

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT

DATE: 15 SEPTEMBER 2020



LEAD OFFICER: KATIE STEWART EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE

SUBJECT: SPELTHORNE ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINT TRIALS

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

This report provides an overview to the Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Point Trials, setting out the programme of delivery of on-street charge points within this financial year and seeks the approval for Spelthorne Joint Committee to advertise the change in Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) required to deliver the electric vehicle charging infrastructure in 20 parking bays in Spelthorne Borough. The trial is part of a wider initiative to install charging infrastructure in Waverley, Guildford and Woking Boroughs, along with Spelthorne.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

1. The Cabinet Member notes the proposed sites and locations of EV charging bays in Annex 1 to undertake the Electric Vehicle Charging Point trials funded by the Enterprise M3 (EM3) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in the Borough of Spelthorne.
2. The advertisement of all necessary TROs across the selected sites in the Borough of Spelthorne, is authorised as and when required, in order to allow the bays to be introduced and agree that if no objections are maintained, the orders are made.
3. Agree that if there are unresolved objections, they will be dealt with in accordance with the County Council's scheme of delegation by the parking strategy and implementation team manager, in consultation with the chairman/vice chairman of the Spelthorne Joint Committee and the appropriate Divisional County Councillor, with the addition also of the project sponsor.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Due to the cancellation of previous Spelthorne Joint Committee due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Cabinet Member is asked to agree the recommendations and

proposed sites to enable the progression of the Electric Vehicle Charging Point Trials as set out in the approved and funded EM3 LEP Business case.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

1. Following the consultation and the subsequent adoption of Surrey's Electric Vehicle Strategy policy in 2018 which forms part of Surrey's Transport Plan, a number of issues have been identified concerning on-street EV charging including the perceived lack of commitment from the County Council to invest in the infrastructure that would help residents in the transition to EVs. There was recognition that provision should be targeted in areas where air quality is a concern i.e. Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), town centre locations, and that there was a need for standardisation to ensure a consistent user experience throughout Surrey.
2. As the demand for EVs increases, the pressure to provide the right type of infrastructure in particular locations will also increase. There are a number of issues that need to be considered before SCC introduces a county wide roll out (to be done by SCC or a private company) e.g. parking, availability of space on the public highway, sustainable business model, capital and revenue funds required to deliver and operate this type of technology on the highway network.
3. The trial, funded by EM3 LEP with local contributions provided by Spelthorne Borough Council and the other three boroughs included within the trials, aims to support the Council in upholding their commitments to improving air quality and addressing the climate change emergency; both of which require urgent action. The trial's objectives are aligned with the ambitions set out in the government's 'Road to Zero' strategy published in 2018.
4. The prioritised sites within the Borough of Spelthorne have been selected based on a strict site feasibility criteria in partnership with our charge point supplier, SCC and Spelthorne Borough officers.
5. Two (2) twin 22kW fast charging units will be installed at each site, giving capacity for four (4) EVs to charge simultaneously. Before the end of the trial (November 2021), there will be a total of 20 parking bays served by the EV charge points provided in Spelthorne. An additional 60 charge points will be provided in the other three participating boroughs.

ANALYSIS:

6. The approach to site selection has been to encourage the take up of Electric Vehicles to contribute to air quality objectives. Furthermore, it is hoped that the provision of this infrastructure will stimulate economic activity by providing charging points close to shops and businesses whilst giving residents without off-street parking access to electric vehicle charging near their homes.

7. There have been some concerns, in early consultation with Spelthorne Borough Council, of what reaction enforcing 'EV only' parking restrictions may elicit from local residents and businesses in locations where parking demand is higher than current capacity.
8. On the other hand, if bays which are serviced with EV charging points do not have the appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) in place to restrict usage to EV only drivers and limit parking time to match the time it takes to charge an EV battery, drivers may be confused about it, and for how long they can park in EV bays which would then result in the charging infrastructure being underutilised.
9. As such, it is crucial to have EV only TROs in place in these selected locations before the infrastructure goes live to ensure 'good' charging and parking behaviour is enforced from the start of the trials. It is also to ensure that the County Council can instil confidence in both current and potential EV users that charging infrastructure will be available when needed.
10. In locations where there will be two (2) EVCP units serving four (4) parking bays, EV users are likely to feel assured that there will always be at least 1 functional charging unit even if the other is out of service for some reason.

OPTIONS:

11. If the decision to advertise the necessary TROs is not approved by the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Spelthorne Joint committee, there is a risk that the charging infrastructure will not realise their full potential to contribute to air quality and overall climate change objectives which is crucial for both the County Council and Spelthorne Borough Council.

CONSULTATION:

12. The site selection process has included collaborative working between county and Borough officers from parking, highway and sustainability teams.
13. Discussions with the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) have also played a big role in the final identification of the sites to avoid any expensive diversion works.
14. The TRO advertisement process will allow members of the public to comment on the proposed locations of the EV charging bay sites that have been prioritised.
15. Additional sites beyond the 5 required for this trial have been selected for consultation to ensure a greater likelihood of 5 sites being suitable for the trial.
16. Any additional sites beyond the five required for phase 1, will be considered for phase 2.

