



**ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 21 OCTOBER 2024**

<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLACE</b>

**REPORT SUMMARY**

This report seeks approval for the adoption of the ‘Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy’. It also sets out the ongoing work with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) to access funding to support development and implementation of the EV charging network.

The Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy has been developed to provide the Council with a plan for the roll out of charge points within the borough. The strategy will support the transition away from the reliance on vehicles with internal combustion engines.

Sustainable transport and the creation of high-quality places is a long-standing priority for the Council and is reflected in the draft Local Plan and the Council Plan 2023-2027. The recommendations contained in this report directly support the key priority within the Council Plan to “play our part in addressing the climate emergency and protecting our environment” and “to work across communities with community, voluntary and faith organisations and partners to improve all residents’ life chances”.

It also supports the “Promoting independence and healthier lives”, “Protect our environment” and “Safe, resilient and engaged communities” themes of the Council Plan.

This matter affects all wards within the borough.

This matter is a Key Decision.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is recommended to approve the draft Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy as set out in Appendix 1.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 The Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy (EVCI) strategy will support movement and connectivity on the highway network within the wider context of sustainable economic growth and regeneration. The strategy will help to underpin the delivery of options of sustainable travel within the borough. The development of the strategy is critical to align with and support other Council priorities, strategies and plans to encourage and support sustainable economic growth and regeneration of the borough, including the emerging local plan, the Birkenhead 2040 Framework and the environment and climate emergency declaration. The ambitions for the local plan are to deliver a sustainable left bank of the Mersey which includes increasing levels of journeys being undertaken by sustainable modes as a key part of the vision.
- 1.2 The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority is developing the Local Transport Plan 4 for the region which will set out plans, policies and ambitions for transport services and transport investment in the Liverpool City Region until 2040. The Wirral EVCI strategy will be one of the documents to support the wider transport plan for the region.
- 1.3 In July 2019 Wirral Council declared an Environment and Climate Emergency with a commitment to take action to address the ecological and climate crisis. The aim is to achieve 'net zero' carbon emissions from our own council activities by 2030, and for the whole of Wirral to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2041. Encouraging walking, wheeling and cycling, use of public transport, and switching to Electric Vehicles (EVs) will help to achieve this goal. The EVCI strategy supports the aims of the Cool Wirral strategy to 'increase in the proportion of zero emission vehicles with widespread adoption of electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids' and to 'phase out of conventional fossil fuelled internal combustion engine cars and vans by around 2030'.
- 1.4 The Council adopted an Air Quality Strategy in December 2023. Currently two thirds of all journeys in the Liverpool City Region are 3 miles or less but more than half of these journeys are taken by car. The impacts of this traffic dominance on the lives of local people are widespread, impacting on resident's health, their environment and quality of life.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 1.1 The Council could decide not to adopt the EVCI strategy (Do nothing) – this option is not considered appropriate as:
  - failure to put measures in place to support the implementation of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure would negatively impact the Council's regeneration plans, the emerging local plan and the environment and climate emergency declaration;

- failure to have an approved strategy could lead to the Council not being able to respond to requests from residents who may wish to use or purchase electric vehicles to access opportunities such as education and employment by sustainable modes;
- failure to have approved strategy could lead to the Council not being able to respond with requests from companies who approach the Council regarding the implementation of facilities to charge electric vehicles; and
- an EVCI strategy is seen essential in order to encourage and support sustainable economic growth and regeneration of the borough, including the delivery of the emerging Local Plan, Birkenhead 2040, Air Quality Strategy and the environment and climate emergency declaration.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Prior to the development of EVCI the Council has taken advantage of funding opportunities to install charge points within the borough.
- 3.2 In December 2018 the Council undertook a survey with residents to establish an evidence base of people interested in taking part in an on-street pilot. 521 responses were received and from the responses approximately 25 locations were identified and used as part of the bid.
- 3.3 In September 2019 the council submitted a bid to the Department for Transport (DfT) On-street Residential Charge point Scheme. The Council claimed £45,083 for the installation of 53 charge points between July and September 2021, the funding enabled the council to claim 75% of the costs. During the first year of the pilot there was no fee for residents to charge their vehicles. In October 2022 the Council introduced a tariff of £0.38 p/kWh.
- 3.4 The Council identified the need for an EVCI strategy and went out to tender in January 2023. The Council received 2 bids in February 2023 to develop the strategy and following the valuation of the bids WSP Ltd were identified as the successful bidder.
- 3.5 WSP used the base-lining data as inputs into their “EV:Ready” model which then forecasts the uptake of Electric Vehicles (EVs) across a region, the distribution of charging demand and the requirements for EV charge points. This was then used to identify where charging infrastructure is required in the borough.
- 3.6 The EVCI Strategy attached in Appendix 1 covers the following;
- Why we need to act;
  - Where we are now;
  - Where we are going;
  - How we are going to get there;
  - Action plan and next steps.

