow the gap to Net Zero. This includes support the transition to low emission vehicles, and by setting out demand management policies and interventions that will help to deliver a reduced need to travel, and a significant mode shift to walking, cycling, micro-mobility and public transport modes. Through LTP4 we can further enhance our position in respect of how CW&C are supporting northern plans.

3.2.2 Cheshire & Warrington Local Nature Recovery Strategy – In Development

A first Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Cheshire and Warrington is being developed in partnership by CW&C with Cheshire East Council, Warrington Borough Council, Peak District National Park Authority, Natural England, the Environment Agency and Forestry Commission. The strategy will set out the priorities and actions of nature's recovery for the next 5-10 years.

A consultation took place in February and March 2025 to inform the proposed priorities, measures and areas mapped for nature's recovery. The LNRS will become a statutory policy document in response to government legally binding commitments to reverse the decline of nature. The LNRS will help Cheshire Authorities to meet their enhanced biodiversity duties by steering broader action in the county, beyond impact of their own services. The draft LNRS introduced 10 nature recovery delivery principles and defined strategic priorities for different types of habitat such as Woodlands, hedgerows & trees, Grassland & heathland, Watercourses, and Peat & wetlands.

The transport sector can have impact on local nature, including with how water run-off is managed, and how culvert and underpasses are designed and maintained.



Cheshire & Warrington Local Nature Recovery Strategy (In development) - [Weblink](#)

3.3 Local

3.3.1 Cheshire West and Chester Climate Emergency Response Plan (2020, and 2025)

The Council's local response to the Climate Emergency is set out in a Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP). The CERP recognises that we face a climate emergency that will have an impact on all aspects of our lives and, while it is undeniably a global challenge, it can only be solved through concerted action at a local level.

An initial version of the CERP was adopted by the Council in 2020. This has provided a key framework for the Council, ensuring that our activities, procedures and decision-making as an organisation are aligned with the commitments which we have made. The CERP has been reviewed during 2024/25, and an updated plan has been drafted and consulted on. A new CERP is scheduled to be considered by Cabinet in summer 2025.

Transport is the second-largest contributor to climate change in the borough (after Industry) and is a growing cause of emissions. The 2025 CERP identifies that transport contributes 26% of all emissions, with over 90% of these emissions relating to road transport. While the Council has varying levels of influence on different transport modes and networks within the borough, tackling transport emissions must be a priority if the Council is to achieve its emissions goals.

The CERP recognises that electric vehicle and low emission vehicles have the potential to make a positive contribution to tackling this challenge as take-up increase, though it accepts that decarbonisation of vehicles alone will not be enough to achieve our target of a net zero borough by 2045. Equally, electric vehicles still generate particulate pollution, contribute to traffic queues and are involved in road collisions. A significant reduction in car miles driven, particularly where there is only one person in the vehicle, will be essential to achieving our priorities. The CERP sets out that improved public transport services, and better walking and cycling infrastructure, will both be key to providing alternatives to car.

The 2025 CERP lists transport-related outcomes that are sought by 2030, and actions which will be taken to get there. These are listed below.

Outcomes by 2030:

- Develop and adopt Cheshire West and Chester Local Transport Plan 4 – an action plan for transforming transport to create a fair, sustainable future transport system.
- Reduced dependency on private car trips.
- Increased uptake of walking, wheeling and cycling modes.
- Increased public transport patronage.
- Improve climate resilience of local transport networks.
- Maximise transition of petrol and diesel vehicles to zero-emission fuels (electric and hydrogen).

Actions which the Council commits to take:

- Develop the Cheshire West and Chester Local Transport Plan 4 and supporting implementation plan to set out a pathway to a fairer, safer, zero-emission transport system in the borough, in partnership with the network operators, neighbouring authorities, local communities and key stakeholders.
- Establish a commercial partnership to deliver a major expansion in the borough's public electric vehicle charging infrastructure network, and explore opportunities for enhancing access to domestic charging facilities, focused on improving opportunities for communities without access to off-street parking and creating an EV charging network to suit all user needs.
- Continue to transition the council's fleet vehicles to zero emission technologies, and explore interoperable networks with other public sector institutions in the borough.
- Develop and adopt a west Cheshire Design Code, ensuring that new developments and street retrofit schemes are built to encourage and enable sustainable forms of transport and are resilient to future climate impacts.
- Continue to deliver improved walking, wheeling and cycling networks across our urban communities, in line with the Council's adopted Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. We will keep this Plan up to date with reviews and updates as required to reflect the issues experienced on our network, including through ongoing engagement with local cycling and walking groups, relevant stakeholders and the broader public.
- Continue to work with local bus operators to deliver our joint Bus Service Improvement Plan, which seeks to make bus the mode of choice through provision of quicker, more reliable and more accessible services, improving connectivity for all.
- Support local businesses in accessing funding and advice to promote transition to zero-emission fleets and support sustainable commuting.
- Support local schools and educational establishments in promoting safe and sustainable travel choices for pupils, students and staff, including exploring opportunities for expansion of the School Streets programme.
- Work with regional partners and forums to lobby for improved rail infrastructure and services for communities across the borough, including improved services, better facilities and greater multimodal connectivity.

The preparation of the 2025 CERP involved consultation with residents, businesses and visitors to the borough through online and in-person surveys. Within this engagement exercise, 66% of people agreed that these transport outcomes are important, and 62% of people agreed with the related actions.


The plan then identifies actions which partners and residents can take to make a positive contribution.

What partners can do:

- Switch the companies' fleet to electric or low carbon vehicles.
- Develop a travel plan for your company or school and its staff based on a modal hierarchy, which reduces the need to travel as the highest priority and includes supporting your employees to work from home and use public transport. Anonymised data from surveys supporting your travel plan can also help the Council in developing area strategies for your community.
- Work with neighbouring organisations and businesses to consider ways to reduce the need for solo car trips – such as through car sharing and colocation – and identify opportunities for consolidation of freight and deliveries.

What residents can do:

- Achieving our goals in relation to transport is ultimately reliant on the travel choices people make. Where you can, consider swapping some of the trips you would usually make by car to bus, rail, walking, wheeling or cycling. You could walk or cycle to school or work, or share a car with a colleague rather than travelling alone. As well as reducing carbon emissions, swapping just a few trips a week could also bring benefits such as better health, less pollution, and could even save you money.
- Engage with the Council through your local councillor to let them know how your community could be transformed to support more sustainable travel choices.
- Work with your local town or parish council under our Highways Volunteer Scheme to help enhance your local community and improve resilience of our network to climate challenges.

 CW&C Climate Emergency Response Plan (2020)- [Weblink](#)

 Emerging CW&C Climate Emergency Response Plan 2025-30 consultation - [Weblink](#)
(*expected to be adopted in summer 2025*)


3.3.2 Cheshire West and Chester Low Emission Strategy 2018 – 2021 (2018)

The Cheshire West and Chester Low Emission Strategy seeks to address the negative health impacts arising from poor air quality by targeting the reduction of NO₂ and PM₁₀ and indirectly tailpipe hydrocarbon emissions through a variety of means whilst at the same time not compromising the Council’s carbon dioxide (CO₂) objectives and targets for minimising carbon emissions and ensuring that the borough continues to thrive.

The Strategy is based upon three key principles for the reduction of emissions:

- Shift: change mode from cars to public transport, cycling and walking.
- Avoid: reduce vehicle kilometres driven, emissions from stationary vehicles, chimneys and construction.
- Improve: improve the vehicle technology to reduce emissions and specifically low emission vehicles.

As the original intended timeframe for the strategy has now passed, it is expected that this will be updated in the future to reflect the latest government targets for particulates and the latest profile of nitrogen dioxide emissions.

 CW&C Low Emission Strategy 2018 - 2021 (2018) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

The declaration of a Climate Emergency, and the subsequent Climate Emergency Response Plans and Low Emission Strategy, set critical context for LTP4 and will be a driving factor in the policies that we set. The scale of the challenge with local context is clear, and action will be required to meet the ambitious targets that have been set for decarbonisation. The climate emergency, and the targets of these policies, can be central to the direction we take in LTP4.

4.0 SOCIETY AND PLACE

4.1 National

4.1.1 A Connected Society – Strategy for Tackling Loneliness (2018)

A Connected Society – Strategy for Tackling Loneliness sets out a vision of how we can all play a role in building a more socially connected society. It highlights the importance of social relationships to people's health and wellbeing. There is evidence that lonely people are more likely to visit a GP or A&E and more likely to enter local authority funded residential care. At work, higher loneliness among employees is associated with poorer performance on tasks and in a team, while social interaction at work has been linked to increased productivity. A study by the Co-op and New Economics Foundation attempted to calculate the cost of this, estimating that loneliness could be costing employers up to £2.5 billion a year due to absence and productivity losses.

Transport is vital for social connections. We all depend on our transport networks for journeys to meet people, get to work or school, do our shopping, look after our families, and see our friends. Respondents to the call for evidence for this strategy highlighted the importance of access to inclusive and affordable transport as vital to tackling loneliness. Access to good bus services and community transport services also plays a key role, especially for those living in rural areas or those on lower incomes. The strategy commits to making transport networks inclusive and accessible, in particular for disabled and older people, enabling them to be more mobile and establish and maintain their own social connections. One of the main commitments is for the DfT to build partnerships with transport providers and community groups to develop how transport can be used as a means to help tackle loneliness and use industry-wide forums to promote these.

Work on the Strategy is monitored annually, with the 2023 monitoring highlighting areas of progress during the previous 12 months including:

- Up to £30 million has been secured to increase volunteering opportunities and reduce loneliness in target disadvantaged areas through our Know Your Neighbourhood Fund.
- Millions of people have been reached through our loneliness campaign activity.
- The evidence base on loneliness has been significantly expanded through commissioning research projects, including investigating the relationship between loneliness and mental wellbeing.

The monitoring report also states that emerging evidence shows cost of living pressures are likely to exacerbate loneliness, and highlighted how the Department for Transport's Tackling Loneliness with Transport Fund had awarded grants of totalling £5 million to 12 projects which explore how transport can help people at risk of loneliness (e.g. funding sociable community transport services).

A Connected Society – Strategy for Tackling Loneliness (2018) - [Weblink](#)

Tackling Loneliness: March 2023 Annual Reporting (2023) - [Weblink](#)

4.1.2 Inclusive Transport Strategy: Achieving Equal Access for Disabled People (2019)

Disability affects 13.9 million people in the UK., with 45% of State Pension age adults reported having a disability. The UK's population is ageing. By 2040, 13% of the UK population will be aged over 75 – an increase from 8% today (2019). The Inclusive Transport Strategy: Achieving Equal Access for Disabled People sets out the Government's plans to make our transport system more inclusive, and to make travel easier for disabled people. While it is focused on the inclusion of disabled people, many of the improvements will also benefit other travellers. The main goal is for disabled people to be able to access the transport system easily, confidently and at no extra cost. In turn this will support the Government's wider commitments to enable more disabled people to take up employment, more people to secure apprenticeships, and fewer people to be impacted by loneliness.

Delivering more inclusive infrastructure across the country is fundamental to achieving the strategy's ambition for greater access to transport services and increased confidence amongst disabled travellers and will be a

major priority for delivery of the Strategy. The strategy states its intentions to engage directly and constantly with disabled people and organisations.




The Strategy's five main themes are:

- Awareness and enforcement of passenger rights - raising awareness of the obligations on transport operators, the processes for raising concerns or complaints and working with regulators to hold operators to account.
- Staff training - ensuring that transport staff (frontline and managerial) understand the needs of disabled people with physical, mental, cognitive, or sensory impairments, and can provide better assistance.
- Improving information - ensuring that transport operators provide travel information in formats that all passengers can easily access and understand, before and during a journey.
- Improving physical infrastructure - ensuring that vehicles, stations, and streetscapes are designed, built, and operated so that they are easy to use for all.
- The future of inclusive transport - ensuring that technological advances and new business models provide opportunities for all, and that disabled people are involved from the outset in their design. Emerging technologies have the potential to change the way disabled people travel. However, without active engagement and consideration of their needs, innovations can risk accidentally 'designing out' sections of society who might benefit most.

The benefits to creating an inclusive transport system are undeniable. Transport has the ability to open doors, unlock potential, and to increase confidence. It enables people to see family and friends as well as seek and access employment. It can make the difference between feeling socially isolated and feeling socially included.

National monitoring of progress is reported by government using a 'scorecard'. The last reporting was published in 2023 for the 2021-22 period. The scorecard covers 23 metrics related to the ITS and disabled people's travel. The data shows disabled people in England made 72% of the number of journeys made by non-disabled people, by any mode. This value has been consistent since 2019-20. The number of trips made by disabled people in 2021-22 was around 22% less than in 2018-19 (a proportional change that is similar to the reduction amongst non-disabled people). The scorecard reported small improvements in the % of people satisfied with the rail passenger assist process, and with the % of local bus services which offer audible and visible information, compared to previous years. Less encouraging trends included an increase in the % of complaints by rail passengers that relate to accessibility, and a small reduction in the % of taxis that are wheelchair accessible.

A broader monitoring and evaluation report was published in January 2022, covering research conducted during 2020-21. The monitoring identified various factors which disproportionately affect disabled people's confidence to travel. These include travelling alone; the familiarity of the journey; the reliability of the mode used; the level of personal comfort available on the journey; and having to change modes. The availability of toilets was also crucial for confidence.

-  [Inclusive Transport Strategy \(2018\) - Weblink](#)
-  [Inclusive Transport Strategy Monitoring 2021-22 'Scorecard' \(2023\) - Weblink](#)
-  [Monitoring and Evaluation Report \(2022\) - Weblink](#)

4.1.3 Get Active: A Strategy for the Future of Sport and Physical Activity (2023)

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Get Active Strategy outlines how the government and sector intend to work together to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be active by supporting the creation of an accessible, sustainable, and inclusive sport and physical activity sector and tackling physical inactivity. Government support for active travel is present across the strategy.

The three core strategy priorities are:

- Being unapologetically ambitious in making the nation more active, whether in government or in the sport sector
- Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all so that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport.
- Moving towards a more sustainable sector that is more financially resilient and robust.

The strategy outlines how transport plays an important role in facilitating access to sport and physical activity but can also act as a barrier. For disabled and non-disabled people, the ability to access facilities and open spaces is often reliant on the availability of walking/ cycling routes, accessible parking, and quality public transport links.

