

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)
held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 8 November 2023

Present:

Members: Councillor R Singh (Chair)
Councillor T Jandu
Councillor A Masih
Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor B Singh

Other Members: Councillor J O'Boyle – Cabinet Member for Jobs,
Regeneration and Climate Change

Employees (by Service Area):

Law and Governance M Jeffery, M Salmon, A West

Transportation, Highways
and Sustainability S Evans, J Seddon

Apologies: Councillor F Abbott
Councillor A Kaur
Councillor R Simpson

Public Business

6. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

7. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th June 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Further to minute 3/23 headed 'Bus Update', in respect of recommendations 2) and 3) the Chair undertook to ensure that the matters were brought to a future meeting of the Board and would identify a meeting date for this purpose and would also advise Members on the progress of recommendation 4).

8. EV Charging Point Installation Roll-out: Update

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) received a briefing note and presentation of the Director of Transportation and Highways on the progress to date of the roll-out of Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points across the city.

There were a number of targets aimed at reducing carbon emissions which had been set at regional, national and international level. Coventry City Council's own Climate Change Strategy was currently under development and would set an ambitious target of reducing emissions by 2030. The Coventry City Council Transport Strategy, adopted in December 2022, was developed in accordance with these strategies, and acknowledged that significant changes to the way we travel must be taken in order to achieve these targets.

Widespread electrification of public and private travel was one strand of the Coventry City Council Transport Strategy, which aimed to reduce carbon emissions, and also to improve air quality.

Coventry had seen the highest number of installations of EV charging points in the West Midlands by some number and was second only to London in the number of operational charge-points, with 958 charge-points and 1,326 sockets available at October 2023. A further 450 charge-points would be made operational by April 2024.

Coventry was also ahead of the WMCA in the adoption of electric vehicles with 1,597 battery-powered electric cars and LCVs, and a further 1,458 plug-in vehicles, accounting for 1.94% all cars and LCVs. This was slightly behind the UK average of 2.59%.

44 fast chargers were available at Coventry City Council properties. The Plug-in Coventry project with partner EO Charging was creating a network of fast chargers available for open use by the public.

There was a multi-stage consultation process which took place once a potential location had been identified involving the publication of a 'Street News' newsletter to residents with information about the proposed installation and details of how to respond to consultation. In addition, Ward Councillors were notified of the proposals and given oversight of the Street Newsletter prior to being sent out. Locations were removed following objection with new locations identified and the process begun again. Application to the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) was made for funding and once the grant letter was received, a second Street News was published with further information. Once locations were agreed, National Grid were involved in ensuring an adequate power supply and a letter drop to residents then took place inviting responses to the plan to install a charging-point in their area.

Enforcement - Traffic Regulation Order/Traffic Management Order processes were instigated and followed through, with the accompanying timescales for objection, and a report containing the list of objections and recommendations submitted to the Cabinet Member for consideration, following which, a decision was made.

The presentation highlighted the following:

- Coventry's Charging Infrastructure Programme
- Background - first chargers installed September 2018; charger delivery using Office for Zero Emission Vehicle funding, chargepoint operator investment and CCC investment; Coventry residents reliant upon on-street chargepoints for routine charging

- Strategic context internationally, nationally, regionally and locally
- Coventry's Emerging Transport Strategy – supporting the City's economic recovery and enabling long-term growth; delivering a sustainable, low-carbon transport system; ensuring equality of opportunity; maximising health and wellbeing
- Department for Transport Official Statistics: Electric vehicle charging device statistics July 2023 and October 2023
- Partnership working to deliver EV infrastructure
- Rapid and residential charger usage combined
- Developing and EV culture
- EV Charging Strategy
- Cenex Outputs – Electric Vehicles (current)
- Project: Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure – Concession Contracts - Opportunity Charging, On-street Residential Charging Points, Destination Charging Points, Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure [LEVI project]
- On-street Residential Charge-point Scheme [ORCS] – Consultation
- Process for objections
- Enforcement and Monitoring

In considering the briefing note and the presentation, the Board questioned officers, received responses and discussed matters summarised below:

- 1,000 public chargers currently installed on the highway, in addition, further charging points were available at petrol stations, supermarkets, hotels etc.
- Ansty Park EV Station – outline business case completed. Lots of interest generated in the Station. Work currently be undertaken on waste to energy.
- Electric buses - 270 electric buses were in operation in the city. All buses operating in Coventry would be electric by 2025 and any bus company wishing to operate in Coventry after this date would need to comply with the City's standards.
- Hydrogen vehicles charging to be considered as determined by the vehicle market
- Petrol stations and EV charging Points would remain a requirement for 10 year+ to support the second/third hand vehicles market
- Parking in EV charging bays – bays identified by signage installed through the Traffic Regulation Order process, were restricted to being used for electric vehicles parking only. All other charging bays could be used for the parking of any vehicle resulting in very little loss of on-street parking places
- EV Charging Policy would provide a clear process for dealing with parking in charging bays - report on proposed Policy would be submitted to Cabinet.
- Consultation Process - the wording be revised to make the process clear when an objection was received requesting removal of an EV charging point.
- Record of only one charger removed following installation, following receipt of an objection
- Future revenue share element of the Scheme anticipated for the Local Authority
- Opportunities for advertising on rapid charger equipment
- EV charging tariffs were linked to energy costs and were consistent/aligned with charges across the West Midlands region

The Board requested that officers explore advertising opportunities on rapid charger equipment, and that, in respect of the Consultation Process, officers be requested to revise the wording to make the process clear when an objection was received requesting removal of an EV charging point. The Board also requested that they receive a further update on the progress of EV Charging Stations, including information on work-place EV Charging provision for employees at businesses in the city.

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3):

- 1) Notes the Briefing Note and Presentation.**
- 2) Requests that in respect of the Consultation Process, the wording be revised to make the process clear when an objection is received requesting removal of an EV charging point.**
- 3) Had no additional recommendations for the Cabinet Member.**
- 4) Requests that they receive a further update on the progress of EV Charging Stations, including information on work-place EV Charging provision for employees at businesses in the city.**

9. Work Programme 2023-24

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) received a report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator that detailed issues on the Board's Work Programme for meetings of the Board for 2023/24.

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3):

- 1) Notes the issues on the Board's Work Programme for 2023/24.**
- 2) Requests that Progress of EV Charging Stations, including information on work-place EV Charging provision for employees at businesses in Coventry, be added to the Work Programme.**

10. Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.40 pm)