



## House of Commons

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs,  
Environmental Audit, Health and  
Social Care, and Transport Committees

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### **Improving air quality: Government Response to the Fourth Report of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of the Environmental Audit Committee, Third Report of the Health and Social Care Committee, and Second Report of the Transport Committee of Session 2017–19**

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**Tenth Special Report of the Environment, Food and  
Rural Affairs Committee, Seventh Special Report of the  
Environmental Audit Committee, Second Special Report of  
the Health and Social Care Committee and Third Special  
Report of the Transport Committee**

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## The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and associated public bodies.

### Current membership

[Neil Parish MP](#) (*Conservative, Tiverton and Honiton*) (Chair)

[Alan Brown MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, Kilmarnock and Loudoun*)

[Paul Flynn MP](#) (*Labour, Newport West*)

[John Grogan MP](#) (*Labour, Keighley*)

[Dr Caroline Johnson MP](#) (*Conservative, Sleaford and North Hykeham*)

[Kerry McCarthy MP](#) (*Labour, Bristol East*)

[Sandy Martin MP](#) (*Labour, Ipswich*)

[Mrs Sheryll Murray MP](#) (*Conservative, South East Cornwall*)

[David Simpson MP](#) (*Democratic Unionist Party, Upper Bann*)

[Angela Smith MP](#) (*Labour, Penistone and Stocksbridge*)

[Julian Sturdy MP](#) (*Conservative, York Outer*)

## Environmental Audit Committee

The Environmental Audit Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to consider to what extent the policies and programmes of government departments and non-departmental public bodies contribute to environmental protection and sustainable development; to audit their performance against such targets as may be set for them by Her Majesty's Ministers; and to report thereon to the House.

### Current membership

[Mary Creagh MP](#) (*Labour, Wakefield*) (Chair)

[Colin Clark MP](#) (*Conservative, Gordon*)

[Dr Thérèse Coffey MP](#) (*Conservative, Suffolk Coastal*)

[Geraint Davies MP](#) (*Labour (Co-op), Swansea West*)

[Mr Philip Dunne MP](#) (*Conservative, Ludlow*)

[Zac Goldsmith MP](#) (*Conservative, Richmond Park*)

[Mr Robert Goodwill MP](#) (*Conservative, Scarborough and Whitby*)

[James Gray MP](#) (*Conservative, North Wiltshire*)

[Caroline Lucas MP](#) (*Green Party, Brighton, Pavilion*)

[Kerry McCarthy MP](#) (*Labour, Bristol East*)

[Anna McMorrin MP](#) (*Labour, Cardiff North*)

[John McNally MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, Falkirk*)

[Dr Matthew Offord MP](#) (*Conservative, Hendon*)

[Dr Dan Poulter MP](#) (*Conservative, Central Suffolk and North Ipswich*)

[Joan Ryan MP](#) (*Labour, Enfield North*)

[Alex Sobel MP](#) (*Labour (Co-op), Leeds North West*)

## Health and Social Care Committee

The Health and Social Care Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the policy, administration and expenditure of the Department of Health and Social Care and its associated bodies.

### Current membership

[Dr Sarah Wollaston MP](#) (*Conservative, Totnes*) (Chair)

[Luciana Berger MP](#) (*Labour (Co-op), Liverpool, Wavertree*)

[Mr Ben Bradshaw MP](#) (*Labour, Exeter*)

[Dr Lisa Cameron MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow*)

[Rosie Cooper MP](#) (*Labour, West Lancashire*)

[Diana Johnson MP](#) (*Labour, Kingston upon Hull North*)

[Johnny Mercer MP](#) (*Conservative, Plymouth, Moor View*)

[Andrew Selous MP](#) (*Conservative, South West Bedfordshire*)

[Derek Thomas MP](#) (*Conservative, St Ives*)

[Martin Vickers MP](#) (*Conservative, Cleethorpes*)

[Dr Paul Williams MP](#) (*Labour, Stockton South*)

The following Members were also members of the Committee during the inquiry  
Caroline Johnson MP and Maggie Throup MP.

## Transport Committee

The Transport Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for Transport and its associated public bodies.

### Current membership

[Lilian Greenwood MP](#) (*Labour, Nottingham South*) (Chair)

[Jack Brereton MP](#) (*Conservative, Stoke-on-Trent South*)

[Ronnie Cowan MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, Inverclyde*)

[Steve Double MP](#) (*Conservative, St Austell and Newquay*)

[Paul Girvan MP](#) (*Democratic Unionist Party, South Antrim*)

[Huw Merriman MP](#) (*Conservative, Bexhill and Battle*)

[Grahame Morris MP](#) (*Labour, Easington*)

[Luke Pollard MP](#) (*Labour (Co-op), Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport*)

[Iain Stewart MP](#) (*Conservative, Milton Keynes South*)

[Graham Stringer MP](#) (*Labour, Blackley and Broughton*)

[Daniel Zeichner MP](#) (*Labour, Cambridge*)

## Powers

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Health and Social Care Committee and the Transport Committees are departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in the House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No. 152. The constitution and powers of the Environmental Audit Committee are also set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152A. These are available on the internet via [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk).

## Publications

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website at [www.parliament.uk/efracom](http://www.parliament.uk/efracom), [www.parliament.uk/eacom](http://www.parliament.uk/eacom), [www.parliament.uk/hscocom](http://www.parliament.uk/hscocom) and [www.parliament.uk/transcom](http://www.parliament.uk/transcom) and in print by Order of the House.

Evidence relating to this report is published on the relevant [inquiry page](#) of the Committee's website.

## Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Eliot Barrass (Clerk), Sian Woodward (Clerk), Daniel Schlappa (Second Clerk), Xameerah Malik (Senior Committee Specialist), Andrew French (Committee Specialist), Anwen Rees (Committee Specialist), James Hockaday (Senior Committee Assistant), Ian Blair (Committee Assistant), Annabel Russell (Committee Assistant), and Sean Kinsey (Media Officer).

## Environmental Audit Committee Staff

The current staff of the Committee are David Slater (Clerk), Nina Foster (Second Clerk), Nicholas Davies (Committee Specialist), Laura Grant (Committee Specialist), Jennifer Maddalena (Committee Researcher), Ameet Chudasama (Senior Committee Assistant), Baris Tufekci (Committee Assistant), and Sean Kinsey (Media Officer).

## Health and Social Care Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Huw Yardley (Clerk), Seth Roberts (Second Clerk), Laura Daniels (Senior Committee Specialist), Lewis Pickett (Committee Specialist), Dr Juliette Mullin (Clinical Fellow), Cecilia Santi O Desanti, (Senior Committee Assistant), Ed Hamill (Committee Assistant), and Alex Paterson (Media Officer).

## Transport Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Gordon Clarke (Committee Clerk), Previn Desai (Second Clerk), James Clarke (Committee Specialist), Nerys Davies (Committee Specialist), Andrew Haylen (Committee Specialist), Daniel Moeller (Senior Committee Assistant), Michelle Owens (Committee Assistant), Estelle Currie (Senior Media Officer), and Simon Horswell (Media Officer).

## Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Second Clerk of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 6194; the Committee's email address is [efracom@parliament.uk](mailto:efracom@parliament.uk). Media inquiries should be addressed to Sean Kinsey on 020 7219 5012.

## Special Report

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The Environmental Audit, Environment Food and Rural Affairs, Health and Social Care, and Transport Committees' report to the House on *Improving air quality* (HC 433) was published by the House on 15 March 2018 as the Fourth Report of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of the Environmental Audit Committee, Third Report of the Health and Social Care Committee, and Second Report of the Transport Committee of Session 2017–19. The Government's Response was received on 22 May 2018 and is appended to this Report.