Recommendations include the adoption of Active Design principles to ensure that planning decisions create environments which can help people to lead more physically active and healthy lives, and the importance of having a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan in place to support active travel and active school journeys. This will have the ‘twin benefits’ of moving away from high carbon-emitting forms of transport, as well as helping to get people active.



Get Active Strategy (2023) - [Weblink](#)



Sport England Active Design Guidance and Design Checklist - [Weblink](#)

4.1.4 Sport England Every Move: Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan (2024)

Sport England has developed a Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan (named ‘Every Move’) which aims to understand and then address the impact and benefits which sport and physical activity can have on addressing some of our biggest societal challenges of climate change, environmental pollution and biodiversity. The plan sets a target for Sport England as an organisation to reduce its own carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 and to achieve net zero by 2040. The plan then expands on how sport and physical activity can be promoted and undertaken in ways that are more environmentally friendly and in line with Net Zero pathways. As part of its 2050 vision for the sector are proposals to increase active travel and make it a primary mode of transport, ensure sports facilities are adapted to generate renewable energy for the local community and to be able to resist changing climate impacts (e.g. flooding resistance). Other proposals include ensuring sports facilities and events are community orientated, are co-located with health and other essential services and aiming for everyone to have access to clean green and blue spaces which are rich in biodiversity and wildlife.



Sport England Every Move: Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan (2024) - [Weblink](#)

4.1.5 Chief Medical Officer’s Annual Report – Health in Cities (2024)

The Chief Medical Officer’s Annual Report 2024 highlights some of the unique challenges which our cities can create, where often distinct communities can be living very close together. This includes wide ranges of poverty and affluence, ethnic mix and cultural experience all living within short distances. Although affluence and poverty are more likely to be side by side in cities than in other environments, deprivation is often concentrated in specific areas with the inevitable concentration of diseases of poverty. Some risks to health, such as outdoor air pollution, are especially problematic in cities, and space for physical exercise and mental relaxation can be difficult to find relative to less crowded areas where the cost of land is lower, and must be protected, especially in areas of deprivation.

The report highlights the opportunities provided by city populations typically being younger than rural areas and smaller towns, as well as the challenges of city populations being more transient and churning. The report also highlights how high density development can impact the quality and spread of green spaces and build environments, the ways in which air pollution issues can be particularly bad in urban spaces, and the way that urban spaces and cities provide both opportunities and difficulties for people to build physical activity into daily lives.



Implications

We increasingly understand the links between the health and wellbeing of our society, and the way that transport provides connectivity and access to opportunity. Through working with colleagues in policy areas such as health, inclusion and physical activity and sport, we can see opportunities to make positive changes which will help improve the lives of people in our communities that face hardship and may suffer in deprivation or poverty. Through LTP4, we can strengthen our policy links between transport and these other areas, and support areas by setting plans to improve transport access and connectivity.

4.1.6 National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out land-use planning policy in England. It was first published in 2012 and has been updated several times by successive governments. The NPPF covers a wide range of development topics including housing, infrastructure, economic development and environment, with a key focus on sustainable development.

NPPF includes information on how local authorities should develop Local Plans which are a vision and framework for future development within an area, detailing where development should occur, what types of development are permitted, and how to achieve sustainable development, all while adhering to the policies set out in the NPPF guidelines.

NPPF 2024 is the latest iteration and came into force in December 2024. It sets out that in respect of supporting a strong and competitive national economy, planning policies should:

- set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to the national industrial strategy and any relevant Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration.
- set criteria, and identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period.
- pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics.
- seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment.
- be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and allow for new and flexible working practices and spaces to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.

NPPF 2024 introduces some key changes from previous versions, including:

- a change in the method of calculating local authority housing targets which has resulted in larger annual housebuilding targets for most of England.
- new guidance on the designation of green belt, and the introduction of the term 'grey belt' to broadly mean 'land in the Green Belt that has been previously developed'.
- greater emphasis on the need for councils to co-operate on plan-making.
- a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the changes to 'tilted balance'.

Section 9 covers sustainable transport requirements. NPPF 2024 identified that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-deigned, sustainable and popular places. This should involve:

- making transport considerations an important part of early engagement with local communities.
- ensuring patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places.
- understanding and addressing the potential impacts of development on transport networks.

- realising opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated.
- identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use.
- identifying, assessing and taking into account the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains.

NPPF then sets out requirements for planning policies such as to be prepared with active involvement from the highway authority, to provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks, and to support an appropriate mix of uses across an area to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for a range of trip purposes.

Additionally, the NPPF sets out requirements for parking standards and how proposed development sites should be assessed which will need to be considered in the development of LTP4.

 National Planning Policy Framework (2024) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

The NPPF sets planning policy for the country so has a direct impact on where and how development can happen. National government also influences how many new houses are required to be built. Development has an impact on travel patterns and demand so will be an important consideration in how we make local policies. Through LTP4 (and Local Plan), we can clarify how we would development proposals to be prepared, and we can further strengthen the principle that development is preferred in locations that are already accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, or order to reduce the likelihood that new development creates car-dependent communities that do not have other options for travel. Truly integrating land use planning and transport planning can deliver higher quality and more environmentally friendly places.

4.1.7 English Devolution White Paper (2024)

The English Devolution White Paper sets out the current Labour government's proposals for extending devolution of powers to regional and local authorities. It plans to allow more decision-making to take place at regional and local levels, meaning that local problems and deprivation can be tackled more effectively.

Legislation is also to be introduced to develop the concept of a Strategic Authority. All Strategic Authorities will belong to one of the following levels:

- Foundation Strategic Authorities: these include non-mayoral Combined Authorities and Combined County Authorities automatically, and any Local Authority designated as a Strategic Authority without a Mayor.
- Mayoral Strategic Authorities: the Greater London Authority, all Mayoral Combined Authorities and all Mayoral Combined County Authorities will automatically begin as Mayoral Strategic Authorities. Those who meet specified eligibility criteria may be designated as Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities. This unlocks further devolution, most notably an Integrated Settlement.

Through devolution, Mayors and local government are proposed to act strategically to drive growth and the shaping of public services in the following areas of competence:

- Transport and local infrastructure
- Skills and employment support
- Housing and strategic planning
- Economic development and regeneration
- Environment and climate change
- Health, wellbeing and public service reform
- Public safety

The White Paper sets out a range of potential changes which will significantly impact how transport and local infrastructure is managed and funded at the regional level. There is an emphasis on increasing local control over transport policies, budgets, and infrastructure, allowing regions to tailor solutions to their specific needs. Local governments and combined authorities would gain more authority over regional transport systems, including bus services, local rail, and roads including active travel infrastructure. This would allow them to design integrated, efficient transport solutions that align with local priorities. Directly elected mayors or local leaders could oversee transport decisions, ensuring that the policies are responsive to regional needs. This would enhance transparency and accountability in transport planning.

Cheshire West and Chester Council is working in partnership with Warrington Borough Council and Cheshire East Council to develop plans for a new Mayoral Combined Authority (which would be named Cheshire and Warrington). The proposed new Mayoral Combined Authority area is shown in Figure 5. The Cheshire and Warrington proposal has been accepted into the Government's Devolution Priority Programme which means that the new arrangements may be established for a Mayoral election to take place in May 2026.

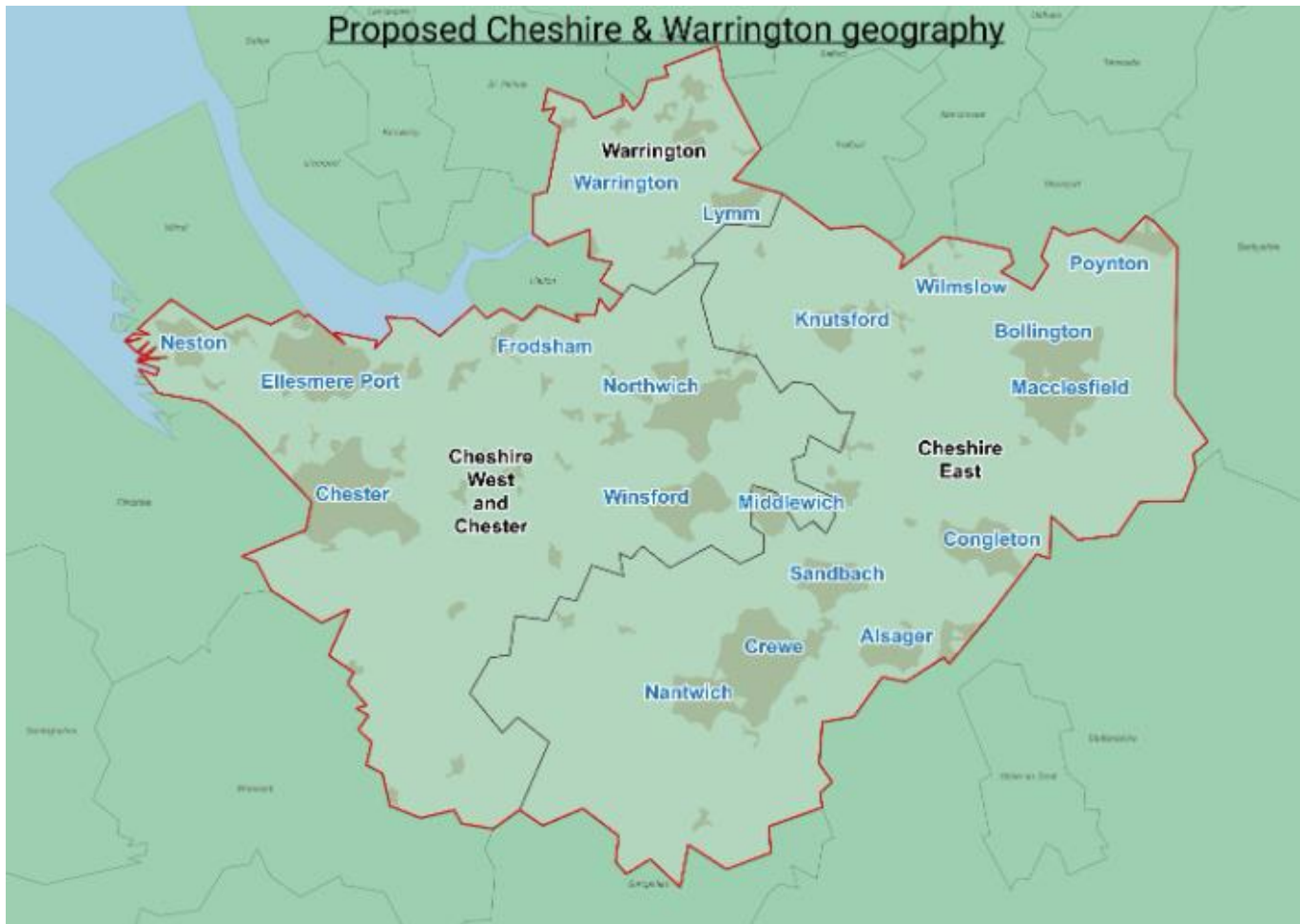




Figure 5: Proposed geography of the Cheshire and Warrington Mayoral Combined Authority area

-  English Devolution White Paper (2024) - [Weblink](#)
-  Cheshire + Warrington Joint Committee Devolution Website - [Weblink](#)

The Devolution White Paper is potentially of critical importance to the local transport system, as a new Mayoral Combined Authority would take on additional powers over transport, and provide an elected mayor and authority officials with more power to influence how funding is directed within the borough. Whilst the opportunities of a Mayoral Combined Authority will sit outside of the CW&C LTP4, we should recognise that within a medium-term horizon there may be greater scope to make more significant changes to the transport system through this change in the organisation of local government.

4.2 Regional

4.2.1 TfN Connecting Communities (2023)

The TfN Connecting Communities Strategy 2023 defines TfN and partners' role in transport and social inclusion and is based on their substantial research base on the subject. Figure 6 below outlines as the causes of transport related social exclusion as: areas of poverty, multiple deprivation, and inequalities, combined with car domination, poor conditions for walking/cycling, inadequate and/or expensive public transport leads to gaps in access to opportunities, which reinforces societal factors in the area.

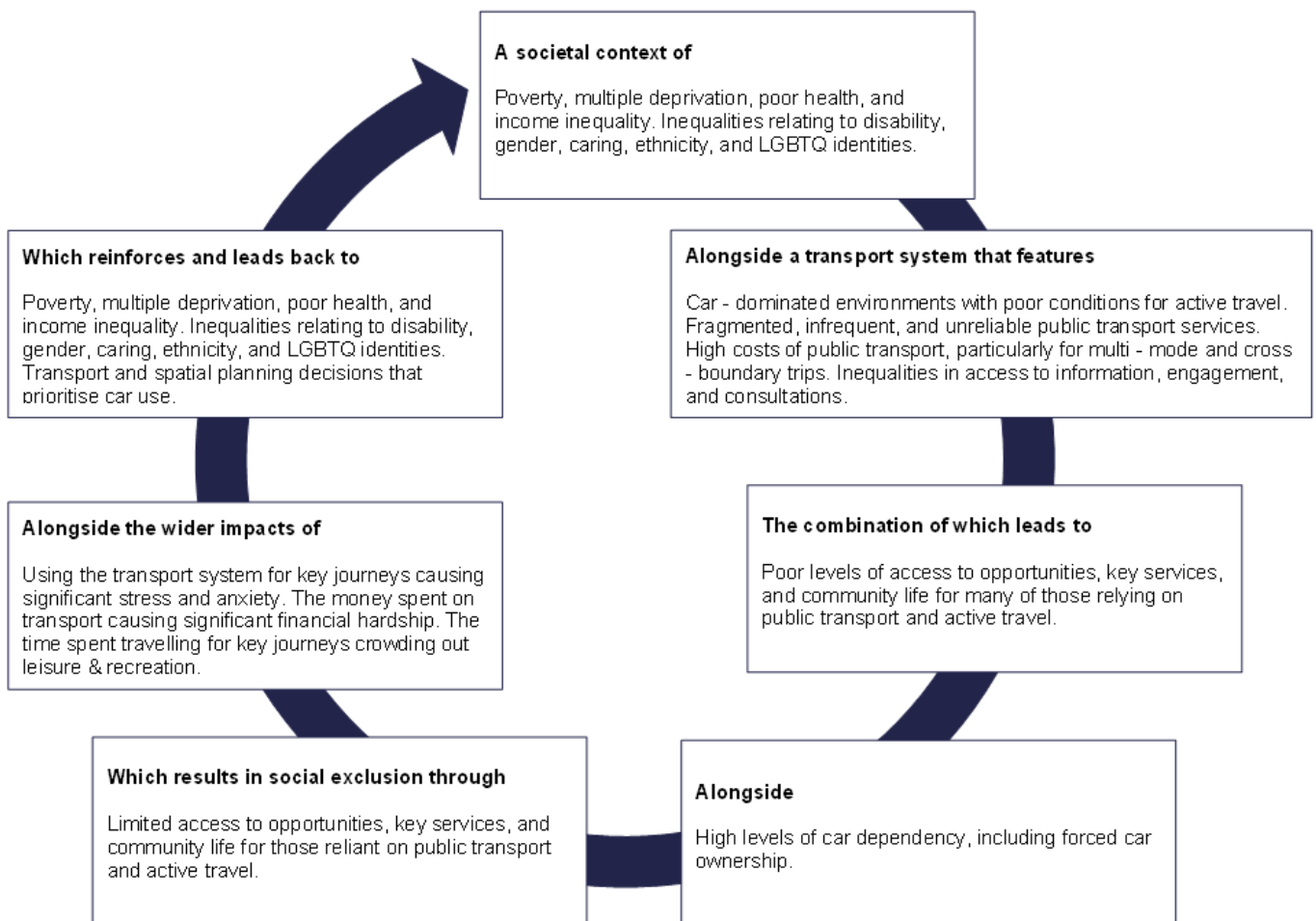


Figure 6: Adapted from TfN reporting (2023) - The causes of transport-related social exclusion.




