AGENDA ITEM 11
REPORT NO. ECI/20/20

The Highland Council

Committee: Economy and Infrastructure

Date: 2 September 2020

Report Title: Electric Vehicle Infrastructure – Update Report 2020

Report By: Executive Chief Officer - Infrastructure and Environment

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides a summary of the Council's Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure project and an update on the progress being made.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

i. note the contents of the report which provide a summary of the two primary strands of EV infrastructure work:
   - update on the delivery progress of the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure project;
   - the development of a Strategic Control Plan; a strategic piece of work comprising the approach towards future vision, internal structure and funding bids associated with electric vehicle infrastructure; and

ii. agree that a Member workshop (Green Recovery Vision Workshop - Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) is held to help inform the Strategic Control Plan.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource

3.1.1 Delivery of the EV infrastructure project: 2 FTE posts (EV Project Manager and Climate Change Coordinator (Electric Vehicles) utilised to support the delivery of the work are externally funded and based within the Climate Change team.

3.1.2 Strategic Control Plan (EV Infrastructure): The EV Project Manager and a Commercial and Efficiency Team (CET) Project Manager are assigned part-time on developing a strategic approach to assist programme delivery and secure

funding.

3.1.3 Delivery of the work has minimal cost implications for the Council in the short term and an options appraisal is underway to explore sustainable delivery models.

3.2 Legal
There are no legal implications arising from this report.

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)
The EV Infrastructure project by nature is supporting communities in the transition towards low carbon transport by providing electric vehicle charge points throughout the region (in particular it is helping to connect rural communities). Additionally, providing infrastructure will encourage EV uptake and enable the development of rural car clubs which can help to address fuel poverty. EVs have a far lower running cost than conventional internal combustion engine vehicles, and although purchase price can be a barrier, government grants and loans are available to assist with purchasing options. The Strategic Control Plan aims to attract and utilise grant funding effectively to ensure best value is achieved for Highland.

3.4 Climate Change/Carbon CLEVER
During a financially challenging period, the EV Infrastructure project and associated work offers a huge opportunity for The Highland Council (and the wider Highland region) to proactively reduce carbon emissions for fleet and private vehicles with fully funded low carbon transport projects.

3.5 Risk

3.5.1 Failing to deliver the programme may hinder future grant awards. Therefore, it is essential that the work continues to progress at pace if we are to tackle the climate emergency, maximise grant funding opportunities and support a low carbon transport transition for communities and visitors to the region in a sustainable way. Resources must remain committed, supported and utilised in an effective manner.

3.5.2 Failing to adequately prepare for future funding opportunities can detrimentally impact the Council's ability to attract investment and can cause significant damage to the Council's reputation. Therefore, it is imperative that the Strategic Control Plan is prioritised and carefully controlled to position the Council well. The development of this plan offers an opportunity to mitigate risk through focussing limited resource on the most positive interventions or opportunities. Support through the strong contact network established by the project team can be utilised alongside a pre-scrutinised 'project pipeline' allowing the Council to become more proactive rather than reactive towards opportunities, as and when they emerge.

3.6 Gaelic – There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

4. Background

4.1 The Scottish Government has pledged to phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans across Scotland by 2032.

4.2 The Local Authority Installation Programme (LAIP) is an annual funding programme which further develops EV charging network so that EV drivers can confidently travel throughout Scotland – across both urban and rural locations. The programme is funded by the Scottish Government and administered by Transport Scotland.

4.3 The Highland Council has been awarded over **£3m** since the first EV charge point was installed in 2012 (~£2.1m of which has been awarded since 2018).

4.4 The grant funding has been awarded to deliver 2 key projects:

1. General EV Infrastructure
   To expand general electric charging infrastructure in rural and urban areas where there is an existing or anticipated need.
2. Electric A9
   The Electric A9 is a specifically branded project that will provide EV charging for long distance journeys, local charging for businesses and residents, and charging at destinations. The hubs will be located along the route of the A9 within local communities; providing multiple charge points and access to amenities.

4.5 The Highland Council was successful in securing a funding allocation for delivery resources for 19/20 and 20/21 (this amount was capped at £40k per annum). Ongoing discussions with Transport Scotland have indicated that they may be amenable to assigning more funds to resources, but this is yet to be confirmed.