In the Government's response, the Committees' recommendations appear in **bold text** and the Government's responses appear in plain text.

## Appendix: Government Response

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### Preface

The Government thanks the joint Committee for its report on improving air quality.

Clean air is essential for life, health, the environment and the economy. Air pollution is a major public health risk, ranking alongside cancer, heart disease and obesity. It causes more harm than passive smoking.

Air quality has improved significantly since 2010. We recognise, however, that more needs to be done. Government must act to tackle air pollution which shortens lives. That is why we have put in place a £3.5 billion plan to improve air quality at the roadside, and why we are taking action to accelerate the improvements to air quality that will reduce risks to health for current and future generations.

On 22 May the Government published our Clean Air Strategy,<sup>1</sup> which aims to save lives by cutting all forms of air pollution, not just emissions from transport. The strategy sets out a wide range of actions on which the Government is consulting, including ambitious new goals based on World Health Organisation recommendations and the introduction of new primary legislation to give local government new powers to take decisive action in areas with an air pollution problem.

We have said that we will end the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040. We will shortly publish the Government's Road to Zero strategy, which will set out the steps we will take over the coming years to deliver our mission for every new car and van in the UK to be effectively zero emission by 2040.

These two new and ambitious strategies, taken together with the Government's Industrial Strategy, Clean Growth Strategy and 25 Year Environment Plan, will help us achieve our goals of cleaner air, a better environment, zero emission vehicles, and a strong clean economy.

The Committees made a number of specific recommendations, which we now consider in detail.

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1 <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/clean-air-strategy-consultation/>

**Recommendation 1. Air pollution has a significant impact on health, but we heard that the health community has not been sufficiently engaged in the air quality debate. The health sector needs to play a stronger, more visible, and more vocal role in tackling air quality. This should occur at a national level, through the Department of Health and Social Care and Public Health England; at a local level, through local authority Directors of Public Health; and through NHS organisations. (Paragraph 14)**

Public Health England (PHE) is working with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Directors of Public Health, health charities and others to raise air quality issues within the health sector and other sectors, and to develop guidance and advice for taking action.

To support Directors of Public Health, PHE (working with Defra and the Local Government Association) has released briefings and toolkits<sup>2</sup> and supports masterclasses on air quality. PHE provides systematic support to local authorities that are required to develop plans under the Government's UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations 2017 ("the NO<sub>2</sub> Plan"). PHE is also supporting the Defra/DfT Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) as part of the review process for these plans, including attending the JAQU Programme Board.

PHE undertakes various air quality research projects, working with academic partners, to review the evidence for the health effects of air pollutants and for effective and cost-effective air pollution interventions,<sup>3</sup> to estimate the costs to the NHS and social care and to improve dissemination of air quality messages. PHE has also developed, with the UK Health Forum and Imperial College London, a tool<sup>4</sup> that highlights the costs to the NHS and social care system of exposure to particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), two of the pollutants to be tackled under the Government's Clean Air Strategy.

DHSC will promote understanding of the health impacts of air pollution with medical professionals and the potential impact on patients.

**Recommendation 2. There is an urgent need for a national information campaign providing clear messages about the risks of air pollution and the actions people can take. This campaign should be run by Public Health England, and implemented no later than September 2018. (Paragraph 18)**

PHE routinely communicates the risk to the public's health from air pollution through its local centres and regions and national team at Chilton in Oxfordshire.

PHE runs campaigns that aim to change behaviour and this requires evidence about the most effective interventions and how these can be communicated with the public and other stakeholders.

It is not possible for PHE to deliver an effective and appropriate campaign by September 2018. However, PHE is currently in the process of reviewing the evidence of the effectiveness of different interventions and will be reporting its findings to Ministers later

2 <https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/assets/63091defraairqualityguide9web.pdf>

3 <https://www.gov.uk/Government/publications/phe-remit-letter-2018-to-2019>

4 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-pollution-a-tool-to-estimate-healthcare-costs>

this year. When the outcome of this work is known, it will contribute to the evidence base for improving information provision on health improvement and mitigation of the risks of air pollution.

***Recommendation 3.*** We recommend that air pollution levels should be monitored at key spots within local communities – for example near schools, hospitals and care homes – and the results clearly communicated to local residents and service users. This will not only serve to reinforce the value of measures such as anti-idling campaigns, but will also provide the public with the information they need to press their elected representatives for further changes at a local authority level. (Paragraph 19)

The Environment Act (1995) requires local authorities to review and assess local air quality. Defra provides guidance and support. Positioning of local monitors is expected to be in line with national and local priorities, which may include locations such as schools where there is high risk of public exposure to air pollutants.

Government will consult in 2018 on policy changes to the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) framework, shifting to greater transparency about local air quality to empower local citizens to hold local decision makers to account and provide stronger incentives for those decision makers to use the tools at their disposal to clean up local air.

Subject to consultation, we expect local authorities to start using the streamlined reporting in 2019, including making data and information readily accessible and available to local citizens.

Government will also improve the information it provides about air pollution, health impacts and the simple actions people can take to reduce their exposure. We will develop and deliver a personal air quality messaging system to inform the public, particularly those who are vulnerable to air pollution, about the air quality forecast, and provide clearer information on air pollution episodes and health advice.

***Recommendations 4, 5 and 6.***

***Recommendation 4.*** We therefore welcome Defra's suggestion that a new Environmental Protection Agency be established to hold Government to account after EU-exit, and recommend that provision for such an agency be written into legislation, specifying equivalent powers, standards and enforcement mechanisms as the equivalent enforcement agencies in the EU. Given the tight timescales surrounding EU-exit, we recommend that Defra publishes its consultation response on the proposed Environmental Protection Agency and the extent of its powers as soon as possible. The new watchdog must have powers equivalent to those of the European Commission to force the Government to act, otherwise action on air quality will be further weakened. (Paragraph 26)

***Recommendation 5.*** The Government should establish appropriate institutions and agencies to independently enforce air quality requirements. Furthermore, the Government should establish in primary legislation a requirement that UK air pollution standards are at least as high as equivalent standards in the EU, and that the relevant enforcement agency must have equivalent powers, standards and enforcement mechanisms as the equivalent agencies in the EU. (Paragraph 27)

**Recommendation 6. The Government must bring forward legislative proposals on clean air that unify and update existing laws in a new Clean Air Act. The Government must set out its regulatory course, including whether to adopt World Health Organization air quality guidelines for all air pollutants, including sulphur dioxide, particulate matter and ozone, and not just nitrogen dioxide. This legislation should aim to achieve the widest possible health benefits by adopting World Health Organization targets into UK statute. (Paragraph 34)**

The European Union (Withdrawal) Bill is designed to ensure that the UK leaves the EU with legal certainty. It will ensure that the whole body of existing EU environmental law continues to have effect in UK law. The Government has already committed to ensure environmental standards are not only maintained but enhanced as we leave the EU. It will be for Parliament (and in some cases for the devolved legislatures) to make any future changes in legislation after we have left the EU.

On 10 May 2018, the Government launched a consultation on a new, independent, statutory body to hold government to account on environmental standards once we have left the European Union, and on a new policy statement on environmental principles to apply post-EU Exit. We will bring forward a new, ambitious Environment Principles and Governance Bill to deliver on these proposals.

We are consulting on the new body undertaking scrutiny and providing advice in relation to environmental policy and law, investigating complaints and, if necessary, taking action to bring about the proper delivery of environmental law by government. The consultation also outlines our proposal to enshrine environmental principles in a comprehensive statutory policy statement to set out their interpretation and application.

