

North Tyneside Council

Report to Council

Date: 23 November 2023

Title: Electric Vehicle Charging

Portfolio(s): Environment Climate Emergency	Cabinet Member(s): Councillor H Johnson Councillor S Graham
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Report from Service Areas: Regeneration and Economic Development
Environment

Responsible Officers: John Sparkes, Director of Regeneration and Economic Development (Tel: 0191 643 6091)
Samantha Dand, Director of Environment (Tel: 0191 643 3442)

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

Following the Motion agreed by full Council on 19 January 2023 relating to electric vehicle charging, which is appended to this report, a cross-party working group was established to consider matters raised in the Motion.

This report invites Council to consider the findings of the working group and the actions recommended by it in this report, and to agree to the report, including the suggested actions, being submitted to Cabinet for its consideration.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Council

- a) notes the content of this report and the findings of the cross-party working group established in accordance with the Motion agreed by full Council on 19 January 2023; and
- b) agrees to the details of this report, including the actions recommended by the working group set out in paragraph 1.5.3 of this report, being submitted to Cabinet for its consideration.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 20 October 2023.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The proposals in this report relate to a number of priorities in Our North Tyneside, the Council Plan 2021 to 2025, in particular:

- A green North Tyneside:
 - We will publish an action plan of the steps we will take and the national investment we will seek to make North Tyneside carbon net-zero by 2030

The proposals also support the following priority in the Carbon Net Zero 2030 Action Plan:

- Travel
 - Bid for EV charging infrastructure (on-Street, Fast, HPC)

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Context

In the course of its work, the working group:

- i. looked holistically at a range of available options in relation to electric vehicle charging, against the national, regional and local policy backdrop and with the support of industry experts;
- ii. took care to ensure to look at the issue in terms of a mixed economy in which public sector, private sector and individual households all have an important part to play;

- iii. noted the policy context at regional level: this includes the North East Transport Plan, which sets out the overall context for transport in the region, and the proposed major regional bid to the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund for the provision of further publicly available EV chargepoints;
- iv. considered the policy context at local level, including the North Tyneside Zero Emission Vehicles Strategy (“ZEV Strategy”), which notes that the Authority is not a mainstream fuel provider to the public or businesses. While the Authority is part of the solution, it is expected that the commercial market will provide the substantial majority of payable EV charging;
- v. took on board predictions that:
 - a. transport represents about 30% of the carbon emissions in North Tyneside (Carbon Net Zero 2030 Action Plan 2023/24);
 - b. by 2030 there could be over 35,000 fully electric vehicles in North Tyneside (Transport for the North online tool); and
 - c. this could imply a demand for circa 1,000 publicly accessible chargers alongside circa 30,000 home or workplace chargers (Transport for the North online tool).
- vi. noted that where EV chargers can be installed is dependent on the availability of an electricity grid connection. For on-street locations, this may also be affected by local factors, e.g. some streets have combined ‘pay and display’ and residents’ permit parking;
- vii. recognised that while there is a demand in general for increased EV charging provision, there is uncertainty over how many EV users would take up any particular charging technology;
- viii. appreciated that charging from home can be considerably cheaper than using public charging infrastructure. The group ensured that proper consideration was given to residents who are currently disadvantaged by their type of accommodation (e.g. terraced property, flat or house without private off-street parking) as they are currently unable to take advantage of home charging; and
- ix. recognised that any provision brought forward should minimise risk to the Authority. This must be assessed against the scale of the provision and where the ultimate liability rests.

