

## PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### 31 October 2023

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy</b>
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<b>Are there public sector equality duty implications?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972</b>	

### List of Appendices

#### **Appendix A – Draft North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to outline the approach that has been taken to formulate the North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy, including the background for production.

##### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1. In support of Government targets to reduce greenhouse gasses, improve air quality and in response to climate change, the UK is transitioning to electric vehicle (EV) transport, with the sale of new combustion engine vehicles to be banned in 2035 (formerly 2030). In response to this, local authorities are required to formulate strategy documents to facilitate the delivery of electric vehicle chargepoint (EVCP) infrastructure.
- 2.2. The primary objective of the strategy is to create a framework for developing an EVCP infrastructure network which serves the needs of North Northamptonshire residents. The strategy looks ahead to 2030 and includes

a series of policies and actions. It also includes targets and key performance indicators that will allow the council to measure progress. The strategy will help the area secure funding to support the delivery of EVCP infrastructure.

- 2.3. The strategy was consulted on from 23 August-11 October 2023. Responses are currently being analysed and the intention is that the strategy will be approved before the end of this year.

### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee notes the publication of the draft North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy as outlined in this report and use the information provided to aid the process of scrutiny.

## 4. Report Background

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- 4.1 In July 2021, North Northamptonshire Council (the ‘council’) declared a Climate and Environment Emergency. As part of this it committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. This includes reducing emissions in the local area.
- 4.2 Road traffic currently accounts for a considerable proportion of North Northamptonshire’s overall greenhouse gas emissions. By accelerating the switch away from fossil fuelled vehicles, there is an exciting opportunity to reduce emissions, improve air quality, and make a major (and measurable) contribution towards meeting decarbonisation priorities and targets. However, the transition to battery-powered electric vehicles (EVs) demands a sound infrastructure base to support the charging of vehicles. This means the following:
- Everyone can find and access reliable public Electric Vehicle Chargepoints (EVCPs) wherever they live
  - Effortless on and off-street charging for private and commercial drivers
  - A reliable network of high-powered EVCPs along major roads
  - Fairly priced and inclusively designed public charging trusted by consumers
  - Market-led roll out for the majority of EVCPs, backed by competition
  - Infrastructure seamlessly into the smart energy system
  - Continued innovation to meet drivers’ needs
- 4.3 It is estimated by CENEX (a Government-sponsored centre of excellence for low carbon) that the number of public EVCPs in the UK needs to increase from about 37,000 currently to up to 720,000 by 2030. This represents a massive step-change, and this will vary from place to place. To date commercial investment in EVCP infrastructure has been largely concentrated in London and other major cities. This is reflected in analysis undertaken by the County Councils’ Network (CCN)<sup>1</sup>.
- 4.4 Through the Virgin Park and Charge (VPACH) project, sponsored by Innovate UK, the council has been working with Believ (formerly Liberty Charge), a ‘charge-point operator’, to install EVCPs in on-street locations across North Northamptonshire. The primary objective of the VPACH project is to address the lack of EVCP infrastructure serving properties without off-road parking. Site selection criteria include road width, pavement height and width, access to telecommunications and power, and proximity to properties without off-road parking. Finding suitable sites is most challenging in the older parts of towns and villages where the road network was not designed for modern vehicles and parking is at a premium. This means that a delicate balance needs to be struck between enabling residents in these areas to transition to EVs and alleviating the concerns of those who are concerned about losing parking.

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<sup>1</sup> [CCN-Analysis-EV-Chargpoints \(1\).pdf](#)