The Government laid legislation transposing the National Emission Ceilings Directive in Parliament on 1 February, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to improving air quality. This legislation implements ambitious, binding emission reduction commitments for 2020 and 2030 for five damaging air pollutants into domestic law. On 22 May we published a new Clean Air Strategy setting out how we will work towards our 2020 and 2030 commitments.

In our Clean Air Strategy we are now proposing bold new goals to progressively cut public exposure to particulate matter pollution, using measures suggested by the World Health Organisation. We are proposing new primary legislation which will create a coherent framework for action to tackle air pollution.

We will legislate to provide for new England-wide powers to control major sources of air pollution, in line with the risk they pose to public health and the environment, plus new local powers to take action in areas with an air pollution problem. Local authorities have long had specific legal powers to tackle air pollution locally. In our Clean Air Strategy we are now proposing to replace the existing patchwork with a single coherent legislative framework for local authorities to tackle air quality and bring the law up to date so that accountability for air quality sits in the right place. We propose to update outmoded legislation on 'dark smoke' from chimneys and underused provisions on Smoke Control Areas with more flexible, proportionate enforcement powers. Finally, we propose to create

a new statutory framework for Clean Air Zones (CAZs) to simplify current overlapping frameworks of CAZs, Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and Smoke Control Areas to create a single approach covering all sources of air pollution.

**Recommendation 7. Defra's forthcoming Clean Air Strategy must ensure that public health and environmental protection are at the forefront of Government thinking. The strategy must ensure measures are considered and implemented as a suite of complementary packages rather than in isolation, as has previously been the case with NO<sub>2</sub>. Improving public transport and providing incentive packages that reduce the need for private vehicles must form a key part of this approach. This national action plan must also ensure air quality policies are properly aligned with public health and climate change goals. (Paragraph 43)**

We do not agree that previous measures to tackle NO<sub>2</sub> have been implemented in isolation. We are working across Government to tackle NO<sub>2</sub> exceedances, and stakeholders from across seven departments take part in the governance of the NO<sub>2</sub> Plan.

While the Committees did not question ministers on the Clean Air Strategy, we have worked closely across Government to ensure that it is aligned with public health and climate change goals. In addition, Government will shortly be publishing the Road to Zero strategy, and in the Clean Air Strategy we are setting out ambitious plans to drive down emissions in each major transport sector: rail, shipping, aviation and non-exhaust emissions from road transport. In all cases we will consider air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions jointly.

### *Public transport*

As set out in the Clean Air Strategy, in addition to the actions for reducing emissions from each transport sector, modal shift to lower emission modes of travel plays a central role in reducing transport emissions. Government is promoting this via:

- The Bus Services Act 2017, which includes a range of measures to improve bus services through franchising and better partnership working. Local authorities and bus operators will be encouraged to agree a package of improvements to introduce bus priority measures to reduce idling and journey times, or to introduce ULEVs along key routes. As announced in March, we have allocated £48m to the new Ultra Low Emission Bus Scheme for local authorities and bus operators to purchase ultra low emission buses and supporting infrastructure<sup>5</sup> (discussed further below in response to recommendation 11).
- The first ever statutory Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, which Government published in 2017 and which identifies £1.2bn that may be invested in cycling and walking from 2016 to 2021. This has included £101m made available through the Cycle City Ambition programme to improve cycling infrastructure in eight cities, and £80m to support local projects to improve safety and encourage cycling.

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5 <https://www.gov.uk/Government/publications/low-emission-bus-scheme>

- Local Enterprise Partnerships. Government is investing £12bn in the Local Growth Fund, which Local Enterprise Partnerships, involving local authorities and businesses, can use to fund local transport infrastructure improvements, prioritised according to local needs.
- The £1.7bn Transforming Cities Fund will provide investment on public transport and cycling and walking infrastructure in some of England's largest cities, to reduce congestion and increase productivity, with benefits for air quality. £840m has already been allocated to the six mayoral combined authorities, and a 'Call for Proposals'<sup>6</sup> for access to the remaining £840m of funding was launched for non-mayoral city regions on 13 March 2018.

### *Climate change*

There are opportunities for mitigating climate change and improving air quality together (for example, by ensuring industrial sector plans for reducing air pollution are well aligned with those for decarbonisation). Where tensions exist, we will ensure that a balanced approach is taken which supports achievement of clean growth as a whole. In practice, this means integrating both air quality and climate change considerations into Government policies such as energy, transport and agriculture. It also means ensuring that innovation funds are focused jointly on air quality and decarbonisation wherever appropriate, so that we encourage the development of technologies and solutions with multiple benefits and avoid unintended consequences.

### *Public health*

Government is working closely together to address the public health impacts of air quality. For example, effective communication of health messages about air pollution can save lives and improve quality of life for many, so Defra, PHE and DHSC are working together to provide clearer and more targeted messages about the risks of air pollution and the simple actions people can take to improve air quality and health.

Government is also working closely with health partners to improve our evidence base. This includes developing ways to evaluate more effectively policies to improve air quality by gathering better information on where, when and how patients report and are treated for air quality related health conditions. This will also help meet the recommendations of the recent Chief Medical Officer's report on air pollution. We will evaluate costs to the NHS, the economy and wider society from the impacts of chronic illnesses associated with exposure to air pollutants and develop a better way to measure our progress.

***Recommendation 8. National action frameworks should take greater account of local authority data. The overall approach to air quality monitoring needs to be expanded to capture more useful local data and ensure this is used effectively to inform appropriate policy action. This will require greater investment in existing and emerging local surveillance capabilities. Defra should conduct an evidence review; investigate the steps needed to undertake such an expansion; and develop a pilot project by December 2018. Defra should provide a progress update in response to this Report. (Paragraph 47)***

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6 <https://www.gov.uk/Government/publications/apply-for-the-transforming-cities-fund>

The Government recognises that the different approaches to local and national modelling and monitoring, which have been established under different legislative regimes, can create uncertainty. National and local monitoring and modelling were established for different purposes: the national assessment seeks to represent the general exposure and must accord with the location and sampling point requirements in Annex III of the Ambient Air Quality Directive, whereas air quality assessments for LAQM focus on targeting local pollution hotspots so that pollutant concentrations are considered at all areas of relevant public exposure within the local area.

That said, we recognise there is scope to make better use of the data from local monitoring networks, alongside the national Automatic Urban and Rural Network (AURN). We will commission projects this year which aim to deliver a solution to allow local and national data to be utilised from the same location, while providing clear guidance as to how each data source should be used.

We aim to work in collaboration with other organisations to develop a single accessible portal for accessing air quality data with the potential for making third-party datasets available through this portal in future. Bringing this data into a single location will increase transparency and open up the possibilities for use by both Government and by the public and researchers.

As a first step, we will consult this year on a review of LAQM to make existing local air quality reporting more streamlined, transparent and accessible to the public.

We recognise the importance of innovation in providing air quality measurements. In 2016 we commissioned a review of innovative technologies<sup>7</sup> where we recognised the potential role that low cost sensor technologies may play in the future. Our Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG) issued a considered view on this emerging technology which is published on Defra's UK Air website.<sup>8</sup> Currently this technology is poorly evidenced and so confidence in its effective use remains low. As part of a two year Future Evidence Programme we will be funding projects that better evidence this technology and help bring it to market readiness more quickly.

In addition, we are currently investigating options for incorporating more local input data into our national air quality model. This will focus particularly on the road transport sector, and improving the capability of the national model to reflect traffic at the local level.