4.6 To date, The Highland Council has successfully delivered over 30 EV charge points around the region. It is expected that upon completion of the current 20/21 projects, this provision will have increased to over 80.

4.7 Alongside The Highland Council, a number of other organisations and bodies install publicly accessible EV charge points which are registered on the ChargePlace Scotland (CPS) network (Scotland's national EV charging network).

4.8 The table below details the total number of publicly accessible charge points in the Highlands on the CPS network together with a breakdown of those owned by Highland Council (2019):

Charger Type	**Total CPS**	**Total Highland Council owned**	**% Highland Council owned**
7kW (standard)	16	4	25%
22kW (fast)	17	3	18%
50kW (rapid)	38	25	66%
TOTAL	71	32	**45%**

4.9 The number of individual charging sessions on the CPS network across Highland increased **66%** from 2018 to 2019, indicating a healthy increase in uptake of electric vehicles and additional demand for publicly accessible charging capacity across the network. The table below shows a breakdown of the sessions from all publicly accessible charge points in Highland, by charger type and usage:

Charger Type	**No of Sessions - 2018**	**No of Sessions - 2019**	**% increase**
7kW (standard)	617	1,118	81%
22kW (fast)	1,023	1,572	54%
50kW (rapid)	13,508	22,435	66%
TOTAL	15,148	25,125	**66%**

4.10 Due to the on-going organisational restructure, governance of this project is currently under review. However, it should be noted that a multi-disciplinary steering group ensures internal expertise and input is wide-ranging, thus maximising the success of the programme. Up until recently, the project was reported to the Energy & Renewables board, and it is anticipated that a recommendation in respect of future governance will be an outcome of the Strategic Control Plan, discussed further at para 5.2 below.

5. Progress To Date

5.1 Current Highland Council target EV charge point installations and summary status:

Status	**7kW (standard)**	**22kW (fast)**	**50kW (rapid)**	**TOTAL**
Existing (pre 20/21)	4	3	25	32
In Progress	6	13	17	36
Proposed (for 20/21)*	2	7	7	16
TOTAL	12	23	49	**84**

*proposed targets are subject to regular review to reflect project and funding developments

A list of installations in progress and proposed can be found in Appendix 1.

5.2 In June 2020 a specialist project team was assembled to produce a Strategic Control Plan; a significant piece of strategic work which will examine previous shortcomings and challenge past behaviours so that a refreshed approach can be taken towards the development of conceptual projects, and subsequently apply for funding. The objective is to position the Council as well as possible to have the best chance of success when bidding for future funding schemes.

5.3 The Strategic Control Plan is intended to be carefully composed and executed so that it can be replicated across the wider low carbon agenda and throughout Council functions.

5.4 Low carbon transport (including EV and EV infrastructure) remains a priority area within the Scottish Government's current Programme for Government (as part of the commitment to The Climate Emergency Response Group) and grant funding opportunities are imminent. Furthermore, this is a particularly challenging area for Highland and The Highland Council due to the natural geography of the region and electricity grid restrictions which is why a positive, proactive intervention is required.

5.5 The overarching theme within the Strategic Control Plan is the application of structure and control to the project development and funding bid process, with three pieces of interdependent work in development:

1. **Vision**: a point of reference – something to substantiate our proposals and bids
2. **Structure**: pragmatic governance with appropriate control, support and scrutiny (including performance management)
3. **Funding**: shaping funding opportunities for Highland through effective relationships and credible project proposals

5.6 Effective and trusting relationships with delivery partners, funders and other local authorities (with past successes in this area) have been established, allowing the project team to take stock and inform the new approach using business logic and lessons learned to improve performance, better co-ordinate bids (from initiation through to completion) and lay out the direction of travel for the next 3 years.

5.7 The fundamentals of this new approach were reported to Members on 28 July 2020 at the Green Recovery workshop during the Climate Challenges & Opportunities presentation where it was well received with a high level of interest and very positive feedback.

5.8 The approach has also been shared with Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) as part of a peer review process. SSN are hugely supportive of the approach being proposed, to the extent they would like to develop a case study on the work to date to help inform and support other public sector partners.

