

Policy and Resources Committee

– 27 January 2025

Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy - Public Consultation feedback and adoption of a final Strategy

(DofF)

1. Overview

- 1.1 Officers have been exploring opportunities to install Electric Vehicle Charge Points (EVCP) in council owned car parks using external government grants and/or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding and a decision was made at the General Public Services and Economic Development Committee in March 2024 to progress a scheme. The Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy sits alongside and develops these proposals further for the provision of a publicly available electric vehicle charging network and details the Council's future rollout of EV charging infrastructure.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on the development of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy including the key findings from the public consultation on the draft Strategy and proposes a final Strategy for adoption.

2 Background

- 2.1 In 2019 the council declared a "climate emergency" recognising the urgent need to address the problem of a rapidly changing climate. In 2021, the council published its Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy which sets out our commitment to achieving net zero by 2030 for our own emissions and to inspire and enable a net zero district by 2045.
- 2.2 In the UK, transport is responsible for 24% of greenhouse gas emissions, leading the government to phase out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2035. In Three Rivers, road transport accounts for 52% of the greenhouse gases emitted by the district.
- 2.3 TRDC wants to continue to ensure the District provides an environment in which people want to live, work and play. As the take up of electric vehicles grows, TRDC want to provide electric charging infrastructure, initially in car parks, to support residents and encourage shoppers and other visitors to local facilities and businesses.
- 2.4 Hertfordshire County Council forecasting estimates that by 2030 there will be 240,800 electric vehicles registered in Hertfordshire. It is estimated that this would generate the need for 6,800 publicly available charging sockets (or just over 3,000 charge points assuming a double socket arrangement) which is a six-fold increase.
- 2.5 Currently TRDC has 43 public charge points installed by commercial companies but no public charge points installed on its own land.
- 2.6 In 2015 Three Rivers DC initially considered EVCP provision and this culminated in a decision in June 2019 to introduce publicly accessible 'Rapid' electric vehicle charging points in car parks around the District. These were to be delivered under the Retail Parades Enhancement programme to improve the attractiveness of local retail centres for business users and visitors, as well as providing an opportunity for local residents (and potentially taxi firms) who have no private opportunity to charge their cars. Vehicle charging would be provided at a cost to the user and would be located at the main retail centres in the District.

- 2.7 The original proposals were aimed at two pilot schemes for Rapid chargers (in Rickmansworth and Abbots Langley car parks). No external funding was available for Rapid charging points at this time and Council funding (from existing budgets) was to be utilised.
- 2.8 The pandemic, with its resulting new priorities, subsequently led to the delay in progressing the EVCP programme.
- 2.9 In September 2022 a successful CIL application for £460k to support the implementation of EV infrastructure was submitted and Officers drafted a tender document to initiate a procurement exercise.
- 2.10 However, by this time, it was increasingly becoming apparent that the context of pursuing EVCP had progressed, and it was clear there was demand for a more expansive programme of delivery. It was also apparent new external funding was to become available (LEVI funding) to Tier 1 Authorities (i.e. Hertfordshire County Council) to support District and Borough Council's to deliver EV infrastructure across the County.
- 2.11 The TRDC Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy also highlighted the role of sustainable modes of travel in contributing to meeting sustainability objectives with the reduction on the reliance on carbon-fuelled transport and improving local air quality. One of the key objectives was to continue to expand and encourage electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the district.
- 2.12 In view of the changing context Officers started to reconsider the EV strategy and methods of delivery available to take full advantage of any external funding available. A new project to provide EV charging is currently underway (as agreed by GPSED Committee March 2024).
- 2.13 In response to the evolving context Officers drafted a Three Rivers Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy (Appendix 1). This Strategy covers the period 2024-2034, aligning to government policy to phase out the sale of new petrol\diesel vans and cars in 2035. While this is a 10-year strategy, it is accompanied by a 3-year action plan (2024-2027). Combining a long-term strategy with a short-term action plan enables us to work towards a strategic vision, but be agile to changing circumstances (e.g., demand for chargers, advancements in charging technology).
- 2.14 The document sets out how the Council will roll-out a public electric vehicle charging network across council owned car parks and on-street residential parking in the district. At the core of the strategy is the EV charger location hierarchy and indicative timeline.
- 2.15 Initial focus will be on Council owned car parks and visitor destinations prior to considering on street locations. This approach will be phased as new funding becomes available and as details of demand/usage of EVCP emerges. However, the cost of the Strategy implementation will initially be within existing budgets or through bidding for and use of CIL monies, with reliance on external Government funding (initially through Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles (OZEV) funding). In April 2024, the council was awarded an £101,250 OZEV grant to enable EV chargers to be installed in town-centre car parks in 2024/25.
- 2.16 On-street residential parking EV chargers will be installed in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) using Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding they are administering on behalf of district and boroughs. Officers are currently working with HCC to identify charger locations, which potentially includes Parish owned car parks. HCC currently predict that installations will start in late 2025 or early 2026.
- 2.17 The Strategy proposes to establish a series of charging units across the District. HCC now have demand-based mapping tools available in addition to a TRDC EV request list. These tools will assist in determining EV demand and potential future locations.
- 2.18 The TRDC strategy will be to provide a mix EV charging speeds which will help cater to different requirements for different groups and meet the projected demand as residents, visitors and those who work in TRDC transition to EVs. The Council seeks a solution using a