**Recommendation 9. Defra's modelling already shows that, in many cases, non-charging options will not be as swift or effective as charging Clean Air Zones. If local authorities are regularly exceeding NO<sub>2</sub> concentration limits and identify a charging Clean Air Zone as being the most effective mitigation strategy, they should be able to receive Government support for implementing a CAZ without having to go to onerous lengths to demonstrate the inefficacy of other options. If this approach fails to deliver the required improvements as quickly as possible, the Government should consider mandating charging zones in hotspot areas. (Paragraph 57)**

Local authorities face different contexts and challenges in tackling local air pollution, and are best placed to take the lead in identifying appropriate measures for their areas.

7 [https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/cat20/1607061156\\_DEFRA\\_innovative\\_tech\\_Final.pdf](https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/cat20/1607061156_DEFRA_innovative_tech_Final.pdf)

8 <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/aqeg/pollution-sensors.php>

All local authorities have the power to introduce CAZs to tackle air quality locally, should they wish to do so.

The approach taken by the Government in the NO<sub>2</sub> Plan is to support local authorities to implement measures which deliver compliance in the shortest possible time. Government has directed 61 local authorities to conduct analysis to identify such measures.

28 of these local authorities, which have longer-term air quality problems, are required to produce plans which achieve compliance at least as fast as a charging CAZ. Given the potential impacts on individuals and businesses (which the Committees acknowledge in making recommendations 10 and 13), the Government believes that if a local authority can identify measures other than a charging CAZ that are at least as effective at reducing NO<sub>2</sub>, those measures should be preferred.

Local authorities' plans will be assessed by Government to make sure they are effective, fair, good value and will deliver the required improvements in air quality in the shortest time possible. If local plans do not meet that test, Government will require councils to take action to achieve legal compliance.

Only plans which achieve legal compliance in the shortest possible time will be approved by the Secretary of State. We will create legally binding obligations to ensure that local plans are implemented and compliance is achieved.

***Recommendation 10. There is a risk that, if not supported with additional measures, Clean Air Zone charges will disproportionately affect low-income drivers. We recommend that all Clean Air Zone proposals are accompanied by mitigating measures to reduce the effect on low-income motorists. (Paragraph 58)***

Following the commitment in the plan, as part of Autumn Budget 2017 the Chancellor announced a £220m Clean Air Fund, a funding pot for which English local authorities required to undertake feasibility studies are eligible. The Clean Air Fund provides an opportunity for these local authorities to implement additional measures which minimise the potential negative impact of local air quality plans on individuals and businesses.

On 23 March 2018 the Government published its response to a consultation seeking views on potential measures that could be supported through the Clean Air Fund.<sup>9</sup> The response outlines a range of measures local authorities could consider, such as new park and ride services, freight consolidation centres, concessionary travel schemes, improvements to bus fleets and targeted local scrappage schemes.

The NO<sub>2</sub> Plan is clear that local authorities should, as part of their feasibility studies, assess the impact a local plan could have on individuals and businesses, including through an economic impact assessment and a distributional and equalities impact analysis. Government also made a clear commitment in the Plan to help local authorities support individuals and businesses impacted by local air quality plans. This commitment holds for all local plans with an impact, a charging CAZ being an example of this.

It is worth noting that even where a local authority identifies a charging CAZ as the most effective measure for delivering compliance, not all CAZs will involve charging motorists.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/Government/consultations/air-quality-additional-measures-to-support-individuals-and-businesses-affected-by-local-no2-plans>

As part of their feasibility studies, local authorities will determine what class of CAZ is needed to achieve compliance in the shortest time possible, and therefore what vehicles will be affected.

***Recommendation 11.* Defra and the Department for Transport must work closely with local authorities to ensure that councils introducing Clean Air Zones receive the support they need to implement complementary measures which encourage car drivers to switch to public transport, active travel or electric vehicles. This may involve granting local authorities greater powers, for example over lane rental schemes and new development. Defra and the DfT should also urgently evaluate whether there are sufficient resources to ensure enough clean buses can be introduced in air quality hotspots to reduce NO<sub>2</sub> concentration levels as fast as possible. The Departments should inform us of the outcome of this assessment in response to this Report. (Paragraph 64)**

The NO<sub>2</sub> Plan is clear that local authorities should consider a range of options to address the air quality challenges in their area; this can include measures which encourage car drivers to switch to public transport, active travel or low emission vehicles.

As the Committees are aware, the Government has announced a £255m Implementation Fund and a £220m Clean Air Fund to support the delivery of local plans in affected local authorities. £24.5m from the Implementation Fund was made available to local authorities in March 2018 to support a range of measures to take immediate action locally. This included support for installing electric charge point hubs in car parks, bus priority measures, building cycle routes, and incentivising ultra low emission taxis through licensing schemes and leasing electric vehicles.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, Government is investing heavily in public transport, active travel and the transition to low emission vehicles through a range of funding programmes and policies and has committed nearly £1.5bn between April 2015 and March 2021 to support one of the most comprehensive global programmes of support for ULEVs, with grants available for plug in cars, vans, lorries, buses, taxis and motorcycles, as well as schemes to support charge point infrastructure at homes and workplaces, and on residential streets.

### *Local authority powers*

Local authorities have long had specific legal powers to tackle air pollution locally. In our Clean Air Strategy we are now proposing to replace the existing patchwork with a single coherent legislative framework for local authorities to tackle air quality.

With regard to lane rental schemes specifically, the Government announced on 16 February 2018 that, following consultation, we have decided to allow local authorities to bid for and set up lane rental schemes as a way of reducing the impact of street works on the busiest roads at the busiest times.<sup>11</sup> This ensures that essential roadworks go ahead, but do not stay in place any longer than is absolutely necessary.

10 <https://www.gov.uk/Government/news/260-million-of-clean-air-funding-launched-by-Government>

11 <https://www.gov.uk/Government/consultations/future-of-lane-rental-schemes-for-roadworks>

### *Clean buses*

The Government has invested in clean buses through various schemes including the Green Bus Fund, the Clean Bus Technology Fund, the Clean Vehicle Technology Fund and the Low Emission Bus Scheme. In August 2017, the Government announced an additional £11m investment in 153 new ultra low emission buses via the Low Emission Bus Scheme.

In February 2018 the Government announced an additional £40m investment in retrofitting over 2700 buses, including over 2200 outside London, with accredited pollution-reducing technology.

The Government estimates that there are up to 3000 further pre-Euro VI buses operating in the 28 most persistent NO<sub>2</sub> hotspots outside London. The Government has sufficient funds available to upgrade these buses via the £475m committed for local authorities to implement and mitigate their air quality plans and via the additional £48m committed for the new Ultra Low Emission Bus Scheme.

However, this will depend on which measures local authorities and bus operators decide to prioritise to achieve compliance with NO<sub>2</sub> limit values in the shortest possible time, as well as other factors such as State aid rules. The time it would take to upgrade this number of buses means that other measures might achieve compliance more quickly.

In June 2017, the Mayor of London announced an £86.1m programme to retrofit around 5000 London buses with pollution-reducing technology so that the entire fleet will be clean by 2020.

***Recommendation 12. Defra and the Department for Transport must clarify in response to this Report how they will ensure that Clean Air Zones will not simply displace polluting vehicles to areas where monitoring is more limited, and what systems will be implemented to verify this accurately. (Paragraph 67)***

We recognise that there is a danger that a poorly designed charging CAZ could incentivise traffic to divert journeys around the zone and that this could lead to negative air quality outcomes. This is why we have instructed local authorities to consider the impacts of CAZs both inside and outside the zones themselves. This is set out in the options appraisal guidance provided to local authorities.