The vision for this strategy is for a transport system which meets the needs of diverse places and populations of the North, reducing inequalities and enhancing social inclusion. There are four policy priorities set out to deliver this vision:

1. Public transport – a series of interventions that provide a safe, reliable, and affordable means of accessing opportunities, key services, and community life.

2. Car – a series of interventions that reduce levels of forced car ownership and the negative externalities associated with car-dominated environments, while reducing congestion and maintaining high quality road links.
3. Active Travel – a series of interventions that promote active travel while reducing levels of forced car ownership and the negative externalities associated with car-dominated environments.
4. Planning and policy processes – interventions that reduce socioeconomic and demographic inequalities and improve access to power and decision-making among population groups that are relatively more exposed to social exclusion because of transport issues.

TfN's ambition is for the North's major road network to support fast action towards achieving Net Zero for transport, whilst maintaining a vital role in enabling safe, reliable, and resilient multimodal journeys.

In *The Cost of Staying Connected* (2023), TfN build on their *Connecting Communities* strategy (see 4.2.1) by assessing the impact that cost-of-living pressures (principally the rapid rise in inflation seen in 2021 and 2022 and the persistently high level of inflation seen in 2022 and 2023) are having on communities at risk of transport related social exclusion. This research found the cost-of-living is changing the frequency many are travelling, which is affecting the mental health of many high-risk groups. Alternative modes of travel are now being considered, as is whether the purpose of the trip itself is necessary. In short, those most at risk are facing more constrained travel decisions and having to consider whether travelling is worth it. The findings of this report further emphasise the need for significant transport investment, targeted to areas and populations that face the highest risk of transport related social exclusion, including improving rural mobility.

-  TfN *Connecting Communities* Strategy (2023) - [Weblink](#)
-  TfN *Transport-Related Social Exclusion in the North of England* (2023) - [Weblink](#)
-  TfN *The Cost of Staying Connected* (2023) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

Transport can play a key role in addressing social isolation and breaking the cycle of poverty and deprivation. TfN analysis reinforces how improving access to affordable public transport and safe, attractive active travel networks are key to unlocking this change, as well as ensuring that those with lived experience of poverty and transport-related social exclusion are empowered in transport decision-making processes. Through LTP4, we are able to define policies which increase our ability to make positive changes for addressing transport-related social exclusion.

4.2.2 Cheshire and Warrington Quality of Place Strategy (2019)

The Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) 2017 placed an emphasis on the importance of place. Building on the SEP, the Local Enterprise Partnership consulted on and published a Cheshire and Warrington Quality of Place Strategy in 2019.

Quality of place can have a significant impact on our lives and life choices, as poor environments can affect our mental and physical wellbeing. The vision in this strategy is:

- A home for and attractive to a well-educated, highly skilled, adaptable workforce.
- Offering high quality urban and rural places including vibrant town centres and an attractive leisure and retail offer.
- Providing a balanced, well-functioning housing market to support economic growth.
- One of the best-connected places in the UK.
- A place where it is easy to do business and to locate and grow a business.

- An area that has successfully transitioned to a low carbon economy.
- A place with high quality, affordable public services (including schools and health services).
- Somewhere that recognises the economic contribution made by blue / green infrastructure.
- A sub-region that is attractive to inward investors and new businesses, and which has a clear and compelling set of messages with which to promote the places within it.



Cheshire and Warrington Quality of Place Strategy (2019) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

Quality of place includes physical environment, schools, housing, health services, culture, and leisure. These are all critical to society, and the LTP4 provides a great opportunity to set out how we will deliver the appropriate transport and connectivity links that are critical to realising the Quality of Place Strategy.

4.2.3 Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership: Towards a Sustainable and Inclusive Cheshire and Warrington (2022)

The Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission was set up by the Subregional Leaders' Board in November 2020, with the aim of contributing towards realising Cheshire and Warrington's ambition of becoming the most sustainable and inclusive subregion in the UK. The report from that commission, titled 'Towards a Sustainable and Inclusive Cheshire and Warrington', sets out an ambition to become the most sustainable, inclusive, healthy and growing sub-region in the country.

Four themes underpin the ambition to transition towards a sustainable and inclusive Cheshire and Warrington:

- Inclusive Economy, including equal opportunities for all; policy solutions co-designed with people affected; public investment to address disadvantage; all people to have access and ability to use information and digital technologies.
- Sustainable Land Use, including unlock potential of rural areas; replace rural fossil fuels with local wind farms, solar and biofuels; reverse decline of nature with better soils, more woodlands, and hedgerows.
- Net Zero, including: build UK's first net zero industrial cluster; support projects that will reach net zero carbon and green jobs; implement waste zero economy; address heating and insulation in social homes – reducing fuel poverty.
- Sustainable Transport, including full decarbonisation of all transport by 2035; new infrastructure for EV; improve public transport; improve active travel.



Towards a Sustainable and Inclusive Cheshire and Warrington (2022) - [Weblink](#)

4.3 Local

4.3.1 Cheshire West and Chester Fairer Future Strategy (2021)

The Council's Poverty Emergency Declaration sets out a "people and planet approach setting poverty alongside climate in providing the framework for a fairer, greener recovery...". The declaration outlines the following commitments:

- Treat poverty as an equalities and fairness issue.
- Work together to gather better quality evidence on the impacts of poverty, including the full range of disproportionate impacts of the crisis on those struggling on low incomes.
- Put lived experience at the heart of our approach.
- Provide the spaces and opportunity for those affected by low income to gather, learn, strengthen, and support one another in raising their democratic voice on the issues that directly affect them, locally and nationally.

- Explore routes to incorporate Community Wealth-Building and Collective Ownership approaches that address low income and environmental concerns, with a focus on the communities most harshly economically impacted by the crisis.
- Collaborate, work collectively, and celebrate one another's successes across councils.
- Put working together to solve the root causes of poverty at the heart of our agenda, recognising that poverty is not a lifestyle choice.

The Council's Fairer Future Strategy 2021 is the Council's long-term plan to tackle poverty. It is built on three pillars:

- Voice – hearing voices of people experiencing poverty, and actions to address issues raised.
- Alleviation – delivering urgent action to tackle immediate consequences.
- Root cause – transforming society and economy to tackle underlying causes.


The cost of poverty to the UK is estimated at £78b annually, and Cheshire West and Chester borough is placed in the worst 25% of all authorities for young person's social mobility. The strategy reports on pockets of deprivation in West Cheshire, with 24,000 residents living in small neighbourhoods that rank in 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in England. Official statistics show that 7,267 children aged 0-15 lived-in low-income families in Cheshire West and Chester, equivalent to 12 percent of children. The JRF report UK Poverty 2020/21 identified transport as being a significant barrier that kept people trapped in poverty. Lower-income workers are more likely to use the bus or walk to work and people on a low wage are more likely to work atypical hours, when there is a more likely to be a lack of appropriate public transport.


The strategy states that immediate consequences of poverty need urgent and serious attention. The Council's approach will balance fair and accessible support services with building resilience for individuals and households to be able to manage their own decisions and make informed choices. There are 17 separate actions the Council commits to, in order to alleviate consequences of poverty. One of those actions is around affordable and sustainable transport. This is deemed as key to removing barriers that people face accessing jobs and key services, particularly for residents in more rural parts of the Borough. A summary of commitments for affordable and sustainable transport is:

- We will work to improve transport links to employment and training opportunities to key services and improve physical accessibility by removing barriers to mobility especially for disabled and older people.
- We will promote active travel across all communities, including more deprived areas, and identify opportunities for community led transport initiatives.
- We will seek investment to deliver the bus service improvement plan to make transport more accessible and affordable.

The strategy also focusses on transforming how we do things to tackle the underlying causes of poverty, and our fairer future objectives are:

- Remove barriers to high quality employment.
- Recognise the pressures and stigma affecting those on fixed incomes and tackle the poverty premium.
- An inclusive economy that benefits everyone.
- Improved social mobility.
- Support community-based working.
- Drive system change through collaboration and devolution.
- Embed poverty considerations in all decision making.
- Adopt rigorous evidence-based approaches.

 CW&C Fairer Future Strategy (2021) - [Weblink](#)

 UK Poverty 2020/21, an annual report by JRF (2021) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

There is a substantial body of evidence that links poverty and social exclusion with transport and connectivity barriers. Through LTP4, we can strengthen our policy links between transport and areas which face the greatest challenges with deprivation and poverty, and support areas by setting plans to improve transport access and connectivity.

4.3.2 Cheshire West and Chester Place Plan (2024)

The Cheshire West and Chester Place Plan was originally published in 2019, covering the 2019-2024 period. It was then refreshed in 2022 and has been updated again in 2024 looking ahead to the next five years. The vision in the Plan is unchanged and remains to “reduce inequality, increase years of healthy life and promote improved mental and physical health and wellbeing for everyone in Cheshire West”.

Compared to England, quality of life is generally good for many people across the borough, with lower levels of deprivation, higher incomes and generally, good health. However, there are pockets of significant disadvantage, where residents experience poorer living conditions, educational attainment, economic prospects, and more years of poor health. Priority areas for intervention include addressing climate change; reducing inequalities; making it easier to access health, social care, and community-based services; and promoting wellbeing and self-care. This will need to be done whilst ensuring we make the best use of our people and financial resources – spending the 'Cheshire pound' wisely and well, whilst improving service quality.

The 2024 updates include change which reflect the NHS Operational and Planning Guidance and other relevant new guidance. The 2024 update also highlights the priorities identified in the new Borough Plan 2024-2028 and the challenges arising from the cost-of-living crises and the Ukraine war. The plan recognises the importance of transport in making greener communities through ‘increasing opportunities for sustainable and healthy transport, including the opportunity that the new LTP4 affords, and through rural mobility schemes and better digital connectivity’.



CW&C Place Plan (2024) - [Weblink](#)

4.3.3 Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) (2015)

Our Local Plan Part 1 was adopted by the Council on 29 January 2015, and provides the overall vision, strategic objectives, spatial strategy and strategic policies for the borough to 2030. This includes setting out the level and location of new housing and employment land, as well as the identification of a number of strategic sites. It sets out the following vision: By 2030 Cheshire West and Chester will be a desirable and attractive place to live, work, learn and visit with vibrant towns and rural villages. This will be delivered through new housing and employment opportunities in sustainable and accessible location, exploiting opportunities for healthier lifestyles, positively adapting to climate change, and supporting communities to take positive actions towards sustainable living.

Local Plan strategic objectives with a clear dependency on LTP4 include:

- Provide and develop reliable, efficient transport networks that support sustainable growth and improve accessibility to jobs and services.
- Ensure all development is supported by the necessary provision of, or improvement to infrastructure, services, and facilities in an effective and timely manner to make development sustainable and minimise its effect upon existing communities.
- Create stronger, safer, and healthier communities by enabling access to leisure, recreational and community facilities and promoting walking and cycling.
- Achieve sustainable waste management, using sustainable modes of transport and travel and the prudent use of our natural resources including water and mineral reserves.
- Opportunities for freight transport on the rail network or via the Manchester Ship Canal should be maximised. New links to these networks will be encouraged where appropriate.

The Local Plan explores transport in more detail. Development and associated transport infrastructure should:

- Provide and develop reliable and efficient transport networks that support sustainable economic growth in the borough and the surrounding area.
- Reduce carbon emissions from transport and take steps to adapt our transport networks to the effect of climate change.
- Contribute to safer and secure transport and promote forms of transport that are beneficial to health.
- Improve accessibility to jobs and key services which help support greater equality of opportunity.
- Ensure that transport helps improve quality of life and enhances the local environment.

New development should be located so as they are accessible to local services and facilities by a range of transport modes. It will be required to demonstrate that any additional traffic can be accommodated safely and satisfactorily within the existing, or proposed, highway network and that appropriate provision is made for access to public transport. Proposals should seek to maximise use of sustainable (low carbon) modes of transport, by incorporating high quality facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and where appropriate charging points for electric vehicles. Opportunities will be sought to extend and improve access to local footpath and cycle networks. Proposals for new industrial and warehousing development should maximise opportunities to transport products by non-road modes of transport (including the Manchester Ship Canal).

 CW&C Local Plan Part 1 (2015) - [Weblink](#)


4.3.4 Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two) (2019)

Local Plan Part 2 was adopted on 18 July 2019. It provides further detailed policies and land allocations which support the strategic objectives and policies set out in the Local Plan (Part One), as part of the Council's aim to produce a comprehensive planning framework to achieve sustainable development in the borough. It is more structured around area-specific policies, which include the land allocations and policies for the development of land within the settlement areas identified in the Local Plan (Part One). Local Plan Policy EP1 (2) – Ellesmere Port settlement area – proposals in the Rossmore Road area are required to contribute towards the provision of new and improved pedestrian and cycling links to improve connectivity within the town centre. Planning commitments to sustainable transport are reinforced in Part 2, and almost all of the numbered local policies set out requirements for sustainable transport.

