

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Scott Butterfield, Strategy, Policy and Research Manager
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Jane Hugo, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	6 February 2023

## **ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STRATEGY**

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To present the Council’s Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy 2023-2027 for approval.

### **2.0 Recommendation(s):**

2.1 To agree the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy, attached at Appendix 10a, with effect until 31 December 2027.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 To ensure the continued rollout of chargepoints to supplement private sector provision, supporting the visitor economy and UK government’s policy ambition to transition towards Battery-powered Electric Vehicles (BEV).

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council’s approved budget? Yes

### **4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:**

4.1 To consider alternative strategic priorities. The strategy seeks to deliver sufficient chargepoints to meet current demand, and will be reviewed in mid-2025 dependent on the levels of uptake of Battery-powered Electric Vehicles both locally and by commuters and tourists. This is considered a proportionate and realistic way of approaching the issue given the relatively low level of car ownership in Blackpool, the desire to achieve mode shift, and the background level of deprivation in the town.

## **5.0 Council priority:**

- 5.1 The work supports both of the Council's priorities:  
"The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool"  
"Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

## **6.0 Background information**

- 6.1 The phasing out of the sale of new petrol cars by 2030, and the sale of new hybrids by 2035, has already led to substantial growth in the number of Battery-powered Electric Vehicles, which represented 17% of all new car registrations in September 2022. However, the distribution of charging infrastructure has been skewed towards the south, with London and the South East having the highest number of charge points. London has 11,028 charge points, the South East has 4,562. At the time of writing, Blackpool had 30 charge points. At 21.7 per head of population, this is the 25th lowest number out of all local authorities in the UK and the 56th lowest per head population rate in the UK.
- 6.2 The Council has had funding from the Local Transport Plan to provide a small number of chargepoints on carparks in Blackpool, with further funding available from the On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) subject to suitable schemes being developed. Most of the public chargers in Blackpool have been provided via council intervention. Data indicate that these are well used, with anecdotal evidence that demand at some of the sites exceeds the number of chargers available at certain times, such as overnight charging for staying visitors.
- 6.3 The Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy (Appendix 10a) aims to help future proof the town by forecasting anticipated charge point needs over the next five years, identifying who the key delivery partners are, potential sites and how charge points can be delivered. It is an important pre-requisite for the Council if it is to access support via the £400m Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding, details of which are expected early this year. Work on the strategy included the development of various supporting papers to provide an evidence base, which are available on request.
- 6.4 Models seeking to predict the number of chargers needed in Blackpool vary considerably in their findings, which causes an issue with setting an appropriate target for installations. The Transport For The North model on which City Science based their analysis suggests that between 1,597 and 2,787 public chargers serving visitors and locals would be needed by 2027, including workplace chargers. However, figures made available more recently via the National Electric Vehicle Insight and Strategy model (NEVIS) developed by Cenex suggests a total of 210 public chargers (excluding workplaces) would be needed by 2027, of which 185 would be 7kw "fast" chargers, and the remainder "rapid" chargers with faster speeds from 22kw upwards.

- 6.5 Taking into account the current lack of chargers, the strategy proposes to adopt an initial target of an additional 210 publicly-accessible chargers compared with the 2022 baseline. The strategy proposes annual reviews on delivery against this, and this will incorporate a review of usage data and anecdotal evidence to assess whether the figure is too low. Delivery of a revised target would be via either private sector partnership arrangements, or external funding such as Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure, On-street Residential Charging Scheme or the Local Transport Plan.
- 6.6 The review process will give the council time to consider the impact of planned schemes, and develop further options. The Council already has a firm commitment to deliver 25 new chargers via the Blackpool Central Car Park, with other potential schemes including public-facing chargers as part of the plans to electrify Blackpool Transport Services's buses, and the ongoing provision of other carpark and neighbourhood chargers via On-street Residential Charging Scheme and the Local Transport Plan. These schemes could potentially cover around half of the figure targeted.
- 6.7 Various private operators offering schemes that involve signing long leases and profit sharing have also approached the Council. The Electric Vehicle Strategy group are working with the Procurement team to ensure that any arrangements adopted offer good value for money. These could deliver a variety of additional schemes, including on-street charging, to add to the schemes in paragraph 6.5, and deliver the remainder of the requirement.
- 6.8 Any shortfalls arising from the work detailed in paragraph 6.5 and 6.6 could be addressed directly by the private sector without Council involvement, for example via supermarkets, other retailers, or hotels. A final option could be to promote charger-sharing apps such as "Co-charger", which connect individuals with private chargers with potential users. If adopted in key localities, this could relieve significant burden on (for example) Blackpool Victoria Hospital car park and charger facilities
- 6.9 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

