

## Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee

<b>Report Title:</b>	Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
<b>Chair:</b>	Cllr Rob Bird
<b>Presenting Officer:</b>	Philip Williams
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To provide the committee with an update on the status of this work
<b>Background documents:</b>	Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee meeting report and minutes (March 2020)  Gloucestershire Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (updated in December 2020)
<b>Appendices:</b>	n/a

## **1. Background**

In March 2020 the committee considered a report and presentation on the draft Gloucestershire Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) strategy. Members provided feedback to officers from GCC and Atkins, who have been commissioned to support the council's work on EV Infrastructure. This has helped with finalising the strategy and shaping the council's approach to the next phase of this project.

Covid-19 subsequently impacted on the delivery timescale as key officers have been overseeing elements of the council's Covid response across a range of transport, parking and highways services. This included the successful introduction of e-scooter trials in Cheltenham and Gloucester, demonstrating how ULEV's are making rapid inroads into local transport.

Therefore in autumn 2020 additional capacity was procured from Atkins to coordinate key work streams and to provide technical expertise in this rapidly changing subject area.

This report summarises the work that has been ongoing during the Covid pandemic and next steps. Further details will be available later this month in a cabinet member decision report seeking authority to procure a contract for the supply, installation and maintenance of EV charging points. The paper will be accompanied by the final draft of the Gloucestershire ULEV strategy that will be the umbrella for all the council's work to encourage the uptake of ULEV's and so help to reduce our carbon emissions.

## **2. Progress and key issues**

In many respects 2020 was a year of disruption and change. Not least for the car industry and the electric vehicle charging market. Consumer demand has grown as manufacturers have introduced cars with greater ranges (influencing charging behaviour and reducing range anxiety) and as local councils and private operators have gained valuable experience from real world testing of new types of EV chargers.

Because of these developments, in summer 2020 officers conducted a soft market testing exercise with a large number of EV charger suppliers to better understand what services and technical functionality they are able to offer and what the market is not yet able or mature enough to offer. This was invaluable for informing our procurement strategy and our specification requirements for EV charging infrastructure and services. We are now much clearer about the technical capabilities of different products, attitudes to financial risk (relevant to concession contracts) and appropriate contract durations.

At the same time we have been networking with other local councils in the south west to share learning and experience about setting tariffs, managing the risk of costly grid connections, identifying suitable locations, engaging with local communities and making the most of national funding opportunities. This knowledge has informed our business plan and the discussions we have

had with the Energy Savings Trust (EST) about our proposed bid to the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme. EST is administering grants on behalf of the Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) and councils are able to secure £3 for every £1 we invest, up to £6500 per site. In our procurement strategy this is a key source of leverage to enable our investment to go further.

During this period officers from the council's commercial team have also been liaising with the Crown Commercial Service to enable us to benefit from the introduction, in May 2020, of a new Dynamic Purchasing System for EV infrastructure and associated services.

To assist others in Gloucestershire it is our intention to make our contract available to other parish and district councils in the county to use independently if they wish.

### **3. Next steps**

Subject to the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member later this month we will be going out to procure in January and February, with initial installations taking place at the end of the financial year.

The contract envisages a phased approach to installation with the installation of 200 charge points taking place in the first three years of the contract. This is in line with commitments made in the Climate Change Strategy.