 CW&C Local Plan Part 2 (2019) - [Weblink](#)

4.3.5 A new Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan

The Council are currently in the process of preparing a new Local Plan, to align with changes that have come into effect to national planning guidance and the NPPF. A new Local Plan will also support the development of a new borough-wide design code that can eventually be incorporated into the new Local Plan or a supplementary plan. Consultation on early evidence base documents took place in 2024 Q1, with a timetable for the further development of a new Local Plan due to be confirmed in due course once national guidance has been clarified. A new Local Plan will replace the existing Part One and Part Two in due course.

 CW&C New Local Plan Website - [Weblink](#)

Implications

As we plan to replace our current Local Plan with a new version, we will maximise co-ordination between development and transport planning, and push for development to be located at sites which can promote sustainability and not deeper car dependency as the only viable mode of travel.

4.3.6 Chester One City Plan (2022)

The Chester One City Plan is a long-term strategy to galvanise healthier, greener, and fairer futures for the city and its communities. With bold ambitions and robust actions that place people front and centre, we seek to achieve equity and confront the climate crisis, it is about building a stronger, kinder city for all. Key principles for the City Plan are: Inclusive City, Accountability, Co-Production and Collaboration and Sustainability.

It sets out that we need to provide more connected, affordable, frictionless ways into the city. As a multi-tiered, historic city, innovative consideration needs to be given to accessibility, wayfinding and creating safer routes.

The transport vision will be delivered through delivery of bold ambitions for connectivity and accessibility including:

- Promote sustainable and active travel and green our transport corridors "whilst maintaining prosperity and making appropriate parking provision for trips that cannot be made by other transport modes."
- Improve permeability of the inner ring road at key sites to overcome severance. Take traffic out of the city centre and encourage new and innovative final mile options.
- Create sustainable neighbourhoods, with easy access to daily services, connected in hub and spoke model with peripheral sustainable travel links.
- Manage congestion and improve air quality through speed management in the city core. 20mph limits in the city core.
- Integrate public transport, active travel, park, and ride and rideshare modes, including simple and integrated payment.
- Deliver a better bus network with enhanced cross-city connectivity, reduced street layover and zero emission vehicles.
- Promote Park & Ride as the best option for travel into the city. Optimise payment structures, routes, and parking sites. Increase patronage and reduce congestion by working with major employers.
- Implement a co-ordinated, coherent travel information strategy for Chester, with branding and consistent messages.
- Promote Chester station as a gateway to the city, with better links to bus interchange and city centre, as well as improved Hoole Bridge crossing.

"Chester will be accessible for all city users, with seamless transportation links that provide safe passage in and around the city for all modes of transport, improving accessibility and quality of life for its communities to achieve the city's vision of a healthier, greener and fairer city".

Vision for Connectivity and Accessibility



Chester One City Plan (2022) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

Increasingly, planning policy and regeneration proposals set out the requirements for a more sustainable transport network. This should be mirrored in the LTP4, which will form a critical component of a robust spatial planning and transport policy framework, delivering against our environmental, societal, and economic strategic goals. For example, considerations for increased rail freight opportunities should be reflected in policy pertaining to economic growth.

4.3.7 Cheshire West and Chester Borough Plan 2024-2028

The Borough Plan 2024-2028 (approved February 2024) has been developed to reflect the vision and goals for the borough for the years 2024-2028. The vision of the plan is to have 'a stronger future where we all play our part in thriving, caring and sustainable communities.' The plan has the following six missions:

- To be the best possible start for our children and young people, with improved opportunity, a healthier start, greater resilience in families and the best possible support and care when it is needed.
- More people feel more financially secure as the causes and impact of hardship and poverty are addressed by working alongside residents.
- Local people are enabled to flourish, be healthy, happy and independent for longer in supportive communities.
- Local people and businesses contribute to and benefit from a strong and fair local economy.
- Residents live in well maintained, connected and safe places with good and affordable homes.
- Individuals, public services and businesses take action to move to tackle the climate emergency, achieve net zero, protect the natural environment and adapt to the impact of climate change.

The Council aims to achieve the vision and missions by working closely with communities within the borough, scaling up prevention, further developing digital and insight, developing workforce and stronger partnerships. Through this plan the council will contribute towards becoming a carbon neutral borough by 2045.

We aim to improve the conditions of highways and transport assets through the implementation of this plan and with the help of developing LTP4. The aim is to improve highways, footways, cycleway and city walls. The Council will liaise and work with utility companies to reduce the impact on road users of any infrastructure changes. Through the improvement of the transport assets across sustainable travel modes the council aims to reduce car dependency and increase the use of public transport, and active travel resulting in improved air quality and a healthier population.

 [CW&C Borough Plan 2024-2028 \(2024\) - Weblink](#)


4.3.8 Cheshire West and Chester Housing Strategy (2025-2035)

CW&C adopted a Housing Strategy in March 2025 which outlines the Council's vision and priorities for housing over the next decade to 2035. The aim is to create strong communities with a mix of good quality, affordable homes, green spaces, and vibrant neighbourhoods. The strategy focuses on three main priorities: enabling residents to access the right home and live well, ensuring homes are fit for now and the future, and providing affordable homes across the borough. It addresses challenges such as homelessness, housing affordability, and the need for sustainable, energy-efficient homes.

There are three priorities in the strategy:

1. Support that enables residents to access the right home and live well.
2. Homes that are fit for now and ready for the future.
3. Affordable homes of all tenures across the borough.

The report emphasises the importance of integrating housing development with the transport network to create sustainable communities. Important factors will be the strategic location of development and co-ordination between housing sites, infrastructure planning, and sustainable travel initiatives.

 [CW&C Housing Strategy 2025-2035 \(2025\) - Weblink](#)

5.0 ECONOMY

5.1 National

5.1.1 Plan for Change

As of early 2025, current Government policy is focused around three Strong Foundations of good government, and five Missions. which are published in the Plan for Change. These are summarised below:

The Strong Foundations are based on economic stability, secure borders, and national security.

The five Missions are:

1. Kickstarting economic growth.
2. Make Britain a clean energy superpower.
3. Safer streets.
4. Break down the barriers to opportunity.
5. Build an NHS fit for the future.

These are measurable milestones which accompany each Mission.

The development of the transport network, and hence the LTP, can help towards delivering on several of the missions. Transport and connectivity are crucial to sustainable economic growth as well as providing access to opportunities. The way that road vehicles and public transport networks are powered in the future and the transition towards more sustainable energy sources will impact on the types of energy which we consume and need to source or produce. Transport and travel are also important to how safe people feel in their local communities. Overall, having a successful transport plan will be critical to ensuring the Council are making our contribution to the national aims and ambitions set by Government.



Plan for Change Website - [Weblink1](#) & [Weblink2](#)

Implications

The Labour government's strong focus on economic growth is likely to be a leading requirement for the types of interventions which may secure funding in the coming years, and so we must look to embed an approach where we are prioritising funding towards schemes which will strongly support unlocking and delivering economic growth. A transport system which promotes better accessibility and more choice will enable economic growth and can be support through our LTP4 and its policies.

5.1.2 UK Industrial Strategy (2017)

The UK's Industrial Strategy (2017) sets out plans for building a Britain fit for the future, creating a stronger, fairer and more productive economy that will allow us to prosper in the world. Infrastructure is one of five foundations identified as essential for increasing productivity and improving quality of life. The strategy identifies the importance of transport investment in connecting people and businesses, and to moving goods efficiently to their markets.


It describes four "Grand Challenges" to put the UK at the forefront of the industries of the future, including "*become a world leader in shaping the future of mobility.*" Early priorities include:

- Establishing a flexible regulatory framework to encourage new modes of transport and new business models.
- Addressing the challenges of moving from hydrocarbon to zero emission vehicles.
- Preparing for a future of new mobility services, increased autonomy, journey sharing and blurring of the distinctions between private and public transport.

- Exploring ways to use data to accelerate development of new mobility services and enable the more effective operation of our transport system.

‘Invest 2035’: An updated UK Industrial Strategy for 2025

The current Labour government are undertaking a refresh of the UK Industrial Strategy and a revised plan (to be named ‘Invest 2035’) is expected in Summer 2025, supported by sector plans for growth-driving sectors. This section will be updated once any revised UK Industrial Strategy is published.

 UK Industrial Strategy (2017) - [Weblink](#)

5.1.3 The Clean Growth Strategy (2017)


The Clean Growth Strategy outlines the Government’s approach for ensuring that the UK grows the economy, whilst reducing its carbon impacts. It sets out a comprehensive set of policies and proposals that aim to accelerate the pace of “clean growth,” i.e., deliver increased economic growth and decreased emissions. The strategy notes that changes to the transport network will be fundamental for reducing emissions and describes in depth how it expects to encourage a shift to low carbon transport. It outlines a 2032 pathway to achieve a 57% reduction in carbon emissions (compared to 1990), based on:

- Accelerating the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles
- Developing a more efficient and low carbon freight system
- A cleaner public transport system
- A reduction in the number of shorter journeys made by car.
- A near doubling of the use of sustainable bioenergy in the transport sector.

Some of the more transport specific commitments include:

- Ending the sale of petrol and diesel vans by 2040
- Investing in the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles
- Developing one of the best electric vehicle charging networks in the world
- Accelerating uptake of low emission buses and taxis
- Investing in active travel to make cycling and walking the main choice for shorter journeys.
- Working to shift more freight from road to rail.

The UK low carbon economy could grow by an estimated 11% per year by 2030 – four times faster than the rest of the economy- and could deliver between £60 billion and £170 billion of export sales of goods and services by 2030.

 The Clean Growth Strategy (2017) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

These national economic policies stress the need for clean growth, which will realise productivity gains whilst reducing carbon emissions. Our LTP4 provides an opportunity to identify logistics opportunities and support cleaner local freight movements.


5.1.4 Levelling up in the UK White Paper (2022)

The Levelling Up in the UK White Paper (2022) set out the Conservative Government’s levelling up policy which sought to reduce geographic economic, social and health inequalities across the UK. The White Paper evidenced how the UK is one of the most spatially unequal countries amongst members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Differences within UK regions or cities are larger than differences between regions. Key policy areas to address these challenges were identified to be:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging.

- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest.
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost.
- Empower local leaders and communities.

Connectivity was stated as a key area to address, as it was evidenced that stronger transport links can boost productivity by connecting people to jobs and businesses to each other. Transport also supports wider quality of life, positive health outcomes and local pride by helping to regenerate high streets and town centres, supporting people to increase their physical activity, socialise and access shops and services. The lack of high-quality transport in some of the UK’s largest cities is noted, with pledges to improve local transport (particularly buses) and give greater powers to local leaders.

 [Levelling Up in the UK White Paper \(2022\) - Weblink](#)

5.2 Regional


5.2.1 Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (2023)

Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER) was commissioned by the TfN partners, collaborating with the wider Northern Powerhouse partnership. A 2016 review was the first publication, which looked to understand the scale, nature and causes of the North’s gaps, distinctive ‘capabilities’ (pan-Northern collectives of sectoral, academic, skills and hard asset strengths of international substance) and future growth prospects for the area.

A 2023 update to the NPIER has been published to reflect the policy changes since the initial edition (such as related to Levelling Up and the establishment of Devolution Deals and Metro Mayors in some areas) and to reflect other shifts in society and travel. The 2023 version increases the focus placed on developing a more comprehensive understanding of the economic, health and well-being, sustainability and inequality.

The North should be a network of modern city regions, driven by the knowledge economy and rich in job opportunities for all. Transport will underpin this vision – a fast and effective transport system will operate across the North, providing a catalyst for growth and supporting people and businesses to fulfil their potential.

The NPIER sets out that there are around 15.6m people and 7.7m jobs across the North, and in 2021 the region generated an economic output of around £369bn of Gross Value Added (GVA), which accounts for about 19% of the UK’s total. The 2016 review reported that for the last thirty years, the North’s GVA per capita has been consistently about 25% below the average for the rest of England, and 10-15% below the England average (excluding London). A persistent economic gap exists between the North and the national average, which is expected to widen by 2050 that necessitates a radical change in the economy of the North. Since the 2016 review some progress has been made to fill this gap as jobs have increased by 283,400 and GVA has increased by £15.6 billion, the GVA per job has been increased by £300 and the GVA per capita has been increased by £400 to £23,700.

 [Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review \(2023\) - Weblink](#)

Implications

The 2023 NPIER review continues to demonstrate how the economic future for the North could be transformed by more investment that improves transport connectivity, so as to enable businesses, skills and innovative sectors to operate more freely around the North. This would markedly raise GVA, improve employment opportunities and wages, and help to close productivity gaps. Our LTP4 will help to define

what is important at a local and sub-regional level to strengthen the place of CW&C within the north of England, and to take better advantage of our close access to major metropolitan areas, international gateways, and large cities across the United Kingdom.

5.2.2 Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan (2018)

Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan (2018) sets out ambition to drive the economy forward, capitalising on the unique strengths and opportunities that our sub-region has. It is a strategy to support growth and economic development over the next 20+ years, doubling the size of the economy and setting out the key economic, environmental, and social strengths on which that growth will be founded.

Part of the evidence base developed to support this plan shows how the network is a potential constraint on growth and is already demonstrating reduced resilience in the face of increasing traffic levels. Continued investment in transport infrastructure, including the public transport network, will be not only essential for Cheshire and Warrington economic well-being, but also for that of North Wales, Liverpool City region and Greater Manchester. As well as physical infrastructure, access to affordable, reliable, high speed and reliable broadband is essential to support economic growth, innovation, and improved productivity.

With improvements to transport and digital connectivity networks, Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership believes we can achieve a £50bn economy for the region by 2050, create an additional 120,000 jobs, build up to 127,000 new homes, and be 20% more productive per resident than the UK average.

