

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S
REPORT TO CABINET**

16th July 2024

Report Title: Delivery of Electric Vehicle Charging through the County Council's Local Government Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding.

Submitted by: Deputy Chief Executive

Portfolios: Finance, Town Centres and Growth

Ward(s) affected: All Wards

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>This report outlines the joint work between the Council and Staffordshire County Council (SCC) under the wider County Electric Vehicle Partnership, to deliver Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure through the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding in the Borough.</p>			
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agrees to the Council working with the County Council to deliver Electric Vehicle charging points utilising LEVI funding and County Council procurement of the EV Charge Point Operator (CPO). 2. Notes the proposed sites for the EV charging points and agrees that these are taken forward for the LEVI soft market testing and if appropriate final installation. 3. Authorises the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth to agree any necessary agreements to facilitate the delivery of the EV chargers and EV charger locations. 			
<p><u>Reasons</u></p> <p>The Council has several EV charging points on its car parks which seek to support residents and visitors using the borough's towns. The County Council has been successful in securing LEVI funding to deliver EV chargers across Staffordshire, specifically targeting areas where residents find it difficult to directly charge their vehicles. It is appropriate that the Borough Council considers the opportunity to work with the County Council to deliver commensurate EV services to our residents and that the appropriate delegations are given to enable a suitable scheme to be delivered with the funding timescales.</p>			

1. Background

- 1.1** The Borough Council has made commitments to reducing its carbon usage and becoming net zero. A Sustainable Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan has been adopted by the Council with objectives relating to travel and transport. Nationally, there is a determination to move away from the use of diesel and petrol vehicles towards cleaner energies in the form of electric or hydrogen powered vehicles. The UK Government set out its ambitions for all new cars to be electric by 2035 and to decarbonise the country's roads by 2050.
- 1.2** In order to facilitate this, there needs to be a network of electric vehicle (EV) charging facilities to enable drivers to charge their vehicles. Whilst most residents where possible seek to charge their vehicles at home there are many properties without access to off-street parking provision or other constraints preventing at-home charging. Furthermore, the current technology of EV's means vehicles need charging at more regular intervals than compared with vehicles using diesel or petrol. As such, there needs to be additional chargers accessible to the wider EV community.
- 1.3** To support the drive to reach net zero carbon emissions and decarbonise road transport by 2050, the UK Government has set out its ambitions for all new cars to be electric by 2035. To help achieve this, the Government's Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) has made funding available through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding, Staffordshire County Council has been successful in securing some of this funding and is now moving to a delivery phase.

2. Issues

- 2.1** The County Council has completed an analysis of areas needing additional EV charging points and matched this with an analysis of availability of publicly owned land which could accommodate EV charging facilities. This work has generated a list of potential sites. Within the borough the County Council has identified the following locations:
- Windsor St / Hassell St
 - The Parade, Silverdale
 - King Street
 - Wharf Street
 - New Chapel Road - Pump Track at Kidsgrove.

These sites are now being assessed as part of a soft market testing exercise, which involves speaking to potential suppliers to establish if they could be potentially suitable. It may be possible to deliver at least 6 to 8 EV Chargers per off-street car park site.

- 2.2** The specific form of required governance agreements for the operation of the charge points is still being determined by the County Council, with options including a Service Level Agreement (SLA) and Lease agreement, or a mini-framework with an open procurement process and call-off contract(s) being considered. Due to short timescales, Cabinet approval is sought to agree in principle to these arrangements, with delegated authority provided to the Deputy Chief Executive to finalise the agreements once a suitable arrangement is agreed.
- 2.3** The County Council intends to procure a Charge Point Operator (CPO) who will manage and maintain the charging infrastructure. The Borough? Council will be required to provide the necessary land access, potential electricity connections and input into the agreements and installation process. The exact division of roles and responsibilities will be detailed in the final governance agreements.
- 2.4** The LEVI funding is being approved in multiple stages, with specific deadlines for each stage. The short time frame between these stages necessitates quick decision-making and turnaround times for the Council and partners, including the review, approval and the necessary agreements. Failure to meet these deadlines could result in missing out on the current round of LEVI funding. This report therefore seeks Cabinet's agreement to the LEVI project, with delegated authority to finalise the necessary agreements and processes for installation. This approach will enable the project to move forward expediently once the governance model is agreed, while ensuring that the Borough Council's interests are properly represented in the final arrangements.

3. Recommendation

3.1 That Cabinet:

- Agrees to the Council working with the County Council to deliver Electric Vehicle charging points utilising LEVI funding and County Council procurement of the EV Chargepoint Operator (CPO).
- Notes the proposed sites for the EV charging points and agrees that these are taken forward for the LEVI soft market testing and if appropriate final installation.
- Authorises the Interim Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth to agree any necessary agreements to facilitate the delivery of the EV chargers and EV charger locations.

