

Forward Plan reference number: FP/052/02/23

Report title: Adopting the Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy: The Right Charger in the Right Place	
Report to: Councillor Tom Cunningham - Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport.	
Report author: Mark Ash - Executive Director, Climate, Environment and Customer	
Date: 1 May 2024	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Katie Pudney – Electric Vehicle and Charging Lead (katie.pudney@essex.gov.uk) or Tracey Vickers – Head of Sustainable Transport (tracey.vickers@essex.gov.uk)	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Everyone's Essex

- 1.1 Everyone's Essex, our new organisation strategy, sets out four strategic aims and 20 commitments. Within the strategic aim of strong inclusive and sustainable economy it includes a commitment to deliver green growth supporting technologies and business models to transition the Essex Economy to net zero. Everyone's Essex also makes a commitment to supporting people to switch to more sustainable travel options so that we can achieve our targets for achieving net zero carbon emissions.
- 1.2 Consistent with these aims, this report sets out a recommendation for Essex County Council (ECC) to adopt **the Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy: The Right Charger in the Right Place** which outlines the vision and objectives for enabling a sustainable transition to Electric Vehicles (EVs). Accompanying the strategy is an action plan which will deliver priorities for the next two years subject to funding being available and any investment by ECC being financially affordable. The action plan timeframe takes account of the continuously changing and fast developing EV and charging infrastructure market, to ensure it remains a relevant and workable document.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree to adopt and formally publish **the Right Charger in the Right Place : Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy**, the Technical Report, and the action plan, as appended to this report.
- 2.2 Note that this is phase one of the strategy and may require a refresh and an updated action plan in 2025. The action plan will only be delivered if it is financially affordable and will be subject to separate decision(s), where applicable.
- 2.3 Agree to publish the consultation report and ECC's response to key quantitative feedback on ECC's website.

3 Background and Proposal

- 3.1 The publication in July 2021 of Decarbonising Transport: a better, greener Britain by the Department for Transport, sets out the actions needed by the private and public sector and individuals to decarbonise the entire transport system in the UK. This document restates the Government's commitment to phase out hydrocarbon fuelled, internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles from 2030, assuming a widespread adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) and the rollout of charging infrastructure to enable their use. The Government further endorsed the importance of decarbonising travel in its Net Zero Strategy published in Oct 2021 prior to the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) conference held in the UK in November 2021.
- 3.2 On 3 January 2024, the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) mandate was passed by the House of Commons and has officially become law. This means that by 2035 all new car and van sales in Great Britain must be zero emission. Under the same law, 80% of new cars and 70% of new vans sold in Great Britain must be zero emission by 2030 (increasing to 100% by 2035). In the first year of implementation, 2024, each qualifying brand must ensure that 22% of new car sales are ZEVs. Failure to meet this target will result in a penalty of £15,000 per non-compliant car. As this announcement came after the public consultation of the draft strategy, the strategy has been updated to incorporate this change.
- 3.3 The Government's strategy *Taking charge: the electric vehicle infrastructure strategy*, stipulates that local authorities are fundamental to the successful rollout of charging points, particularly for the deployment of widespread on-street charging. As a local authority, ECC is ideally placed to identify the local charging needs of residents, fleets, and visitors. As such, the Government is placing an obligation on local authorities (subject to consultation) to develop and implement local charging strategies to plan for the transition to a zero-emission vehicle fleet.
- 3.4 But it is important to recognise that EVs are only one part of the solution for decarbonising transport; they are not the panacea, and this is reflected throughout the proposed strategy. EVs must be considered in the context of the wider transport agenda (reducing unnecessary journeys and increasing the use of sustainable transport).
- 3.5 As noted above and pertinent to how quickly the industry and market is progressing, the strategy is deliberately the first of several phases. The action plan is short-term (two-years to 2025) to help plan for the rapidly evolving EV landscape and prevent us being left behind by the public sector.
- 3.6 The long-term vision of the strategy is to have '**the right charger in the right place**' to support a sustainable transition to EVs without making it so easy for people to use EVs that they replace trips that can be made by more sustainable modes.

