

Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

26 February 2019

Wards: Borough wide

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

Lead officer:

Paul McGarry, Head of FutureMerton

Lead member:

Councillor Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing & Transport

Project sponsor:

James McGinlay, Assistant Director for Sustainable Communities

Contact officer:

Chris Chowns, Transport Planner, FutureMerton

Recommendations:

1. To update Panel Members on the progress and actions Merton Council is taking to support greater use of Electric vehicles, making the borough friendly for electric cars.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report is to update the Panel on the Council's activities to promote electric vehicle usage, offering a wider range of sustainable travel choices to our businesses and residents.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel has overseen the Air Quality Task Group and its final report in February 2018 which concluded, amongst other actions to improve air quality; that the task group supports the rollout of electric charging points across the borough, including utilising additional funding where available.
- 2.2. Merton is recognised as one of the leading Local Authorities for its work on air quality leading on innovative and ground breaking initiatives that extend beyond our borough boundaries.
- 2.3. We have made brave and sometimes controversial decisions to tackle pollution in our borough, something we will continue to do. We have implemented a diesel levy linked to our parking permit system and are coordinating our air quality work with internal partners and shaping policies that can push behavioural issues such as parking and planning.

Mayor's Transport Strategy

- 2.4. The Council is in the process of finalising its draft third Local Implementation Plan (LIP), which sets the course as to how Merton will meet the Mayor's

Transport Strategy and incorporates a number of delivery targets, including targets on car ownership and air quality.

- 2.5. The LIP funding of £1.5m for 2019/20 will focus on Vision Zero and Healthier Streets and covers 18 individual initiatives. Vision Zero aims to ensure that deaths and serious injuries from all road collisions are eliminated and Healthy Streets/Healthy People sets out to rebalance our streets and environment. Improving the street environment and promoting healthier lifestyles through more walking and cycling will be essential in delivering these outcomes.

3 SUPPORTING ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.1. As demand for electric vehicles grows more charging points will be implemented across the borough. What is increasingly clear is that there is not a one size fits all solution and that a mix of charging products and solutions will need to be rolled out. The rapid pace of development of battery technology also presents some major challenges for the future. Merton takes a pragmatic approach and is rolling out a number of charging options to motorists.
- 3.2. There are currently 70 publically accessible charge points (7kw) spread across the borough, which are able to charge a typical electric vehicle in 3-4 hours. A further 31 charge points are in the process of being commissioned by Source London and should be operational by the end of March 2019.
- 3.3. In partnership with Transport for London, we are supporting a network of 20 rapid chargers (50KW) across Merton which will be capable of charging a vehicle in 15- 30 minutes. This includes two chargers on London Road, Morden and a 3rd on Colliers Wood High Street is currently going through the planning process.
- 3.4. These rapid chargers are mainly aimed at taxi and other high usage vehicles but can be used by any motorist. As part of the Go Ultra Low City Scheme (GULCS) Merton proposes to trial a number of lamp column chargers in 2019 aimed at overnight parking.
- 3.5. The Council is now ahead of its annual target to deliver 125 publically accessible charge points by 2020/21.
- 3.6. Another recent development is that the Source London charge points can now be accessed via an app on a pay as you go basis, thereby improving accessibility by removing the need for residents to or business to register for membership.

On-street bays

- 3.7. The Council receives enquiries from residents about running charging cables from homes, across the pavement to on-street parking bays.
- 3.8. In terms of trailing power cables over the footway, including when using rubber matting the prevailing consensus is that councils cannot endorse permitting trailing cables as policy as they effectively represent an obstruction of the highway and potential trip hazard. This could be a particular problem for vulnerable users and the partially sighted.

- 3.9. We recognise that this limits some people's ability to charge vehicles and we are working with TfL and London Councils to identify practical solutions to this issue including lap-post charging.

Column Charging

- 3.10. New electric vehicle charging products are coming to the market place and many London boroughs are beginning to install lamp column chargers to supplement existing dedicated on-street charging units. These units are ideal for overnight charging in quieter locations where residents do not have off-street parking. The lower installation costs also mean energy charges can be lower. The latest equipment also supports standard type 2 charging cables supplied with most electric vehicles. Whilst longer term operational issues and maintenance costs of lamp column chargers still need to be assessed. This remains something the council would like to trial and will need to be co-ordinated in any lamp-column renewal projects.

Car Clubs and E-Car Clubs

- 3.11. There are currently 3 car club providers in Merton. Each uses a different operating model.
- 3.12. Blue City provides 6 all electric cars operating between Source London electric vehicle charging points.
- 3.13. Enterprise Cars run a traditional car club from dedicated on-street bays with about 200 Merton members.
- 3.14. By far the largest is Zip Car Flex with around 60 flex cars operating in the borough on a daily basis plus a small number of dedicated bays. Launched between April and June 2017 the Flex scheme now has over 5000 Merton members. This so called floating car club model is expanding rapidly across London.
- 3.15. New operators are expected to come to Merton in 2019 further expanding the car club offer. Each floating car club vehicle can replace up to 13 privately owned vehicles. The Council is expected to generate between £80k and £100k per annum working in partnership with car-club providers to promote a network of accessible bays.
- 3.16. London has a target of 1,000,000 car club members by 2025. Merton would like to double the number of car club members by 2021/2022. Many car club operators have ambitions to move towards all electric fleets.
- 3.17. As part of the Morden parking review, Merton Council is currently considering the benefits of rolling out electric pool-car vehicles and the corporate use of flexible car clubs as part of the Council's essential staff transportation options.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1. None for the purpose of this report

5 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 5.1. None for the purpose of this report

- 6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**
- 6.1. None for the purpose of this report
- 7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**
- 7.1. None for the purpose of this report
- 8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**
- 8.1. None for the purpose of this report
- 9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1. None for the purposes of this report.
- 10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
- 10.1. None for the purpose of this report
- 11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**
- 11.1. None
- 12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 12.1. None