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**Highways and Transport Committee**

**20 July 2023**

**Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy**

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**Report of: Tom Moody, Director of Infrastructure and Highways**

**Report Reference No: HTC/11/23-24**

**Ward(s) Affected: All wards**

**Purpose of Report**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to:
  - (a) Provide the Committee with an update on work to develop a robust evidence base and strategic approach to the provision of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points in the Borough.
  - (b) Seek approval of the Council's updated EV Charging Strategy.
  - (c) Provide an update on the Council's EV infrastructure delivery programme and seek delegations necessary to secure funding from central government, conduct procurement of a delivery partner and install infrastructure where funding has been secured.
- 2 The report contributes to the following priority outcomes identified in the Corporate Plan:
  - (a) **GREEN** – through proposals that would improve EV charging provision across the Borough, the Council will encourage the early adoption of electric vehicles which will positively contribute both to our response to the climate emergency and to reducing the incidence of air quality problems, especially in urban areas.
  - (b) **FAIR** – the proposals are intended to create greater consistency and availability of access to EV charging, removing some of the long-standing barriers to the use of electric vehicles within the Borough.

## Executive Summary

- 3 The transition of cars, vans and buses to EVs presents a significant opportunity to support transport decarbonisation in the Borough.
- 4 The Council has already invested to provide several electric vehicle charge points, however there are significant gaps in the current provision across Cheshire East. Notably, there is an evident lack of public charge points in Macclesfield town centre, Congleton, Poynton and many rural areas.
- 5 Analysis of housing types in Cheshire East has found that many properties have no off-street parking and therefore no potential to install a domestic charge point at home. This was reported as an issue for residents in consultation responses on our Draft EV Charging Strategy. At present there are limited charging options for these residents.
- 6 In areas of the borough that have EV charge points, current provision will be insufficient to support the projected uptake of electric vehicles in future years. The current number of publicly available charge points in Cheshire East, according to UK Government figures, is 153 (April 2023). Forecasts of the number of charge points needed to serve EVs in Cheshire East indicate that 300 public charge points are needed by 2025 increasing to circa 1300 charge points by 2030.
- 7 Development of the EV Charging Strategy has been informed by a comprehensive data review, including local and central government strategies, and engagement with stakeholders. Objectives have been defined to guide development of the strategy and commissioning new charge points to meet the needs of Cheshire East, complementing wider initiatives to:
  - Reduce inequalities in charge point provision to enable all communities to transition to electric vehicles in a timely way.
  - To contribute towards reduced carbon emissions and improved air quality from transport.
  - To support the uptake of electric vehicles by individuals, businesses, and organisations within Cheshire East.
  - To ensure infrastructure makes a positive contribution to the streetscape through sensitive placement and appearance, avoiding negative impacts on other highway users, particularly pedestrians.

- To guide the provision of infrastructure that is safe, easy to use and represents good value for money both on installation and throughout its life.
  - Supporting electric vehicles as part of an integrated transport system that encourages reduced private car use and greater reliance on active travel and public transport.
  - Cheshire East Council to lead the way in transitioning fleet vehicles to EV and supporting other organisations across the borough.
- 8 To meet these objectives, measures are identified in the strategy as set out in the background section of this committee report (see paragraph 20).
- 9 The Council is investing to deliver this strategy and aims to guide future improvements in the charge point network. Large scale investment is needed to expand and improve the public charge point network in Cheshire East. The Council needs to position itself to secure funding from external sources to successfully implement this strategy fully.
- 10 The Council has opportunities to secure funding from central Government. In 2022, £155k was awarded from the On-street Residential Charge point Scheme (ORCS) and is engaging with Government's new Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund. A key requirement of these funding schemes is for local authorities to secure substantial match funding from the private sector.
- 11 The Council will need to engage with Charge Point Operators (CPO) to build a partnership to deliver improvements on the local charge point network. The scope of such arrangements might include the installation, maintenance and operation of EV infrastructure on behalf of the Council. Where the private sector is willing to invest in EV charge points, the Council may enter into land leases to secure infrastructure on council-owned land such as public car parks. There are several options for delivery models for EV infrastructure and the preferred option will be identified after a full and open procurement process.
- 12 The Council has conducted soft market testing with CPOs in Spring 2023, and this has confirmed significant interested from the market. A range of procurement and contracting options were discussed with CPOs and this feedback alongside technical work is informing development of the Council's procurement strategy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Highways and Transport Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the EV Strategy (see Appendix 1) which will become part of the Council's adopted transport policy framework.
2. Approve development of a funding bid to the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund in line with the EV Strategy and authorise the Director of Infrastructure and Highways to submit the bid, accept the funding grant when offered.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure and Highways to spend the money when received and make all necessary arrangements to:
  - a. Launch procurement activities for a strategic EV infrastructure investment and delivery partner/s for programmes such as the On-street Residential Charge points Scheme (ORCS) and the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI).
  - b. Award contract/s to invest in, deliver, operate, and maintain publicly available charge points.
  - c. Call off the contract/s for future phases of charge point delivery.
  - d. Implement the measures contained within the strategy through joint working with a range of partners.
4. Note that Committee will receive reports as part of the forward work programme to provide updates on the delivery of these programmes.

