CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY PANEL – ADVISORY MEETING
20 SEPTEMBER 2021
6.00 - 8.32 PM

Present:
Councillors Virgo, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle, Mrs Hayes MBE, Mrs Ingham, Kennedy, Leake, Mossom, Parker, Temperton and Tullett

Also Present:
Councillors Bettison OBE, Brunel-Walker, Gbadebo, Harrison and Turrell.

11. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

12. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Climate Change Advisory Panel held on 9 June 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

Alternative wording for the Terms of Reference from Councillor Leake would be sent to Kevin Gibbs, Executive Director: Delivery, outside of the meeting for consideration.

13. **Urgent Items of Business**

There were no urgent items of business.

14. **Chairman's Introduction**

Councillor Virgo introduced the Climate Change Advisory Panel and explained that this Advisory Panel meeting would be looking at EV Charging.

15. **Bracknell Forest Council's Plans for EV chargers**

Neil Matthews, Head of Highways & Transport presented an update on Bracknell Forest Council's plans for Electric Vehicles and EV chargers.

The presentation covered the following highlights:

- The Government had recently released a decarbonising transport document. Which highlighted that transport currently produced 27% of the UKs greenhouse emissions.
- The decarbonising transport projection was already on a downwards trajectory due to the regulation of emissions.
- There was an assumption within the projection that the electricity grid is fully decarbonized which currently wasn't the case and that fewer journeys would be made in smaller vehicles and that a number of journeys would be made by cycling or walking.

- There were three steps to the government's targets, the first being the halt on selling new cars and vans that were wholly powered by petrol and diesel by 2030.
- Hybrid vehicles would still be able to be purchased between 2030 and 2035.
- By 2035 all new cars, powered two wheelers and vans would be fully zero emission at the tail point.
- 2040 would likely see the end of non zero emission HGVs.
- However, it was noted that the technology for these solutions was not yet in place for all the various vehicles. Some were subject to consultation with manufacturers to see if these changes were achievable within the governments set time frame.
- There were 38 million vehicles on the road in 2020, this was projected to increase to 45 million in 2050.
- There were only 400,000 low emission vehicles on the road in 2020, which was 1% and tallied with records in Bracknell Forest.
- The regulation of use of non low emission vehicles was currently unknown.
- It was expected that from 2025 onward the costs would be comparable for EV.
- Battery technology was important, with performance increasing annually.
- Viability of commercial and public charge points was important.
- Incentives will be a factor to encourage people to make the switch early.
- Installation costs for charge points varied, and that depended on the charge speed and whether a power upgrade was required.
- It was expected that the Council would have to be a facilitator and coordinator of charging points, rather than a provider. Its current role was ss a contributor to the 'Overall Charging Solution'.
- The Councils current role was to help to provide public chargepoints in places and facilities we own, encourage and facilitate private investment by commercial EV chargepoint providers, forecourt owners, energy providers and co-ordinate with distribution network operators.
- Each new charge point was currently a business case in its own right.
- Estimating demand was currently difficult, with no regional figures currently being released. The Council was currently in the hands of the chargepoint providers, with them providing this information.
- Competition from chargepoint providers was also a factor, so the longevity of the charge point was also a factor.
- Technology was changing fast, with what was currently state of the art technology, may not be next year.
- There were currently some financial grants provided by the government to residents, companies and the council for chargepoint installations.
- The Council had to bid for this funding. There was a £20m national fund across the country.
- Going forward there would be a £90m national fund in 2022 aimed at providing rapid charging hubs.
- An EV infrastructure strategy would be forth coming, which would help define roles for the public and private sectors.
- The Council had been successful in getting funding for a further 32 charge points, in addition to the 20 already in BFC car parks and the 20 private points across the borough.
- There was currently 9 charge points to an EV in the borough, the national average was 17 to each EV, but it was important to not be complacent.
- The Council was working with other Berkshire authorities on shared challenges / opportunities and preparing evidence base for increased investment by commercial EV charging providers in the Berkshire region.

- There was an 'EV ‘Summary and Guide’ published on BFC public webpage and an expansive webpage was planned to inform, guide and signpost on EV themes.
- Awareness exercises were planned to promote early planning for EV transition.

