

Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9 November 2022

5. EV Charging Points - Task and Finish Group Findings

Councillor Sinclair (who sat on the TFG) informed the committee that:

- In February's Communities OSC they committee voted to monitor the roll-out of the charging points in a TFG
- Monthly meetings were held between May-July 2022 and a range of concerns were considered across several subjects
- The TFG made eight recommendations that focused on ensuring equality of EV charging points cross-county and how to increase the amount of charging points
- In 2020 1% of vehicles were EVs, in 2030 this is expected to increase to 41%, 70% of charging points were predicted to be in private residencies so the Council needed to make up the rest
- A comprehensive network needed to be set up before this to encourage drivers to switch to EVs
- The eight recommendations are;
 - That elected members are updated regularly on a quarterly basis of the roll-out.
 - That officers should continue to seek funding opportunities to support that (a bid was planned for the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund)
 - Officers provide more information of the EV network to the public
 - Nuneaton and Bedworth are prioritised with EV points as they were behind on a charge points per 100,000 residents
 - Officers would monitor trials elsewhere e.g. the gully solution for charging with on-street parking
 - Members write to central government to ask for a change in the required planning act so that charging points could be closer to the highway's boundary
 - Increase staff resourcing when funding permitted (the suggestion was a three-year fixed contract for an engineer to take on this work)
 - Look into traffic regulation orders (TROs) that allow EV only parking

In response to Councillor D Humphreys, Councillor Tim Sinclair stated that residents with EVs and on-street parking would be able to charge their cars from lampposts or the new gully system that was being investigated. The gully system allows a cable to be plugged into the house and go into the pavement to the car. The chargers themselves will be and will need to be a mixture of ultra-fast charging and trickle charging (charging overnight). These would need to be in different locations too. Following a supplementary from Councillor D Humphreys, Margaret Smith (Lead Commissioner - Transport Planning) noted that there were grants for landlords who owned a carpark to put EV charging infrastructure in. One thing that was being looked at was EV charging points in supermarkets so someone doing the weekly shop with an EV could charge their car at the same time. EV owners only needed to charge their cars once a week.

In response to Councillor Chilvers, Councillor Sinclair noted that they briefly spoke on EV charging points in supermarkets and WCC has a limited influence over getting supermarkets to implement EV charging points in their carparks. He concurred with the issue that his residents had with EV charging points being broken.

Margaret Smith stated that there were national issues with one of the providers (BP Pulse) but there were KPIs (key performance indicators) within their contract. These stated that their charging points must be working for a high percentage of the time and if they are not then WCC get compensation. Working charging points would make residents less anxious over switching to EVs.

In response to Councillor D Humphreys, Margaret Smith stated that the 41% statistic came from a report that WCC commissioned Cenex to do on EV charging points in Warwickshire. This was predicted because central government are going to ban the production of new petrol and diesel cars. It was unknown how long it would take for petrol stations to phase out so increasing the amount of charging points would ease this transition.

In response to Councillor Sinclair, Margaret Smith agreed that BP Pulse will be spoken to about ensuring their charging points work.

Councillor Baxter-Payne noted that the debate being had in the meeting was like the meetings the TFG had. He supported recommendations five and eight as five would help residents who lived in terraced housing and a common issue, he noticed was non-EVs parking in EV charging point bays.

Councillor Redford suggested that the OSC receive an update on the rollout of EVs in future. The Chair suggested that this be a briefing note and be received after a year as one of the recommendations was for members to receive quarterly updates.

In response to the Chair, Margaret Smith stated that the TFG agreed that the TROs for EV-only bays would be rolled out incrementally. For example, a row of bays would not be all made to be EV-only. The situation would be monitored where necessary as there were concerns over this from both sides.

The Chair thanked the TFG for their work.

Vote

The Communities OSC voted unanimously for the recommendations in the report.

Resolved

That Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee support the recommendations set out in in paragraph 5 of the Task and Finish Group's report attached at Appendix 1.