- 3.7 The EVCI Strategy includes the baseline data for the borough which has been used to identify potential on-street locations for EV charge-points that will form a network.
- 3.8 The EVCI includes an Action Plan which outlines the key recommendations, organised under 5 key objectives. The Action Plan builds on the recommendations of the Wirral Council EVCI Strategy to provide a series of actions for the Council to follow which will improve EV adoption, EV charge point access and provide support for the provision of alternatives to diesel and petrol vehicles.

The 5 key objectives are to;

1. Ensure all EV drivers have access to a high-quality electric vehicle charge point network;
  2. Ensure that the chargepoint network is future proof and innovative;
  3. Accelerate the uptake of EVs in areas the council can directly influence;
  4. Support tourists and visitors to be able to charge; and
  5. Raise awareness and grow confidence in EVs.
- 3.9 Each Action Area contains a number of sub-actions which should ensure that a lack of charging infrastructure is not a barrier to EV uptake and that all EV drivers in the borough have access to convenient, high-quality charging infrastructure.
- 3.10 The EVCI provides the overview and a framework of how and why a network should be developed but it should be noted that there will be considerable policy decisions to be made going forward. Each sub-action will require further work to develop and implement appropriate operational measures in support of delivery of the strategy and ensure financial viability. Any proposals to enable delivery of this strategy will be the subject of further reports to this committee and would be supported by additional information.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) Capital Fund is a grant fund available to local authorities in England. The LEVI fund will help the Council to expand the network of on-street chargepoints primarily utilising street lighting columns. This will be supported by a smaller number of faster chargepoints within council car parks and Merseyrail Park and Ride locations.
- 4.2 The LCR has been advised that £9.7 million is available to accelerate the delivery of EVCI within the LCRCA. This will be split between the LCR local authorities and Merseyrail however at the present time no decision is available as to how that will be allocated.
- 4.3 A financial assessment of the proposed model for operation identified within the city region will need to be undertaken as well as the impacts on individual authorities.

## **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council has statutory duties as defined by the Highways Act 1980, Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, Road Traffic Act 1988, Local Government Act 1972 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 with regard to any works on the highway.
- 5.2 Wirral Council has a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 to maintain the highway within the borough and is committed to ensuring that roads and pavements are kept safe and well maintained for the benefit of all users. It is an offence under section 51 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, for a person other than the street authority to place apparatus in a street, or to break up or open a street for the purpose of placing apparatus, other than in pursuance of a statutory right or a street works licence, including running cables across the adopted highway which could cause a trip hazard.
- 5.3 The adoption of the EVCI strategy will support the Council in consideration of responses to future statutory consultations regarding the delivery of proposals in relation to electric vehicle infrastructure measures.
- 5.4 Legal colleagues would be required in reviewing any proposals with regard to any future operational models used.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 Existing staff resources, supplemented by external specialist resources via WSP Consultants have been used to support the development and delivery of the EVCI Strategy. Ongoing resources required will be assessed as part of the next stage of work to deliver what is outlined in this strategy.
- 6.2 There are no immediate ICT or asset implications as a direct result of this report however it will have implications for highway assets in the delivery of the strategy going forward. Any proposals for delivery of EVCI would be subject to consultation, some statutory, and further reports and decision making.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 Failure or delay to adopt the EVCI strategy will impact on the ability to implement measures to improve the provision of chargepoints within Wirral.
- 7.2 Failure or delay to adopt or implement the EVCI strategy may impact on the ability to secure grant funding going forward.
- 7.3 Failure or delay to adopt and implement the EVCI strategy will impact on the ability to deliver against elements of the emerging Local Plan, Birkenhead 2040 and the Environment and Climate Emergency Declaration.
- 7.4 Individual measures in support of delivery of the EVCI strategy will be subject of future reports to this committee. Further details regarding risk will be