5.9 Members will continue to be involved in establishing the detail of this work, firstly at the upcoming Green Recovery Vision Workshop - Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (scheduled for 7 September 2020).

5.10 The Strategic Control Plan is intended to be carefully composed and executed so that it can be replicated across the wider low carbon agenda and throughout Council functions.

5.11 The success of the EV infrastructure project has continued to grow and attract the level of funding received to date because the importance of building a network of influential contacts has been taken seriously and prudently nurtured since resources were fully committed onto the project in 2018.

5.12 The project team takes a proactive approach towards forming and maintaining mutually beneficial working relationships with delivery partners and funders.

Developing trustworthy communication channels centred around trust and transparency has been very effective and resulted in a series of meetings and workshops (both project specific and strategic) unlocking practical support in a variety of ways which has helped accelerate progress in Highland. Examples of this support are:

- Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) EV Team – bespoke practical workshops have been held during which SSEN use their expertise to discuss and help identify where the most technically feasible opportunities may exist to assist with our EV infrastructure priority plans.
- Other local authorities – regular communication takes place with counterparts in other councils, including Dundee, Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. Those with a successful track record in EV infrastructure have offered/agreed to support The Highland Council by way of peer review or more informal knowledge sharing.
- Transport Scotland – regular informal meetings to discuss potential upcoming funding opportunities and exchange work updates. Transport Scotland have suggested that due to the maturity and robustness of our EV infrastructure project development plans and successful delivery, The Highland Council should be used as a pilot case to help shape/test their upcoming funding criteria for related grant schemes.
- SSEN Innovation – quarterly meetings are held to exchange work plans and have exploratory discussions around collaboration opportunities and maximising funding streams. This allows The Highland Council to be well placed for identifying innovative solutions for regional specific challenges and to share and support a common message to communities with the Distributed Network Operator (DNO).

5.13 The project team is working with procurement colleagues across various authorities to identify opportunities for savings in the procurement and delivery process. Workshops are under development to scope collaboration options allowing us to consider opportunities that will positively impact the progress already made and advance/enhance future plans in line with the strategic approach for Highland.

5.14 Some project works have been internalised to Highland Council teams; the Roads and Transport team now undertake the painting and markings of the EV bays and will soon undertake signage works.

5.15 There may be further opportunities to redirect works to internal teams, and/or to enable the Highland Council workforce through upskilling/training and this is a key area for consideration to ensure a sustainable model for EV infrastructure is established in the longer term.

5.16 Planning support and guidance on EV infrastructure requirements continues to be provided to help inform development plans and existing projects.

5.17 The project team is working with Planning colleagues to ensure that more sustainable modes of travel (such as cycling and walking) are supported alongside the development of the EV charge point network.

5.18 To encourage the uptake of EVs, a successful promotional campaign was undertaken involving Highland schools in 2019/20; younger children submitted entries to design a logo for the side of the Highland Council electric vehicle used by the Climate Change team, and older children submitted entries to design a logo for charging points. The logos and signage are on target to be deployed during summer/autumn 2020.

The winning designs are provided in Appendix 2.

5.19 In addition, a feasibility study is underway following a successful bid to the Energy Saving Trust (through the Switched on Towns and Cities programme) requesting bespoke consultancy services. The results of the study will help inform future plans on EVs and accompanying infrastructure as well as the wider low carbon transport and energy agenda. The Council's planning team is heavily involved and will be maximising opportunities to assist them with the Inner Moray Firth development plan. The study is expected to be finalised August/September 2020.

5.20 The Council's fleet transition to electric vehicles is being supported through the EV Infrastructure project by selecting a number of Highland Council office sites as locations for EV charge point installations. However there remains a need for strategic planning to maximise the value of these installations, particularly in respect of the likely estate rationalisation work undertaken as a result of COVID-19.

5.21 A fee will be introduced to offset the electricity costs associated with charging vehicles and will be factored into the ongoing sustainability assessment of provision, operation and maintenance. A draft proposal was prepared pre-COVID and this is to be reviewed and progressed in Autumn 2020.