model that offers the best route to safeguard against tariff hikes and offers fair and equitable charging to the those who will depend on public access to charging with an initial focus on its main retail centres followed by secondary centres and leisure sites.

- 2.19 TRDC has assessed this requirement and understands that the following charging units are most appropriate (but can amend based on the outcome of any procurement processes for specific sites).

These units are:

Fast 7.1 - 22kW (which are most common in car parks/destinations)

And/Or

Rapid 22 - 50kW (en-route/ destination charging)

- 2.20 Rapid chargers (charging in 1-2 hours) will be considered in appropriate locations as part of a wider portfolio of EVCPs.

- 2.21 TRDC recognise that some car parks may not have the electrical capacity to allow Rapid EVCPs to be installed. In the event that there is not the capacity to provide the supply to the Rapid units, then TRDC would consider installing only Fast charge units.

- 2.22 The Council is seeking a uniformity of design as a standard for installation within its car parks. It is proposed that once installed, TRDC will be the owner of the infrastructure from the District Network Operator (DNO) to the charging unit (underground) and the Change Point Operator (CPO) will be the owner of the charger unit (above ground).

- 2.23 All Electric Vehicle charging points will be compliant with the latest OZEV and OCPP standards and will have regard to the accessibility standards detailed in PAS 1899:2022.

- 2.24 It is envisaged any CPO is fully responsible for the design and installation of the charging unit as well as the maintenance and operation. This includes all software and appropriate applications to enable a successful charge.

- 2.25 Typically, users will charge on visiting the car parks or visitor destinations and charging is available to users for out of hours (overnight in residential areas – such as Rickmansworth) when a car park remains open. The charging points must be publicly accessible with the core users being residents, shoppers, visitors and business employees including residents that have no access to private charging options. All chargers should be publicly available 24/7 unless this is shown non-viable such as in visitor destinations that close to the public overnight.

- 2.26 The draft Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy was approved for public consultation by the General Public Services, Community Safety & Infrastructure committee on the 23 July 2024.

3 Public Consultation Report

- 3.1 The public consultation ran from the 23 August 2024 to 4 October 2024, a period of 6 weeks. The consultation asked 8 closed-ended questions and 1 open-ended question.

- 3.2 The consultation received 454 visits and 40 responses throughout the 6-week period. This is an engagement rate of 10.6% which is largely similar to other council consultations. The consultation was most popular at the start of the 6-week period and near the end of August, the latter likely a result of its inclusion in council email newsletters. 17 respondents opted to skip the optional open-ended question.

- 3.3 The table below summarises the responses received to the closed-ended questions where we asked respondents to what extent they agree with each strategic objective.
- 3.3.1 Strategic objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 saw strong support with over 75% respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing.
- 3.3.2 Strategic objective 4 saw support with 65% respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing, with a proportion of respondents (15%) choosing 'Neither Agree or Disagree'. This could be because the objective is not relevant to them if they have off-street parking.
- 3.3.3 Strategic objective 6 saw support with 72.5% respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing, with a proportion of respondents (10%) choosing 'Neither Agree or Disagree'.
- 3.3.4 Question 8, relating to the method and funding used to deploy chargers, saw support with 72.5% respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing. A proportion of respondents (15%) choosing 'Neither Agree or Disagree'. This could be because the question is not clear enough to be understood without reviewing the strategy document.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
TRDC EV1: To provide a publicly available charger network in council owned car parks in town centres	7	0	2	6	25
TRDC EV2: To provide a publicly available charger network in council owned car parks at destinations (e.g. leisure centre)	5	0	3	5	27
TRDC EV3: To provide a publicly available network (based on available evidence of charging need) that promotes equal access to electric vehicle charging, including those with disabilities, in rural and remote locations and in areas of deprivation	5	0	3	5	27
TRDC EV4: To work alongside Hertfordshire County Council, as the Highways Agency, to provide a publicly available charger network in on-street residential parking locations	5	3	6	2	24
TRDC EV5: To work alongside Hertfordshire County Council to leverage Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) funding and the private sector to support the development of a charger network	5	1	2	6	26
TRDC EV6: To support the adoption of consistent charger standards across the district to ensure the best outcome for end-users	4	3	4	3	26
TRDC EV7: To keep up to date with technical innovation, policy development and funding opportunities to enable an	4	0	4	5	27

agile approach able to adapt to changing market trends					
The Electric Vehicle Strategy proposes what method and funding the council will use to deploy Fast and Rapid Chargers, as summarised in the table above. To what extent do you agree with this approach?	4	1	6	10	19

3.4 Question 9 was an open-ended question inviting any comments or feedback on the proposed Electric Vehicle Strategy. 23 responses were received, 17 respondents opted to skip this optional question.