included in those future reports. The management of these risks will be undertaken by the project manager and monitored via the relevant Project Management Office.

- 7.5 There is a risk that without the strategy in place there are risks that policies would not come forward and the network would develop in an ad-hoc manner, this would not benefit residents and support roll out of sustainable travel options.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 There has been no specific consultation on the development of EVCI strategy, however the aspirations of the policy are in line with numerous other council strategies and plans. It is considered to reflect feedback from work undertaken over the past few years to support the development of the emerging Local Plan, the Environment and Climate Emergency, the Cool 2 Strategy, Birkenhead 2040 and various masterplans and regeneration projects.

- 8.2 For the further delivery of the various actions, including the installation of chargepoints, consultation will take place as required and be reported to this committee as part of the implementation of any policies and future decision making.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.
- 9.2. Whilst there are no equality implications arising directly from this report, the associated actions arising from any of the proposed projects or policies may need to assess any equality issues and mitigate any negative impact that may emerge and will be assessed as part of future reports

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The EVCI strategy moves away from vehicles which cause emissions from the tail pipe. The link between poor air quality, the climate emergency and emissions from fossil fuelled vehicles is widely accepted. The EVCI strategy supports the shift away from the fossil fuel private motor cars towards cleaner, modes of transport and can have a positive environmental and climate change impact.
- 10.2 The development of the EVCI strategy provides an opportunity to ensure that Wirral supports the Cool 2 sustainability targets. The strategy has clear links to the environment and climate emergency declaration and switch from fossil fuel vehicles. An effective strategy will have a positive environmental and

climate change impact through the encouragement and enablement of increased numbers of multi modal and active travel journeys.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Community Wealth Building re-organises local economies to be fairer and stops wealth flowing out of communities. Striving for a prosperous and inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations, the Council aims to create an economy that benefits all of our residents and one which keeps money within Wirral. The Council's Community Wealth Building Strategy is a key part of how this is achieved and makes a major contribution to improving the economic, social and health outcomes of the borough.
- 11.2 Any future procurement exercises to support delivery of projects within the EVCI Strategy will support to build the wealth of our local communities where we will strive to maximise social value activity through creation of local employment/ training opportunities and local labour/spend to maximise the Wirral pound. The request for quotation evaluation criteria has a 10% built in award weighting for social value.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Julie Barnes  
Lead Commissioner Transport and Technology  
Strategic Transport  
Regeneration and Place Directorate,  
  
Tel 0151 606 2365  
juliebarnes@wirral.gov.uk

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

This report is being considered by the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee in accordance with section (k) of its Terms of Reference:

- (k) undertaking the development and implementation of policy in relation to the Committee's functions, incorporating the assessment of outcomes, review of effectiveness and formulation of recommendations to the Council, partners and other bodies, which shall include any decision relating to the above functions.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure \(LEVI\) capital: funding amounts and project status - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Cool Wirral Strategy

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/cool2-strategy-2020.pdf/download?inline>

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE BRIEFING NOTE: INTRODUCTION OF TARIFF FOR PILOT SCHEME OF EV CHARGING POINTS ON STREET LIGHTING</b>	20 OCTOBER 2022