In addition to this, we are encouraging local authorities to work with surrounding local authorities and other relevant organisations such as Highways England to ensure that they fully consider the potential impacts of charging CAZs on other areas.

The 33 local authorities which were issued with directions to undertake targeted feasibility studies on 23 March 2018 have also been given guidance stating that they should consider and address any risk of displacement onto other roads.

Local authorities will continue to monitor the effectiveness of their schemes with Defra oversight, and there will be ongoing obligations in terms of assessment of ambient air across the country, including background concentrations.

**Recommendation 13.** Defra and the Department for Transport must ensure Clean Air Zone plans include robust economic impact assessments, and work with local authorities to ensure affected communities and businesses are made aware of the support measures accompanying clean air plans. To ensure small businesses are not disproportionately affected by the new measures, Defra and the DfT should also investigate the feasibility of providing small businesses with more time or resources to upgrade their vehicles. (Paragraph 71)

The NO<sub>2</sub> Plan is clear that local authorities must conduct feasibility studies with robust economic impact assessments, following the HMT Green Book approach. We have issued guidance to support them to do this, including a requirement to assess the impact a local plan could have on individuals and businesses through a distributional and equalities impact analysis. In developing a local plan, local authorities will conduct appropriate stakeholder engagement and consultation, and will develop communications plans to ensure those affected are made aware of the local plan and available support measures. To support this work, JAQU is setting up a Communications Working Group for local authorities to share best practice on communicating new measures to stakeholders and the general public.

Government has also issued eligible local authorities with guidance for the £220m Clean Air Fund to mitigate the impact of local plans on individuals and businesses: JAQU will provide further support as part of the business case development process. The Clean Air Fund is intervention-neutral and outcome-focused, enabling local authorities to put forward proposals that best fit their local situation. Features of the tax system such as Enhanced Capital Allowances and VAT reclaims may also benefit some small businesses if they choose to buy or lease a different vehicle.

Section 3.9 of the CAZ Framework<sup>12</sup> sets out the Government's policy on exemptions and discounts within charging CAZs. The framework recognises that based on particular local circumstances local authorities may also consider additional exemptions or discounts (the period for which any discount is available should also be considered). Such additional exemptions can only be considered where they do not slow down the achievement of compliance with legal limits.

**Recommendation 14.** The 2017 NO<sub>2</sub> air quality plan should be widened to offer direction, financial resources, and technical support to the 45 local authority areas which breach NO<sub>2</sub> limit levels but are not included under the current action framework. This should be accompanied with commensurate financial increases in the Implementation Fund and Clean Air Fund. (Paragraph 77)

Government made clear its commitment to ensuring legal compliance with regards to air quality at the inquiry. On 23 March 2018 we directed an additional 33 local authorities to conduct targeted feasibility studies to identify any measures they can take to ensure that they comply with NO<sub>2</sub> concentration limits in the shortest possible time. To support this work, we have issued £1.65m of funding and guidance that includes contextual information about the NO<sub>2</sub> Plan, how to develop a targeted feasibility study and ways of working with Government. We have also previously encouraged these local authorities to apply for

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12 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/Government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/612592/clean-air-zone-framework.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/Government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612592/clean-air-zone-framework.pdf)

the Air Quality Grant 2017/18 and other relevant grants. We will have a clearer view on possible additional funding requirements once the local authorities have submitted their targeted feasibility studies by 31 July 2018.

We will not be directing 12 of the 45 local authorities to conduct feasibility studies. This is because the Court recognised that they are expected to achieve compliance in 2018 without further action.

**Recommendation 15. Defra should examine additional ways of raising funds for air quality improvements. This should first involve establishing a fund for clean air initiatives partially financed by the private sector. This should be organised by December 2018. The Government should provide us with a progress update in response to this Report. Defra should further examine the expected financial returns from charging zones and the feasibility of allowing local authorities to use this money to fund local air quality schemes. Defra should inform us of the outcome of these assessments in response to this Report. (Paragraph 80)**

The private sector has already made contributions to initiatives that will improve air quality. For example, in November 2017 BMW Group, Daimler AG, Ford Motor Company and the Volkswagen Group with Audi and Porsche announced the IONITY joint venture to develop and implement a High-Power Charging (HPC) network for electric vehicles across Europe. The network aims to launch 400 ultra-fast charging station sites across Europe by 2020, with more than 100 to be deployed this year, reducing charging times for compatible vehicles and helping to make electric vehicles more appealing. Many vehicle manufacturers have also run private scrappage schemes, enabling owners of older vehicles to purchase a cleaner vehicle. We have encouraged and continue to encourage manufacturers to come forward with further voluntary contributions to air quality funding, and in this context we would welcome proposals from the automotive sector ahead of the Committees' December deadline.

Volkswagen has reimbursed DfT £1.1m for the costs of a diesel emissions testing programme. We needed to undertake this to determine whether any other manufacturer had used a cycle recognition strategy to cheat the legislative test, as Volkswagen's actions had cast doubt over the rest of the industry. These funds have had the effect of increasing the UK's capability for testing real world emissions, increasing the Air Quality Fund (allowing the Government to provide funding for a City Council's HGV fleet to be retrofitted with emissions reduction technology), and encouraging the uptake of ULEVs.

Local authorities will consider the expected financial returns from CAZs as part of the economic analysis within their feasibility studies. The Transport Act 2000 requires any excess revenue that may arise from charging zones (above the costs of operation) to be re-invested to facilitate the achievement of local transport policies. These policies should aim to improve air quality and support the delivery of the ambitions of the charging zone. The Government has, however, been clear in its guidance to local authorities that they should not set the level of charge as a revenue raising measure, but rather at a level designed to drive the behavioural response needed to bring about compliance in their local areas.

**Recommendation 16.** The Joint Air Quality Unit should develop a centralised support programme available to all local authorities to address current and prevent future air pollution problems. Plans for the support programme should be developed with the aim of making a service available nationally by January 2019. We would be grateful for written confirmation of the establishment of this service. (Paragraph 85)

Government has already taken action to enhance its programme of support for all local authorities. Funding for the Low Emissions Partnership, a local-authority led online platform, was awarded from Defra's Air Quality Grant for five years from April 2018. This will give all local authorities in England access to knowledge including good practice case studies, peer-to-peer expertise, and information and resources to raise citizens' awareness about why air quality matters and how they can make a difference.

We will also consult in 2018 on changes to the LAQM system to minimise bureaucracy and reporting burdens, shifting the focus to taking action to clean up local air through strong collaborative local partnerships, and driving stronger local action on reducing particulate matter emissions, and will encourage greater public transparency about local air quality.

**Recommendation 17.** We welcome the proposal to introduce air quality emissions information in vehicle labelling, and urge the Government to provide clear guidance on how this will be extended to the second-hand market as quickly and effectively as possible. The Government should also consider aligning this labelling system with an easily accessible online register of real-world emissions to help consumers make informed choices. We recommend the Government re-examines its anti-idling policy guidance to assess whether higher fines and stricter enforcement mechanisms should be used to discourage motorists from idling. (Paragraph 89)

Since April 2018,<sup>13</sup> point of sale data for new cars has included the Euro standard (all new cars are Euro 6), whether or not the vehicle is subject to a diesel supplement for the first year's Vehicle Excise Duty (VED), and a brief explanation of when the supplement applies and confirmation that Euro 6 cars meet current minimum standards for CAZs.

The used car label, voluntarily adopted by most dealers, will be amended in the following months. As some used cars will not meet the standard for CAZs, this information will help drivers and owners play their part in reducing emissions.