3.4.1 Key themes from the comments and any proposed amendments to the strategy have been summarised below:

Theme	Proposed Amendments
Supportive of having chargers which are easy to use.	Officers agreed, contactless payment and plug and charge standard preferred. No changes proposed.
Objection to tax money being spent on EV infrastructure.	This strategy does not propose the use of any council tax. No changes proposed.
Cost of charging	Officers are aware of charging cost disparity and will endeavour to make any charging points competitively priced and are supportive of cross pavement solutions. No changes proposed.
Concerns about whether Battery Electric Vehicles are the most viable future technology	A technology-agnostic approach to policy development is favourable however Battery Electric Vehicles are viewed as the most viable solution to decarbonising road transport. No changes proposed.
Supportive of cross-pavement solutions to enable residents to use low-cost home charging	Officers at TRDC have been monitoring trials currently underway and will work with Hertfordshire County Council on any possibility of a cross-pavement solution in Hertfordshire in the future. No changes proposed.
Concerns over access to dropped kerbs	Placement of on-street chargers will be chosen to avoid access issues. No changes proposed.
Concerns over loss of parking	Within charging projects, parking loss will be mitigated as much as possible. Existing parking restrictions will remain in place. No changes proposed.
Supportive of TRDC improving EV infrastructure	No changes proposed.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 Following a review of the strategy feedback (as detailed in part 3 of this report), officers propose no changes to the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy. The feedback was overall positive and supportive of the strategy with concerns relating to specific issues created from the installation of EV infrastructure. Officers will record these concerns and review during the site selection process for future EV projects.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets. CIL monies and external Government funding have been identified for the initial phase of the EV project. The Strategy is identified in the Regulatory Services Service Plan 2024-2027.

6 Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre

6.1 None specific.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 All elements of the Strategy will need to be considered alongside the Council's legal duties and powers.

7.2 Projects involved in the delivery of the Strategy will require contract preparation and approval in accordance with the Council's Contracts Procedure Rules.

8 Financial

8.1 The cost of the Strategy implementation will initially be within existing budgets or through bidding for and use of CIL monies, with reliance on external Government funding (initially through OZEV funding). Full reporting will be through Budget Monitoring.

8.2 On-street residential parking EV chargers will be installed in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) using Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding they are administering on behalf of district and boroughs.

9 Staffing Implications

9.1 The vacant role of Principal Sustainable Transport Officer was filled in July 2024 providing the staffing resource to oversee the development of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy. This project is not expected to require additional staffing resources outside of the Transport and Parking team.

10 Equal Opportunities Implications

10.1 An Equal Opportunities Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached as an Appendix to this report.

11 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

11.1 A sustainability impact assessment has been undertaken resulting in a score of:

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	3.60

Travel	4.00
Goods and Consumption	4.00
Ecology	4.00
Adaptation	3.00
Engagement and Influence	4.00
Total Overall Average Score	3.8

12 Communications and Website Implications

12.1 Following adoption the Strategy project will be placed on the website and referred to in future press releases. A new 'request for EV charging points' page is to be added to the Council's website so Officers can collate requests and understand demand.

13 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

13.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

13.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Regulatory Services Service Plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
The Council fails to develop and adopt an EV Strategy	The Council will fail to deliver improvements to address climate change within the District; the Council will fail to deliver EV opportunities for its residents, businesses and visitors.	Continue to progress with individual EV projects, for the Committee to approve the draft Strategy	Tolerate	4-6

13.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely Likelihood ▶ Remote	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
Impact Low ▶ Unacceptable				

Impact Score	Likelihood Score
4 (Catastrophic)	4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
3 (Critical)	3 (Likely (21-79%))
2 (Significant)	2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
1 (Marginal)	1 (Remote (≤5%))

13.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

The remainder are therefore operational risks. Progress against the treatment plans for strategic risks is reported to the Policy and Resources Committee quarterly. The effectiveness of all treatment plans are reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

14 Recommendation

14.1 It is recommended that:

- i) Members agree the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for adoption
- ii) Members agree the Strategy is progressed to Full Council for final adoption

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: Draft Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy

Appendix 2: Response Data from public consultation

Appendix 3: EqlA

Appendix 4: Sustainability Impact Assessment