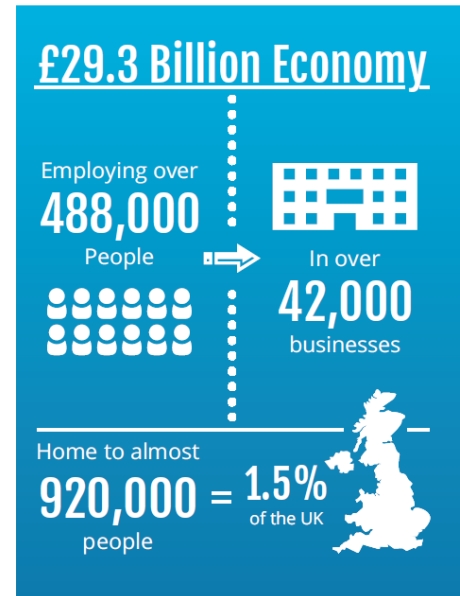


Figure 7: Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (2017)



Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan (2018) - [Weblink](#)

5.3 Local

5.3.1 West Cheshire Inclusive Economy Prospectus and Action Plan (2022)

West Cheshire Inclusive Economy: Prospectus and Action Plan is the Council's strategy to deliver an inclusive economy which prioritises reducing poverty and inequality, combating the climate emergency, supporting community wellbeing, and enhancing the vibrancy of our Borough. The strategy is built on 3 pillars:

- People - concerning skills, employability, education, and well-being.
- Place – including infrastructure, built & natural environment, housing, energy, transport.
- Enterprise - concerning developing anchor networks, improving supply chains, supporting startups and social enterprise.

Cross cutting drivers within the strategy are poverty and inequality; climate and sustainability; culture and animation; and health and well-being. 12 main action areas have been identified, which include digital inclusion, building stronger places and transport access, with an emphasis on connectivity to jobs.


After setting out key issues and a “pillar” based approach, the strategy contains 12 priority actions, which are the building blocks to achieve a more inclusive West Cheshire economy. One of those 12 priority areas is around transport access and connectivity to job opportunities. Lack of public transport access prevents people accessing job opportunities whilst businesses struggle to fill vacancies, and one third of our residents live in rural areas where lack of connections also result in exclusion. This proposed action intends to improve connections between deprived areas and business parks and industrial hubs and better connect excluded rural communities.

Specifically, the action plan commits to:

- Continue robust investigation into need, including through involving local communities and businesses to inform targeting of improvements. Including improving data collection on the performance of existing services, researching links between transport exclusion and deprivation and social isolation, and assessing opportunities to expand connections to health and leisure activities.
- Explore innovative approaches to develop new connections in the places and at times where required to enable greater inclusion. Including through:
 - Working with bus operators to provide services to employment hubs from deprived areas.
 - Review of parking policies to encourage use of public transport.
 - Expansion of cycling and walking infrastructure and exploring e-scooter trials.
 - Expanding current provision of free/ low-cost travel card ticketing for young people to reduce affordability barriers, this may also include across geographies, i.e., able to use in Liverpool City Region or North Wales.
 - Working together to raise confidence in using public transport and ensure accessibility, reliability, and safety.
 - Raise awareness for businesses and residents of how Park and Ride services benefit them.
 - Monitor over time to assess impacts, including increased employment where lack of connectivity is currently a barrier, help to full job vacancies, improve connections to leisure, culture, and community assets, and reduce traffic and emissions in order to improve health and wellbeing.

Headline statistics:

- The borough contains 16 neighbourhoods in the 10% most deprived in England, and the borough is amongst worst 10% for youth social mobility.
- Some areas of west Cheshire have 50% higher child poverty than others, and 23% of workers are below real living wage.
- There is a ten-year gap between wards with lowest and highest life expectancy.
- Ageing population – 46% expected increase of people aged 65+ by 2035.

 [West Cheshire Inclusive Economy Prospectus and Action Plan \(2022\) - Weblink](#)

Implications

This West Cheshire economic strategy recognises the need for much improved transport infrastructure and networks in order to realise sustainable economic growth. Our LTP4 will need to evidence a clear policy link to this strategy and ensure that the actions it promotes are embedded into our plans. In this context, transport plays a significant role in delivering an inclusive economy by facilitating access to employment opportunities.

5.3.2 Cheshire West and Chester Council: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026-29

A report was taken to Council in February 2025, setting out the CW&C Medium Term Financial Strategy (2026-29). This included the Council budget for 2025-26, and indicative budget packages for 2026-27 to 2028-29. The report highlighted the specific financial challenges facing the Council over the next four years and its strategy to meet these. In order to make the investments that are desired, a £156m funding gap must be bridged across four-year period (15% of the Council's gross budget). For 2025-26 the gap will be filled by £29m of saving proposals and £20m by locally generated income from council tax and business rates.

The Council has a history of excellent financial management which has enabled the delivery of significant savings to the local taxpayer whilst still investing in priority services. However, there is a national backdrop of continued financial uncertainty and challenge for local authority funding which CW&C are not protected from. A survey by the Society of County Treasurers found that most of its council members were concerned about cost pressures. Key challenges on local authority budgets included continued cost pressures relating to Social Care services, significant inflationary pressures, and a lack of certainty around nationally set financing and income frameworks.



CW&C Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026-29 (2025) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

The Council's financial position will clearly have an impact on our ability to resource and fund transport interventions. It provides the context for what we can achieve through LTP4 but should not be a limiter on the scale of our ambition.

6.0 TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY

6.1 National

6.1.1 Transport Investment Strategy, Moving Britain Ahead (2017)

The Transport Investment Strategy (2017) sets out how the Government is responding to today's transport challenges through transport investment, delivering the Industrial Strategy, while putting the travelling public at the heart of transport decision-making. Specifically, it sets out four main objectives which DfT investment decisions should focus on:

- Create a transport network that works for users, wherever they live.
- Improve productivity and rebalance growth across the UK.
- Enhance our global competitiveness by making Britain a more attractive place to invest.
- Support the creation of new housing.

Integrated National Transport Strategy

The current Labour government are planning to develop a new Integrated National Transport Strategy which will set the high-level direction for how transport should be designed, built and operated in England over the next 10 years. A call for ideas engagement ran between November 2024 and February 2025 and this information is currently being used to develop the draft strategy. This section will be updated when more information on the new Strategy is available.



Transport Investment Strategy, Moving Britain Ahead (2017) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

Whilst the 2017 Transport Investment Strategy is now aged, the planned new National Transport Strategy will be an important reference point for our LTP and is likely to inform how our delivery plans may evolve in the coming years, as well as setting direction which will inform the types of interventions that may secured central government funding.

6.1.2 Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy (2019)

The Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy sets out the approach Government will take to seize the opportunities from the changes happening in urban transport. It sets out the benefits targeted from mobility innovation to deliver and the nine principles (below) that will help to achieve these:

- New modes of transport and new mobility services must be safe and secure by design.
- The benefits of innovation in mobility must be available to all parts of the UK and all segments of society.
- Walking, cycling and active travel must remain the best options for short urban journeys.
- Mass transit must remain fundamental to an efficient transport system.
- New mobility services must lead the transition to zero emissions.
- Mobility innovation must help to reduce congestion through more efficient use of limited road space, for example through sharing rides, increasing occupancy, or consolidating freight.

Impacts of road traffic

- In 2017, 1,793 people killed and 24,831 seriously injured on UK roads.
- Road transport contributes to 80% of nitrogen oxides at roadside.
- Reliance of cars contributor to 64% of adults overweight or obese
- Noise estimates £7 – £10bn annual costs of sleep disturbance and annoyance.

- The marketplace for mobility must be open to stimulate innovation and give the best deal to consumers.
- New mobility services must be designed to operate as part of an integrated transport system combining public, private and multiple modes for transport users.
- Data from new mobility services must be shared where appropriate to improve choice and the operation of the transport system.



Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy (2019) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

An emphasis on new mobility services, innovation, and active travel in the LTP4 will play a significant part in reducing the health and economic impacts of road-based traffic.

6.1.3 Future of Transport (Rural) (2023)

Future of Transport is a 2023 DfT review of emerging technologies and innovations which may benefit transport connectivity for rural areas. People in rural areas want to travel conveniently, safely and at a reasonable cost. For many in rural areas, this means completing most journeys using a private car, with other modes not always fully meeting the needs of local people. Living in a rural area often means travelling longer distances for everyday journeys: travelling to work, school or to access services like healthcare and shopping. As a result, those who are unable to drive can feel isolated, cut off from their communities and out of reach of key services and opportunities.

The review sets out the following priorities:

- The importance of investment and innovation in local highways
- Supporting the decarbonisation of the transport system through transition to electric vehicles
- Improving services and providing greater choice, through improved and flexible local bus services, local rail enhancements, and more opportunities to walk, wheel and cycle safely
- Enabling innovation in rural mobility, including demand-led people-centred transport services, growth of shared mobility schemes and mobility hubs, and integration of services through data and digitalisation

In addition, it sets out nine rural transport principles to help authorities and operators to work towards a future transport system that is cleaner, safer and greener:

1. New modes of transport and new mobility services must be safe and secure by design.
2. Innovation in transport should consider the needs of rural transport users and must be available and accessible to all parts of the UK and all segments of society.
3. Walking, wheeling, cycling and micromobility must be enabled as the best options for short rural journeys.
4. Affordable and accessible public transport and shared mobility must be fundamental to an efficient rural transport system.
5. New transport modes and services in rural areas should support a rapid transition to zero emissions and be adapted to climate change.
6. Innovation should improve road efficiency and reduce congestion by promoting shared mobility, improving user choice and consolidating freight.
7. The marketplace for mobility must be open to stimulate innovation and give the best deal to users, working alongside local authorities to complement existing services.
8. New transport services must be designed to operate as part of an integrated system that combined public and private modes with community-led schemes for transport users.
9. Data from new transport services must be shared to improve both choice and the operation of the transport system.



Future of Transport: Urban Strategy (2023) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

The CW&C borough contains a mix of urban and rural communities and LTP4 must be flexible and informed enough to respond to the distinct needs which our different communities have, including the specific challenges and barriers which face our rural towns and villages. The rural transport principles of the Future of Transport plan will be a useful guide for LTP4.

6.1.4 Better Delivery: The Challenge for Freight (2019)

Better Delivery: The Challenge for Freight is a 2019 study by the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) on behalf of the Government. The Commission's central finding is that through the adoption of new technologies and the recognition of the freight sector's needs in the planning system, it is possible to decarbonise road and rail freight by 2050 and manage its contribution to congestion. Achieving this requires government to outline clear, firm objectives, and begin working with the energy sector, freight industry and local areas to ensure that the infrastructure required for alternative fuels and land for efficient freight operations is available when and where it is needed.

The UK already has one of the most efficient freight systems of any developed country, ranking ninth in the world. It comprises around 195,000 enterprises, employing 2.5 million people, and contributing £121 billion gross value added (GVA) to the economy. It operates almost entirely within the private sector, with little government intervention required beyond the provision of roads and rail.

However, freight already makes a significant contribution to the UK's carbon emissions and local air pollution, and, over the next 30 years, the weight of goods lifted by heavy freight transport could increase by between 27% and 45%. The nature of this demand will also change, with expected increases in same day delivery, more just-in-time manufacturing, and continued growth of internet shopping. Without action, greater demand risks higher emissions and increased congestion.

Four key interventions have been identified:

- Accelerating uptake of zero emission vans – transition is already beginning, and as a choice of vehicles and travel ranges increases, alongside wider availability of EV infrastructure, uptake will continue to rise.
- Preparing for transition to zero emission HGVs – Once the total lifetime costs of zero emission freight vehicles achieve parity with diesel vehicles, uptake of zero emission options could accelerate rapidly. Such an acceleration would have significant and rapid impacts on the UK's networks of transport and energy infrastructure.
- Decarbonising rail freight – Delivering the UK's climate targets will require decarbonisation of transport. It is therefore a question of how to decarbonise the railway for both freight and passengers, rather than whether it should be done. Road and rail freight should have a common, single target to decarbonise fully by 2050.
- Managing freight's contribution to congestion – Although freight is not the root cause of congestion, it can be a significant contributor in some areas and at certain times. This intervention involves making better use of capacity; innovation in urban freight; improved planning to enable optimisation; and local authorities using integrated transport and land use planning to develop plans for urban freight.

HGVs currently account for 12% of road use on all roads in UK, 25% of road use on motorways and 19% on urban and rural highways. Congestion, primarily caused by private cars, costs road freight operators at least £3 billion a year.



Better Delivery: The Challenge for Freight (2019) - [Weblink](#)

6.1.5 Future of Freight (2022)

Future of Freight (2022) set out a long-term vision for the UK freight sector. It explains how the freight industry contributes £127 billion to UK economy each year, with more than 2 million people employed across the wider logistics industry. The plan was developed to tackle the short-term problems arisen from the challenges from Covid-19 and Russia-Ukraine war, as well as to set out long-term ideas to support the freight industry and the UK's place in global trade systems. The vision of the plan is to have 'a freight and logistics sector that is cost-efficient, reliable, resilient, environmentally sustainable and valued by society.'

The plan outlines the following key issues and challenges to be addressed in the short, medium and long term:

- **Decarbonisation:** encouraging the shift to cleaner options, like electric and low-emission vehicles, as well as alternative fuels, is key to cutting down the freight sector's carbon footprint. By doing so, we can move closer to hitting important climate goals.
- **Innovation and Technology:** new technologies, like autonomous vehicles and digital platforms, have the potential to revolutionise freight transport. By adopting these tools, we can make operations smoother, reduce congestion, and improve the way goods move, especially in busier urban areas.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** to meet the growing demands of freight and keep up with technological advances, it's essential to invest in better transport infrastructure. This means upgrading roads, railways, ports, and airports to make them more efficient and future ready.
- **Resilience:** supply chains need to be robust and flexible enough to handle challenges like extreme weather, global crises, or other disruptions. Building resilience into the system will help ensure goods keep moving no matter what.
- **Sustainability:** switching more freight transport to eco-friendly options like rail and waterways is crucial. At the same time, there's a lot of room to improve how logistics are managed to make the whole system greener and more sustainable.
- **Collaboration and Data:** bringing governments, industries, and local authorities together is essential for creating smarter freight systems. On top of that, using data to fine-tune operations can cut inefficiencies and make the whole process more effective.

When developing local transport plans, local authorities are encouraged to think about their transport strategies with goals of decarbonising freight and reducing congestion, especially in urban areas. These considerations will be taken into account when developing LTP4.