1.5.2 Technologies discussed

The group found it positive to hear that a number of technologies are on the market, with different solutions better suited to different situations, and considered various case studies. The following points were noted:

- a. The cheapest and simplest technology available is running a charging cable from a resident's home to their vehicle and using cable matting, placed across the footway by the resident, to cover the charging cable. However, this is likely to be unpopular with footway users and pose risks related to liability for trips and falls. Different local authorities have taken different approaches to the level of risk. The Authority could not fully understand the risk until it was tested, for example following a personal injury claim, where such decisions would be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- b. Utilising streetlight column charging for EVs was considered to be a potentially viable option. However, as the Authority's Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract regarding the provision of streetlighting runs until 2029 it may not be a short-term possibility. In addition, it may require a deed of variation to the PFI contract to enable such charging to take place. This should be considered as part of planning when the PFI contract is coming to an end and should be considered when considering subsequent streetlighting column provision.
- c. Bollard type EV chargers are an established technology. However, users of these types of chargers would not benefit from lower household electricity prices (or the lower household rate of VAT). Installing these type of EV chargers could mean a reduction in the amount of car parking availability.
- d. Emerging technologies such as 'lance and connector' models where the connector sits flush with the pavement (after excavation) merit further investigation once results are available from pilot schemes.
- e. The group was interested to review the type of gully system being piloted by Durham County Council (where the provider Kerbocharge is used) owing to its apparent ease of installation, low cost, and safety features for footway users. The group noted that:
 - i. it appeared that this system might have some advantages over comparable products such as the Oxford 'gul-e' system;
 - ii. the Durham pilot involves a cost to households for an annual inspection of the gully, and residents signing up to terms and conditions associated with a licence for its private use;

- iii. the formal evaluation of the Durham pilot will be available in 2024 following completion of the pilot scheme; and
 - iv. further investigation should take place once the evaluation of the Durham pilot is available.
- f. other local authorities have introduced some of the above solutions under licence/permit arrangements, as a means of both seeking to require residents to adhere fully to the terms and conditions and confirm residents' understanding of the terms and conditions (e.g. a parking space on the public highway cannot be reserved for individual use) – this was felt to be something to be considered and explored further.

Following discussion of the above points, the group:

- i. appreciated that EV charging provision is primarily for the market to deliver, and the Authority's role is essentially one of facilitator as the highway authority;
- ii. recognised that residents would appreciate having as much information as possible available on the Authority's website;
- iii. recognised that any charging option would have to be sufficiently attractive to the market;
- iv. acknowledged that the majority of chargers are expected to be provided at homes and workplaces. However, to respond adequately to likely future levels of demand, the Authority is likely to have to ensure that there is a range of provision including both on-street and off-street EV chargers;
- v. recognised that this would pose some challenges around delivery, the ongoing management of the highway network (e.g. residents' expectations around parking enforcement) and highway maintenance (e.g. utility works to the footway), with associated potential for increased maintenance costs;
- vi. recognised that arrangements would have to be made for any charging infrastructure installed to be managed and maintained; and
- vii. noted that some authorities appeared to be further forward with aspects of public EV charging provision and would like to see similar steps taken to move forward in North Tyneside.

1.5.3 Actions recommended by the group

The group recommended the following actions:

1. Request that Cabinet consider updating the North Tyneside ZEV Strategy to provide further guidance around on-street EV charging provision.
2. Further analysis should be undertaken around predictions of future EV charging uptake and the prioritisation of potential charging sites within the borough.
3. The Authority's website should be updated providing clear information and guidance on EV matters, including advice for homes without off-street parking.
4. The Authority should continue to seek funding for further EV charging provision in its public car parks.
5. The Authority should, where appropriate, take further steps to encourage others, including major retailers, to provide publicly accessible EV charging in their car parks.
6. As pilots/trials in other areas develop and their findings become available, the Authority should develop a range of solutions and options which could be trialled or implemented in appropriate locations in the borough, as funding opportunities arise. This should be carried out in conjunction with further analysis around predictions and criteria for the prioritisation of locations in the borough.
7. Whilst the group acknowledged that cable matting was the simplest technology, use of this would come with a number of challenges, for example, durability in adverse weather; potential for incorrect installation by residents; accessibility for footway users (particularly the potential cumulative impact of cable mats in the same street/area) and potential conflict with the Authority's aims to encourage walking, wheeling and other sustainable travel. The group recommended that the Authority should develop a policy statement to clarify its position relating to use of cable matting on the highway.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Council:

Option 1

To approve the recommendations as set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 2

Not to approve the recommendations as set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

To enable the report including the cross-party working group's suggested actions to be submitted to Cabinet for its consideration in accordance with the Motion agreed by full Council on 19 January 2023.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix – Motion agreed by full Council on 19 January 2023

1.9 Contact officers:

Paul Watson, Head of Highways and Transportation, 0345 2000 101
Paul Nelson, Head of Environmental Sustainability, 0191 643 6467
Andrew Flynn, Senior Manager – Integrated Transport, 0191 643 6083
Amar Hassan, Principal Accountant, Investment (Capital) and Revenue,
0191 643 5747

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) [North Tyneside Transport Strategy](#)
- (2) [North East Transport Plan](#)
- (3) [North Tyneside Zero Emission Vehicles Strategy](#)
- (4) [North Tyneside Transport and Highways SPD](#)
- (5) [North Tyneside Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial and resource implications directly arising from this report. This report sets out the outcomes of the cross-party working group and invites Council to agree for details to be submitted to Cabinet.

2.2 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

However, when future decisions are taken on EV charging, including some of the options that have been discussed in this report, it will be necessary to consider the legal implications of doing so. Such considerations could range from ensuring that procurement legislation is complied with when procuring EV chargers, as well as ensuring the Authority's obligations as a highway authority under the Highways Act 1980 are complied with. Such duties include asserting and protecting the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway, including footpaths. As stated in the report, some of the options considered could impact on the condition of the highways in the Borough.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

Internal consultation has involved the Cabinet Member for Environment, the Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency, the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development and the Director of Environment.

The working group involved Cllr L Bartoli, Cllr L Marshall, Cllr J O'Shea and Cllr M Wilson.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

The work of the cross-party working group has involved discussion amongst Members of the group, with advice from officers and industry experts, and hence no external consultation/engagement has been undertaken on this matter.

Subject to approval of the recommendation, the suggested actions would be submitted to Cabinet for its consideration, at which point the potential for external consultation/engagement would be considered further.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

The Authority's approach to policy and strategy development is carried out having regard to the public sector equality duty imposed on the Authority by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

The cross-party working group's consideration of the policy context, with advice from industry experts, included aspects of good practice relating to the accessibility of EV charging, such as the British Standards Institution's Publicly Available Specification PAS 1899, which sets a new industry standard for making EV chargers accessible to all.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk management implications directly arising from this report. Strategic and operational risks associated with transport matters are assessed via the established corporate process.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are potential positive environment and sustainability implications as the outcomes of the working group highlight a number of points for further consideration. These will support the Authority's efforts to encourage the take-up of zero-emission vehicles in preference to petrol or diesel vehicles and alongside the use of public transport or active travel.

PART 3 – SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive
- Director of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Assistant Chief Executive

Appendix – Motion agreed by full Council on 19 January 2023

EV on street charging

Electric vehicles are one of the best ways that households can reduce their emissions. Across the country, many people are making the swap to EV – with over 30% of all new car sales being battery powered electric vehicles. However, for many people across North Tyneside without access to off street parking, owning an electric vehicle with the ability to charge it at home is just a pipe dream.

North Tyneside Council believes that finding a sustainable solution to the issue of on-street EV charging is significant in our borough's journey to net zero.

North Tyneside Council notes the scheme which has been set up in Oxford (gul-e) gives residents the opportunity to have gullies installed on the pavement – allowing charging cables to run safely from the property to the roadside without causing a trip hazard.

North Tyneside Council asks the Mayor to set up a cross-party working group to look holistically at all options available to improve EV provision in North Tyneside, particularly looking to reflect the dropped curb scheme. The group should produce a report to be presented to Full Council before the end of 2023 setting out a plan to submit to cabinet.