## Background

- 13 The Environment Strategy 2020-2024 includes a number of commitments including: producing an Electric Vehicles Charging Strategy; for the Council to be carbon neutral in our own operations by 2025; and supporting carbon reduction across the wider borough by 2045.
- 14 Additionally, the Council is committed to improving air quality, as outlined in the 2018 Air Quality Action Plan. Enabling a wider and more rapid transition to electric vehicles is expected to make a significant contribution to these outcomes.

- 15 The Council adopted a new Local Transport Plan (LTP) in October 2019 with key actions including providing electric vehicle charging infrastructure through seeking external funding from government and working collaboratively with commercial partners. At the national level the UK Government has committed to the phasing out sales of new Internal Combustion Engine cars and vans by 2030, and plug-in hybrids by 2025.
- 16 Figures from the Department for Transport (DfT) and National Charge point Registry show that nearly 5,300 plug-in vehicles (incorporating battery electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids) were registered in Cheshire East in the second quarter of 2022. This figure includes vehicles registered at residences and also businesses who register their fleet vehicles at locations within Cheshire East. In addition, many EVs travel into and through Cheshire East daily with key traffic routes such as the M6, M56 and A-roads carrying significant levels of traffic.
- 17 The numbers of EVs registered in Cheshire East have grown steadily through the previous decade. As we move towards the phase out of new Internal Combustion Engine cars and vans from 2030 the growth in EV numbers is expected to accelerate. By 2030 there is forecasted to be around 96,000 plug-in vehicles registered in Cheshire East, a significant increase on current numbers. This means the Council needs to plan for increasing demands and support the installation of new charge points.
- 18 Forecasts of the number of charge points needed to serve the anticipated number of EVs in Cheshire East have been produced. This shows that approximately 300 publicly available charge points are needed by 2025 rising to around 1300 charge points by 2030. This is a large increase on the current number of publicly available charge points which according to UK Government figures was 153 in April 2023.
- 19 Without timely investment in charging infrastructure to ensure a balanced and reliable network, there is a risk the transition to electric vehicles will be delayed.
- 20 To meet the strategy objectives the following measures are to be implemented:

Measure	Short term (0 – 2 years)	Medium term (2 -5 years)	Longer term (5+ years)	Key Responsibilities
Providing charging points in CEC car parks at key destinations (e.g., key and local service centres).	✓	Continuous monitoring of charge points usage and commercial provision to determine when / if further phases of Council-led charge points are required		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to procure a Charge Point Operator (CPO) partner and secure funding from both the private and public sector</li> <li>• CPO to deliver, maintain and operate these charge points</li> </ul>
Providing charging points to support residents with no access to residential off-street parking, in line with the framework set out in this strategy.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to procure a Charge Point Operator (CPO) partner and secure funding from both the private and public sector</li> <li>• CPO to deliver, maintain and operate these charge points</li> <li>• Where residents have access to private off-street parking it will be the responsibility of the resident / property management to install charge points</li> </ul>
Providing on-route charging points to serve key traffic routes.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to procure a Charge Point Operator (CPO) partner and secure investment from the private sector</li> <li>• CPO to deliver, maintain and operate these charge points</li> </ul>
Providing charge points in rural areas.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to engage Parish Councils and communities</li> <li>• CEC to consider funding opportunities and community ownership models</li> </ul>
Introduce charge points for the Council's own fleet and grey fleet.	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to deliver ringfenced charge points at key locations</li> </ul>
Consider the need for further planning policies to support the roll out of the chargepoint network.	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to review and update planning policies</li> </ul>