4. Reasons

- 4.1** Subject to approval, it is proposed that the Deputy Chief Executive of the Borough Council of Newcastle-under-Lyme, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth is authorised to negotiate and sign the final governance agreements and, where appropriate, consult with stakeholders, for example, landlords and tenants, to make any necessary

amendments to existing agreements or leases, in order to meet the timeline targets as set out by Staffordshire County Council and the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV).

5. Options Considered

- 5.1 The Council does not have to offer EV charging facilities in our car parks however by doing so this will help in encouraging local residents and others to acquire EV's and use these as replacements for diesel and petrol vehicles and as such contribute towards deliver of sustainability goals.
- 5.2 The Council can decide if to procure suppliers for EV chargers independently of the County Council, however if this route is taken then there will be no access to the LEVI funding.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 The Council will be required to consider a range of agreements which will cover procurement, suitable governance arrangements and wider lands aspects [Agreements for Lease, Heads of Terms suites of documents, Management/Concession Agreements, Electricity Connection Agreements, repair and maintenance, Insurances and Termination].

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1 The project seeks to make ownership and usage of electric vehicles more accessible to people who do not have the option to charge at home.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

- 8.1 The County Council are undertaking the procurement in line with the Public Contract Regulations (PCR) 2015.
- 8.2 There will be a requirement for the Borough Council to provide some car parking enforcement role on the car parks to ensure that the EV Charging parking spaces are not inappropriately used. This could be delivered within the existing resources engaged for the Council's pay and display car parks, however for the Wharf Street and New Chapel Road new resources would be required. For these sites there will need to be further discussion with the County Council and the chosen EV Charger provider to agree suitable enforcement options (and also if these need to be included in the Traffic Regulation Order).

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

- 9.1 The proposed joint working with the County Council allows the Borough Council to support the expansion of EV infrastructure and work towards its environmental goals with minimal financial and operational risk.

9.2 The County Council has completed a risk assessment with the main risks identified as follows:

9.2.1 If agreements are not signed, the shortlist of Borough Council car park sites will not be included as locations for LEVI-funded installation. This could delay the rollout of EV charging in the Borough and mean missing out on the current UK Government (OZEV LEVI) funding opportunity.

9.2.2 If there are delays to the proposed timeline, 10% of Staffordshire County Council’s LEVI funding (£458,800) expected in March 2025, may not be received leaving a shortfall in the budget for the project.

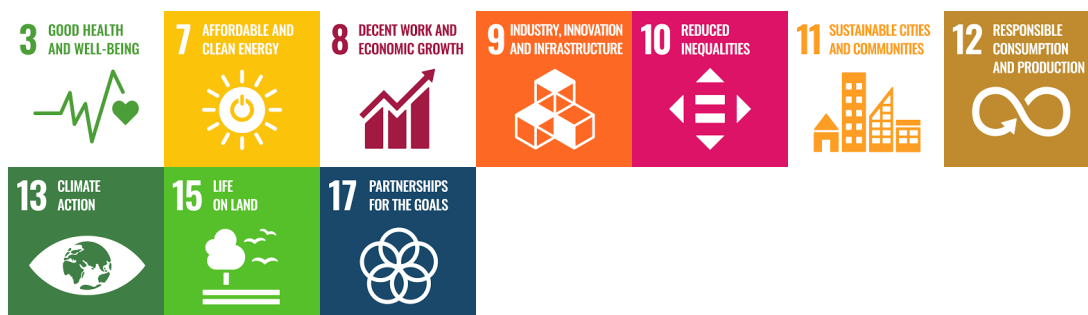
9.2.3 Lack of uptake or usage of the new charging points could mean they are not financially viable for the Charge Point Operator (CPO). Robust feasibility assessments and ongoing monitoring of usage levels by the CPO will be required to mitigate this.

9.2.4 Reputational risk to the Borough Council, if there are issues with the availability, reliability or pricing of the charging points. Clear SLAs on performance and customer service standards will need to be agreed upon with the Charge Point Operator (CPO), along with effective contract management.

9.2.5 It is also worth noting that, if the Borough Council does not provide EV charging points then customers will gravitate towards those car parks that do have them, and therefore risk losing clients and commercial cross-subsidisation opportunities, should we not provide them. With the introduction of EV points in the medium term may boost our customer base by providing the facilities modern-day drivers expect.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

10.1 The EV chargers and use of clean powered vehicles clearly supports the UNSDG goals.



11. Key Decision Information

11.1 This is a key decision as it involves 2 wards.

12. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

12.1 Cabinet approved the Sustainable Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan in June 2024.

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 None.

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 Staffordshire County Council Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy is available on request.