

Cabinet

15 December 2022

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points - Task and Finish Group Findings

Recommendations

That Cabinet considers for approval the recommendations set out in the Task and Finish Group's report attached at Appendix 1.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In February 2022, the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) agreed 'to monitor the rollout of electric charging points'. A member Task & Finish group (TFG) was established to look at the various aspects of this in relation to the local authority and what it can do in terms of installing EV charging points.
- 1.2 The TFG held monthly meetings between May-July 2022 and raised varying concerns with charging point placements and types. The work of Transport Planning was acknowledged despite the pressures of demand being recognised. The TFG has produced a report of its work contained at Appendix 1 which contains eight recommendations for consideration by Cabinet.
- 1.3 Recommendations focus on ensuring equality of EV charging points cross-county and what can be done to help increase the number of charging points in Warwickshire.
- 1.4 The recommendations of the TFG were considered by the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9th November 2022. The Committee supported the recommendations and made the additional request that the Committee receive an annual briefing note on the EV rollout progress.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The TFG report contains a section on the funding of electric vehicle charging infrastructure (section 4.3). This recognises that the installation of new infrastructure is reliant on securing funding from various national and local sources. The report also goes on to identify in the same section the various sources of external funding that are available to Local Authorities. These external funding opportunities will continue to be pursued, in collaboration with partners where appropriate, to progress the charging infrastructure

requirements for Warwickshire. Encouragement and influence for private sector contributions in money or in delivery (such as at supermarkets, shopping centres and restaurants) will also be pursued.

- 2.2 A bid to central government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund is currently being developed by Transport Planning so that it can be submitted when the fund opens for bids (date to be confirmed but expected to be 2023). It is expected that the bid would include costs associated with the next phase of rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure alongside the revenue costs for an officer to deliver this rollout.
- 2.3 The opportunity to secure other external funding to enhance the staffing resource available to work on EV charging infrastructure and its roll out will also be explored as and when such funding opportunities become available. Funding additional capacity in this way means that the recommendations of the TFG would result in no additional costs to the County Council as funding for the Charging Points will come from existing budgets, central government grants or provided by privately run charge point partners e.g. BP Pulse or Char.gy.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 Supporting the roll out of EV charging infrastructure will help the transition from ICE (internal combustion engines (petrol/diesel ones) to EV, with consequent benefits in terms of CO² reduction and improvements to air quality.
- 3.2 The recommendations are in line with the Council Plan 2025 by improving air quality in 'built up areas', 'provide charging points for electric vehicles' (page 30) and support 'the use of electric vehicles and move Warwickshire towards sustainable transport choices' (page 41). They also align with the Council's Sustainable Futures Strategy which is currently the subject of wider engagement and is due to be considered for approval by Cabinet in Spring 2023.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 Following the conclusion of its work, the TFG the group were encouraged by the progress that was being made to develop an EV charging network in the County. Some concern was raised around ensuring that publicly funded charge point provision is delivered in an equitable way across the County and that rural communities must be considered. Opportunities to provide charging facilities for those without private off-street parking were considered a priority, alongside ensuring the public is better informed about the EV charging opportunities that are being installed in their community. It was also acknowledged that the Transport Planning team would be able to do more with more funding for their work. This is covered by recommendations five, six and seven.

- 4.2 The Task and Finish Group considered that the main focus of the Council's work should remain on the continued expansion of charge point infrastructure. By making the charging network more accessible and comprehensive and by providing infrastructure ahead of demand, more drivers are likely to make the decision to switch to electric. This is covered by recommendations two, four, and eight.
- 4.3 The TFG were keen for elected members and members of the public to keep informed on the progress of EV charging points rollout cross-county. This is covered by recommendations one and three.
- 4.3 The report at Appendix 1 contains the detailed findings of the TFG. The recommendations of the TFG which have been endorsed by the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, are presented to Cabinet for its consideration are set out below;
1. Elected members to be updated on a quarterly basis as to the progress of EV charging infrastructure installation, relative performance of Warwickshire on a national basis and information on usage at existing charging hubs.
 2. Officers should continue to seek funding opportunities to enable the delivery of EV charging infrastructure in Warwickshire.
 3. Officers to work with the County Council communications team to provide more information to the public about the available EV charging network in Warwickshire.
 4. The Nuneaton & Bedworth area to be prioritised for EV charging points until the same level of accessibility (in terms of charge points per 100,000 population) as other boroughs and districts is achieved.
 5. Officers based in County Highways to further monitor trials elsewhere and consider how a gully solution could be implemented in Warwickshire to enable residents without off-street parking to charge via their domestic electricity supply.
 6. The Council writes to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to ask him to consider a change to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 to permit the installation of a charging point to be one metre instead of two metres from the highway boundary.
 7. Staff resourcing for the commissioning and delivery of EV charging infrastructure by the County to be reviewed and when funding permits, increase to enable the County Council to develop and deliver the required number of charge points to meet the forecast demand.
 8. Review and if appropriate seek to alter the Traffic Regulation Orders that apply to parking spaces adjacent to charging points in on-street locations to ensure access to charging points is not unduly restricted by petrol/diesel vehicles.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 The recommendations approved by Cabinet will be implemented by officers with progress tracked and monitored and reported back to the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee as may be requested by it.

Appendices

1. Report of the Electric Vehicle Charging Point Task and Finish Group
2. Minutes of the Communities OSC 9th November 2022

Background Papers

None

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): n/a

Other members: Members of the Communities OSC and Task and Finish Group