5.22 There is a fully-funded 5 year warranty and maintenance plan in place for the EV charge points.

6. Key Next Steps

6.1 To ensure the continued success of the EV infrastructure programme in Highlands, a number of key actions have been identified and will be progressed:

- Continue to deliver EV charge point provision in Highland and expend all grant funding awarded to the Council.
- Hold a Member workshop (Green Recovery Vision Workshop - Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) to help inform the Strategic Control Plan.
- Undertake an appraisal to explore sustainable delivery model options.
- Initiate discussions on the potential for internalising additional project works.
- Relationships with grant funders and stakeholders will continue to be nurtured to allow transparency and raise awareness of the Council's and regional challenges so that these can be considered when allocating funding and inform wider low carbon discussions.

- A communication plan will be developed to raise awareness, improve transparency and encourage interaction among various groups, stakeholders, communities and internal teams.
- Draft fee proposal for use of EV charging network will be reviewed and initiated.

7. Benefits

7.1 The EV infrastructure project and associated strategic work will deliver significant benefits to the organisation and region:

- attract high levels of grant funding for energy infrastructure assets;
- influence future funding opportunities related to energy and a low carbon transport transition through successful delivery and engagement;
- support communities towards low carbon transport by providing EV charge points in various locations throughout Highland;
- support the Climate Change agenda and the aspiration of being 'net zero' by 2025 - the works undertaken will reduce transport related carbon emissions.
- lead the way and encourage the use of electric vehicles;
- improve regional EV infrastructure for tourists, residents and visitors to the Highlands;
- offer opportunities for innovation to be introduced in a bid to tackle major challenges (i.e. grid constraints);
- potential future income generation opportunities through commercial ventures (i.e. by enhancing installs to provide other facilities/amenities); and
- support economic generation through the use of internal workforce and local contractors to support delivery of the work whilst exploring upskilling opportunities.

7.2 It should also be noted that since fully committing to delivery of this project the Council has unlocked influential pathways to future opportunities and partnerships within the wider strategic energy landscape. These include:

- co-chairing a regional EV Stakeholder Forum involving key organisations and agencies involved in EV rollout;
- membership of the Transport Scotland Local Authority Charge Point Host Users Group which informs the shaping of future EV grant funding calls and wider policies;
- representation and input into the Transport Scotland EV drivers workshop to help shape the tender requirements for future operation of the 'back office' system of EV charge points; and
- closer working relationship with teams within SSE including scheduled and ad-hoc learning sessions and knowledge sharing enabling working practices to become more aligned and mutually understood.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment

Date: 11 August 2020

Author: Jackie Sayer, Energy Engineer

Appendix 1

Highland Council EV charge point installations in progress:

Site Address			**7kW**	**22kW**	**50kW**
Strathpeffer	Square	IV14 9DH		2	
Inverness	Crematorium	IV3 8JN		1	1
Lairg	Sutherland Transport Park	IV27 4DD		1	1
Dingwall EA9	Inchvannie Court Car Park	IV15 9SE		1	2
Brora EA9	Gower Street Car Park	KW9 6NX		1	2
Inverness (HC HQ)	Highland Council HQ	IV3 5NX	3	1	
Golspie	Drummuie Office	KW10 6TA	1	1	
Kyle of Lochalsh	Lochalsh Leisure	IV40 8AB		1	1
Golspie EA9	Fountain Street Car Park	KW10 6TH		1	2
Helmsdale EA9	Coupers Yard Car Park	KW8 6JZ		1	2
Poolewe	Village Car Park	IV22 2JX			1
Wick	Riverside CP	KW1 4AB	1	1	1
Lochcarron	Adjacent to Bistro	IV54 8YD	1	1	
Alness	Alness Academy (new)	IV17 0UY			1
Fort Augustus	Tourist Information Car Park	PH32 4DD			1
Achnasheen	Public Toilets	IV22 2EE			1
Durness	Tourist Information	IV21 4PZ			1
TOTAL			**6**	**13**	**17**