The Vehicle Certification Agency manages an online suite of tools and publishes an annual fuel economy guide to enable car buyers to compare fuel economy, carbon dioxide and other emissions, and running costs of different models and brands.

We note the Committees' recommendations relating to anti-idling offences. Ensuring that existing powers are utilised by local authorities to reduce emissions, particularly where idling is a significant local issue, is key. Government will consider modernisation of the existing guidance to clarify the extent and use of existing anti-idling powers, including the fines which local authorities are already able to impose. We will then re-issue this guidance to local authorities over the coming months.

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13 <http://www.dft.gov.uk/vca/additional/files/fcb--co2/point-of-sale-pos-system/label-changes-2018.pdf>

**Recommendation 18.** The remit of the Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) should therefore be expanded to meet this need. JAQU should work with the Cabinet Office to ensure all Departments are clear about their duty to consider air quality in policy development. JAQU should further scrutinise policies relating to air quality across all Departments to ensure these form a coherent set of complementary actions. Public health officials should play a key role in JAQU's scrutiny work to ensure health considerations are properly taken into account. Defra and the DfT should outline a delivery framework in response to this Report and provide us with regular subsequent progress updates. (Paragraph 94)

Two ministerial groups act to ensure a coherent approach to air quality across Government. The Ministerial Oversight Group gives ministers from across Government direct oversight of the delivery of the NO<sub>2</sub> Plan, thereby ensuring a joined up approach to tackling air quality. This group was established by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment, Dr Thérèse Coffey, who also acts as Chair, and is attended by ministerial representatives from DHSC, HMT, DfT and MHCLG. The Environmental and Clean Growth Inter Ministerial Group considers issues relating to air quality where these have a cross-departmental aspect, and is attended by ministers from Defra, BEIS, HMT, MHCLG and DfT, and the Government Chief Scientific Adviser.

As part of the Collective Agreement and write round processes, which ensure that Government speaks with one voice, departments initiating new policies are required to engage in discussions with interested departments and seek clearance from the relevant Cabinet Committees. JAQU is therefore sighted on policies that could impact on air quality.

Across Government, a consistent approach is taken to appraising the costs of air pollution and the benefits of action to improve air quality as part of the standard appraisal methods outlined in HMT's Green Book, which is designed to promote efficient policy development. Defra is responsible for developing and disseminating this approach and other Government departments are required to adopt it, where appropriate.

These appraisal tools reflect existing advice from scientists on the various impacts of air pollution on the economy, environment and public health. We are currently working with officials from other Government departments and PHE to update these tools so that they better reflect the emerging evidence on the wide range of chronic health impacts that we now know can be caused by air pollutants, from asthma to coronary heart disease. We plan to publish the updated appraisal tools with accompanying guidance this year. This improvement will have the effect, across all departments, of increasing the appraised benefits of taking action to reduce air pollution.

The Green Book signposts analysts in other departments to officials in JAQU and Defra who can then provide advice and guidance on when and how to use air quality appraisal tools.

**Recommendation 19.** Government should give additional priority to the funding of infrastructure projects which will help to meet air quality objectives. We welcome efforts from local authorities to work collaboratively to address air pollution, and recommend the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) plays a more active role in supporting greater co-ordination. (Paragraph 95)

Government is making substantial investments in infrastructure projects which will help to meet air quality objectives, for example through the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, the Transforming Cities Fund, and initiatives to support the uptake of ULEVs.

JAQU has also provided funding for such infrastructure projects, awarding £24.5m in March this year to support a range of local actions in local authorities with some of the biggest air quality challenges. For example, Bristol, Basildon and Southampton were awarded funding to improve cycling infrastructure in their areas, while Coventry received funding of over £2m to be spent in part on a project to improve a key junction and create staggered pedestrian crossings.

MHCLG fully supports greater collaboration across local authorities and is exploring both policy requirements and incentives to ensure local authorities coordinate their work more strategically, both through national policy and by directly supporting individual areas.

MHCLG is strengthening collaboration across local authorities, on all strategic cross-boundary issues including air quality, through requiring Local Planning Authorities to produce Statements of Common Ground. This requirement is set out in the draft revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated guidance, on which Government recently consulted. The statement of common ground details how plan-making authorities within an area will deal (or have dealt) with cross boundary matters, and the outcomes of these. Plan-making authorities must produce and update one or more statements of common ground throughout the plan-making process and make these publically available. Statements will show whether agreements or meaningful outcomes have or have not been achieved on certain matters (such as air quality in areas most at risk and infrastructure improvements required from development) earlier in the plan-making process.

Collaboration across local authorities and early engagement with other authorities and public bodies (such as Natural England and Local Nature Partnerships) is required for plans to be found 'sound' when tested by the Planning Inspectorate at public examination. In addition, under the 2017 Neighbourhood Planning Act, powers came into force on 15 January 2018 for the MHCLG Secretary of State to be able to direct neighbouring authorities to produce plans jointly.

MHCLG has worked with individual areas to support greater collaboration on air quality issues. For example, there were air quality elements included in the devolution deals with West Midlands Combined Authority, West of England Combined Authority and Liverpool City Region, and the joint MHCLG/BEIS Cities and Local Growth Unit works with JAQU to confirm that progress is being made on these.

***Recommendation 20. More robust air quality policies should also be included in all Local Plans. MHCLG should audit Local Plans for authorities with NO<sub>2</sub> exceedances to assess whether the National Planning Policy Framework guidance is doing enough to encourage effective action on air quality. MHCLG should inform us of its findings in response to this Report. (Paragraph 96)***

Whilst we agree that local plans and planning decisions should contribute to improving air quality, we do not consider that it would be appropriate for central Government to audit individual local plans to review the effectiveness of their action on air quality.

This is because as part of the plan-making process, each plan is already examined by an independent Inspector to ensure it accords with national policy, as part of the 'soundness' test that plans must pass.

However, in line with the Committees' recommendation that local plans should include more robust air quality policies, we are proposing to strengthen national policy. Paragraph 179 of the draft revised NPPF sets out how local planning authorities should contribute to improving air quality when plan making and taking decisions on planning proposals. This includes taking account of AQMAs and CAZs, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, for example through traffic and travel management and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. Paragraph 179 goes on to state that this should be done at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach to the matter. We are considering the consultation responses to see if any further guidance is needed on these issues.

Where local authorities are developing local plans to address NO<sub>2</sub> exceedances under the NO<sub>2</sub> Plan, the Cities and Local Growth Unit (jointly owned by MHCLG and BEIS) is represented on the Programme Board for the Government's NO<sub>2</sub> Plan and is closely involved in reviewing and assessing local plans. The unit brings to the table expertise on how these local plans interact with NPPF guidance. MHCLG will also expect these authorities to take account of their local air quality plan when they come to review their local development plan at the appropriate point in the future.

***Recommendation 21. The Treasury must take greater account of the costs of air pollution when establishing taxation and spending policy. It must explore how existing policies to achieve CO<sub>2</sub> reductions can be combined with air quality targets — particularly NO<sub>2</sub> and particulate matter — to produce a single instrument that delivers on both. The Treasury could begin by examining the feasibility of incorporating harmful pollutant emissions into vehicle taxation. The Treasury should update us on progress in the Government's response to this Report. (Paragraph 100)***

The Government is committed to tackling climate change and air pollution. HMT sees tax and spending policy as playing an important role in achieving this, alongside other approaches such as regulation.