Future of Freight (2022) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

Considerations for freight in LTP4 should seek to incentivise opportunities for efficient, low emission operations; collaboration with planning is essential for this to be realised. LTP4 presents an opportunity to enable better freight and logistics networks through the identification of locations and infrastructure, delivery networks, hubs and last mile delivery facilities.

6.1.6 Bus Back Better (2021)

Bus journeys have been in decline for decades across most of England but remain the most used form of public transport. Before the coronavirus pandemic, previous reforms had slowed the rate of decline but not stopped it. The pandemic led to even steeper declines in bus usage. In response The National Bus Strategy for England describes the Government's vision for bus services in England outside of London. Its central aim is to get more people travelling by bus – *first, to get overall patronage back to its pre-COVID-19 level, and then to exceed it* – by ensuring that buses are an attractive alternative to the car for far more people. The strategy seeks to make buses more frequent, more reliable, easier to understand and use, better co-ordinated and cheaper through a partnership approach between Government, local transport authorities (LTAs), and operators, and better and more locally accountable bus services.

The vision includes:

- Simpler, cheaper fares with daily price caps
- More services, including more services in the evenings and at weekends and services on some routes that run so often people do not need to use a timetable.
- Faster buses, supported by bus priority.
- Contactless payments
- Integrated ticketing across bus operators and different modes
- Better information so buses are easier to use.
- Buses which are greener and more accessible by design.

Buses are at the centre of the public transport network, making 4.07 billion journeys in England in 2019/20. More than twice as many as the railways.

The main policy interventions are:

- A greater role for local transport authorities in planning local bus services
- Guidance for local transport authorities on the provision of socially and economically necessary services
- The requirement for local authorities and bus operators to jointly develop and publish Local Bus Service Improvement Plans
- Measures to tackle the negative impact congestion has on bus services.
- Reforms to the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG)
- Measures to increase the uptake of zero emission buses.

A key change introduced by the National Bus Strategy was a requirement for local transport authorities to adopt one of two options, an Enhanced Partnership (and develop and publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) or franchising.

Cheshire West now has an Enhanced Partnership in place and published an updated West Cheshire BSIP in 2024 (see 6.3.1). Franchising is currently not permissible but will become an option should devolution plans process with Cheshire and Warrington seeking to join to form a new Mayoral Combined Authority area which would hold these powers.



Bus Back Better (2021) - [Weblink](#)

6.1.7 Bus Services Bill (2024-25)

Improving local transport is an important component in the current Labour Government's plan to rebuild and grow the UK economy. The Bus Services Bill was introduced in December 2024, aiming to provide local authorities with greater control over routes, timetable, connections and fares. The bill will allow local authorities to establish their own bus companies which will provide greater control over routing of services and improved bus connections for local people. The bill also allows local authorities and private bus operators to work alongside each other to improve bus services, should the local authority choose to not have full ownership of buses. It is planned that this legislation will formally come into effect during 2025.

The aims and objectives of the updated West Cheshire BSIP (2024) align with overall aim of this bill (see 5.3.1) and a new Cheshire and Warrington Mayoral Combined Authority area would be able to make use of powers provided through the Bus Services Bill to increase local control over the operation of the bus network.



Bus Services Bill (2024-25) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

The introduction of the BSIP process, and more significant changes being planned by the government, create an opportunity to think differently about how the bus network serves CW&C and how it could be expanded to increase the share of journeys which buses carry. Devolution may present further opportunities, so LTP4 can capture this in the round including the investment priorities of the BSIP plans and supporting policies needed to further strengthen the appeal and reach of bus.

6.1.8 Great British Railways: The Williams – Shapps Plan for Rail (2021)

In 2019, most UK transport emissions (over 55%) came from cars and taxis. Rail, in contrast, accounted for only 1.4% of UK domestic transport emissions. Every mile a person travels by train produces less than a third of the emissions of a mile travelled by car.

Great British Railways: The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail 2021 sets out proposals for the biggest change to the railways in 25 years, seeking to end the fragmentation of the past and bringing the network under single national leadership. A new public body, Great British Railways, will own the infrastructure, receive the fare revenue, run, and plan the network and set most fares and timetables. The existing franchised system will also be replaced by new Passenger Service Contracts will focus operators on meeting passengers' priorities and will incentivise them to grow rail usage. A 30-year strategy will provide long-term plans for transforming the railways to strengthen collaboration, unlock efficiencies and incentivise innovation.

The new GBR organisation will be responsible for delivering 10 key outcomes:

1. The passenger experience should be modernised, ensuring passengers receive high quality, consistent services.
2. A retail revolution is needed to deliver clearer information and to simplify the process of paying for travel.
3. Ways of working with the private sector need to change to focus on reliability, performance, and efficiency.
4. The railways should support economic recovery and be financially sustainable, reflecting their role as a public service.
5. There needs to be greater control for local people and places, with rail being more responsive to the needs of local communities.
6. Rail should be cleaner and greener through decarbonisation, greater biodiversity, and improvements in air quality.
7. A new offer for freight will put rail freight on the front foot.
8. Enhancements to the rail network should be delivered faster and more efficiently, helping 'level up' areas across the country, sparking new economic growth and improvements in connectivity.
9. The workforce should become more skilled and diverse, with high-value jobs created for the future.
10. The industry structure should be simplified, bringing track and train together in a 'guiding mind' for the whole system.

The current Labour Government has continued with plans to establish GBR and is bringing forward legislation (see 6.1.9) to establish GBR and make changes to how the rail industry operates across the country. It is planned that GBR will be fully operational by late 2026 'at the earliest' with a 'Shadow GBR' having been formally established already to drive through early work.

Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Bill (2024)

The Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Bill was introduced by the current Labour Government in September 2024, providing powers to establish GBR and to allow public sector ownership of passenger railway services instead of by means of franchises. This will reverse the privatisation of railways, and the Railways Act 1993 has also been amended according to this. The bill allows for a gradual transition for all passenger rail services to be returned to public ownership.

The aim of this bill is to have a unified and simplified governance structure for railways that places passengers at the heart of the mission. The intention for the bill is to improve affordability, reliability, efficiency, quality, accessibility and safety in passenger railways services. This will allow provision for accessing opportunities and breaking down travel barriers to growth. The bill will help and support the LTP4 objectives based around the economic theme of the golden thread.



Great British Railways: The Williams – Shapps Plan for Rail (2019) - [Weblink](#)



Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Bill (2024) - [Weblink](#)

6.1.9 Gear Change (2020)

Gear Change set out a bold future vision of cycling and walking in England. It is about creating healthier, happier, and greener communities and safer streets through convenient and accessible travel. Cycling and walking to be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030. This will be delivered through:

- Better streets for cycling and people – set out key design principles (Figure 8) which will enable cycling to become a form of mass transit, with routes designed for larger numbers of cyclists and for users of all abilities and disabilities.
- Cycling and walking at the heart of decision-making – supported by £2bn of funding, representing a sixfold increase in dedicated cycling and walking funding.
- Empowering and encouraging local authorities – a new funding body and inspectorate, Active Travel England, will manage the budget, enforce standards, and raise performance generally.
- Enabling people to cycle and protecting them when they do – every adult and child who wants will be offered training on how to ride a cycle safely.

Gear Change sets out a number of key design principles. It states that “cycling is, or will become, mass transit, and must be treated as such. Routes must be designed for larger numbers of cyclists, for users of all abilities and disabilities.” Those key design principles are:


1. Cyclists must be separated from volume traffic, both at junctions and on stretches of road between them.
2. Cyclists must be separated from pedestrians.
3. Cyclists must be treated as vehicles, not pedestrians.
4. Routes must join together; isolated stretches of good provision are of little value.
5. Routes must feel direct and logical.
6. Routes and schemes must take account of how users actually behave.
7. Purely cosmetic alterations should be avoided.
8. Barriers such as chicane barriers and dismount signs should be avoided.
9. Routes should be designed by only those who have experienced the road on a cycle.



Figure 8: GOV.UK (2020), Key cycling design principles

Health benefits of physical activity reduces risk of:

- Dementia by up to 30%
- Depression by up to 30%
- Breast cancer by 20% and colon cancer by 30%
- Type 2 diabetes by 40%
- Cardiovascular disease by up to 35%
- All-cause mortality by 30%

 Gear Change (2020) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

The health benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling are well evidenced and there has been clear policy direction in recent years for providing more high-quality cycling infrastructure in order to encourage more use, and therefore contribute towards the government target for half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030. LTP4 can define how we will seek to provide more space for active travel and how we can plan to invest in infrastructure that meets the key design and network planning principles of Gear Change.

6.1.10 Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) 2020 to 2025 (2020)

The Road Investment Strategy 2 set out the long-term objectives for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). Looking towards 2050, it sets out a vision for the SRN to be:


- A network that supports the economy
- A greener network
- A safer and more reliable network
- A more integrated network
- A smarter network.


As part of the Transport Investment Strategy (2017), the Government committed to creating a Major Road Network (MRN) across England to cover the busiest and most economically important local authority A roads. In creating this network, the Government has five central policy objectives: reduce congestion; support economic growth and rebalancing; support housing delivery; support all road users; support the Strategic Road Network (SRN).

Road Investment Strategy (RIS3)

Following confirmation of an interim settlement which covers 2025-26, the Government and partners are currently working on RIS3 which will apply for the five-year period between 2026-27 and 2030-31. RIS will continue to focus on the needs of the SRN and set out investment plans to manage and improve the network during the coming years. Under the previous Government, 6 objectives were provisionally identified for RIS3, as follows:

- Improving safety for all.
- Improved environmental outcomes.
- Network performance.
- Growing the economy.
- Managing and planning the SRN for the future.
- A technology-enabled network.

 Road Investment Strategy 2: 2020 to 2025 (2020) - [Weblink](#)

 Road Investment Strategy: Interim Settlement 2025-26 - [Weblink](#)


6.1.11 Taking Charge: the EV Infrastructure Strategy (2022)

Taking Charge: the EV Infrastructure Strategy sets out that “by 2030, we will remove charging infrastructure as both a perceived, and a real, barrier to the adoption of EVs. EV charging should be cheaper and more convenient than refuelling at a petrol station”.

The policy aims to ensure that the UK is a place where:

- Everyone can find and access reliable public charge points wherever they live and not limited by income.
- Effortless on and off-street charging for private and commercial drivers is the norm.
- Fairly priced and inclusively designed public charging is open to all.
- Streets will not be cluttered by trailing charging cables.
- Market-led rollout for the majority of chargepoints delivers a thriving charging sector.
- Infrastructure is seamlessly integrated into a smart energy system.
- Continued innovation to meet drivers' needs lowers costs and increases convenience.

Intervention is focused on two sectors: high powered chargers on the strategic road network, and local on-street charging (affordable, convenient charging for residents, businesses, and visitors without causing pavement disruptions that could discourage walking and cycling). Government will cease intervention in the destination charging sector but will address barriers to commercial investment in public charge points.

 Taking Charge: the EV Infrastructure Strategy (2022) - [Weblink](#)

6.1.12 Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate Update (2025)

As set out in the UK Government Net Zero Strategy Build Back Greener (see section 3.1.3), in 2023 it was UK government policy that the sale of new diesel and petrol cars would be banned from 2030.

In January 2024, the Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate was changed to delay the introduction of this ban until 2035.

Following a change in government, the Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate policy is planned to change again, to reinstate the original 2030 ban. The government has consulted on this change. Hybrid vehicles will continue to be sold until 2035. Manufacturers also have annual targets regarding proportion of their sales that are EVs. These targets have been adjusted in 2024.

The latest Mandate will support the LTP4 as it will help speed up the transition of the vehicle fleet towards cleaner technologies. It provides direction for the private sector and vehicle manufacturers, as well as organisations involved in the roll out of charging infrastructure, which is likely to be required more extensively sooner than if the ban was to be introduced later.



Information on the forthcoming updates to the Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate (2025) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

National decisions on when the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles will be phased out will have a significant impact on the composition of the vehicle fleet, which will be noticeable across the strategic and local road networks. Through LTP4, we can set out how we will plan to accommodate an increasing number of electric vehicles within our networks, with consideration of charging infrastructure both in off-street spaces and at kerbsides. This is a change which will feel more significant over time and so we will need to proceed carefully to fully understand how our residents, and people that work in or visit the borough, will be impacted and what actions we may need to take in response.

6.1.13 The Highway Code

The Highway Code is essential reading for all road users, including pedestrians, mobility scooter users, cyclists, horse riders, drivers and motorcyclists. Its aim is to promote safety on the road, whilst also supporting a healthy, sustainable and efficient transport system.

Rule H1 sets out the principle of a 'hierarchy of road users', placing those road users most at risk in the event of a collision at the top of the hierarchy. The hierarchy does not remove the need for everyone to behave responsibly. The road users most likely to be injured in the event of a collision are pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and motorcyclists, with children, older adults and disabled people being more at risk. Everyone suffers when road collisions occur, whether they are physically injured or not. But those in charge of vehicles that can cause the greatest harm in the event of a collision bear the greatest responsibility to take care and reduce the danger they pose to others.

The Highway Code also sets out further 'H rules' which give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders at road crossings and when turning at a junction.



Highway Code - [Weblink](#)

6.1.14 Plan for Drivers (2023)


The Plan for Drivers, developed by DfT in 2023 under a previous government, acknowledges that cars are the currently the most widely used mode of personal travel, comprising 58% of trips in 2022 and 78% of distance travelled. It sets out 30 steps that the Department will take to give car drivers in England confidence that they are getting a "fair deal" alongside other road users. The Plan is set out five sets of priorities:

1. Smoother journeys. Strengthening guidance to make better use of bus lanes, supporting councils in minimising disruption from street works and road closures, developing and harnessing better road data and technology and funding smarter, cutting-edge traffic flow management technologies.
2. Stopping unfair enforcement. Updating guidance for 20mph limits and Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes to help prevent inappropriate use, strengthening guidance on enforcement of moving traffic offenses to ensure consistency and fairness, and seeking to minimise over-zealous use of traffic enforcement powers.
3. Easier parking. Using technology to make it simpler and easier to find a parking space, and a proposal to consult on revising guidance about the public's right to challenge council parking policies.
4. Cracking down on inconsiderate driving. Measures to tackle uninsured driving, inconsiderate motorway driving, excessive vehicle noise and roadside littering.
5. Helping to transition to zero emission driving. Speeding up electric vehicle chargepoint provision, provide guidance on the use of safe cross-pavement charging solutions and work with industry to myth-bust concerns about electric vehicles.