- 3.7 The strategy enables the delivery of EV charging infrastructure (EVI), either by local authorities or the private sector by providing the right guidance and policies, and securing government funding, as well as engaging with key public and private organisations.
- 3.8 The Strategy's six objectives are reflective of the objectives in Everyone's Essex:
- Social equality: levelling up access to and use of EVs especially for people who do not have access to off-street parking and no viable means to charge a car using their own domestic supply, which in some areas of Essex is over 50%.
 - Healthy environment: by decarbonising transport, reducing emissions from transport, and improving air quality (but recognising EVs emit Particulate Matter (PM) because they are still a car which contributes to high levels of congestion, particularly during peak times)
 - Resilient and safe network: that is reliable, accessible, safe, compatible, and easy to use.
 - Integrated network: to have an EV offer that complements the promotion of reduced car use, increased sustainable travel and future mobility solutions.
 - Connected network which meets essential demand for EVs.
 - Creating better places: with infrastructure in the right place, designed to complement public spaces and minimise impact on all members of society.
- 3.9 Although the strategic modelling was undertaken prior to the change in national policy set out in paragraph 3.2, it is not expected the changes will make significant changes to the modelling. We also want to emphasise that the strategy is focused around ECC's organisation strategy, Everyone's Essex, which remains unaffected by the update provided in 3.2. As such we are proposing to proceed with the following modelling which suggests there could be:
- 30k-55k EVs on Essex's roads by 2025
 - Rising to 120k-220k by 2030
 - Meaning demand for 1,500 publicly accessible charging points by 2025 and over 6,000 additional points by 2030 (currently there are around 350 publicly accessible charging points which is behind the national average)
- 3.10 The Strategy states that ECC's role is to enable a sustainable transition to EVs, as opposed to providing everyone the means to obtaining their own charging points, the same way it does not provide individual access to petrol and diesel forecourts. As such, ECC envisages the private sector will play a pivotal role in delivering most of the infrastructure, but they're only likely to install in locations which are commercially viable, potentially leaving gaps in the network where provision is needed. ECC propose to use funding opportunities such as the upcoming Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund to bridge any gaps in provision and deliver the action plan, attracting as much commercial investment as possible. ECC does not currently have sufficient budget to deliver the action plan, so ECC shall look for public and private funding opportunities to fund it. This includes any cost escalations or residual gaps. The aim is to ensure ECC does not have any capital expenditure from current or future budgets.

- 3.11 The strategy further recognises the importance of a collaborative approach to action, and recommends working closely with key partners, such as our city, district, and borough partners to incite knowledge sharing for better targeted measures.
- 3.12 The action plan includes, but is not limited to, the following actions, all of which will be considered and if necessary, in partnership with the appropriate teams, to assess their legality, feasibility, costs, benefits and risks:
- Create a working group with key partners.
 - Develop and write a policy providing solutions for private residential on-street charging for residents who do not have access to off-street parking.
 - Installing charging points across ECC's property portfolio, subject to funding availability and financial affordability to ECC.
 - Develop proposals for ECCs fleet electrification.
 - Develop design guidance.
 - Supporting the passenger transport industry in transitioning to electric buses. However, this is not a financial commitment. This support will likely be in the form of staff time to pursue any funding opportunities to deliver this transition.
 - Working with private sector to provide the appropriate on-route charging points.
 - Supporting businesses to install workplace charging.
 - Supporting city, district, and borough partners and parish councils to utilise their assets for charging.