On taxation, the Government has reformed VED so that it helps both to tackle CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and to improve air quality. As of 1 April 2017, all new cars pay VED based on revised CO<sub>2</sub> bands in the first year of registration to incentivise uptake of lower emission transport. As of 1 April 2018, the Government has also introduced a temporary levy on new diesel cars to help improve air quality and to encourage manufacturers to bring forward next-generation clean diesels sooner. New diesel models have gone up by one VED band in their First Year Rate<sup>14</sup> and the Company Car Tax (CCT) diesel supplement has increased by 1 percentage point.<sup>15</sup> These diesel taxes are temporary until such time as manufacturers bring forward next-generation clean diesel cars that meet the Real Driving Emissions Step 2 (RDE2) standard. We are currently consulting on reforming VED for vans, to encourage drivers to choose cleaner vehicles.<sup>16</sup>

14 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vehicle-excise-duty-introduction-of-the-diesel-supplement>

15 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/income-tax-cars-appropriate-percentage-increasing-the-diesel-supplement>

16 <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/vehicle-excise-duty-for-vans>

The Government believes it would be unfair to change the tax treatment for drivers who bought an older vehicle in good faith and cannot make a different choice. We want to encourage those who are looking to buy a car to make good choices.

There would be challenges to introducing a banded system based on air pollutant emissions, as environmental conditions play a significant factor in what air pollutant emission results will be produced by a test on a car on any given day. This is the reason why current EU regulations on NO<sub>x</sub> do not attempt to set out bands. Instead, they set out “pass-fail” tests which prescribe maximum levels of emissions with which manufacturers must ensure their vehicles comply in any validly conducted test.

Other taxes also play an important role in reducing air pollution, such as the Carbon Price Support tax which has helped to reduce the use of coal in power generation, a considerable source of NO<sub>x</sub> and sulphur dioxide emissions. Taken together, these taxes provide a strong environmental signal to incentivise a reduction in polluting activities. However, HMT clearly keeps all taxes under review, and any changes would be announced at fiscal events.

In line with our commitment in the Spring Statement, in order to improve air quality, particularly in our towns and cities, Government has published a call for evidence into whether red diesel for non-road mobile machinery discourages the purchase of cleaner alternatives.<sup>17</sup> Red diesel for agricultural use is out of scope, as are fishing vessels, home heating use and other static uses.

On spending, as we set out above, departments across Government are strongly encouraged to appraise the costs of air quality when evaluating all relevant policies, programmes and projects. This is reflected in HMT's Green Book, refreshed in March 2018, which sets out in Annex 2 how to evaluate air quality costs alongside other environmental and climate change impacts. All these costs should then be integrated into a single evaluation of the policy in question. Although it is for departments to ensure that they account for the costs of air quality in policy development, HMT scrutinises departments' application of the Green Book's guidance, including on air quality costs, on an ongoing basis.

***Recommendation 22. We recommend the Treasury introduces more ambitious measures to encourage the take-up of low emission vehicles. This should include a revision of Vehicle Excise Duty rates to better incentivise both new purchases and support the second-hand market. (Paragraph 101)***

The Government is investing nearly £1.5bn between April 2015 and March 2021 in one of the most comprehensive global programmes of support for electric vehicles. In Autumn Budget 2017 the Government set out support which included:

- an investment of £200m, to be matched by the private sector, into a new £400m Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund to help chargepoint companies grow;
- an exemption for people charging their electric car at work from benefit in kind tax from April 2018;

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17 <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/non-road-mobile-machinery-and-red-diesel-excluding-use-for-agriculture-fishing-vessels-home-heating-and-other-static-uses>

- a further £100m new funding for the cleanest vehicles as part of the Plug-In Car Grant. The grant helps people with the upfront cost of buying an ultra low emission vehicle; and
- regulatory updates to support the roll-out of electric car charging infrastructure, including changing building regulations to ensure all new homes have the right cabling for chargepoints.

There is already a zero rate of VED for zero emission cars. In addition, at Autumn Budget 2017, the Government announced that it would exempt zero emission capable taxis from the VED supplement that currently applies to cars costing over £40,000. The Government is now bringing this in a year earlier than planned, to encourage drivers to make the switch sooner. This means all zero emission capable taxis purchased from April 2018 will be exempt from the supplement, incentivising drivers to make cleaner choices and accelerating the transition to low emission vehicles.

There is a developing market for second hand electric vehicles. Used electric vehicle motorists are able to take advantage of the favourable tax regime the Government has put in place, alongside local initiatives such as free parking and Government grant schemes which assist with the cost of installing chargepoints.

The Government's forthcoming Road to Zero strategy will set out further detail on the Government's plans to support the UK transition to zero emission road transport.

**Recommendation 23. The remit of JAQU should be expanded to track spending on measures intended to improve air quality across all Departments. JAQU should also develop a system to help better quantify what effect new policies will have on air quality, and measure their actual impact after implementation. This information should be collated into a single resource to provide a robust, easily accessible evidence base for future decision-making. (Paragraph 107)**

### *Tracking spending*

JAQU was established between Defra and DfT to drive delivery of the NO<sub>2</sub> Plan. JAQU is responsible for directly managing and administering funding that has been put in place specifically to support delivery of the NO<sub>2</sub> Plan, and the primary objective of which is to support the implementation of measures to deliver compliance with NO<sub>2</sub> limits or to mitigate the impact of such measures.

Acting on the Committees' recommendation, JAQU will take a more structured approach through its Programme Board, and revisit its contact relationships with other relevant departments to ensure that we can track spend across the air quality space and maintain an open and transparent cross-Government record of money committed and spent on air quality.

### *Evaluating air quality policies*

Assessing the effectiveness of any proposed policy, both before and after implementation, is an important part of the policy-making process. We have set out above the work that Government is doing to update the appraisal tools which enable other departments to

calculate the impacts of policy interventions relevant to air quality. In addition, as part of this update we will be working to update the Transport Analysis Guidance to reflect the latest evidence on air quality valuation.

We are also taking action to develop the evidence base for the effect of new policies on air quality and to make it more accessible for both policy-makers and a wider audience. These actions include, but are not limited to:

- commissioning a review by the Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG) into past evaluations on air quality policy interventions, including advice on the best principles and approaches in quantifying the air quality and subsequent environmental or health benefit of different interventions;
- funding the Low Emissions Partnership, a local-authority led online platform that will give all local authorities in England access to knowledge and best practice around air quality measures; and
- working collaboratively with other organisations to develop a single accessible portal for accessing air quality data.

JAQU has also supported local authorities conducting feasibility studies under the NO<sub>2</sub> Plan in building a localised evidence base, which can be used to assess and quantify the potential impacts of policies considered as part of their local plan. Government will ensure that a systematic evaluation of the local plans is conducted, in order to measure the post-implementation effectiveness of any new measures. The outputs, reports and learnings from this evaluation will be disseminated in a way to help develop the growing evidence base.

***Recommendation 24. The Government should bring forward the date by which the sale of conventional petrol and diesel vehicles will be ended. The Government should conduct a feasibility assessment to determine the earliest date by which this could be achieved, balancing the health impacts of air pollution with economic and practical considerations. We expect the Government to then require manufacturers to end the sale of conventional petrol and diesel vehicles by this earlier date. The Government should inform us of the outcome of its assessments in response to this Report. (Paragraph 114)***

We are due to publish the Road to Zero strategy shortly which will set out further detail on the Government's ambition and plans for the transition to zero emission road transport.

We have said we want every new car and van to be effectively zero emission by 2040 and that we will end the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by this date. This level of ambition will not only help ensure we deliver our air quality and greenhouse gas reduction ambitions. It will put the UK at the forefront of the global transition to cleaner road transport and help ensure our automotive sector continues to thrive and create good jobs across the country.

