

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY PANEL**

A meeting of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel was held on Wednesday 6 October 2021.

**PRESENT:** Councillors R Arundale (Vice-Chair), D Branson, D Coupe, T Furness, B Hubbard, T Mawston, M Saunders and M Storey

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** T Bryant and S Brown, Tees Valley Combined Authority

**OFFICERS:** S Lightwing, S Blood, G Field, R Horniman and C Orr

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Were submitted on behalf of Councillor S Walker

21/25 **WELCOME**

Councillor Arundale, Vice Chair, welcomed all present to the meeting. It was noted that the Chair had submitted his apologies for the meeting, and, with the agreement of the Panel, the Vice Chair undertook to pass on congratulations and good wishes to the Chair, on the birth of his daughter.

21/26 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

21/27 **MINUTES - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY PANEL - 8 SEPTEMBER 2021**

The minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 8 September 2021 were taken as read and approved as a correct record.

21/28 **MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL'S GREEN STRATEGY - ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT - TEES VALLEY COMBINED AUTHORITY**

The Head of Transport and the Transport Planning Officer from the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) were in attendance to present an overview of the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Project.

Early in 2021, extensive market engagement was undertaken to inform the procurement specification and process for the Project. The purpose of the market engagement exercise was to gain feedback on the scope of the project and detail within the specification documentation from prospective bidders.

An open procurement process was undertaken in March to appoint to a single supplier framework, which was awarded in June 2021. The framework was available for use by all public bodies across Tees Valley for the next five years, giving them the option to avoid carrying out a full procurement exercise if required.

Taking into account the feedback from the market engagement process a phased approach to Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) site construction had been adopted as follows:

- Phase 1 –Local Authority controlled sites – such as public car parks. This phase would be implemented over a two year period.
- Phase 2 –Other public sites - including Further Education, NHS, Network Rail, Highways England - subject to future funding / bidding opportunities. The development/feasibility work for this phase would run simultaneously with Phase 1.

The TVCA had worked closely with the five Tees Valley Councils to establish a list of

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prioritised sites for Phase 1 that were either owned by the local authorities or the TVCA and this was in the procurement specification.

The TVCA would use the £2 million allocated funding to pay for all costs including equipment, installation, maintenance and back office system. VCA would retain ownership of the infrastructure and the revenue generated by the network to pay for electricity costs. Any remaining revenue would be re-invested into the network.

A supplier had been procured to install, operate and maintain the EVCPs and operate the back office system.

Feasibility studies were being carried out for each site, which would be complete by the end of October. As part of these studies a cost for any required upgrade or new connection to the electricity supply would be determined with the Distribution Network Operator (Northern Powergrid), which could vary significantly.

Following the completion of feasibility works, TVCA and Local Authority approval would be required for each site individually before delivery, to ensure value for money. If a feasibility study for a particular site determined that the cost of installation was too expensive, the site might not be delivered.

Site development was scheduled to commence late 2021/early 2022, with Phase 1 of the Tees Valley EVCP network operational by Summer 2023.

It was highlighted that over 50% of the sites put forward for Phase 1 should support surrounding residential areas that did not have access to off street parking.

The EVCPs would be installed at no cost to the Council as the TVCA would fund installation and maintenance. Users could set up an online account, and pay with a mobile phone or debit card. TVCA would cover all the electricity costs and any revenue costs that were generated over and above the cost of running the EVCPs would be re-invested into the network. An energy provider had been procured to supply 100% renewable energy.

The EVCPs would be compatible with all electric vehicles with the exception of Tesla vehicles, which currently could only use their own charging points. The specification included in the procurement documentation was to ensure inter-operability as far as possible with all electric vehicles. As of July 2021, there were approximately 1500 electric vehicles owned by Tees Valley residents.

As part of the feasibility study on the location of the EVCPs, Middlesbrough Council was considering council car parks adjacent to residential properties. The car parks needed to be accessible 24/7 and it was suggested that the points should be installed in prominent areas, both to minimise the risk of vandalism and encourage electric vehicle ownership through their visibility.

The Chair thanked the officers from the TVCA for their presentation.

**AGREED** as follows that:

1. The information provided was received and noted.
2. Details of the Middlesbrough sites identified for Phase 1 would be circulated to Panel members.

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**MIDDLESBROUGH REGENERATION POST COVID-19 SCRUTINY REVIEW - DRAFT FINAL REPORT**

A copy of the Draft Final Report on Middlesbrough Regeneration Post Covid-19 had been circulated with the agenda.

Members provided recommendations for inclusion in the Final Report.

During discussion an issue was raised in relation to traffic congestion in Middlesbrough and the Vice Chair undertook to pursue this with the relevant service area on behalf of the Panel.

**AGREED that:**

1. the following recommendations were approved for inclusion in the report:
  - A) Whenever opportunities arise, and in line with the hierarchy of need identified in the Local Implementation Plan (LIP), the Council should seek to ensure that it is easier, safer and more convenient to walk, cycle or use public transport, rather than travelling by car by:
    - Providing additional cycle routes.
    - Implementing traffic free zones.
    - Working with public transport operators to increase local provision.
    - Reviewing existing road networks to identify particular instances of traffic congestion at peak times and address these through the LIP to encourage further economic growth.
  - B) Whilst it is acknowledged that there have been a number of impacts on the approval and publication of Middlesbrough's revised Housing Local Plan due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Scrutiny Panel asks the Executive to ensure that the revised Local Plan is adopted as soon as practicable and by no later than March 2022.
  - C) In line with the Middlesbrough Council's ambition for the town to be net carbon neutral by 2039, use the Middlehaven developments as an opportunity to explore, promote and encourage the use of green renewable energy both with Developers and as a selling point for potential investors.
  - D) Consideration should be given to extending the Urban Pioneers Scheme, or encouraging similar developments, to provide more live/work accommodation in Middlesbrough, given the shift to increased home working during the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - E) The Council should ensure that green spaces around the Middlehaven developments are regularly maintained and attractive to prospective new residents and businesses. One suggestion is that hard-standing surfaces or laybys are built into development masterplans rather having grassed verges. This could also save the Council expenditure on maintenance of and/or repair of more traditional grassed surfaces next to roadways.
  - F) The Council could consider collaborating with the local community to encourage ownership and maintenance of public spaces (if appropriate) in Middlehaven to promote pride in the area.
  - G) By working closely with Broadband Providers, the Council should seek to ensure that all areas of Middlesbrough can have access to superfast broadband by 2025 at the latest, and that residents and businesses are not disadvantaged by lack of provision given the increased reliance on digital technologies post-pandemic.
  - H) The Council should consider developing a multi-purpose venue in the town, which can accommodate entertainment. A venue which attracts the best entertainers in the world will encourage people from across the UK to visit the area, stay and spend, boosting the local economy. The Captain Cook Shopping Centre would be an ideal location for an eSports gaming venue as evidenced by the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel in a recent Final Report on Cultural Events.
2. the Report was approved by the Panel.
3. subject to final approval by the Chair of the Panel, the Report would be submitted to Overview and Scrutiny Board for consideration.

21/30 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 3 NOVEMBER 2021**

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel would take place at 10.30 am on Wednesday 3 November 2021.

21/31 **ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED**

None.