Measure	Short term (0 – 2 years)	Medium term (2 -5 years)	Longer term (5+ years)	Key Responsibilities
Work in partnership with District Network Operators to enable capacity in the power network for all of Cheshire East's needs including cost effective charge points.	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to engage with DNOs (Scottish Power Energy Network, Electricity North West and Western Power Distribution) to collaboratively plan electricity requirements, particularly in the areas of Macclesfield and Congleton which are known areas of constrained capacity</li> <li>• DNOs to work within statutory framework to deliver strategic network strengthening</li> </ul>
Engage with taxi industry and providing charging infrastructure for taxis in convenient locations.	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to further engage with taxi operators and procure CPO partner to deliver, maintain and operate these charge points</li> </ul>
Engage with bus operators and consider providing charging infrastructure for buses.		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to continue engaging bus operators and consider future funding opportunities</li> </ul>
Encourage and where possible support the introduction of commercially provided charging forecourts.	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to consider making land assets available to CPOs to deliver locations through their own investment</li> </ul>
Introduce charge points for HGVs should appropriate technology come forward in the future.			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC to monitor technology developments and requirements for infrastructure.</li> </ul>

## Consultation and Engagement

- 21 In preparing the strategy engagement has occurred with Council service areas to ensure a joined-up approach with adjacent work programmes. Significant engagement has also occurred with District Network Operators (Scottish Power Energy Networks, Electricity North West and Western Power Distribution) to identify cost effective locations for connecting to the electricity grid and longer-term requirements for strategic network strengthening.
- 22 During November-December 2022 Cheshire East Council undertook a consultation on the Draft Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy. The consultation was held online with paper versions being available on request. Hard copies of the consultation were also provided at libraries in Cheshire East. The consultation was promoted to the general public, Town and Parish Councils, businesses in Cheshire East, local transport operators, special interest and community groups and MPs. In total, 408 responses were received, 404 via the online survey and 4 email responses. The EV Charging Strategy includes a summary of the responses received and how this has informed the final document.
- 23 Further public consultation and engagement is planned for specific charging infrastructure sites as these are brought forward, including any statutory Traffic Regulation Order consultations.

## Reasons for Recommendations

- 24 The EV Charging Strategy and subsequent delivery of charge points will play a key role in delivering the Fair and Green elements of the Corporate Plan.

## Other Options Considered

Option	Impact	Risk
Do nothing - the option of leaving the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure wholly to the private sector has been considered.	Although this option would minimise financial commitments on the Council this is expected to result in an unbalanced charging network with substantial gaps in provision, most notably in some of our more rural or deprived communities.	This approach would not realise the benefits of providing charging infrastructure on Council owned land, some of which is located in attractive locations for charging electric vehicles, risking a slower uptake in the borough. This option is



		not the preferred approach at this time.
The option of the Council taking full ownership and responsibility for investment, installation, maintenance and operation of charge points has been considered.	The Council would have full control of the network.	This option would expose the Council to significant financial risks. This option is not the preferred approach at this time.

## Implications and Comments

### *Monitoring Officer/Legal*

- 25 The Council adopted the Local Transport Plan in 2019. One of the aims stated in the LTP is that “the Council will produce an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy which will outline the ambition to increase electric charging infrastructure provision, and seek funding opportunities and initiatives which encourage the uptake of electric vehicle usage” and that the Council “will continue to apply for funding from the government, in order to implement and construct infrastructure projects, such as electric vehicle charging points to make it more attractive to buy an electric vehicle.”
- 26 In developing and implementing electric vehicle charging infrastructure, the Council should have regard to the transport needs of disabled persons and of persons who are elderly or have mobility problems. Development of plans and delivery of charge points will need to be in accordance with statutory and legal requirements for Community Engagement and Equalities Impact Assessment.
- 27 Members should be fully aware of the equalities implications of the decisions they are taking. This will ensure that there is proper appreciation of any potential impact of any decision on the Council’s statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum, this requires decision makers to carefully consider the content of any Equality Impact Assessments produced by officers.
- 28 In developing and implementing electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the highway the Council will need to ensure that any approved solutions do not constitute an obstruction or danger to users of the highways.

