

Giving councils the power to implement Workplace Parking Levies where they feel it would be appropriate will fulfil a number of goals shared across Scotland's political spectrum, including:

- **Tackling the public health problems** associated with air pollution, and bringing Scotland into compliance with its European legal obligations on air quality
- **Reducing carbon emissions** from the transport sector, contributing to efforts to tackle climate change
- Generate funding to **make Scotland's transport system more equitable**, and work for everyone

The need for change

There is a large body of evidence that Scotland needs a step change in its transport system, moving away from dependence on cars - particularly in urban areas. Air pollution, which is primarily from transport, is **responsible for the early deaths of 2,500 people** in Scotland each year¹. It causes heart attacks, strokes, and respiratory problems² - with **children and the elderly amongst the worst affected**. In January 2019, it was revealed that 7 sites in Scotland are still exceeding air quality legal limits, nearly ten years after the limits were implemented³⁴.

Meanwhile, our transport sector is the largest source of climate pollution in Scotland, and has barely changed since 1990⁵. We need to change the way we travel, making it easier for people to use sustainable forms of transport. A workplace parking levy gives the opportunity to deliver the dual-benefits of reducing emissions whilst creating investment in transport.

Proven success

WPLs have a proven record of delivering significant changes to travel habits. A WWF report found that in its first three years, Nottingham's levy raised **£25.3 million**, all of which has funded improvements in the city's transport infrastructure, whilst contributing to a **33% fall in carbon emissions**, and a modal shift which has seen **public transport use rise to over 40%**.⁶

The revenue from the levy has allowed Nottingham to deliver Europe's largest fleet of electric buses, create new tram routes, and invest £6.1 million in improved cycle routes.

The demand for the levy

It is right that local authorities are empowered to create a transport network that is right for their local area - and **a number of councils have already asked for the powers** to deliver this through a workplace parking levy⁷⁸. It is very unlikely that every council will use the WPL

¹ <https://foe.scot/press-release/new-research-means-2500-deaths-a-year-in-scotland-are-from-air-pollution/>

² <https://www.who.int/airpollution/ambient/health-impacts/en/>

³ <https://foe.scot/scotlands-most-polluted-streets-in-2018/>

⁴ Page 30/44. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32008L0050&qid=1455033222658&from=EN>

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-greenhouse-gas-emissions-2016/pages/3/>

⁶ WWF Scotland, "International Case Studies for Scotland's Climate Plan,"

⁷ https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Rural/City_of_Edinburgh_Council_TB.pdf

powers. The decision on using the powers is best made at a local level by those who know the needs, and transport challenges, of their local area.

The Transport Bill is an opportunity to give councils the power to implement this levy if they wish to do so. This would be a key step towards achieving the shared goals of improving our transport system, our public health, our environment, and our urban spaces.

Private Non-Residential Parking Levy

There is support for the Scottish Government to look at expanding the powers to enable local authorities to charge levies on other premises with large-scale parking. In addition to improving sustainable transport, PNR would give local authorities more powers to protect town centres, since these levies would encourage businesses to set up in less car-dependent locations.

Key considerations:

- **The levy should be paid by employers and should not be passed on to workers.** This should be considered in the drafting of the legislation. The levy should only apply to employers who meet a threshold in the number of parking spaces they offer, as is the case in Nottingham.
- **People on the lowest incomes are least likely to have access to a car**, and therefore will be net beneficiaries anywhere this policy is introduced⁹. People on the lowest incomes disproportionately walk and use the bus, and revenue raised from the levy can be reinvested in active travel infrastructure and improving bus networks¹⁰. People living in lower-income communities are more likely to be killed or seriously injured by cars and shoulder the burden of the health impacts from air pollution¹¹¹².
- **The policy has been a great success for business** in Nottingham, with growth in employment and output, and a positive movement of inward investment indicators¹³.
- The WPL provisions in the UK Government's Transport Act 2000 contain a wide range of criteria and possible exemptions, giving local authorities the flexibility to create a scheme that is right for their area¹⁴.

For more information, contact:

Gavin Thomson, Air Pollution Campaigner
gthomson@foe.scot | 0131 2432714

Fergus Boden, Parliamentary Officer
fboden@foe.scot | 0131 2432721

⁸ <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewPack.asp?c=P62AFQ0GZLZ3DNZLB253YXYXQAJ5177DJ52AFQDNZLNT0GT1>

⁹ Transport and Travel in Scotland 2017. <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/transport-and-travel-in-scotland-2017/sct08183658301-31/>

¹⁰ As above

¹¹ https://www.understandingglasgow.com/indicators/transport/road_casualties/child_road_casualties/deprivation

¹² <https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/projects/outputs/every-breath-we-take-lifelong-impact-air-pollution>

¹³ Dale et al, "An evaluation of the economic and business investment impact of an integrated package of public transport improvements funded by a Workplace Parking Levy" Transportation Research Part A 101 (2017) 149–162

¹⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/38/part/III>