 Plan for Drivers - [Weblink](#)

6.1.15 Network North (2023)

The Network North plan was published in 2023 under the previous government administration, following the announcement of the cancellation of the northern leg of High Speed Rail 2 (HS2). It was instead decided to allocation funding to an alternative programme of transport improvements across the country, named Network North. Rail upgrades, road projects, public transport investments and maintenance funding was allocated. Cheshire West and Chester Council were allocated £1.286 million for road maintenance in both the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years which supported.


 Network North (2023) - [Weblink](#)


6.1.16 Wales Transport Strategy (2021)

Many residents of Cheshire West and Chester travel into Wales for work, education or leisure, and vice versa, and so it is important that we reflect on the Welsh Government approach to transport, from its Wales Transport Strategy (2021). Its vision is “to deliver an accessible, sustainable and efficient transport system”. Three headline priorities will influence all investment and delivery:

- Bringing services to the people in order to reduce the need to travel. This involves planning ahead for better physical and digital connectivity, more local services, more home and remote working, and more active travel, to reduce the need for people to use their cars on a daily basis.
- Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible sustainable and efficient transport services. This will be delivered by achieving a shift away from private cars to more sustainable modes and investing in low carbon transport services and infrastructure.
- Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport, delivered by making sustainable transport more attractive and affordable.
- The Welsh Government has set out four main ambitions that transport will contribute to:
 - Good for people and communities, promoting equality and health.
 - Good for the environment, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and maintaining biodiversity.
 - Good for the economy and places, supporting economic ambitions and helping local communities to thrive.
 - Good for culture and the Welsh language.

In February 2023, Welsh Government published its National Transport Delivery Plan 2022 – 2027 which lays out programmes, projects and policies to deliver against the national strategy.

 Wales Transport Strategy (2021) - [Weblink](#)

 Welsh Government National Transport Delivery Plan (2023) - [Weblink](#)

6.1.17 Welsh Government Response to Roads Review (2023)

In June 2021, the Deputy Minister for Climate Change announced a review of new road schemes funded by the Welsh Government. The Roads Review panel was established with a membership made up of independent experts in transport policy, climate change, highway engineering, and the freight and logistics sector. The primary purpose of the review was to ensure road investment is fully aligned to the delivery of the Wales Transport Strategy ambitions and priorities, Welsh Government Programme for Government commitments and Net Zero Wales. The panel submitted its Final Report to the Welsh Government in September 2022. It notes that a rebalancing of policy away from enabling private car use and in favour of active travel and public transport is required to deliver against the Welsh government’s strategic objectives. It also notes that an increase in the number of kilometres of roads in Wales will either require an increase in the maintenance budget to maintain road standards or will result in a degradation of road quality over time.





Figure 9: Welsh Roads Review 2023 Purposes and Conditions for Future Road Investment

In response to the panel findings, Welsh Government published its Response to the Roads Review in February 2023. It declared that all new roads need to contribute towards achieving modal shift – both to tackle climate change and to reduce congestion on the road network for freight. As a result, the Welsh Government will continue to consider road investment in roads (both new and existing) in the following circumstances:

1. To support modal shift and reduce carbon emissions. This is about ensuring that future roads investment does not simply increase the demand for private car travel. Instead, we need to deliver schemes that contribute meaningfully to modal shift, which will require different approaches in different parts of Wales.
2. To improve safety through small-scale changes. Safety on the road network must be paramount. Investments for safety should focus on specific safety issues to be addressed (rather than wider road improvements and increases in road capacity). Speed limits should be considered as one of the primary tools for improving safety.
3. To adapt to the impacts of climate change. Climate change is already having an impact on our road network and is likely to become an increasing issue in future decades. Road investment can be justified to adapt for these circumstances to ensure roads can continue to function and contribute meaningfully to modal shift.

4. To provide access and connectivity to jobs and centres of economic activity in a way that supports modal shift. In particular, new, and existing access roads will be necessary to connect new developments, including Freeports, to the existing network.

 The Future of Road Investment in Wales (2022) - [Weblink](#)

 Welsh Government response to The Future of Road Investment in Wales (2023) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

Given CW&C's proximity to north Wales, our LTP4 will need to be closely aligned to the plans for North Wales including the National Transport Delivery Plan. This will help us maximise opportunities for cross border sustainable transport options and ensure a seamless experience for people that need to travel across the order. We have positive relationships with the authorities and other delivery organisations in North Wales and through the LTP4 development process will look to build on these to ensure that we continue to be aligned with Welsh transport policy and priorities and visa-versa.

6.2 Regional

6.2.1 TfN Strategic Transport Plan (2024)

TfN published a new Strategic Transport Plan (STP) in March 2024 which builds on the original narratives set out in the 2015 Northern Transport Strategy and TfN's first STP from 2019. The latest STP builds on the evidence, analysis, strategy development and policy thinking which TfN has undertaken since that time including on different travel scenarios and transport-related social exclusion.

The updated STP vision states 'by 2050 the North of England will have become a thriving, socially inclusive region. Our communities, businesses and places will all benefit from sustainable economic growth, improved health and wellbeing and access to opportunities for all. This will be achieved through a transformed, near zero-emission, integrated, safe and sustainable transport system, which will enhance connectivity, resilience, and journey times for all users.

The vision is supported by three clear strategic ambitions which the North wants to achieve:

- Environmental – Rapid decarbonisation of our transport system.
- Social – Enhancing social inclusion and health.
- Economic – Transforming economic performance.

To achieve the vision and strategic objectives, TfN state that collectively we need to address connectivity challenges by creating a transport system that enables:

- Strong, interdependent, and integrated labour markets, working collectively to drive up productivity and growth through agglomeration.
- Fast frequent and reliable connections between our economic centres for goods, people, and business alongside equally strong outwards facing connections to other parts of the UK and international gateways.
- Policy changes that will accelerate the decarbonisation of our transport network and reduce car dependency both within and between places.
- Safe, reliable, and accessible public transport networks, both at a pan-regional and local level, which enables access to opportunities for all communities across the North.

The successful delivery of our strategic ambitions and headline objectives can only be achieved through a collective effort nationally, regionally, and locally. This can be achieved through effective transport planning and ensuring a strong golden thread through key policies.

The plan identifies three main connectivity needs for the North:

1. Pan-Northern connectivity, sustainably connecting the economic centres of the North through our seven Strategic Development Corridors and the delivery of Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) in full and the TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU) to support the identification of a pipeline of investment and interventions.
2. Connectivity between the North, other parts of the UK and internationally, recognising the North’s critical role in connecting all parts of the UK and across the globe, not least for moving goods.
3. Supporting member authorities (including Cheshire West) to transform connectivity within all places of the North, including cities, towns, and rural areas.

The STP quantifies its ambitions through presentation of SMART outcomes and targets/end states around economy, society, and environment. Some of these key targets are set out below.

Strategic Ambition	Pan-Northern Target	Baseline
Transforming Economic Performance	Close productivity gap between the North and rest of England (excluding London) by 2030.	11% (2019)
	75% of North’s population can access employment centre with at least 5000 jobs by public transport within 30 minutes by 2050.	63% (2019)
Decarbonising Surface Transport	Reduce total northern surface transport CO2 emissions to near zero by 2045	25million tonnes (2018)
	Share of trips made by sustainable modes (public transport and active modes) increases to 51% by 2050	36% (2018) - Active modes 29%, Rail 1.5%, Bus and Coach 5.5%
	Treble rail share of freight by 2050 to 25.5%	8.5%
	Uptake of public EV charging points increases to at least 141,000 by 2050.	6,400 (2022)
Enhancing Social Inclusion and Health	Reduce number of people in the North living in areas of high risk of Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE) by 1 million by 2050	3.31m (2019)
	Vision Zero – reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured in traffic accidents to zero by 2040	6,429 (2018/19)
	Eliminate the need for Air Quality Management Plans due to NO2 or PM10 to zero by 2045.	132 (2022)

 TfN Strategic Transport Plan (2024) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

Aligning with TfN’s strategic themes of environment, economy, and society in our LTP4 will ensure consistency of approach as well as ensure that our local priorities are making a contribution to the outcomes of the STP. We consider it important to develop our LTP4 in a way which prioritises people and particularly looks to improve prospects for people that find themselves suffering with deprivation and poverty. Our LTP4 plan can look to reduce the levels of, and numbers of people at risk of, transport-related


social exclusion - particularly looking to the parts of CW&C that are amongst the highest risk areas in the North.

6.2.2 TfN Freight and Logistics Strategy (2022)

The freight and logistics sector is a key part of the North of England's economy, both today and in the future. By 2050 it could be worth more than £30bn and employ more than 500,000 people, providing the backbone for economic growth across a range of sectors. The aim of this strategy is to undertake an overarching analysis of freight requirements across road, rail, port, and inland waterways in the North, identify key constraints or challenges on the existing networks, and provide a list of areas of interventions and policy solutions that will best support economic growth and decarbonisation.

The three main issues for road, rail and waterborne freight are similar: network capacity and capability, terminal availability, and decarbonisation. TfN sets out it will work with partners, Government, delivery bodies and the industry to deliver the following objectives:

- Reduce the number of incidences of unplanned closures of Major Road Network (MRN) routes leading to severe journey delay.
- Prioritise measures that tackle journey reliability and congestion.
- Support less polluting and more energy efficient movement of goods on the transport network.
- Maximise the utilisation of rail, inland waterways, and local distribution hubs to improve efficiency and support the modal shift of goods from road to rail and water.
- Improve multimodal north-south and east-west connectivity across the North.
- Optimise the efficient flow of goods on the MRN and rail network through improved flow of traffic and supported by technology.
- Optimise data availability to support partners in including a freight dimension in building their business cases for transport interventions.
- Support the planning and development of well-connected warehousing and consolidation sites.
- Explore the benefits of regional freight consolidation and distribution networks.
- Reduce the impact of air pollution from freight movements on the health of local communities.
- Reduce the impact of noise from freight movements on local communities.
- Increase electrification of the rail network.
- Decarbonise road haulage through increased use of zero carbon and low emission fuels.

 TfN Freight and Logistics Strategy (2022) - [Weblink](#)


6.2.3 TfN Major Roads Report (2021)

The TfN Major Roads Report (2021) outlines the critical role that the North's strategic roads play in enabling our residents and businesses to go about their daily lives. It sets out the scale of the challenge as we look to enhance their safety and reduce their environmental impact. With 97% of personal journeys and 88% of freight movements in the North made using highways, roads are central to our way of life. And with close to 70% of all vehicle kilometres on the Major Road Network (MRN), our Major Roads will always have a vital role in underpinning economic activity, opening up access to jobs, goods, and services and in enabling growth in new employment and housing.

TfN and partners have agreed a set of conditional outputs against which they aim to monitor the MRN and will use to identify issues and develop proposed actions to improve performance. These are:

- Journey reliability: Where drivers on 90% of the MRN should experience an average peak hour delay of no more than 25% in relation to the 'free-flow' travel time. This equates to a delay of 15 minutes or less on a 60-minute journey.
- Network efficiency: Aiming to ensure that the MRN contributes to a sustainable and inclusive transport system. This includes reducing carbon emissions, through optimising the efficient flow of people and goods on the MRN, encouraging customer behaviours, and supporting new technologies to reduce emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases.

- Network resilience: Aiming to reduce the number of incidents of MRN route closures leading to severe journey delay.
- Journey quality: Improving the customer experience of using the MRN, including the quality and availability of travel information.
- Carbon emissions: Reduction in carbon emissions from road transport in the North in line with TfN's trajectory for achieving net zero emissions.
- Air pollution: The proportion of the population exposed to high levels of PM2.5 and NO2 emissions, to which vehicles are a significant contributor.
- Noise pollution: The proportion of the population exposed to high levels of day and night-time noise pollution from vehicles.
- Road incidents: The number of road incidents resulting in fatalities or serious injuries.
- Physical inactivity: The proportion of adults walking or cycling for travel at least three days per week.

 TfN Major Roads Report (2021) - [Weblink](#)


6.2.4 TfN Electric Vehicles Charging Infrastructure Framework (2022)

The TfN Electric Vehicles Charging Infrastructure Framework is a whole network, whole system approach to electric vehicle charging in the North. A key challenge for national Government, local authorities and the private sector is planning and delivering EV charging infrastructure. 39,000 to 54,000 charge points will be needed by 2025 in the North, and 123,500 to 161,200 by 2030 to meet challenging targets.

Public charging infrastructure has struggled to keep pace with EV uptake to date. With the North seeing lower levels of overall EV infrastructure development than many other areas of the UK. Data in July 2022 indicated the North West (27 per 100,000 population), Yorkshire and Humber (29 per 100,000) and the North East (36 per 100,000) are all below the UK average for charging devices (49 per 100,000).

The strategy contains the following objectives:

- support delivery of an integrated EV network based on a robust and data-driven evidence base of demand and requirement.
- provide a collective route map towards an effective, attractive, and inclusive network.
- support the delivery of a 'whole network and whole system' approach through public and private partnerships.
- recognise and negotiate uncertainty for EV infrastructure decision-making.

 TfN Electric Vehicles Charging Infrastructure Framework (2022) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

LTP4 will need to consider the issues raised in the TfN Freight and Logistics Strategy and aim to make freight movement and distribution of goods efficient and sustainable in the borough. The other TfN policies also have a similar theme to the LTP4 which aims to have decarbonisation whilst balancing improving transport infrastructure with environmental priorities which should be important considerations in the development of the LTP4.

6.2.5 Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Digital Infrastructure Plan (2020)

Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Digital Infrastructure Plan plays an integral role in enabling delivery of the objectives of the Local Industrial Strategy and leveraging infrastructure assets and investments made to date, facilitating a step-change towards the next generation of fixed and mobile connectivity. In doing so, Cheshire and Warrington will be able to service the industries of the future, provide best in-class connectivity to its businesses and citizens and remain competitive, resilient, and adaptable to change, in a regional, national, and global context. The Plan sets out four strategic objectives:

- Beyond developing its priority sectors and key economic assets, Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership is committed to establishing Cheshire and Warrington as a world-class digitally connected sub-region, to the benefit of all industries, including SMEs, start-ups, and entrepreneurs.
- Address areas of coverage inconsistencies and speed/service inequalities in recognition of changing work patterns, a mobile workforce, reliance on connectivity and the convergence of fixed/mobile technologies.
- Adopt/strengthen a consistent barrier busting approach to digital policy. “Ensure future infrastructure projects such as new developments, highways improvements etc. consider digital connectivity as standard during the planning stage and throughout delivery, for example by building in additional duct capacity during construction that can be utilised for deployment to avoid subsequent retrofit of digital infrastructure at greater expense”.
- Drive adoption of digital connectivity by increasing participation/skills and take-up of services. Recent estimates show that 16% of the UK population cannot undertake Foundation digital activities such as turning on a device, connecting to Wi-Fi or opening an app by themselves, with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged the most likely to be digitally excluded.



Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Digital Infrastructure Plan (2020) - [Weblink](#)

6.3 Local

6.3.1 West Cheshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (2024)

Further to the Bus Services Act 2017 and following the release of the National Bus Strategy for England (June 2021), CW&C developed an Enhanced Partnership (EP) for local buses with commercial operators. The EP was formally established in April 2022 and an EP Plan and EP Scheme were published to set out the vision and objectives of the EP and how these will be achieved. The National Bus Strategy for England also introduced the concept of Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIP). A 2022 CW&C BSIP was published.

The EP Plan, the EP Scheme and the BSIP were all updated in 2024.

These documents outline the vision for bus travel in CW&C is to create a network that:

- Makes bus the mode of choice through provision of quicker, more reliable, and more accessible services.
- Improves connectivity for all reducing transport related social exclusion and supporting modal shift to public transport.
- Supports the Council’s strategic priorities and the objectives of LTP4 in relation to promoting healthy communities, supporting a thriving economy, delivering efficient networks, protecting environments and achieving carbon neutrality by 2045.

This vision is supported by the following 8 objectives:

1. Enhance transport connectivity within and between urban and rural areas and across local, regional and national borders.
2. Provide and develop reliable and efficient transport networks, that are integrated, customer focused, and resilient to provide an attractive and viable alternative to the private car.
3. Support sustainable economic growth and regeneration within Cheshire West and surrounding areas by improving connectivity between key growth sites and accessibility to jobs and services.
4. Reduce carbon emissions from transport by adapting our transport networks to take advantage of low carbon and renewable resources.
5. Protect and enhance the local environment within Cheshire West and surrounding areas.
6. Create a highly accessible, affordable, sustainable transport network to increase equality of opportunity.
7. Install minimum standards of transport accessibility for all areas regardless of individual circumstance.
8. Contribute to safer and more secure transport in Cheshire West and surrounding areas and promote types of transport which are beneficial to health.

The BSIP sets out a programme of improvements which includes short-term priorities including infrastructure improvements and desirable service improvements. There are links made to funding and ticketing reform as well as various other borough-wide initiatives related to timetable co-ordination, network simplification, marketing and event planning. The plan also identified long-term priorities, as summarised in Figure 10.

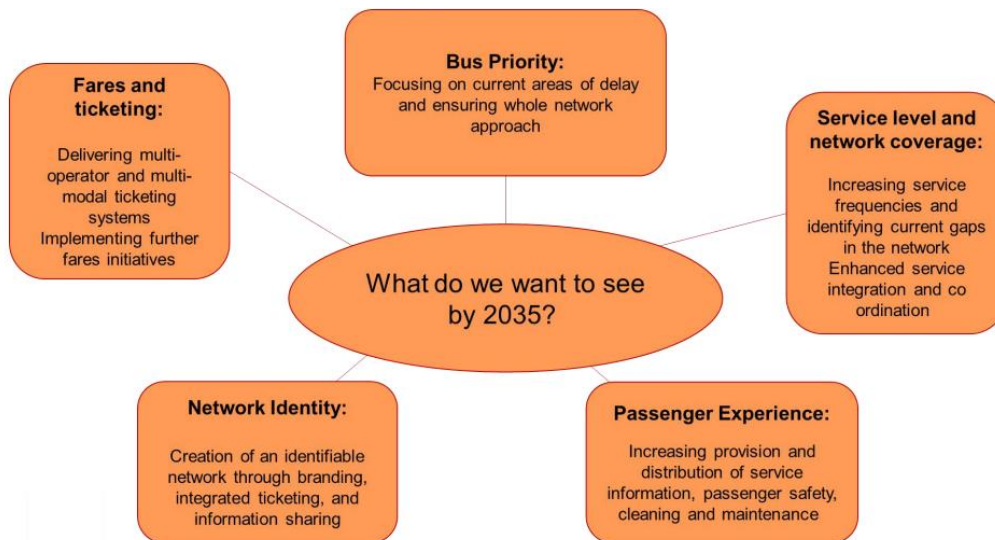





Figure 10: BSIP 2024 long-term priorities

-  CW&C Bus Enterprise Partnership Plan (2024) - [Weblink](#)
-  CW&C Bus Enterprise Partnership Scheme (2024) - [Weblink](#)
-  West Cheshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (2024) - [Weblink](#)

Implications

We understand that there are challenges with the bus network, and various improvements would help to ensure it offers a more reliable and attractive provision as part of a multi-modal sustainable transport system. The LTP4 will need to take forward the work of the Enhanced Partnership and the BSIP, and indicate the scale and scope of the long-term investment plans that are needed to strengthen the role that the bus network can play. Devolution may present further opportunities to change how the network is planned and operated, and we will be considering all potential options where they can help us to grow the bus market.

6.3.2 Cheshire West and Chester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2020-2030 (2020)

The Cheshire West and Chester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 2020-2030 seeks to develop a new culture for promoting active travel in West Cheshire. The goal is to make walking and cycling safer, more attractive, and convenient. It is a plan that provides a strategic approach to help identify where cycling and walking interventions are required at a local level, ensuring that:


- Infrastructure improvements for short-, medium-, and long-term investment can be identified.
- Consideration is given to walking and cycling within local planning and transport policies and strategies.

In the consultation survey undertaken to support the development of the LCWIP, 76% of respondents indicated that the cycling measures proposed would encourage them to make more journeys by bicycle. 73% of respondents indicated that the planned walking measures would encourage them to make more journeys by foot.

The Council has continued to deliver active travel schemes in accordance with the LCWIP and are planning to refresh the document in the coming years to reflect the new baseline position that has emerged.

Linked to our LCWIP is Active Travel England’s assessment of the Council’s capability to develop and deliver high-quality active travel schemes. A Capability Rating is assigned to each area which informs the funding

and support available, based on leadership, network planning and record of delivery. Cheshire West and Chester has been making positive steps in improving our reputation with Active Travel England, reflecting in the 2024 rating where we rose from level 1 to level 2 which recognises that we have ‘visible local leadership and support, and an emerging network’.

 [CW&C Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2020-2030 \(2020\) - Weblink](#)

Implications

The LCWIP is an important delivery plan which sets out how we can develop walking and cycling infrastructure in order to secure more economic, health and environmental benefits. Maintaining the LCWIP and using it to prioritise active travel investments will be central to LTP4 as we look to increase the role which active modes contribute, particularly for short local journeys and in areas where there are footways and cycle routes available.

6.3.3 Cheshire West and Chester Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2023-2027 (2023)

The Council’s Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2023-2027 states that car use in Cheshire West and Chester Borough is high. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2019, over 2 billion miles were travelled by car or taxi in the borough. Road transport also contributes towards poor air quality with over 50% of nitrous oxide emissions in Chester City Centre caused by road traffic, with four areas within the borough falling within the Air Quality Management Area. This strategy is informed by the Council’s Climate Emergency Response Plan which sets out the following tiered approach to addressing significant transport emission challenges.

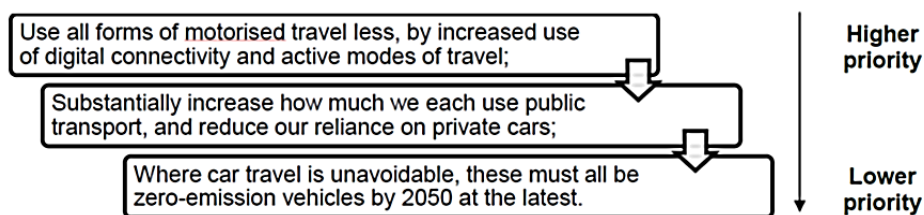


Figure 11: Cheshire West and Chester Council (2023), Avoid, Shift, Improve – Cheshire West and Chester Council’s Transport Decarbonisation Hierarchy


The document focusses on the Council’s approach to supporting the transition to electric vehicles within this framework – i.e., where other travel options are unavoidable. Comprehensive, accessible, and efficient charging infrastructure is essential in enabling the rapid adoption of electric vehicles and this strategy sets out the policies and plans to realise this goal. By 2025, the Council will seek to meet or exceed regional levels of EVCI per 100,000 population and by 2030 meet or exceed the same metric nationally.

This strategy sets out the actions the Council will take to develop a sustainable electric vehicle charging infrastructure network that supports journeys across the borough, is easy to use, intuitive and integrated, is inclusive and accessible for all, and offers good value for money, both for the Council and network users. This network will form part of a broader ‘net zero’ transport network which supports the Council’s decarbonisation and air quality objectives, delivering healthier communities while supporting inclusive economic growth. The approach recognises that this requires significant reductions in reliance on private cars alongside the move to electric vehicles in order to be successful.

The strategy is being led by the following four objectives as well as 14 policy commitments:

- A framework approach to managing electric vehicle charging in Council car parks, and to ensuring that residents without access to private off-road parking can access appropriate electric vehicle charging infrastructure.


- A series of strategic priorities to further support the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the borough, including how we will influence and leverage investment from the private sector and other partners. This includes how we will ensure quality provision of charging infrastructure in new development sites.
- How we will promote public electric vehicle charging infrastructure and promote uptake of electric vehicles.
- An implementation plan, detailing initial assessment of the feasibility of installing charging infrastructure in key council car parks and identification of likely focus areas for on-street residential charging.

 [CW&C Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2023-2027 \(2023\) - Weblink](#)

6.3.4 Cheshire West and Chester Highways Asset Management Strategy (2019)

The Highways Asset Management Strategy sets out the Council’s approach to the long-term management of highways assets. It demonstrates alignment of key highways service outputs with strategic objectives of the Council Plan. It includes a set of principles adopted around; whole lifecycle approach, informed decision making, building resilience, supporting climate change and environmental challenges. The four main objectives are:

- Providing a high level of customer satisfaction with our approach to managing highways.
- Ensuring we provide a responsive service and effective works delivery.
- Committing to delivering better value for money through improved asset management.
- Strengthening our highways asset management capability.

 [CW&C Highways Asset Management Strategy \(2019\) - Weblink](#)

Implications

Network management and maintenance will need to be a strong theme of the LTP as it is critical to ensure that the infrastructure we already have it fit for purpose and safe to use. Roads, streets and footways can suffer from poor surfacing and this rightly causes frustrations and problems for end users. Budgets for maintenance are increasingly stretched meaning we must be selective in the work we can do and how we prioritise the use of budgets. Through LTP4 we can better define our approaches and how maintenance activities can be embedded into our wider aims to improve the quality and choice offered by the transport system.

6.3.5 Cheshire West and Chester Parking Study (2016) and Revised Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (2022)

The Cheshire West and Chester Parking Strategy 2016 is a review of all parking-related matters in Cheshire West and Chester to identify options and recommend future actions that are consistent with the corporate and sub-regional strategies and policies alongside future development and regeneration proposals. It sets out a range of recommended measures covering parking quality, signage/marketing/technology, disabled parking, residents parking, and parking management and control. It is supported by five location-based reviews covering Chester, Ellesmere Port, Helsby/Frodsham, Northwich and Tarporley.

In addition, the Council’s Revised Parking Standards SPD 2022 provides recommended guidelines for parking provision (including cycle parking and electric vehicle charging) for new development and changes of use. It aims to address traffic congestion and poor air quality through the appropriate control of the amount and design of car parking associated with development. It sets out minimum standards for car parking along with maximum guidelines within particular development zones.

 CW&C Parking Study (2016) – [Weblink1](#) & [Weblink2](#)


 CW&C Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (2022) - [Weblink](#)

6.3.6 Cheshire West and Chester Towards a Digital Borough 2021-2025 (2021)

Towards a Digital Borough 2021-2025 presents massive opportunities across all of the Council's agendas. It can help drive our economy, make our care services more responsive, improve the customer experience, empower communities, make us a more efficient organisation, and also support a fairer society. It can also reduce the need for travel. The case for change is compelling. The vision for this strategy is that, by 2025, technology underpins public services, communities and the local economy leading to better outcomes for local residents and businesses. To achieve this, the Borough will have secured fundamental improvements in the following areas:

We believe there are at least 35,000 residents at risk of digital exclusion in Cheshire West and Chester.

- Communities (confidence, support, and access to digital technology to drive a fairer and more equitable society)
- Customer (excellent customer experience through intuitive processes and technology)
- Commerce (businesses work with the council through intuitive processes and are supported to thrive in an increasingly digital economy), connectivity (excellent digital infrastructure across whole borough)
- Co-production (council working alongside local people)
- Care (maximum independence and better quality of life through digital tech)
- Capabilities (the Council has the right capabilities to deliver this strategy).

 CW&C Towards a Digital Borough 2021-2025 (2021) - [Weblink](#)

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The policy review suggests that our main drivers for change, for a better future for transport, should be:

- The need to tackle climate change and improve our air quality.
- The need to create more inclusive societies, helping people out of deprivation and poverty, by ensuring car ownership is not essential and other modes of travel such as buses and trains are available to help people to accessing public services and opportunities, such as jobs, training, health centres and other amenities.
- The need to create healthier, happier and greener places to live.
- The need to grow our local economy and support national economic growth.

It is clear that change, via our LTP4, is expected to be delivered mainly through initiatives such as:

- The rapid decarbonisation of the transport network, and a significant reduction in car-based journeys, particularly for local trips.
- The promotion of active travel, to make cycling and walking the best choice for local journeys.
- Significant improvement to public transport networks, with an emphasis on creating better links to jobs, health and other services.
- Step changes to travel behaviours, enabling people to make more sustainable travel choices by providing more accessible, affordable and convenient options.

There are potential opportunities which should be afforded by devolution which is due to come in from summer 2026. This is expected to change how we may access and allocate funding and powers and is set to include new opportunities to take control over the bus network should this be something which Cheshire and Warrington chooses to pursue.