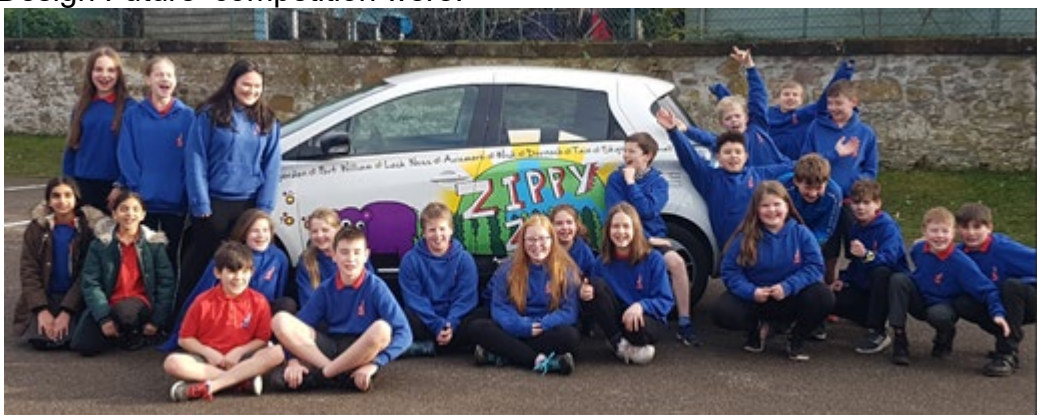
Highland Council EV charge point installations proposed for 2020/21*:

Site Address			**7kW**	**22kW**	**50kW**
Kinlochbervie	TBC			1	1
Gairloch	TBC			1	1
Kingussie EA9	Gynack Road Car Park	PH21 1ET		1	2
Invergordon EA9	Car Park adj. Church	IV17 0UN		1	1
Fort Augustus	Tourist Information Car Park	PH32 4DD	1	1	
Thurso EA9	Thurso Swimming Pool	KW14 8PS	1	1	1
Kyleakin Car Park	TBC			1	1
TOTAL			**2**	**7**	**7**

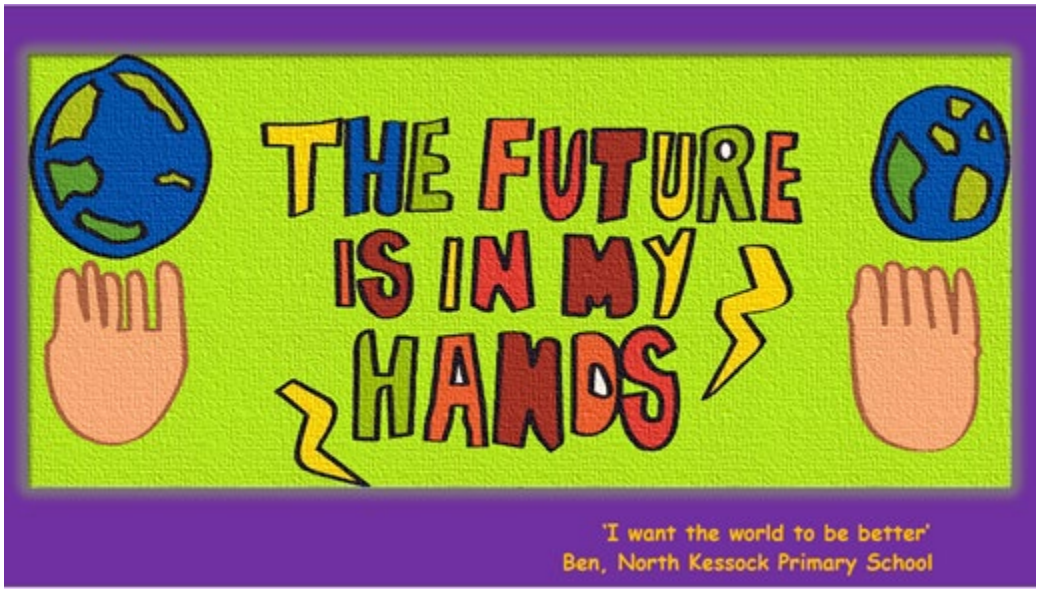
*proposed installations are subject to regular review to reflect project and funding developments.

Appendix 2

Out of over 700 entrants from pupils around the Highlands, the three winners of the 'I Design Future' competition were:



Aysha Reid (long hair standing nearest wing mirror), Crown Primary School. Aysha created a design for The Highland Council's electric car (Zippy Zoe).



Ben Macgillvray, North Kessock Primary. Ben designed an image to go on all Highland Council EV charging point units in Highlands.

Samantha Flavell, Millburn Academy. Samantha created a sign that will be placed at all Highland Council EV charging point sites.