



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CLIMATE CHANGE CABINET STEERING GROUP

10 NOVEMBER 2021

**UPDATE REPORT ON ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING
STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE ESTATES IN DISCUSSION
WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update to the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group with regards to the work underway on developing a Council Strategy for Electric Vehicle Charging (EVC) and how it relates to the wider RCT Council Net Zero and Carbon Reduction commitments.
- 1.2 For the Steering Group to provide feedback to Cabinet, on the strategy following the amendments made through the public consultation undertaken.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 Following Members consideration of the feedback obtained from the public consultation in respect of the Electrical Vehicle Charging Strategy, that the Steering Group provide feedback to the Cabinet in respect of the adoption of the proposed strategy and its publication prior to Cabinet consideration on the 15th November,
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1, further reports are presented to the Steering Group, providing further updates on progress with the development of an Implementation Plan.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The contents of this report provide background information, an update on the progress so far and the development of the Council's Strategy and Implementation Plan for Electric Vehicle Charging.

4. BACKGROUND AND UPDATE

- 4.1 In April 2021 the Electric Vehicle Charging and Transportation Working Group was set up, comprising officers from across all Service Groups, under the leadership of the Corporate Estates Energy and Carbon Reduction Team. This group has now held a series of meetings throughout the Spring and Summer.
- 4.2 The initial task of the group is to produce two crucial pieces of work, deemed fundamental to the development of an electric vehicle charging infrastructure within the County Borough.
- 4.3 The first crucial element is the development of a Strategy to cover the future of Electric Vehicle Charging. This lays out the aspirations of the Council and sets the scene for future development of EV Charging that is under our remit.
- 4.4 As previously reported, at the inaugural meeting the group were presented with an overview of the current EV Charging infrastructure across RCT, in order to set a baseline from which to move forward. The document also highlighted potential funding opportunities and underlined research undertaken in the background, all whilst setting the scene for the group's work.
- 4.5 The EVC Strategy has been updated and subject to approval by Cabinet is ready to be published, having progressed through internal consultation with stakeholders and a 2nd public consultation exercise. The internal consultation was conducted via email back in August, however, as with the first consultation process (reported on in June 2021), the external consultation was again conducted using the Council's engagement website, 'Let's Talk RCT' and is attached as Appendix B. The Corporate Policy Team started the consultation on the 6th September and the report data was then extracted following the closing date of 4th October 2021. Remarks, requests and other information were then collated into a report and ultimately submitted to the EVCS team for further consideration. This then allowed a short period for adjustments to be made to the strategy (as appropriate), prior to submitting the final draft back to publishing on 22nd October.
- 4.6 The final version of the published Strategy has also now been sent to the Welsh Language Translation Service.

- 4.7 In a parallel procedure the EVCS team (in consultation with the wider working group) has been engaged in the development of an Implementation Plan.
- 4.8 Whilst the purpose of the Strategy is to inform and set out the Council's aspirations, the Implementation Plan will be to provide clear guidance and advice on the requirements for the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, across the County Borough, including:
- The Council's Fleet
 - Other Service Areas
 - Community Groups
 - Businesses
 - The Public
- 4.9 The intention of the 'Plan' is to give a clear road map on how to proceed, who to speak to, and how proposed works will need to be planned and implemented. The Implementation Plan will also contain an 'Action Plan' stating clear goals for the Council, including short, medium and long-term targets for the Council to aspire towards, in the transition to the use of electric vehicles.
- 4.10 Impact assessments have been prepared, in consultation with the Welsh Language Service and Diversity and Inclusion Service, these assessments were then submitted for further comment, before finally being placed before the review panel. The panel was held on 20th October and the outcomes of the consultation have afforded a healthy, positive influence on the whole process.
- 4.11 As reported in June's update, the Cardiff Capital Region's (CCR) City Deal, are undertaking a parallel process to the Transportation & EVC Working Group, for which there are several elements. These relate firstly to EV Taxis and the infrastructure to support them, and then secondly to an infrastructure to support EV Charging for the general public within our car parks.
- 4.12 For information purposes, during the 2020/21 Financial year, 70 taxis were purchased across the CCR, of which RCT have been allocated 5, and we are currently working with the CCR to appoint a management company to operate the vehicles and chargers.
- 4.13 The CCR are already involved in the process of installing taxi charging points across RCT, with the first having already been installed at Porth Park & Ride and Duke Street carpark, Aberdare. There are plans to install further chargers at other car parks. As previously reported, the CCR proposal is that 22kw charging points will be installed, in over 32 sites, mostly within public car parks, but chargers will also eventually be installed at Leisure Centres, such as Hawthorn, Llantrisant and both Rhondda Sports Centres.

- 4.14 Good progress is being made with the development of a draft 'Implementation Plan' ready for internal consultation later in November.

5. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STRATEGY

- 5.1 As mentioned in paragraph 4.5 above, the EV Charging Strategy will be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on the 15th November for approval and publication. A copy of the latest proof is included as Appendix A.

- 5.2 The Strategy aims to set out why action is needed and identify clear outcomes, along with who will deliver them. This would provide an RCT wide approach and promote and encourage the development of a robust and practical electric vehicle charging (EVC) network in the short, medium, and long term, whilst fostering a transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles (EVs) as part of the Council's wider sustainable transport goals.

- 5.3 The Strategy has ten clear ambitions;

1. Develop an Implementation Plan to roll out an EV Charging infrastructure aligned to future demand with suitable speed and power chargers for all vehicles including cars, taxis, buses, e-motorcycles, e-bicycles, mobility scooters.
2. Establish the need for EV Infrastructure by working with partners, where applicable, to secure external funding opportunities and help meet demand.
3. Review our Planning Policies, whilst working with landowners and developers to ensure the EV charge point opportunities are identified and pursued, to promote sustainable methods of transportation.
4. Monitor air quality, to evaluate the relationship between increased EV uptake and improved air quality, expectantly reducing the harmful effects of air pollutants on public health.
5. Develop a series of models for funding, deployment, and management.
6. Identify all suitable locations for potential 'Destination Charging' sites.
7. Identify suitable locations for 'Workplace Charging' across all RCT sites and work with other sectors, where applicable, to increase workplace charging, to meet demand as appropriate.
8. Work with residents to raise awareness and establish the best means of charging vehicles where planning, physical and/or technical constraints mean that their preferred method of charging is not feasible or achievable.
9. Explore potential opportunities for introduction of car clubs within the County Borough.
10. Transform our fleet towards more sustainable methods of transportation, in a planned and practical way.

- 5.4 The Strategy has recently been considered at the Equality and Diversity Review Panel which also considered Welsh Language implications and all feedback has been taken on board and incorporated into the latest draft included in Appendix A. The final version is ready to be published as soon as the approval is given.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 6.1 A Socio-Economic Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are detailed below.
- 6.2 Under the Equality Duty (set out in the Equality Act 2010), local authorities are required to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, as well as to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.3 In line with the Equality Act 2010, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) is committed to working towards achieving the Well-Being goal of a more equal Wales, as set out by the Well-Being of Future Generations Act, and ensuring equal access to its services and opportunities, no matter background or circumstance.
- 6.4 The EV Charging Strategy will aim to support the alleviation of poverty and deprivation, improve access to employment opportunities, improve access to skills and to develop improved infrastructure and healthier communities, by promoting access to an affordable EV charging infrastructure. The Council will ensure that charging infrastructure will be designed inclusively and will advocate for disability and accessibility equality in the roll out of EV charge points, in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, and will be fairly-priced to increase both physical and financial accessibility.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Public bodies must work to achieve all seven well-being goals put in place by the WBFGA, with achieving a Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language being one of the seven goals. The Welsh Government's ambition is to see the number of people able to enjoy speaking and using the Welsh language to reach a million by the year 2050, for further information see the Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy. The Council intends to support this ambition by providing the conditions to facilitate an increase in the use of the Welsh Language.
- 7.2 Under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, RCTCBC has a duty to comply with specific standards in respect of the delivery of

Welsh language services. To ensure that we meet the requirements of the Measure, we have undertaken a Welsh Language Impact Assessment to assess the likely (or actual) effects of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy (EVCS) on the Welsh language, both within our workforce and in the community, so that we can mitigate any negative impacts and enhance the positive impacts.

- 7.3 In line with the Council's Welsh Language Promotional Strategy, the EVCS will ensure that bilingual Welsh first signage and Welsh language services are available on the charging devices installed by the Council, or its Contractors, throughout the County Borough. The Council will also use its influence to encourage other Charge Point providers to implement the same measures to support the Welsh Language.

8. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 8.1 During the development of the EV Charging Strategy, two consultation exercises were conducted involving the public. There are no further consultation requirements at present with regards to this report.
- 8.2 The findings of the Public Consultation exercise can be found in Appendix B of the report and have been taken into consideration in drafting of the revised Strategy.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 Whilst there are no financial implications with regards to this update report, it is worth noting that the schemes currently underway as a result of the Cardiff City Region (CCR) initiatives are fully funded by the CCR.
- 9.2 As the Implementation Plan and detailed action plans are developed, additional funding may be required to deliver new workstreams moving forwards and all external funding opportunities will continue to be investigated as we move forward.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report

10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

- 11.1 The future actions that arise as a result of the future recommendations of the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group report will be considered by the Council's Cabinet and it will take full regard to the seven national wellbeing goals.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 This report provides an update to the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group with regards to the work underway on developing a Council Strategy for Electrical Vehicle Charging and how it relates to the wider RCT Council Net Zero and Carbon Reduction commitments.

Appendix A

Final Proof of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy

Appendix B

Consultation Feedback Report