- 4.5 To date through VPACH, on-street EVCPs (each with dual-sockets) have been installed in Corby, Desborough, Higham Ferrers, Kettering, Rushden, Thrapston and Wellingborough. There are now thirty-six locations 'live'. Each location serves residents without access to off-road parking. Installations through the VPACH project involving further sites are expected to be complete by summer 2024.
- 4.6 Details of all the locations which are being progressed through the VPACH project are available at the following link: [Electric car chargers | North Northamptonshire Council \(northnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/electric-car-chargers) and on ZapMap at [Map of electric charging points for electric cars UK: Zapmap \(zap-map.com\)](https://zap-map.com)
- 4.7 Government figures indicate that there are 139<sup>2</sup> publicly available EVCPs in North Northamptonshire (note: each device may have more than one connector (normally two) capable of delivering charge at different speeds). The majority of these have been provided at supermarkets, petrol filling stations, shopping centres and other commercial locations. This corresponds to 38.6 devices per 100,000 population and is lower than the average of 59.9 per 100,000 for the UK, as is typical outside the larger cities and more urbanised areas.
- 4.8 Analysis by the CCN indicates that the ratio of publicly available chargepoints to miles in North Northamptonshire stood at 1:7.8 in July 2023. This compares to a ratio of 1:8.2 miles per charger in Cambridgeshire, 1:9.7 miles in Leicestershire, and 1:10.2 miles in West Northamptonshire.
- 4.9 Forecasts produced by CENEX (indicate that the number of battery EVs in North Northamptonshire could increase to 70,000 by 2030 (from 5,762 in Q1 2023 – 2.4% of all vehicles). EV registrations have grown by 414% since Q1 2019. CENEX predicts that, to meet the projected increase, about 1,400 public EVCPs (2,800 new sockets) would need to be installed by 2030. This is based on a medium-growth scenario. The total projected need is over and above those forecast to be installed in homes, workplaces, supermarkets and other private commercial destinations.
- 4.10 The North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy seeks to respond to the challenge of providing not just a step-change in the provision of EVCP infrastructure, but also increasing the geographical spread of the network, with a particular focus on providing convenient and local EVCP infrastructure for properties without off-road parking. This means extending the network beyond the larger towns and increasing density.
- 4.11 In addition to the forecasts produced by CENEX, the strategy has been informed by analysis developed by Electric Places as part of the North Northants to Net Zero (NN2NZ) project. This was supported through the Government's Community Renewal Fund and looked at various options for transitioning to Net Zero, including through the widespread adoption of EVs and other forms of zero-emission transport. Officers have also worked closely

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<sup>2</sup> Department for Transport figures at end Quarter 1, 2023

with the Energy Saving Trust (the Government-body leading work on the EV-agenda), engaged extensively with the wider EV market including charge-point operators and National Grid, reviewed reports and strategies, and spoken with other local authorities undertaking a similar journey. This includes local authority networking events organised by the Energy Saving Trust. These have focused on specific themes, such as the different types of EVCP infrastructure available. The strategy also utilises learning gained from the VPACH project. Commercial support is provided by PA Consulting working alongside the Energy Saving Trust and CENEX.

4.12 Prior to publication, discussions on key themes for the strategy took place with the Sustainable Communities EAP on 24 April 2023, the Town and Parish Council Forums on 16 and 18 May 2023, and internal officers from property, planning, fleet and highways. This helped to inform the strategy.

4.13 The strategy encompasses policies on the following themes:

**Policies:**

Policy 1 – Strategic Charging Network

Policy 2 – Charging Hubs

Policy 3 – On-street Charging

Policy 4 – Charging Superhubs

Policy 5 – Smart Charging

Policy 6 – New Development

Policy 7 – Shared Transport

Policy 8 – Council Sites and Fleet

Policy 9 – Investment and Financial Sustainability

Policy 10 – Demand Stimulation, Engagement, and Collaboration

4.14 The strategy includes ten headline targets or milestones against which progress will be monitored, and five key performance indicators. These are listed below:

**Headline Targets:**

1. Business case for LEVI capital funding approved by March 2024.
2. Contract let for the deployment of EV infrastructure through the LEVI initiative by end of 2024.
3. Deployment of EV infrastructure through LEVI to start by March 2025.
4. Public EV chargepoints will be available in all twelve towns across North Northamptonshire by the end of 2025.
5. At least 250 public EV chargepoints will be available by the end of 2025.
6. EV chargepoints will be available in all suitable NNC car parks by the end of 2026.
7. At least five hundred public EV chargepoints will be available by the end of 2027.
8. NNC's fleet transition to EVs for all vehicles below 7.5t will be complete by the end of 2028.

9. At least 80% of residents without off-street parking will be within 250m of a public EV chargepoint by the end of 2029.
10. All EV chargepoints delivered using public funds will have an average uptime of at least 95%.

