

06 September 2018



Electric Vehicle Strategy and Public Consultation

Purpose of report: To provide Select Committee with an overview of the Draft Surrey County Council Electric Vehicle Strategy as well as a summary of the consultation to date to enable members to provide their feedback and help to shape the final version of the document.

Introduction

1. Electric vehicles (EVs) are recognised as a technology that has potentially significant benefits for air quality and continued economic growth, including in Surrey. A strategy has been drafted that provides the basis for decision-making to support the installation of EV infrastructure, setting out a pathway towards Surrey becoming a more 'EV friendly' place to live, work and visit.
2. This paper outlines the draft version of the emerging EV Strategy which was released for public consultation during the summer of 2018. The document is expected to provide an update to the Surrey Transport Plan (STP) which covers the period up to 2026, forming a new strand to its existing suite of strategies.

Context

Position

3. Government has made a commitment that all new vehicles must have "significant zero-emission capability" by 2040¹, effectively banning any new vehicle powered solely by petrol or diesel beyond this date. Government's Road to Zero Strategy (July 2018), goes a step further and sets a target for at least 50% of new vehicles to be ultra-low emission by 2030 (i.e. vehicles emitting less than 75g CO₂/km from the tailpipe). EVs are expected to play a major role in meeting these targets by enabling a transition away from conventionally fuelled vehicles.
4. Levels of EV ownership in the country have already increased significantly over the last five years. Fewer than 5,000 plug-in vehicles (eligible for grant funding) were registered by June 2013, this figure had risen to more than 150,000 by June 2018. Over 2,500 of these were registered in Surrey.

Problems & Possibilities

5. There are number of barriers that discourage more people from switching to EVs. Whilst many of the challenges surrounding EV technology will be addressed by the commercial sector (e.g. vehicle range, cost etc.), Surrey County Council recognises it

¹ [House of Commons Written Statement 839 \(9 July 2018\)](#)

has a role to play in overcoming other barriers, including the availability of charging infrastructure.

6. The EV Strategy presents how the council proposes to address these barriers. It aims to act as a guidance tool for decision-making when planning new services and infrastructure in a specific area. It will be of benefit by better enabling the council to apply a methodical and consistent standard so that interventions in one area mirror those in others.
7. In the absence of a strategy, there is a risk that infrastructure installed 'ad hoc' by the council may not meet the needs of Surrey residents in terms of type, location, value for money or level of provision.

Proposal

8. The proposed aim of the strategy is to:

"Develop a Surrey-wide approach to encourage growth in the use of electric vehicles."

9. The proposed objectives within the strategy are:

- a) To encourage use of EVs amongst Surrey residents, businesses and make provision for visitors.
- b) To consider appropriate opportunities for charging points on SCC land.
- c) To consider policy regarding on-street charging points.
- d) To act as a coordinator for a strategic Surrey-wide approach to charging provision.
- e) To apply for appropriate funding and sponsorship when and where it becomes available.
- f) To provide a tool that can help lobby for funding and support where opportunities are not currently available.
- g) To respond flexibly to fast-paced and changing technologies within the EV sector.
- h) To lead by example by using EV technology to reduce the environmental impact of our day-to-day operations.

10. Throughout the EV Strategy (and summarised in Chapter 6.1), twenty proposed actions are put forward to enable the council to work towards the objectives of the strategy.

11. These actions are contained within the following policy areas:

- i. Informed geographical planning of EV charging points
- ii. 'EV-friendly' planning policy
- iii. Funding the installation and maintenance of charging infrastructure
- iv. Develop SCC's on-street charging policy
- v. Strategic site assessment
- vi. Supporting a town centre charging network
- vii. On-street charging point trials
- viii. Enable EV use through Surrey's car club
- ix. Encourage EV uptake by taxi operators
- x. Bus route assessments
- xi. Clean bus fleet funding
- xii. Lobby central government for funding
- xiii. Providing further infrastructure on SCC land
- xiv. Encourage EV adoption when fleet vehicles are refreshed

- xv. Encourage EV uptake amongst SCC partners
- 12. The table presented in Chapter 6.1 of the EV Strategy links the actions back to the original objectives. The table also indicates the teams that would be expected to take the lead on the actions within each policy area and, where appropriate, a timescale suggesting when the work should be pursued.

Financial implications

- 13. There are costs associated with both the health impacts of poor air quality and the mitigation measures to reduce emissions, including measures to incentivise the uptake of EVs. The council's approach to investment in transport infrastructure and projects takes an integrated approach, considering environment, economic and health aspects.
- 14. There is no internal funding streams currently allocated to EV charging infrastructure. Grant funding opportunities from central government are typically available to cover the capital installation costs of some types of EV charge points, but not the ongoing operation, maintenance or liability.
- 15. A key aspect of the EV Strategy is the recognised need for a sustainable business model to be developed that will enable the council to be able to fund both the installation and ongoing maintenance/liability of charging infrastructure. The council already owns a small network of EV charge points, requiring a commitment from council budgets. An agreed model would be expected to cover both new and existing assets. Possible models are considered within Chapter 3.1 (Table 2) of the EV Strategy.
- 16. Depending on the business model the council pursues to arrange the installation and operation of charge points on its behalf, there may be an opportunity for the council to gain revenue that, at least partially, covers the ongoing costs of the new infrastructure. In the first instance, it is expected that a sufficient portion of this should be set aside to cover potential liability for its operation, maintenance or replacement/removal.

