

Wrightbus signs deal for 100 zero emissions buses with Northern Ireland transport provider

Ballymena busmaker Wrightbus has landed a contract for 100 zero emission buses in its own backyard with Northern Ireland's public transport provider.

The province's infrastructure minister, in one of a hastily released announcements ahead of the dissolution of the Assembly on Thursday, said the deal had been signed this week between Translink and Wrightbus.

Infrastructure minister John O'Dowd welcomed the deal.

"I am delighted to announce a further investment of £88million which will deliver an additional 100 zero emission buses and EV charging infrastructure for our public transport network. This investment will be fundamental in creating cleaner and greener transport as we seek to tackle the climate emergency and improve air quality across the North."

Chris Conway, Translink Group Chief Executive, said the investment will help the organisation achieve its plan to decarbonise its fleet.

"We would like to thank the Minister and his Department for this investment which enables us to deliver the benefits of zero emission technology to more areas across Northern Ireland, with 40 buses being allocated to Ulsterbus services and 60 being added to the existing zero emission Metro fleet in Belfast," he said. "These new buses will run on sustainably sourced 'green' electricity and offer the latest standards in comfort, quality and accessibility."

The news comes as Wrightbus said that its zero emission fleet have travelled two million miles in their first year of service.

Wrightbus unveiled the world's first hydrogen-powered double decker bus – the Hydroliner – in Aberdeen in 2020, with a fleet of buses entering passenger service the following January. The firm's StreetDeck Electroliner battery electric claims to be the world's most efficient double deck electric bus.

“Hitting the two million mile mark is an immense achievement for us – and seeing the impact our zero-emissions fleet is having on communities is incredibly gratifying,” Ben Werth, Chief Commercial Officer at Wrightbus, said. “Our buses are world-leading, with our teams working tirelessly and innovatively, in order to help play a crucial role in the UK's ambitions for decarbonisation.

“These latest figures are astounding to see but it means we must continue to strengthen the case for further support for zero-emissions transport, both in the UK and around the globe, to ensure net zero targets are met.”