#### **Key Performance Indicators:**

- Number of fast EV chargepoints available to the public - more is better
- Number of rapid EV chargepoints available to the public – more is better
- Number of EVs registered in North Northamptonshire – more is better
- Number of EV chargepoints per 100,000 population – more is better
- Number of EVs registered in North Northants per EV chargepoint available to the public – less is better

- 4.15 Allied to the activities outlined above, the council is developing in-house mapping capabilities. The main objectives of this are to be able to identify properties without off-road parking, map existing and planned EVCP infrastructure, and help inform the optimum locations for future EVCP infrastructure for both commercial and any publicly funded provision. The mapping will draw upon a wide range of data, including details of current EVCPs via the national chargepoint register and ZapMap, and identify locations which are likely to come forward via the commercial sector, including supermarkets and existing petrol filling stations. The mapping tool will also help the council to monitor progress, especially on Headline Target 9:

*“At least 80% of residents without off-street parking will be within 250m of a public EV chargepoint by the end of 2029”.*

- 4.16 At its meeting on 12 October 2023, the Executive considered and agreed a report on Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Funding. In addition to delegating authority to agree submission of a business case for LEVI funding, the Executive delegated authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets, in consultation with the Executive Member for Climate Change & the Green Environment and Executive Director for Place & Economy, to consider responses to the consultation on the draft strategy and approve the final version for publication.

## **5. Issues and Choices**

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- 5.1. Government expects all local authorities to produce Electric Vehicle Infrastructure strategies. This is also a requirement to secure LEVI funding for the area. If a strategy was not developed, it would limit the council's opportunity to access external funding as well as reduce the council's ability to plan and implement charging infrastructure effectively.

## **6. Next Steps**

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- 6.1. Consultation on the draft North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy closed on 11 October 2023. Responses will be

analysed, and a consultation report produced. This will detail comments received, and provide a response, including if relevant any amendment proposed to the strategy document together with the rationale.

- 6.2. The consultation report, together with the strategy (as amended), will be considered by the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets in conjunction with the Executive Member for Climate Change & the Green Environment and Executive Director for Place & Economy (interim) for approval.
- 6.3. If the strategy is approved, a written record of decision will be produced and published. The final strategy will be made available on the Council's website and accompanied with publicity.
- 6.4. Mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that the policies and actions in the strategy are acted on and progress is reviewed and reported. This will include creation of an officer working group, and liaison with a range of external stakeholders to raise awareness of the strategy and progress related actions. Updates will be provided on the council's website.

## **7. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **Resources and Financial**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial or resource implications arising directly from the report. However, the strategy will help to support the Council's business case for securing additional external funding. This includes the allocation of £2.895m capital funding through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI). This business case must be submitted by the end of November 2023. It is intended that the strategy will also help to attract further commercial investment in EVCP infrastructure to the area.

### **Legal and Governance**

- 7.2 When approved, the strategy will inform statutory documents, such as the North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan and Local Transport Plan, and influence operational policies, processes and guidance related to the provision of EVs and related infrastructure. In addition, it is intended that the strategy will help to shape actions by other stakeholders, including developers, the EV infrastructure market, the public, and businesses through demand stimulation, collaborations and trials.

### **Relevant Policies and Plans**

- 7.3 The report, and installation of EVCPs supports various council policies. These specifically include the commitments to 'Safe and Thriving Places' and a 'Green, Sustainable Environment' in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 and the following priorities:

- Help town centres and villages respond to changing trends

- Enable people to travel across North Northamptonshire and beyond
- Demonstrate clear leadership on tackling environmental sustainability
- Work with communities and businesses to tackle climate change and improve air quality
- Promote sustainable, active travel
- Embed low carbon technology, sustained and improved green infrastructure, and sustainable forms of transport fit for the future

7.4 The installation of EVCPs also supports the council's Carbon Management Plan which was adopted in December 2022 and has the aim for the council to be carbon neutral by 2030. A key theme of the plan is to encourage the transition to electric vehicles.

### Risk

7.5 The main risks are listed below:

Risk	Mitigation	Residual Risk (RAG)
Change in Government policy impacts transition to EVs and demand for EVCP infrastructure	All major car manufacturers have shifted towards production of EVs meaning increased demand for EVCP is inevitable.	Green
Lack of interest from the market meaning lower levels of investment in the area	Soft market testing and regular dialogue with the market.	Green
Inability to identify suitable sites to enable residents without off-street parking to access EVCPs close to where they live	Mapping underway to identify properties without access to off-street parking and potential locations for EVCPs. Collaboration with National Grid to identify any power constraints	Green
Outdated policies, processes and guidance inhibits the pace of EVCP infrastructure delivery and creates a barrier for investment meaning market looks elsewhere	Review of existing mechanisms to remove of unnecessary bureaucracy supported through creation of officer working group. Provide clear guidance to suppliers on relevant processes to create confidence and certainty	Green
Opposition to specific EVCP sites	Consultation process for the installation of on-	Amber



