

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for City Services held at 10.00 am on
Wednesday, 17 February 2021
This meeting was held remotely

Present:

Members: Councillor P Hetherton (Cabinet Member)
Councillor G Lloyd (Deputy Cabinet Member)
Councillor M Heaven (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Other Members: Councillor L Bigham

Employees (by Directorate):

S Evans, Transport and Innovation
L Knight, Law and Governance
R Parkes, Law and Governance
M Salmon, Law and Governance

Public Business

34. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

35. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th January, 2021 were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

36. On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme - Experimental Traffic Regulation Order Objection

The Cabinet Member considered a report and received a presentation of the Director of Transportation and Highways concerning an objection that had been received to an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order advertised on 16 July 2020 for fast chargepoints at locations in the city which became operational on 24th July. A copy of the order schedule, the issues raised in the objection and the responses were set out in appendices to the report. As the meeting was being held remotely, in line with the revised government regulations, the objector was offered the opportunity to submit additional comments in writing in response to the report and a further response was received following the publication of the meeting documentation. The objector had been provided with additional information on watching the live stream meeting.

The report indicated that Coventry was at the cutting edge of the automotive industry and a leader in innovation. Electric vehicles were at the heart of this development and following a number of successful bids, the City Council had installed over 200 residential electric chargepoints city wide. A further 200 chargepoints were currently being installed and would be operational by end of April 2021. This programme was intended to future-proof the city's transport infrastructure for the increase in electric vehicle ownership in line with national

Government policy, with the Government having committed to ending sales of new diesel- and petrol-powered vehicles from 2030.

In line with this commitment, the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) had allocated £20m of funding for on-street residential chargepoint projects. The funding available was for 75% of the capital costs of procuring and installing the chargepoint and an associated dedicated parking bay (where applicable). The scheme was intended to meet the needs of residents and therefore the requirement from OZEV was that the chargepoints must be installed in residential areas where there was limited access to off-road private parking. Over the past three years the City Council had submitted four successful funding applications to OZEV securing grant funding to the value of £1,446,010. This funding is being used to install a mix of slow and fast chargepoints on residential streets across the city.

The Chargepoint Scheme was primarily focused on the installation of electric vehicle chargepoints in on-street locations. However, The City Council acknowledged that on street parking was prevalent in streets where off-street parking was not available. Consequently, no parking restrictions had been proposed for the locations where slow chargepoints had been installed. However, where fast chargepoints had been installed, there was a parking restriction of Electric Vehicles only for 4 hours, whilst charging, no return within 4 hours, between 6am and 10pm.

The City Council undertook consultation with local residents where these chargepoints were proposed for installation. Where informal objections were received for any proposed location, the chargepoint was relocated or removed from the proposal. The Cabinet Member was informed that 4,200 Street News had been issued to residents in the locations on two occasions and drop in sessions were also held. An ETRO was then used to install the charging point waiting restriction at the fast chargepoint locations to enable monitoring of the situation/any problems that could arise.

The report highlighted that the proposal had been to install the slow chargers on ends of the identified streets on existing footway where existing street light was present which would supply power to the slow chargers, minimising street clutter. Where street lights were at the front of the footway, slow chargepoints had been installed directly on to these street lights.

The Cabinet Member was informed that the objection received was not to the specific ETROs that have been proposed but asked that the Council prioritise a range of other measures in advance of making these ETROs. It was noted that similar objections had been received from the objector to other ETRO and TRO consultations, and that many of the measures requested by the objector, such as Average Speed Enforcement and the provision of segregated cycle routes, were being promoted and delivered through a range of investment programmes, such as the Local Air Quality Action Plan and Binley Cycle Route schemes. The officer detailed the specific concerns highlighted by the objector, including his additional comments, and provided responses to the concerns raised. The Cabinet Member was informed that the objector would be offered the opportunity to meet Council officers to talk in detail about the issues that he had raised.

