

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

meeting date: 9 JANUARY 2024
title: CAR PARKING UPDATE
submitted by: ADAM ALLEN - DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Committee on current car parking arrangements and proposals for Electric Vehicle (EV) charging.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities
- Community Objectives - To help make people's lives healthier with a cleaner environment.
 - Corporate Priorities - To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley.
 - Other Considerations – To contribute to the Council's Climate Change Strategy and, in particular, the reduction of carbon emissions.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Discussions have taken place at previous committees regarding car parking arrangements. In particular issues with pay and display machines in rural areas and how parking charges for those using EV chargers will work. It was agreed that an update be provided to committee.
- 2.2 Currently Pay and Display machines work in all car parks when using cash. The machines can store up to 1000 cash transactions. The machine then downloads information over the mobile network through the use of a SIM card. In areas of poor connectivity such as Dunsop Bridge it is necessary to manually take part of the machine to an area of better connectivity to download data. If this is not carried out, the machine refuses to take any additional payments. Procedures are now place to ensure the machine takes cash transactions continually. Unfortunately debit card transactions require a constant mobile signal and can not be used at Dunsop Bridge. Slaidburn also has poor connectivity, however the machine does get connectivity at points during the day and therefore can take both debit card and cash transactions effectively.
- 2.3 We continue to look for solutions to the Dunsop Bridge connectivity issue and a number of options are being explored to improve connectivity (mobile and internet).
- 2.4 Electric vehicles are now integral to the Government's policies for climate change and transport. This was highlighted recently by the Industrial Strategy white paper which

identified clean growth and mobility as two of the four 'Great Challenges' facing the UK economy.

- 2.5 In addition, the Government has also announced all new cars should be zero emission by 2035 with the sale of new diesel and petrol cars to be banned from 2035.
- 2.6 The current level of provision of EV charging in the area is still quite poor, particularly in the rural areas. There are 14 independent charging points on Ribble Valley Borough Council car parks; 4 at the Railway View Car Park and 10 at Chester Avenue Car Park. Lancashire County Council have commissioned and installed 3 on street chargers in Whalley and 3 in Clitheroe. There are currently no charging provisions on rural car parks and there is no on-street charging available in these locations.
- 2.7 In the Ribble Valley Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2019-2023 the Council has given an undertaking to introduce electrical charging points on council-owned car parks.
- 2.8 £50,000 of the UK Prosperity Funding has been allocated for the installation of EV charging at rural car parks. This capital scheme falls under the Policy and Finance Committee together with all other UKSPF schemes.
- 2.9 A survey (RVBC Electric Vehicle Charge Point Feasibility Report 2023) of all the rural car parks has been undertaken and 4 car parks have been identified as the most suitable for the installation of EV charging facilities based on the existing, available, local power supplies and communication (mobile and broadband) reception, both of which are prerequisites for EV charging. The car parks are:
- Slaidburn
 - Sabden
 - Ribchester
 - Chipping

Dunsop Bridge would not currently be suitable due to poor mobile connectivity, however discussions are ongoing with suppliers to find a solution.

- 2.10 The survey highlighted that at each of these locations there is sufficient power available to charge at a rate of 7kw/h. This charge rate, over 2 hours, will give an additional 50 miles capacity. An overnight 8-hour charge should result in a fully charged EV.
- 2.11 Officers have concluded that the most appropriate method to tender the EV charging provision will be by using the ESPO Framework for Suppliers. ESPO is a public sector owned professional buying organisation (PBO), specialising in providing a wide range of goods and services to the public sector.
- 2.12 It is expected that the provision of EV charging at the four locations will be procured through the ESPO Framework early January 2024 with an expectation that the facilities will be ready to use by Spring 2024.

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 The 4 rural car parks have been selected based on local availability of sufficient power and communications.

- 3.2 £50,000 of UKSPF funding has been allocated to EV charging facilities on rural car parks. Whilst it is difficult to provide an accurate estimate of costs, as each site is unique with topography, geology and existing underground services, it is expected that this sum of money will suffice for the provision at the 4 car parks.
- 3.3 The current car parking order does not make separate provision for EV charging spaces. The Council has made a strong commitment to Climate Change and wishes to promote the use of electric vehicles where possible. When electric vehicles were introduced, many Councils provided free charging and also free parking to promote the adoption of electric vehicles. Now that electric vehicles are more widespread and in general use, it is not proposed that the actual charging of vehicles be subsidised, but costs will be minimised as we are purchasing the charging points. With regards to car park charging, it is considered that providing cost effective charging is a benefit to users and that further subsidy of the car parking charge is not necessary. Enforcing a variation in car parking fees for EV's will also prove problematic in that they would have to actually be charging their vehicles for a subsidy to apply. This could cause confusion and tickets being issued for a genuine misunderstanding of the rules. If Members decide to offer free parking for EV bays, this would require a change to the existing parking orders.

RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – The use of electric vehicles eliminates carbon emissions leading to a cleaner environment and healthier lives.
- Financial Implications – £50,000 of UKSPF funding has been allocated for the provision of EV charging at the 4 rural car parks. No monies from RVBC budgets will be used. This capital scheme falls under the Policy and Finance Committee together with all other UKSPF schemes.
- Political – None.
- Reputation – Council enhances its reputation as a Council promoting the environment and healthy living.
- Equality and Diversity – None as a direct result of this report.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Note the contents of this report and agree that standard car parking charges will apply to EV charging bays.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS
None

For further information please ask for Winston Robinson, on extension 4523

REF: WR/COMMUNITY SERVICES/9th January 2024