17. Continued adherence to the updated guidance on advertising TROs in light of the current circumstance of COVID-19 and will do so accordingly.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

18. If the proposed sites referenced in Annex 1 are not approved by the Cabinet Member, we risk delay in the TRO consultation process. As the next Local Joint Committee is not until November 2020. This will cause a delay to any installation of the chargers prior to the end of the financial year and delay the trial period.
19. The EM3 LEP funding agreement includes the requirement for the installation of the EV charging bays by the end of March 2020.

Financial and value for money implications:

20. All funding for the Electric Vehicle Charging Point trials including the TRO advertisements was confirmed in November 2019 with majority of the funds provided by the EM3 LEP. Local contributions were provided by Spelthorne Borough Council and the other three trial boroughs.
21. The County Council have not provided any financial contribution, other than officer time to the EV Charging trials. The costs of the TRO advertisement, installation and monitoring are covered by the EM3 LEP funding contribution.
22. On-street parking charges will remain unchanged in the updated TROs, thus ensuring the protection of this revenue stream.

SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTARY:

23. Although significant progress has been made over the last twelve months to improve the Council's financial position, the medium term financial outlook is uncertain. The public health crisis has resulted in increased costs which are not fully funded in the current year. With uncertainty about the ongoing impact of this and no clarity on the extent to which both central and local funding sources might be affected from next year onward, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term.
24. The recommendations in this report will allow the electric vehicle charge point trials to proceed, utilising funding provided by the Enterprise M3 LEP and the Borough council. As such the Section 151 Officer supports the proposed approach.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – MONITORING OFFICER:

25. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 sets out the legal basis for making Traffic Regulation Orders. Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 requires the County Council to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic (including pedestrians). In carrying out this exercise the County Council as Traffic Authority must have regard to the:

- a) Desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises.
- b) The effect on the amenities of any locality effected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the road(s) run.
- c) The strategy prepared under Section 80 of the Environment Act 1995 (the national air quality strategy).
- d) The importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles.
- e) Any other matters appearing to the local authority to be relevant.

26. Pursuant to the Local Authorities Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 the County Council has consulted local community groups and the Police together with other organisations listed where appropriate such as the other emergency services and transport operators. The County Council will now advertise all draft Order it intends to make to allow a period for representations of support or objection to be submitted. After this consultation the County Council has to consider any representations received and having done so, to either:

- a) Resolve to make an Order in the form originally intended and advertised.
- b) Modify the Order from advertised, provided it is not more restrictive.
- c) Abandon the proposal altogether.
- d) More restrictive modifications to the proposed Order would need to be advertised again to provide further opportunity for comments.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY:

The following accessibility considerations have been factored into our pilot plan:

27. The EV charging points must leave at least 1.5m of footpath width, where they are installed on the footway. Where this is not possible, an extension of the footway in a form of a 'buildout' will be constructed to allow for the installation of the charging points. This is designed to leave sufficient width of footway for wheelchair access and avoid unnecessary obstacles for those with vision or mobility impairments.

28. Each EV charging site will consist of up to four (4) dedicated EV parking bays. This will ensure that where possible, one (1) parking bay at each new charging site will be sufficient length for blue badge holders (6.6m opposed to 5.7m standard spacing). These 'easy access' bays will not be reserved for blue badge holders for the duration of the 2 year pilot as the aim of the trial is to facilitate EV uptake in the borough (which is currently very low) and it is expected that an EV only and blue badge holder only charging site is not going to encourage optimum use of the infrastructure.
29. It is the intention however, that once the level of EV use has reached a significant level in comparison to the Internal Combustion Engines (ICE), the TRO will be updated to enforce blue badge only parking to prioritise those with mobility impairment.

Environmental Sustainability:

30. Increased uptake of electric vehicles where it replaces combustion engine forms of transport such as petrol and diesel cars, will improve air quality and reduce carbon emission levels, which is a key objective of the Surrey Local Transport Plan (LTP) and addresses the declaration of climate emergency. Transport is responsible for one third of carbon emission in Surrey. SCC's LTP has a target to reduce carbon emissions from (non-motorway) transport by 10% (absolute emissions) by 2020, increasing to 25% reduction by 2035 from 2007 baseline of 2,114k tonnes.

Public Health:

31. The improvements in air quality resulting from the reduced NOx emissions and reduced particulate matter will mitigate any negative health implications leading to respiratory diseases which poor air quality is proven to cause.

What next:

The project team will arrange for the necessary TROs to be advertised in the identified locations.

Results of the TRO consultation will be shared with the Spelthorne Local Committee in November 2020.

Following the TRO approval, the charging infrastructure will be installed in the new year (January – March 2021).

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

SCC Parking, Local Highways. Legal, Property
SBC Sustainability, Environmental Health

Annexes:

Annex A – Spelthorne EV Site locations

Sources/background papers:

Surrey County Council EV Strategy, 2018

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