- 29 Charging infrastructure installed on Council owned land will be subject to leases and contracts setting out the terms and conditions for the use of the charging infrastructure.
- 30 Legally enforceable Traffic Regulation Orders will be required for enacting parking restrictions for bays at which charging infrastructure is installed. Statutory consultation is required before making any Traffic Regulation Order including amending existing Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 31 The Council has a duty under section 122 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to provide suitable and adequate on and off-street parking and must be mindful of that duty when proposing new Traffic Regulation Orders or amending existing Traffic Regulation Orders.

*Section 151 Officer/Finance*

- 32 The staff resources for the delivery of this Cheshire East Electric Vehicles Charging Strategy and subsequent procurement will be funded from the established annual budget for the Strategic Transport & Parking service.
- 33 Delivery of EV charging infrastructure is expected to be funded from a range of sources including: private sector investment; LTP Integrated Transport Block funding; Community Infrastructure Levy; Section 106 & 278 Agreements; and external Government grant funding including the On-street Residential Charge points Scheme (ORCS) and the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund.
- 34 The operation and maintenance of charge points will be funded by the private sector under a concession contract.

*Policy*

- 35 Development of the Cheshire East Electric Vehicles Charging Strategy has been undertaken to ensure there is a consistent policyfit with all relevant adopted and emerging local policies including: the Environment Strategy, Local Transport Plan, Local Transport Development Plans, Corporate Plan 2021 – 2025; regeneration masterplans for Crewe and Macclesfield; Town Vitality Plans; and the Car Parking Strategy.

<b>An open and enabling organisation</b>	<b>A council which empowers and cares about people</b>	<b>A thriving and sustainable place</b>
<b>The EV Charging Strategy and subsequent delivery will</b>	<b>The EV Charging Strategy and subsequent delivery</b>	<b>The EV Charging Strategy and subsequent delivery will</b>

<p><b>particularly support the following priorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making</li> <li>• Support a sustainable financial future for the council, through service development, improvement and transformation</li> </ul>	<p><b>will particularly support the following priority:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work together with our residents and partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient</li> </ul>	<p><b>particularly support the following priorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A great place for people to live, work and visit</li> <li>• Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods</li> <li>• To reduce the impact on our environment</li> <li>• A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel</li> <li>• Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all</li> <li>• To be carbon neutral by 2025</li> </ul>
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### *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*

- 36 An Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) has been drafted for the Cheshire East Electric Vehicles Charging Strategy to ensure that the needs and impacts on residents are understood, especially individuals or groups with identified protected characteristics. This document was originally developed during development of the draft strategy and has been updated as a live document during the consultation phase and finalisation of the strategy.
- 37 A range of issues have been considered and a number of measures and provisions are included within the strategy to ensure charge points do not impact negatively on other highway users, and particularly those with protected characteristics. Additionally, the strategy states that charge points commissioned by CEC will be accessible to all users through their design and functionality.
- 38 The Equality Impact Assessment will be kept as a live document to guide delivery of charge points in the future.

### *Human Resources*

- 39 There are no direct implications for Human Resources.

### *Risk Management*

- 40 Development of the EV workstream will report to Project Board chaired by the Head of Strategic Transport. Officers from procurement, finance, estates, legal, environment, and highways attend to ensure appropriate project governance and strategic direction. A project risk register is maintained detailing mitigation measures.

### *Rural Communities*

- 41 As part of the strategy public car parks operated by the Council in Principal Towns, Key Service Centres and Local Services Centres have been considered. These locations are anticipated to act as hubs for surrounding areas. Additionally, the strategy includes a specific measure for delivering charge points in rural locations.

### *Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)*

- 42 No direct implications for children and young people have been identified.

### *Public Health*

- 43 The strategy has been aligned with the Council's stated policies and action plans relating to air quality management. This considers the impact of transport on issues affecting public health, most notably air quality and the contribution that electric vehicles can make to reducing tailpipe air pollutants.

### *Climate Change*

- 44 The strategy aims to support the transition away from Internal Combustion Engines that burn fossil fuels. This coupled with decarbonisation of energy generation is anticipated to play a major role in meeting the UK's targets for reducing greenhouse gases.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Richard Hibbert, Head of Strategic Transport Richard.hibbert@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1 Cheshire East Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy

	Appendix 2 Cheshire East Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy EqIA
Background Papers:	None