Health and environmental implications

- 17. Surrey residents are impacted by air pollution, with poor air quality contributing to cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness and lung cancer. Climate change has wide ranging impacts on health and the environment ranging from increased flood risk in Surrey to affecting food supply stability, natural hazard risks and more, across the world.
- 18. A transition to EVs could potentially offer significant benefits to public health in Surrey by considerably reducing tailpipe transport emissions that lead to poor air quality (e.g. NO_x) and climate change (e.g. CO₂). There is also likely to be secondary benefits as the UK continues to move away from generating electricity from fossil fuels, towards using cleaner, lower carbon, more sustainable energy sources.
- 19. The strategy does note, however, that EVs will not solve the issue of some air pollutants (e.g. PM₁₀ / PM_{2.5}) which arise from tyre and break wear.
- 20. The strategy advocates an integrated approach to the planning and implementation of any new EV infrastructure. In doing so it seeks to help residents, organisations and visitors to Surrey achieve a smooth and efficient transition from petrol and diesel to

ultra-low or zero emission vehicles. At the same time it seeks to avoid diminishing the importance of active travel and public transport in overcoming other issues that will not be solved by EVs, including the reduction of congestion and sedentary lifestyles, and improving road safety and wellbeing.

Consultation

21. During the development of the Draft EV Strategy extensive discussions, research and benchmarking work took place with a range of key parties including council officers, charge point providers, network operators and numerous other local authorities.
22. As the EV Strategy is a prospective part of the STP, the council has a duty to consult on the document.
23. A 12 week public consultation period was launched on 4 June and concluded on 26 August 2018, running simultaneously with the Low Emissions Transport Strategy (LETS). During this period a number of engagement activities were planned to encourage residents, businesses and organisations to feed back on the strategy including:
 - A dedicated public web page and Surrey Says platform
 - Mailouts to members, statutory consultees and interested parties
 - Social media posts (Twitter and Facebook)
 - Posters displayed in Surrey libraries
 - Media article in Surrey Matters
 - Web banners on the Surrey County Council home page and intranet
24. The public consultation was primarily based online, however, paper reference copies of the Draft EV Strategy were distributed to libraries across the county to enable individuals without internet access to take part.
25. As a complimentary activity during the consultation period, the council organised a roundtable event at the University of Surrey. Hosted by Cllr Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, the event invited local businesses, key industry stakeholders and local authority officers to discuss the medium to long-term opportunities and challenges for EVs in Surrey. During the event, attendees were encouraged to provide a written response to the Draft EV Strategy.
26. An initial appraisal of responses to the public consultation is attached as Annex B. Following this, the strategy will be amended as appropriate, ahead of submission to Cabinet in October.

Conclusions:

27. Surrey faces a number of transport-related air pollution issues that are also faced by other local authorities across the country. A transition from the use of conventional vehicles to EVs has the potential to significantly help to address these issues.
28. The EV Strategy seeks to understand key barriers that currently inhibit people from switching from petrol or diesel use to EV. It subsequently describes measures that can be undertaken by the council to remove or alleviate some of these barriers to make it more attractive for people to own or use an EV in Surrey.

29. It is recognised that the EV sector is still developing rapidly, meaning that technologies and approaches can quickly become obsolete. Therefore, it is anticipated that the strategy will be revisited and refreshed within 18 to 24 months of adoption to ensure that it is kept up-to-date and relevant to a progressing circumstances.
30. Given that the EV Strategy represents an emerging technology and an entirely new strand of the Surrey Transport Plan, officers have sought to undertake a broad level of engagement through meetings with industry, public consultation and discussion with other local authorities. The Select Committee is encouraged to provide their input on the draft document to ensure that the content of the final strategy works for Surrey.

Recommendations:

31. The Environment Select Committee is asked to:
 - (i) note the content and actions presented within the Draft Electric Vehicle Strategy;
 - (ii) make recommendations to Cabinet regarding the Draft Electric Vehicle Strategy.

Next steps:

The comments received during the public consultation and feedback from the Select Committee will be reviewed and used to develop a final version of the Electric Vehicle Strategy to be submitted to the Surrey County Council Cabinet in October 2018.

Following formal approval, the Electric Vehicle Strategy will be adopted as part of the Surrey Transport Plan.

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Sources/background papers:

Annex A: Electric Vehicle Strategy (Draft for public consultation – June 2018)

Annex B: Electric Vehicle public consultation summary

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