In response to discussion and questions, the following points were noted:

- It was essential that information was shared with counterparts and support could be provided to Town and Parish Councils.
- It was difficult to establish a fixed model for chargepoints as each was currently an individual business case.
- For lots of practical and financial reasons, it was expected that street level parking would come later down the line, therefore it was important that the three settings, home, on route and destination were covered.
- When chargepoints are installed at street level, working with the land owner, such as Silva Homes would be important.
- Lots of factors were at play in different regions such as bigger Towns and City, there had been some projects that had accelerated projects in these areas.
- Bracknell were faring well in relation to other areas, but it was important to not be complacent.
- The installation costs for different speeds varied, depending on the supply that you may have in your area. The costs could be very high if you lived in a remote location and needed to improve the supply.
- The plan for the 32 new chargepoint would be an introduction in many in the local community carparks, as community hubs for people to have access to, rather than just the town centre car park.
- EV range would depend on other factors such as the journey type, whether it was stop start, if you were on the motorway or had the heating or aircon on.
- Procurement was required for the new chargepoints, to ensure best value for money and it was a very competitive market. The Government expected a 12 month turn around, but it was hoped after procurement it would be a shorter time period.
- Discussions around taxis were currently being held internally with the licensing team regarding their strategy going forward.
- It was expected that the Government strategy would be coming in 2022. A public roadmap had already been provided by the government.
- A national perspective and fund was required to push forward.
- Bracknell Forest had a strategy within the framework that had been provided by government. It would be clearer what the Councils role was once the governments strategy had been published.
- The Council couldn’t compete with the private companies with providing charging solution or roll out large charging stations.
- The Councils role was enablement and the LEP was currently undertaking similar work.
- If lamp column charging was to be used, then the whole column would need to be replaced in order to facilitate this.

16. **Southern and Scottish Energy (SSE) - EV chargers**

The Advisory Panel were joined by Bryan Puszkar, Southern and Scottish Energy – Customer Relationship Manager in the Thames Valley, who provided the group with an overview on Distribution Future Energy Scenarios.

The presentation looked at two main areas:

- Introduction to Distribution Future Energy Scenarios.
- Local impact of the transition to Net Zero

The overview included the following highlights:

- SSE were the Distribution Network Operator, which meant that they owned the electricity network in the area.
- Electricity was delivered to over 3.8 million homes in the central belt of Scotland and central Southern England.
- A lot of work was currently being undertaken on the Future Energy Scenarios, to outline 4 pathways for the future of energy to 2050.
- 3 of the 4 pathways reached net zero in the UK by 2050 or sooner, but with different technologies and trajectories.
- The Distribution Future Energy Scenarios supported the national grids modelling. This was adjusted as required. This was very evidence based and included stakeholder engagement with local communities, customers and developers.
- EVs were a very hot topic, but another hot topic was the was the electrisation of heat, with the movement away from gas central heating.
- Installing new cables would be costly, looking at local and new sources of producing electricity were key.
- The Distribution Future Energy Scenarios modelling was a 4-stage approach.
- It was important to understand the uptake across the region, which enabled SEE to provide modelling for the network and to be able to forward plan across the regions.
- Modelling for Spelthorne was share with the group regarding heat pup uptake projections and EV uptake projections.

As a result of the Advisory Panel's comments and questions, the following points were made:

- It was important to understand from the Council what type of infrastructure is needed to be put in. This is where collaboration on a national level is required.
- Reliability of the network was a slightly different issue, and lots of work was undertaken in a number of areas to ensure that the capacity and reliability was in place.
- Some suppliers were giving offers to charge your cars over nights at a cheaper rate when there was not as much capacity on the grid.
- If additional capacity is being put on to the grid, it was important that this was being done in a green way.
- National grid transmitted electricity around the country, and SSE distributed at a local level.
- Going forward the grid needed to be much smarter.
- The network needed to understand what was required at a local level with the new need and demand moving forward.
- SSE didn't deal with billing the customers. Approx. 17% of a householders bill came to SEE. The supplier didn't deal with the distribution of electricity.
- SSE looked after the maintenance of the electricity.
- SSE had a 5 year price control, a plan for the price control was put forward to the regulator to agree which covered everything that was needed to be done to the network.
- There were areas of the network that were more constrained than others.