Funding

- 3.13 The strategy anticipates that most of Essex's charging infrastructure will be delivered by the private sector. However, central government funding will be vital to fill gaps in provision, help maintain consumer confidence and accelerate the transition. ECC has a role to play in securing this third-party funding and enabling the delivery of infrastructure to support residents such as those with limited access to off-street parking. The action plan within the strategy is not currently fully funded, however, we will use the opportunities available to secure funding for its delivery. This will either be paid for by public funding such as LEVI or that outlined in the next paragraph, or by the private sector.
- 3.14 In 2023, ECC was successful in securing £236,000 of funding from the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) to cover 60% of the costs of installing 66 charging points in 30 locations across Essex. The remaining 40% will be paid for by Qwello, the Charge Point Operator selected because of a successful tender. These charging points are expected to be delivered by April 2025.
- 3.15 We will also be applying to secure our allocated funding from the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund in 2024/25. Further information on this will come forward in due course. However, having this strategy in place will help us to secure this funding as it provides evidence for future EV uptake in Essex and public charging needs. The extent of funding secured will determine the pace and scale of roll out of EVs in Essex.

Monitoring

- 3.16 We will ensure we make the most of public funding opportunities and any available investment aligns with the strategic objectives and principles of this initial Phase 1 Strategy.
- 3.17 We will monitor the geographic and demographic uptake of EVs and the expansion of the public and private charging network to ensure the different key user groups we have prioritised in this strategy are not being left behind.
- 3.18 We will monitor key outcomes over the Phase 1 Strategy period of the next 2-3 years including, but not limited to, the following examples:
- The level of public funding secured by the council through Government grant schemes and private investment for the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
 - The number of publicly funded charge points delivered by the council and our partners.
 - Expansion and number of registrations of private and public charge points in the county and how this compares with the projected level of need for different user types.
 - How the delivery of charge points aligns with the objectives and principles of this strategy.
 - The usage and performance of installed charging points
 - Rate of EV uptake across the county for different user groups, locations, and demographics. How this compares with trends from other counties and Government forecast.

Public Consultation

- 3.19 Public consultation on the draft strategy and action plan took place in summer 2023 and received 743 responses to the consultation survey and an additional 36 email responses. The consultation report has been appended to this report.
- 3.20 The overall responses showed support for the strategy. In particular, the Vision and Objectives and Action Plan were given strong support. 44% strongly supported the Overarching vision, whilst a further 31% supported it. The specific objectives of the strategy also received strong support. Added to this, 25% strongly agreed with the Action plan, whilst a further 41% agreed with it.
- 3.21 Respondents who offered negative comments tended not to criticise the proposals of the strategy directly, but instead the notion of a switch to EVs in general. This was particularly apparent in the responses received to the survey's open-ended questions.
- 3.22 The qualitative responses explored the findings in more detail. Support for the vision and objectives were highlighted including the need for a strategy and the need to focus on helping residents and businesses to meet the net-zero target.

- 3.23 There were some common themes and concerns over EV capability/price and potential environmental implications of producing EVs – especially batteries. There was also concern over straining the UK power grid and the source of UK electricity. ECC will work closely with the distribution network operator for Greater Essex: UK Power Network (UKPN) to ensure the grid is such that it is able to cope with the number of charging points Essex needs. This includes working with the DNO to plan for each different site and area, to gain a better idea where there is sufficient capacity and where upgrades might be required.
- 3.24 Some respondents also felt that the strategy didn't go into enough detail regarding costings or evidence on how the strategy will work with local councils and private companies. However, it is difficult to provide any costs associated with the action plan because we do not yet know these. The delivery of the action plan is subject to financial affordability from the ability to secure funding from external sources, such as the On-Street Residential Charging (ORCS) point fund and the Local Electric Vehicle (LEVI) fund. Furthermore, we will also be looking to leverage as much private investment as possible to remove pressure from ECC budgets.
- 3.25 A key discussion point of the consultation was how access to charging could be provided to those without off-street parking. Several respondents offered ideas to aid this such as ways to allow private cables to run over pathways or reviewing drop-kerb policies. Easy access to chargers was shown to be important, as was usability of the charging points regarding accessibility or the use of apps.
- 3.26 Feedback like this is valuable because it provides insight to where there are potential gaps in knowledge and understanding about EVs and key areas of focus for Essex residents and businesses. For example, the strategy recognises the need to update existing policies for on-street charging options to enable residents who do not have access to dedicated off-street parking to be able to use their own energy supply to charge a vehicle. The feedback highlights this challenge as a key priority for respondents and helps to prioritise the action plan.