Councillor Hetheron, Cabinet Member, placed on record her thanks to the officer for all the work undertaken with the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme, in particular the significant consultation exercise undertaken with local residents.

RESOLVED that:

(1) Having considered the objection received to the City of Coventry (Various Locations Phase 8) (Electric Charging Places) (Experimental) Order 2020, approval be given to making the Order permanent.

(2) It be noted that the issues raised in the objection are general in nature and do not relate directly to the location of the parking bays as detailed in Appendix A and it be endorsed that if the same issues are raised again to other proposed electric charging bays in the future, they are not considered again.

37. Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) Taxi Infrastructure Scheme - Binley Road Experimental Traffic Regulation Order Objections

The Cabinet Member considered a report and received a presentation of the Director of Transportation and Highways concerning two objections that had been received to an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order advertised on 19 March 2020. Two rapid chargepoints had been installed on Binley Road and to ensure a turnover of use, parking was restricted to 1-hour maximum stay. The order was introduced to restrict the parking and became operational on 27th March. A copy of the order schedule, the issues raised in the objections and the responses were set out in appendices to the report. As with Minute 36 above, the objectors were offered the opportunity to submit additional comments in writing in response to the report and one further response was received following the publication of the meeting documentation. Both objectors had been provided with additional information on watching the live stream meeting.

The report indicated that with electric vehicles being key to the development of the automotive industry, following a successful bid, there was the opportunity to promote a move towards electric taxis. The Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) had made £500m available to grow the market for ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) from 2015-20 and offered grants to support the wider use of electric and hybrid vehicles. The City Council had been successful in securing £1.2m funding in March 2017 to install 39 rapid charging point for taxis and private hire cars in the city.

The priority of the project has been to encourage existing taxi drivers to purchase an electric taxi by establishing an accessible network of charging infrastructure within the City for use by electric taxis. The City Council had installed 39 rapid chargepoints city wide.

The report highlighted that the whole of Coventry was declared an Air Quality Management Area in 2009 because of high levels of Nitrogen Oxide (NO₂) and more recently the Government's 'UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Oxide Concentrations' document issued in July 2017 identified Coventry as a city where NO₂ exceedance was expected to continue beyond 2020. The Council's Cabinet had approved the local air quality action plan in July 2020 to address this. Diesel

vehicles, especially the older diesel vehicles which characterise Coventry's taxi fleet, were a major source of NO2 so the adoption of ULEV taxi and private hire vehicles would represent a clear public health benefit for those who live or work in the city. This project should be seen as part of a wider strategy to promote electric vehicles.

While the charging points installed were specifically for taxis, the Council had aspired for the charging points to also be available for use by private electric cars. This worked on the basis that taxi charging got priority and a booking system was now in place to facilitate this.

The city wide locations where the 39 rapid chargepoints had been installed, had a parking restriction only permitting electric vehicles, whilst charging, to stay for 1 hour with no return within 2 hours. They had been installed using ETROs to enable monitoring of the situation/any problems that may arise. Where the chargepoints had been in the vicinity of residential, retail, or commercial properties, localised consultation had been carried out and where necessary, consent had been sought from adjacent properties. The locations were initially identified by taxi drivers during the bid process.

The Cabinet Member was informed that the first objector had raised concerns relating to the conservation area around the Binley Road which they felt was a very protected area and not an appropriate location for the rapid chargepoints. It was clarified that further guidance had been sought and planning permission was not required.

The second objector had raised issues that were not specific to the order. The officer detailed the concerns highlighted, including the additional comments, and provided responses to the concerns raised. Some initial concerns related to the station area and these had been referred to the project manager for the station project.

RESOLVED that:

(1) Having considered the objections received to the City of Coventry (Binley Road) (Electric Charging Places) (Experimental) Order 2020, approval be given to the order being made permanent.

(2) It be noted that the issues raised in objection two are general in nature and relates to outside of the parking bays and the advertised restrictions and it be endorsed that if they are raised in the future, they are not considered again.

38. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

39. Any other items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 10.25 am)