	<p>street EVCPs will enable local residents and businesses to comment on proposals. Communications will ensure clarity on the rationale for site selection and any decisions.</p>	
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## 8. Consultation

8.1 A formal consultation process on the strategy was undertaken from 23 August-11 October 2023. Sixty-four responses were received via the council's online consultation portal and a single response was received via email to the [ev@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:ev@northnorthants.gov.uk) email address.

8.2 Responses were received from the following groups:

Local Residents

Service Users

North Northamptonshire Employees

North Northamptonshire Councillors

Town / Parish Council Representatives

Representative from the voluntary sector or community organisations

Representative from a health partner organisation

Chargepoint Operators

8.3 A full report on the strategy consultation will be produced. However, some initial themes from the responses are included below.

8.4 Respondents were asked what they considered to be the main barriers to widespread EV adoption. The three issues that respondents considered most important were:

- Cost of Electric Vehicles
- Concern regarding vehicle range and ability to charge on-route
- Inability to charge at home

8.5 Consultees were asked what they think NNC should be doing to support the transition to EVs? A variety of responses were received. The main themes of the responses centred around:

- The belief that there is not enough charging readily available be that in car parks, on-street and via lamp post charging.
- Anxieties around the removal of on-street car parking in terraced areas and the desire for EVCP infrastructure to be located away from these locations.

- The belief that electric vehicles are not the current technology to incentivise and that too much is already being done to support the area.
- The belief that the council should seek to support residents that do transition to EVs financially.
- Anxieties around charging facilities being blocked by internal combustion engine vehicles.
- Desire for chargepoints to be supplied with energy from renewables.
- Large businesses being incentivised to build charging facilities for their staff and visitors.
- Ensuring there is adequate provision in urban communities, rural communities and strategically located close to the major road network.
- Exploring ways in which residents in terraced homes can charge using their own power supply.
- Ensuring all chargepoints can be paid for using contactless technology.
- Engaging with the community to ensure there is demand for public charging points before they are deployed.

8.6 No petitions were received during the consultation period.

8.7 Parking can be a controversial issue at the local level. Consultation will be undertaken on individual locations proposed for EVCP infrastructure. This will include engaging with local councillors, residents and businesses on potential sites and any associated parking restrictions through the statutory Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process. Details of proposed sites, including maps, will be provided via the council's website.

8.8 The council has also set up web site link<sup>3</sup> which can be used to register an interest in on-street electric vehicle charging point. This has provided popular with some sites suggested by residents and local councillors coming forward through the VPACH project.

### **Consideration by the Executive**

8.9 At its meeting on 12 October 2023, the Executive noted the publication of the draft strategy and delegated authority to the Executive Member for Highways, Travel & Assets, in consultation with the Executive Member for Climate Change & the Green Environment and Executive Director for Place & Economy, to consider responses to the consultation on the draft strategy and approve the final version for publication.

### **Equality Implications**

8.10 An Equality Screening Assessment has been completed for the draft Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy which considered the impact of the proposals

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<sup>3</sup> [Register your interest in on-street electric vehicle charging NNC - Introduction - Online form \(achieveservice.com\)](https://www.achieveservice.com)

on the identified equality groups. This identified no negative impacts. Installations involving public funding will be designed to comply with the latest accessibility standards.

### **Climate Impact**

- 8.11 Having declared a climate change emergency in June 2021, the council is committed to reducing its climate impact both within its buildings and in working with businesses and the wider community to achieve net zero energy emissions. Road traffic currently accounts for a considerable proportion of North Northamptonshire's overall greenhouse gas emissions, so making the switch to battery EVs is going to be an essential part of the journey towards net-zero.

### **Community Impact**

- 8.12 The provision of EVCPs, including dedicated parking for EV charging, will help to ensure that communities and residents without access to off-road parking are not left behind in the transition to electric vehicles.

### **Crime and Disorder Impact**

- 8.13 There are no specific Crime and Disorder impacts associated with the proposals.

## **9. Background Papers**

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- Draft North Northamptonshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy - August 2023
- 12 October 2023 Report to Executive on Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Funding – 12 October 2023