Changes to the Strategy

- 3.27 The following table documents the key changes that have been made to the strategy because of updates to data since the public consultation, the government announcement regarding the targets for the sale of new cars explained in paragraph 3.2, and because of the public consultation on the draft strategy:

Change	Justification
References to a 2030 phase out date of internal combustion	After the public consultation, the government amended its commitment to phase out the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles from 2030 to 2035. The impact of this change on the modelling has been investigated, and it is expected to be marginal. The modelling looked at a range of scenarios,

<p>engine vehicles have been removed and replaced with: The UK Government is phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) by 2035 to accelerate the uptake of zero emission vehicles.</p>	<p>including a low, medium, and high uptake rate, because of significant political and industry uncertainties. These assessments reflect the uncertainties and are still considered appropriate to underpin the development of Phase 1 of the Essex EV Charge Point Strategy.</p>												
<p>The baseline situation for Essex and zero emission vehicles ownership has been updated on p15 to provide the most up to date numbers.</p>	<p>Since the consultation, central government has updated their Zero Emission Vehicle uptake data for quarter 2 in 2023. When compared to the figures on p15 of the consultation draft, the numbers for Essex have almost doubled, which shows how quickly uptake is progressing:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1018 1146 1388 1308"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2023 Q2</th> <th>2021 Q4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BEV Cars Only Total</td> <td>11,681</td> <td>5,673</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PHEV Cars Only Total</td> <td>8,926</td> <td>5,257</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BEV / PHEV Cars Only Total</td> <td>20,607</td> <td>10,930</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The forecasting modelling for future uptake was undertaken as a separate exercise and did not use the baseline numbers, so no changes are required for this modelling.</p>		2023 Q2	2021 Q4	BEV Cars Only Total	11,681	5,673	PHEV Cars Only Total	8,926	5,257	BEV / PHEV Cars Only Total	20,607	10,930
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<p>Reference to the Workplace Charging Scheme (WCS) on p21 and 41 have been removed.</p>	<p>This has been amended to make it clear that it relates to provision of electrical charging infrastructure in the workplace. It now says that ECC will engage with private and large public sector employers to provide charging at workplace car parks. This will increase the number of opportunities EV users will have to charge their vehicles. This will include guiding businesses towards funding opportunities to help cover the costs of installing and running charging points.</p>												
<p>Reference to '20 Minute neighbourhoods' has been removed from p28.</p>	<p>In line with the recommendations from the Essex Climate Action Commission, which were endorsed by ECC in November 2021, p28 outlines the preferred approach for travel in Essex, highlighting that EVs are not a panacea for decarbonising transport. Home working and designing neighbourhoods so residents are given direct access to key services at new and existing developments, should reduce</p>												

	the need to travel and provide more mode choice for people who do need to travel to access services. The reference to 20-minute neighbourhoods is therefore unnecessary.
On p33 an additional sentence has been added to clarify that the delivery of the action plan is dependent upon securing external funding from central government and Charge Point Operators (CPOs)	To make it transparent that the delivery of the action plan can only be delivered if ECC gets sufficient funding from central government and/or CPOs.
The action to continue to develop the DigiGo bus service has been removed from p36.	ECC will continue to support the current DigiGo DDRT services for the duration of the current DigiGo project but looking for opportunities to locate more charging hubs to increase the range, coverage and potential number of services sits outside the scope the current strategy.
The timeline of next steps on p43 has been updated.	This is to reflect a later than expected strategy adoption date, government announcement of the Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate and the addition of ECC's application to the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI).

4 Links to our Strategic Ambitions

4.1 The strategy and phase 1 action plan will help to decarbonise transport in Essex by supporting the transition away from internal combustion engines (ICE vehicles).

4.2 It specifically supports the following aims in the **Essex Vision**:

- Develop our County sustainably
- Connect us to each other and the world

4.3 Effective, sustainable and zero carbon transportation is essential if ECC is to meet our strategic aims of **Everyone's Essex**, specifically:

- Supporting a **strong, inclusive and sustainable economy** by providing access a wide range of employment, education, service and leisure opportunities and is essential for Essex businesses to be productive and efficient.

