



13 March 2023

Title	Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging in Reading Tender
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Report author	Sam Shean, Highways & Traffic Services Manager
Lead Councillor	Councillor John Ennis, Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy & Transport
Corporate priority	Healthy Environment
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Committee note the intention to tender for a suitably qualified and experienced partner to roll out an Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging programme within Reading2. That the Committee note that any planned installation will be in line with the Council's agreed Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy, a draft of which appears elsewhere on the agenda.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. To inform & update the Strategic Environment Planning & Transport Committee of the intention to tender for a suitably qualified and experienced partner to roll out an Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging programme within Reading.
- 1.2. To inform the Committee that any planned installation will be in line with the outcome of Reading's Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy that is currently being considered by this Committee.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) published the Transport Decarbonisation Plan 'Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain' in July 2021 to set the pathway and key principles underpinning the approach to delivering net zero transport in the UK by 2050.
- 2.2 This was followed by the publication of 'Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy' in March 2022. The Strategy sets out Government's vision and action plan for the rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the UK, ahead of the dates to end the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2035 and for all new cars and vans to be fully zero emission at the tailpipe by 2035.
- 2.3 The transition to electric vehicles will help to achieve a number of Council strategies and objectives including those within the Corporate Plan, the Climate Emergency Strategy the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the Air Quality Action Plan. It is a core element of the LTP vision to promote a sustainable transport system in Reading that creates an attractive, green and vibrant town with neighbourhoods that promote healthy choices and wellbeing.

3 The Proposal

- 3.1 The Council recognised the move to electric vehicles (EVs) would result in the need to charge electric and hybrid vehicles on the public highway and has already installed 15 lamp column and 6 other public 22kW EV charge points Boroughwide.
- 3.2 The Reading Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy incorporates a Charging Infrastructure delivery plan to be presented at this Committee meeting.

(Link to previous EV Charging Strategy report June 2023 for information, refers) <https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/documents/s27658/08%20EVCI%20Strategy%20-%20SEPT%20Committee%2029%20June%202023.pdf> .
- 3.3 The Council propose to go out to tender using the Oxford Framework Portal which is recognised as the appropriate facility where suitably qualified, approved and experienced contractors are available to return tenders. The proposal is to use a concession-based contract with the successful tenderer owning the above and below ground infrastructure and being responsible for its operation and maintenance for the duration of the contract. All assets then revert back to Council ownership at the end of the contract.
- 3.4 The tender will call for experienced contractors to deliver a range of EV Charging solutions including lower energy power charging on-street from either a streetlighting column or bespoke charging bollard to various fast to rapid charging solutions within the Council's car parks and on other Council land with potential charging speeds of 5 to 350kw.
- 3.5 Tenderers will be required to secure suitable funding themselves and to deliver the installation programme over a 2-year period. The project will not require the Council's own funding.
- 3.6 Tenderers will be required to enter a contract with the Council that includes the successful contractor maintaining at their own cost all apparatus installed, as well as proposing a long-term revenue share or equivalent option for the Council to consider.
- 3.7 A long term contract of up to 15-years will be entered into to secure financial stability for both the Council and the successful tenderer, which is industry standard.
- 3.8 Tenderers will be required to demonstrate social value and a strong commitment to carbon reduction principles within their tender submissions to assist the Council in our Carbon Net Zero pledge.
- 3.9 The Council will agree the delivery programme to ensure that the Council's priorities are being met including enhancing opportunities in socially deprived areas of Reading and to achieve best available price kwh for residents using the charging points.
- 3.10 Any contract award will include the final approved Reading EV Charging Strategy requirements.
- 3.11 Funding for the EV Charging project will be part LEVI Grant funding (£860k) secured by Reading Borough Council and part partner funded by either their own private funding or through the Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund (CIIF). This is a 50:50 Government / private sector fund of over £400m of investment capital being made available to speed up the deployment of public EV chargers.
- 3.12 It is anticipated that the potential income over the lifetime of this contract falls below the level where Committee approval is required in accordance with the Council's Procurement thresholds. However, a report will be brought back to this Committee in advance of tender award to report the outcome and to seek, if necessary, Committee approval should the potential income exceed expectation and meets the current Committee Approval threshold for authority to award the contract.

Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1 Reading Borough Council's vision is:
To help Reading realise its potential – and to ensure that everyone who lives and works here can share the benefits of its success.
- 4.2 The Council's new Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:
- Healthy Environment
 - Thriving Communities
 - Inclusive Economy
- 4.3 These themes are underpinned by “Our Foundations” explaining the ways we work at the Council:
- People first
 - Digital transformation
 - Building self-reliance
 - Getting the best value
 - Collaborating with others
- 4.4 Full details of the Council's Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the [Council's website](#). These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.

5 Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers). Transport is the biggest greenhouse gas emitting sector in the UK accounting for around 27% of total carbon emissions. As set out in the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy this figure is lower in Reading with transport accounting for around 20% of carbon emissions, however significant investment in sustainable transport solutions is vital in order to respond to the Climate Emergency.
- 5.2 A Climate Impact Assessment has been completed which suggests a ‘net medium positive’ impact arising from adoption of the EV Charging Programme, in the context of the wider EV Charging Strategy. In order to achieve the Council's sustainable transport vision and meet our climate change goals, we will need to reduce car use both within and through the Borough by providing attractive and viable alternatives through prioritising and promoting public transport and active travel schemes. However, our Transport Strategy recognises that private vehicle use, car and van trips, will remain for many the most appropriate mode of transport. Therefore, by encouraging the adoption of electric vehicles for the trips that still need to be made they can be made to be more sustainable with a lower impact on the environment and climate change as well as reducing the impact of poor air quality in Reading.
- 5.3 A key driver to the successful adoption of electric vehicles is the ability to adequately charge vehicles. For some the natural choice will be through home charging in an off-street setting, but this will not be available for many, and Reading has a particularly high proportion of homes that do not have off-street parking. The Council's Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy will provide a framework for a network of charging points across the borough and to remove barriers to EV ownership and help achieve our targets from the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy of increasing uptake of zero emission vehicles.
- 5.4 Tenderers will be required to submit an Environmental Implications proposal which will form part of the quality element of the tender evaluation. A social value quality submission will also be included to ensure that the most deprived Wards in Reading benefit.

- 5.5 Tenderers will be required to submit Carbon reduction and improved sustainability targets. The intent is to reduce the amount of carbon used to produce the materials at source, using recycled materials, lower temperature materials, reducing the uncontrolled waste in the environment to reduce pollution of the natural environment, use of electric vehicles and plant, use of cold applied materials with lower carbon emission, as well as how they will achieve their carbon reduction targets.
- 5.6 The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy, which was endorsed by the Council in November 2020, highlights the importance of adapting to climate impacts as well as reducing the emissions which are driving climate change. The Council will regularly review design standards, in conjunction with industry bodies, to take into account the extreme weather events (both extreme heat and extreme cold) to ensure sustainability of the public highway network.

6 Community Engagement

- 6.1 As set out in the June 2023 Strategic Environment Planning & Transport committee report, a public consultation was undertaken to seek feedback on the draft Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy as part of the proposed statutory consultation to be undertaken on the Council's new Local Transport Plan, the Reading Transport Strategy 2040

7 Equality Implications

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 The EV Strategy is being developed in line with these requirements and the delivery of individual elements of the strategy will be subject to further Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) as they are developed. The EV Charging Tender is the mechanism to deliver key elements of this Strategy.

8 Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1 There are none.

9 Legal Implications

- 9.1 The Borough Council, as Highway Authority, has a duty under the Highways Act 1980 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway.
- 9.2 There is no current statutory requirement for the Council to produce an Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy, however it is anticipated that the new Local Transport Plan guidance being prepared by the Department for Transport may place this duty on Local Transport Authorities.

10 Financial Implications

- 10.1 The delivery of EV Charging will be funded by the successful tenderer using Grant funding that is currently available, as well as Grant funding that the Council may secure from the LEVI Fund as necessary.
- 10.2 Maintenance of any EV charging apparatus installed within Reading will be carried out by the successful tenderer at their own cost.
- 10.3 The successful tenderer will be required to propose and pay an annual apparatus rental fee for each EV device installed on the public highway for the duration of the contract.

10.4 The successful tenderer will be required to propose and share profits made from the sale of energy over the lifetime of the contract.

11. Timetable for Implementation

11.1 The tender is due to go out early in the new financial year 2024/2025 with the award of the contract to follow the adoption on the Council's adoption of the EV Charging Strategy.

11.2 It is anticipated that the successful tenderer / partner will commence delivery of on-street EV Charging apparatus in Autumn 2024 and it may take up to 2-years to fully roll out the delivery programme.

11 Background Papers

11.1 There are none.

Appendices

There are none.