## **7.0 List of Appendices:**

- 7.1 Appendix 10a: Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy 2023-2027  
Appendix 10b: Equality Analysis  
Appendix 10c: Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy - Public Consultation Report

## **8.0 Financial considerations:**

- 8.1 A financial model will be developed for charging which allows the development of a fund covering the maintenance of chargers supplied by the Council. This could include income from other arrangements with third parties and be supplemented with funding from the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure scheme.

## **9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 None arising directly from the strategy. Leases and contractual arrangements with third parties would be subject to further discussion as required to meet the targets in the strategy.

## **10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The strategy minimises the risks to the visitor economy of providing insufficient facilities for tourists. Risks directly relating to the installation of the equipment need to be assessed on a site-by-site basis.

## **11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 An Equality Analysis is attached at Appendix 10b. This particularly notes the importance of well-lit, secure charging facilities for vulnerable motorists charging at night, and the role of the new Accessible Chargepoint standard PAS1899 in ensuring that motorists with disabilities are able to charge their vehicles. The strategy will deliver sites which are accessible to PAS1899 wherever possible, within the constraint of spaces requiring more space, and arrangements to provide manual support for some users.

## **12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 The Council's Sustainability Impact Assessment process was used throughout the development of the strategy. The scheme will lead to an increase in electricity use locally through the charging of cars, but this is a positive given the decarbonisation of the national grid when compared with fossil fuel sources of power. There could be an impact on the capital cost of schemes as suitable schemes seek to include provision for electric charging where appropriate, although there is potential for funding to mitigate this. It has the potential to have a positive impact on the number of journeys made to Blackpool by electric vehicle as provision will be promoted and made available via chargepoint provider and third party apps such as Plugshare and Zap Map. Chargepoints will be developed across the town and provision will be made for those with disabilities.

## **13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 Stakeholder events were held in March with key local businesses and organisations, which have influenced the report, whilst drop in sessions were held for Members in June to explain the planned strategy and take comments. A public engagement exercise took place on the content of the draft strategy (Appendix 10c) with the findings used to shape the action plan and strategy.

## **14.0 Background papers:**

- 14.1 Electric Vehicle Strategy data analysis and forecasting summary report v1.0 – City Science, May 2022  
Electric Vehicle strategy stakeholder engagement report v1.0 – City Science, June 2022  
Electric Vehicle Strategy baseline evidence report v1.1 – City Science, June 2022  
Electric Vehicle strategy infrastructure delivery report v1.0 – City Science, June 2022

**15.0 Key decision information:**

15.1 Is this a key decision? No

15.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number:

15.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

15.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

**16.0 Call-in information:**

16.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

16.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

**17.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):**

Date informed: N/A Date approved: N/A

**18.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

18.1

**19.0 Summary of Discussion:**

19.1

**20.0 Executive decision:**

20.1

**21.0 Date of Decision:**

21.1

**22.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

22.1

**23.0 Date Decision published:**

23.1

**24.0 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

24.1

**25.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

25.1

**26.0 Call-in:**

26.1

**27.0 Notes:**

27.1