We expect the transition to zero emission vehicles to be industry and consumer-led, with Government monitoring developments closely. Against a rapidly evolving international context, we will seek to maintain ambitious targets and our leadership position, intervening firmly if not enough progress is being made.

**Recommendation 25. The Government should set out a procurement route map to show how it will achieve this target in the Budget, and extend this commitment to cover the fleets of all departments, agencies and public bodies. (Paragraph 117)**

In December 2017 new Government Buying Standards for transport committed to new Government vehicle purchases being zero or ultra low emission by default, with alternatives considered only in exceptional circumstances. Any diesel car alternative must be certified as meeting Real Driving Emissions (RDE) standards (Euro 6d-TEMP or Euro 6d1<sup>18</sup>), and where possible Euro 6d.

These standards are now mandatory for central Government and encouraged for the wider public sector, including local authorities. A requirement within these standards is to electrify 25% of the central Government car fleet, meaning that 1 in every 4 cars will be zero or ultra low emission by 2022.

It will be for individual Government departments to determine how they work towards this target. However, the Office for Low Emission Vehicles will produce guidance for fleet managers later in the year, providing more detail on how the target will be met and progress reported. The Office for Low Emission Vehicles with the Energy Saving Trust will also be working with fleet operators and the Crown Commercial Service to assist fleets in delivering this target.

The forthcoming Road to Zero strategy will set out further detail on how government will lead the way in the transition to zero emission road transport.

**Recommendation 26. The Government should work with National Grid and local authorities to identify the key practical barriers preventing a more rapid roll-out of charging infrastructure, and provide details and timescales of how these will be overcome in response to this Report. Local authorities also need to be clear that they should be facilitating the switch to ULEVs as far as possible. This should be clearly communicated to residents and planning committees. (Paragraph 120)**

Officials from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles speak to National Grid, distribution network operators and local authorities on a regular basis to understand their views on the barriers to infrastructure roll-out.

In January 2018, the Government announced that Ministers had written to local authority leaders to highlight support available through the on-street residential chargepoint scheme.<sup>19</sup> The Government has also made available over £50m to a range of pathfinder local authorities to support measures to help increase uptake of ULEVs through our Go Ultra Low Cities and taxi infrastructure programmes.

The proposed NPPF sets out that when local parking standards are being set, policies should consider the need for adequate provision for charging electric vehicles, and that applications for developments should be designed to enable charging.

The forthcoming Road to Zero strategy will set out further detail of how Government will support the deployment of one of the best electric vehicle infrastructure networks in the world.

18 <http://carfueldata.direct.gov.uk/>

19 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/funding-for-thousands-of-electric-car-charge-points-unused-by-councils>

**Recommendation 27. The DfT should work with Defra and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to ensure that charging infrastructure addresses strategic needs and prioritises air quality hotspots. A technology-neutral approach must be maintained whilst ensuring these systems are future-proofed and capable of handling increases in usage and larger battery sizes. (Paragraph 121)**

Work is ongoing between DfT and MHCLG to ensure policy measures such as planning policy, via the NPPF, and Permitted Development Rights, enable charging infrastructure provision. In addition, as announced in November 2017 in the Industrial Strategy,<sup>20</sup> Building Regulations will be amended to ensure that cabling infrastructure is provided for chargepoints when dwellings are built, to help future-proof new homes.

The Automated and Electric Vehicles Bill will give the Government new powers to improve the provision of electric vehicle infrastructure. These proposals include powers to require provision at motorway service areas and large fuel retailers.

Government has committed significant funding to improving charging infrastructure, including £200m investment at Autumn Budget 2017 for a new Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund, to be matched by the private sector.

In addition, Highways England has a commitment of £15m to ensure there are chargepoints (rapid where possible) every 20 miles on 95% of the Strategic Road Network.

As part of the 2017 Plan, JAQU has also funded a number of initiatives to improve charging infrastructure in air quality hotspots. For example, in March this year, Government announced funding for Leeds, Sheffield, Greater Manchester, Tyneside and Basildon & Rochford to install charging points for electric vehicles at key locations.

Our 2040 mission is technology neutral, and we welcome any innovative thinking that helps us to achieve it.

The forthcoming Road to Zero strategy will set out further detail of how Government will support the deployment of one of the best electric vehicle infrastructure networks in the world.

**Recommendation 28. The Government should produce a detailed roadmap outlining how the predicted increase in energy consumption arising from greater ULEV uptake will be produced using clean sources, and the concrete steps needed to ensure these goals are met. (Paragraph 122)**

National Grid publish predicted electric vehicle impacts on the grid as part of their 'Future Energy Scenarios' (FES) work. Their July 2017 report<sup>21</sup> found that even in their most optimistic scenario with high electric vehicle uptake but with smart charging, the additional peak demand caused by electric vehicles in Great Britain could be as low as around 6GW in 2050, the equivalent of around 10% of current peak demand.

20 <https://www.gov.uk/Government/publications/industrial-strategy-building-a-britain-fit-for-the-future>

21 <http://fes.nationalgrid.com/fes-document/>

Government's Clean Growth Strategy,<sup>22</sup> published in October 2017, sets out our proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy (including the energy sector) to 2030. It explains how the whole country can benefit from low carbon opportunities, while meeting national and international commitments to tackle climate change.

The Climate Change Act 2008 is the basis for the UK's approach to tackling and responding to climate change. It requires that emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are reduced and that climate change risks are prepared for. The Act also establishes the framework to deliver on these requirements.

We are legislating through the Automated and Electric Vehicles Bill to ensure that in future people are encouraged to charge their vehicles off-peak, helping to reduce demands on the energy system.

Technology such as smart charging could be used to take advantage of times when more renewable energy is available.

**Recommendation 29. Defra must publish its analysis of the scrappage consultation responses as soon as possible. It should provide details of the fiscal measures it would take to fund any scrappage proposals and the value for money this represents. The Government should also work closely with private scrappage providers to ensure that existing schemes do more to target support at low-income households and small businesses. (Paragraph 128)**

On 23 March 2018, Government published the consultation response on additional measures to support individuals and businesses affected by local NO<sub>2</sub> plans.<sup>23</sup>

This included our analysis of consultation responses on vehicle scrappage. Stakeholder responses were mixed in regards to scrappage, with some stakeholders supporting it as a way to assist people to upgrade their vehicle, and others highlighting challenges including poor value for money and difficulties with delivery. We have always been clear that any scrappage scheme would need to be carefully targeted. We have not restricted the types of measures for which local authorities could bid for funding from the Clean Air Fund, and local authorities could decide to bid for funding to deliver locally targeted scrappage schemes. Any measure proposed by local authorities would be considered against the assessment criteria and so would need to demonstrate the rationale for intervention, provide value for money, be deliverable and effectively target those most impacted, and have no negative air quality effect.

Most major vehicle manufacturers have also run private scrappage schemes, enabling owners of older vehicles to purchase a cleaner vehicle. We have encouraged and continue to encourage manufacturers to come forward with further voluntary contributions to air quality funding, including further manufacturer-led scrappage schemes, as a way to help some owners of older vehicles to purchase a cleaner vehicle.

22 <https://www.gov.uk/Government/publications/clean-growth-strategy>

23 <https://www.gov.uk/Government/consultations/air-quality-additional-measures-to-support-individuals-and-businesses-affected-by-local-no2-plans>. Note that the measures covered in this consultation do not have the primary objective of tackling poor air quality: those measures are set out in the 2017 Plan. Instead, the key objective for these measures would be to support people and businesses impacted by local air quality measures.