

Report title	Electric Vehicle Strategy
Report author	Judith Orr
Department	Planning Policy
Exempt?	No
Exemption type	Not applicable.
Reasons for exemption	Not applicable.

Purpose of report:
To recommend to Full Council

Synopsis of report:

The Electric Vehicle Strategy sets out how Runnymede Borough Council will explore opportunities to increase the network of publicly available electric vehicle charge points across Runnymede on both Council owned land and in other locations..

It is important to recognise that it is not the intention of this Strategy to increase the number of vehicles on our roads. The aim is to support a far higher proportion of vehicles using highways across the borough which produce less harmful emissions than those vehicles powered by petrol and diesel fuels. This EV Strategy therefore also looks at encouraging the use of e-bikes as well as electric vehicles.

This report seeks Committee endorsement of the proposed Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy for Runnymede Borough Council together with a recommendation to Full Council that the Strategy be adopted.

Recommendation(s):

- 1. The Electric Vehicle Strategy for Runnymede Borough Council, as attached at Appendix A, be endorsed by Corporate Management Committee;**
- 2. The Committee recommends that the Strategy be adopted by Full Council at the meeting on the 7th December 2023, with an implementation date of 14th December 2023.**

1. Context and background of report

1.1 An Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) Strategy for Runnymede Borough Council was produced and endorsed by the Environment and Sustainability Committee on 8th July 2020 and Full Council on 16th July 2020 (subject to certain amendments being made). The intention was that the ULEV Strategy would be regularly reviewed and brought back to the Environment and Sustainability Committee every 6 months. However, it has come to the attention of officers that unfortunately, this has not

happened, and the strategy was never published, mainly due to changes in personnel at the authority. Officers have therefore taken the opportunity, in light of the additional work now being carried out in various service areas on EV and supporting infrastructure, to carry out a wholesale update of the strategy. Officers have also incorporated the Member requests for amendments to the strategy that were sought in 2020.

2. Report and, where applicable, options considered and recommended

- 2.1 The main purpose of the EV Strategy is to start to develop a coordinated borough wide approach to encourage the transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles as part of a sustainable transport system. The development of the Electric Vehicle Strategy (see Appendix A) forms one part of the Council's response to Climate Change.
- 2.2 The Strategy has the following aims:
- To increase provision of publicly available electric vehicle charging infrastructure and ensure that they are available across Runnymede to help to incentivise the use of electric/hybrid vehicles over internal combustion engine powered equivalents.
 - To help to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality in Runnymede.
 - To integrate RBC charging infrastructure with other EV charging initiatives being undertaken locally. This includes integration with the charging points provided by other public authorities such as Surrey County Council, as well as private initiatives to avoid duplication.
 - To lead by example by ensuring the Council's own activities use cleaner EV technology at the earliest opportunity, where it is practical and offers the taxpayer good value for money.
- 2.3 The EV Strategy provides background information relating to Electric Vehicle uptake and the availability of charge points nationally and in the borough. It contains an overview of the national and local policy context, sets out why it is important for RBC to get involved in this agenda and sets the overall direction for the Strategy.
- 2.4 The Strategy incorporates an Action Plan containing seven key action points to help ensure that the aims of the document are delivered. These are set out below:
- Action One: Explore opportunities to increase the network of publicly available electric vehicle charge points across Runnymede on both Council owned land and other public sector land. This includes both on and off-street chargers.
 - Action Two: To explore opportunities to implement electric vehicle technology within RBC for the fleet and employees.
 - Action Three: Bid into relevant third-party funding opportunities to move towards delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
 - Action Four: Condition private developers and landowners to provide EV charge points and supporting infrastructure (such as power supply) on future development sites.
 - Action Five: Investigate opportunities with partners, in the private sector, to provide additional charge points.

- Action Six: To look at opportunities to incentivise and promote the use of e bikes within the borough.
- Action Seven: Raise awareness of the location of charging points in the Borough as well as the benefits of EV ownership, such as reduced environmental impacts and improved air quality.

2.5 It is important that the Council can adapt to changes and ensure a flexible approach to the delivery of the Strategy. The Strategy will therefore be reviewed annually. It is considered that allowing these regular reviews will ensure that the Council's approach is adaptable to changes in technology such as improvements in artificial intelligence or hydrogen fuelled vehicle technology, and ensure that trends in mobility, changes to Government and sub-regional policy and financial considerations can also be taken into consideration. These reviews are likely to involve officers recommending amendments via tracked changes, and then discussing the proposed amendments with the Climate Change Working Party, before formally taking the amended Strategy through the Committee process for agreement.

2.6 Whilst the Strategy has been produced centrally by the Planning Policy Team, Heads of Service and other key officers who will be involved in the delivery of the action plan have been consulted throughout the production of the document. In addition, discussions were held with officers from across the Council at three Climate Change Officers' Working Group meetings during the development of the Strategy.