- SEE wanted to facilitate the move to EV but it was important to understand where the uptake was going to be. So, it was important to the investment was being made in the right place.
- It was requested that a map of the information be provide, or an information session with the data be provided from SSE with the transport team.

17. **Housing Developer Representative - EV Chargers**

The Advisory Panel were joined by Rebecca Fenn – Tripp, Planning Director and Barry Groves from Bloor Homes Southern who gave a developer perceptive on using and installing EV charging points. As well as providing an insight into the challenges that the developer also faced.

The presentation covered the following highlights:

- Bloor Homes were a national housebuilder who covered 8 regions and delivered 4000 homes each year.
- The southern region was quite vast, which meant working with a large of number of Local Authorities and interpreting a number of different policies and requirements for EV installation and provision.
- Reputation and relationship with the communities was central to Bloor's ethos.
- It was important to note that it was the local planning policies which set the framework in which the developer operated.
- The current obligation was that some LPAs were securing the provision of EV point on development through planning policy or conditions.
- The NPPF section 9, points 107 and 112 identified that if setting local parking standards for developments then policies should take into account the need to ensure adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra low emission vehicles and be designed to enable the charging of these vehicles in as safe, accessible and convenient location.
- Future obligation for developers was that the government had proposed to make all new developments EV ready, this was expected in future regulations which were due to be released in December 2021, however it was expected that this could be pushed back.
- Bloor Homes currently designed all their houses to be able to provide a suitable electrical circuit to serve a 7.4w charger for on plot charging.
- The provision of a fully installed EV charger was a customer extra, with 507 customers (12.4%) taking up this option in the 2020/21 financial year.
- An off plot (plugging across a drive) provision could be a safety risk if not considered correctly.
- EV points were not under dwelling ownership, therefore there were challenges to who adopted and maintained the provision. A management company was thought to be the best solution for this.
- If the capacity was not available in an existing development, then this could provide issues.
- Providers are being asked to serve new developments with suitable provision for EV chargers.
- In order to reach net zero, all new dwellings from 2025 will be constructed without gas boilers which will put further strain on the electrical infrastructure.

As a result of the Advisory Panel's comments and questions, the following points were made:

- On of the Members had recently has a quote to have an EV charge placed at the point of development from another developer which was £1500, a quote from the supplier excluding the grant had been considerably cheaper.
- Developers had a responsibility to include easy EV options.
- Bloor currently installed a suitable cable to a face plate on the external side of the building so should a resident wish to connect themselves, they can.
- The 12.4% who had taken the EV installation option, had been installed by Bloor not a supplier and was in place ready to go, without cables being places across driveways.
- The regulators require that the meters have to be easily reached and shouldn't be more that halfway to the back of the dwelling. Regulators would not allow the meter to be at the rear of a house. If parking was away from the front of the house, a cable could be run from the meter to the parking area underground and a small box fitted. This could be installed at the point of the house being built.
- Flat provision would be run off a landlord supplier, an EV charging point could be run off the supplier that way and would be maintained and managed by whomever manged the flats.
- Developers were still waiting for the updated building regulations be released which would set out how much of a provision was required, this was still an unknown.
- Most garages were built with a power supplier which allowed for future proofing.
- Clarity was also important for the developer, and they were working within the framework that they had.

18. **Visit to BIOGEN Anaerobic Digester facility in Dummer Hampshire.**

The Chairman had submitted a report regarding the Visit to BIOGEN Anaerobic Digester facility in Dummer Hampshire.

Councillor Mrs Hayes proposed a visit to the Grundon's Colnbrook Site be held in November.

19. **Chairman's Conclusion**

The Chairman thanked all those who attended and gave such insightful presentations and stated that Electric Vehicles and charging points was such an important issue for residents and praised the Council for being ahead of the curve.

The Chairman proposed that the subject be brough back to the Advisory Panel in six months' time to review and to see what progress had been made.

20. **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the Advisory Panel was 3 November 2021.

CHAIRMAN