- Safeguarding a **high-quality environment** by improving air quality
 - Ensuring **health, wellbeing and independence for all ages** by reducing negative effects of carbon emissions
 - Ensure Essex is a **good place for children and families to grow**, making our streets and communities, safer, greener and healthier.
- 4.4 The strategy will rebalance an inequality for the significant proportion of residents without suitable off-street parking by providing public on-street charging facilities in residential streets. Equality is a key priority of ECC's new organisation strategy 'Everyone's Essex'.
- 4.5 The **Essex Climate Action Commission** (ECAC) has recommended that Essex decarbonise by 2050. About 49% of carbon generated in Essex is related to transport and more than 90% of this is related to vehicle use. ECAC recommends a three-fold approach:
- Avoiding unnecessary travel by designing out the need for travel, reflecting increased digitisation, changing lifestyles and new work patterns
 - Shift to more sustainable modes of travel
 - Decarbonise remaining transport to minimise its carbon impact, supporting the transition away from internal combustion engines and decarbonising freight. A major component of this is supporting a shift to electric vehicles.
- 4.6 The **Essex Transport Strategy** (the statutory Local Transport Plan for Essex) adopted by ECC in 2011 includes Policy 7- Carbon Reduction. ECC will support and encourage the use of lower carbon travel.

5 Options

- **Option 1:** Adopt the Electric Vehicle and Charging Strategy, The Technical Report, and the Action Plan (recommended) – for the reasons outlined above and in paragraph 3.3.
- **Option 2:** Considering the recent changes to the date of the proposed future ban on new sales of petrol and diesel vehicles as described in paragraph 3.2, revise the draft strategy recognising that these changes might impact the forecasting results (not recommended) – Further changes to the phase out dates could be announced between now and when the ban date comes to fruition. Everyone's Essex has not changed and the commitment to deliver green growth and transition the economy to net zero remains a key focus for the organisation. The strategy was written around Everyone's Essex, and because this has not changed, it is not recommended to change any other part of the strategy.
- **Option 3:** Do not adopt the strategy (not recommended) – paragraph 3.3 outlines an obligation for Local Authorities to produce and adopt an EV and Charging Strategy. Without a strategy, ECC is unlikely to be able to benefit from public and private funding opportunities. ECC would be risking the wrong charging points being installed in the wrong places on the highway, which leaves it open to financial, environmental, and social risk. Without the

strategy, ECC is unlikely to meet its sustainable transport and transport decarbonisation targets.

6 Issues for consideration

6.1 Financial implications

6.1.1 The adoption of the EV strategy and associated action plan will not result in any new additional cost for Essex County Council subject to other bodies across the public and private sectors funding the actions to be delivered under the Strategy.

6.1.2 It is important to note that this Strategy will support in leveraging further external funding both from Government and the Private sector to support the aims and objectives of this strategy.

6.1.3 Should insufficient funding be secured from the public and private sectors, the action plan will need to be scaled down to fit within the available funding envelope.

6.2 Legal implications

6.2.1 Whilst local authorities do not have the duty to achieve net zero under the Climate Change Act 2008, the Council clearly has a role to play

6.2.2 Numerous legal issues can arise with placing charging infrastructure in the highway but these are beyond the scope of this report.

7 Equality and Diversity Considerations

7.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

7.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

- 7.3 The Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

8 List of Appendices

Adoption the Right Charger in the Right Place : Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy

Technical Report
Equalities Impact Assessment
Consultation Report

9 List of Background papers

None

I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.	Date 10.06.2024
Councillor Tom Cunningham - Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance and Sustainable Transport	

In consultation with:

Role	Date
Mark Ash - Executive Director, Climate, Environment and Customer	03.06.2024
Executive Director, Corporate Services (S151 Officer) Stephanie Mltchener on behalf of Nicole Wood	30.05.2024
Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer) Paul Turner	30 April 2024