3. Policy framework implications

3.1 Taking Charge (published in March 2022) is the Government's electric vehicle infrastructure strategy. It sets out the Government's vision and action plan for the roll out of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the UK and comes with an ambition to see 300,000 (as a minimum) publicly available charge points across the UK by 2030. It sets out that local authorities have a key role to play in meeting this target.

3.2 Surrey County Council (SCC) has developed a county-wide electric vehicle strategy¹ and the RBC EV Strategy looks to integrate, as far as practically possible, with county-wide proposals.

3.3 The Runnymede Corporate Business Plan 2022-2026 sets out how the Council will play a key role in creating a greener environment and ensuring an effective response to climate change. The Climate Change Strategy 2022-2030 describes how the Council will approach this, and sets out Runnymede's 2030 climate vision i.e., how the Council intends that all its operations will be carbon 'net zero' by 2030, in line with the national target. It describes how the Council will approach this and sets out within it actions for reviewing the Council owned car parks to establish the potential to install EV charging point facilities to encourage the modal shift to Electric Vehicles and reduce carbon emissions.

4 Resource implications/Value for Money

4.1 Members will be aware of the Councils need to make savings and efficiencies to bridge the forecast £5.2m budget gap by 2025/26 as reported to Full Council in February 2023. The approved budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) currently have no budgetary provision for climate change or other such initiatives so any resources (financial or other) to achieve the actions as set out in the EV strategy will need to come from repurposing current budgets or seeking external funding.

¹ [Surrey Transport Plan Electric Vehicle Strategy Nov 2018](#)

- 4.2 The implementation of the Electric Vehicle Strategy will have resource implications for the Council. However, at this stage it is difficult to identify specific costs and resources to implement individual elements of the strategy. For example, there are several options open to RBC to support the delivery of Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure, including public and private funding schemes. It is envisaged that the costs of putting together bids for external funding and wider communications work will be met from within current staff resources and budgets, with any subsequent individual infrastructure projects being subject to detailed business cases for consideration at the relevant committees as required.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 The UK's Climate Change Act 2008 sets a legally binding UK-wide carbon budget and commits the UK to 'net zero emissions' by 2050. The UK has also signed and ratified the United Nations Paris Agreement – a legally binding international treaty - which commits signatories to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees centigrade.
- 5.2 The Government has introduced or is proposing to introduce policy across various sectors aimed at achieving the carbon emissions target. One such policy being the introduction of a ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles from 2035 (delayed from 2030).

6. Equality implications

- 6.1 The Council has a Public Sector Duty under the Equality Act 2010 (as amended) to have due regard to the need to:
- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a Protected Characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share those characteristics;
- in relation to the 9 'Protected Characteristics' stated within the Act.
- 6.2 An EqIA screening has been carried out in support of this Strategy and this concluded that implementing the Electric Vehicle Strategy requires thought to be given at the outset, prior to the installation of new charge points, to people with accessibility needs. PAS 1899:2022 is a new standard giving designers, procurers and installers essential specifications on how to provide accessible public charge points for electric vehicles. It covers the physical aspects of the environment surrounding fixed charge points (e.g. kerb height, ground type); the location, placement and spacing of charge points within the streetscape/public realm; the information, signals and indicators to be provided to users; and the factors to be taken into account in the design and specification of accessible charge points (e.g. height of charge point, cables and cable management systems, bollard spacing, colours used on screens, weight and force and ease of use of the equipment).
- 6.3 Continued monitoring of the EV Strategy will take place, after it is adopted, which may reveal additional positive or negative impacts that exist and will assist officers in recommending measures that seek to mitigate any negative impacts on any of the protected characteristics.

7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

7.1 There are several positive environmental/ sustainability/ biodiversity implications expected to arise from the implementation of this Strategy including:

- EVs release zero tailpipe emissions at street level improving air quality in urban areas;
- Emissions from electricity generation are usually displaced away from street level where they have highest human health impacts;
- EVs can be powered by electricity produced from sustainable energy sources;
- The lifetime carbon footprint of manufacturing, running and disposing of an electric vehicle is lower than for a conventional fossil fuel vehicle.
- Electric vehicles are very quiet compared to petrol and diesel vehicles. This has benefits for residents living alongside busy roads and benefits for the natural environment with reduced vehicle borne noise pollution.

8. Timetable for Implementation

8.1 It is intended that should the EV Strategy be endorsed at this Committee that it will then be considered for adoption by Full Council at the meeting on the 7th December 2023, with an implementation date of 14th December 2023.

9. Conclusions

9.1 The Council needs to drive forward action on climate change to ensure local and national net zero targets are achieved in the borough. This EV Strategy is one means of helping to achieve this, with the Council playing a key role in ensuring an effective response to climate change.

10. Background papers

10.1 None.

11. Appendices

- Appendix A - Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy for Runnymede Borough Council