



Report to:	Grants Advisory Committee 28 th October 2022
Lead Cabinet Member:	Environment
Lead Officer:	Bode Esan

Electric Vehicle Charge Point Grant

Executive Summary

1. This report sets out the proposals for a new grant scheme to parish councils and operators of community buildings, for grants of up to £5,000 to support installation of publicly accessible electric vehicle charge points (EVCPs) in order to encourage electric vehicle (EV) uptake within the district. Members are asked to consider the proposed structure and funding criteria (**Appendices A and B**) and make a recommendation to Lead Cabinet Member for Finance.

Key Decision

2. No. This is not a key decision as the proposed grant scheme would be funded from within existing budgets.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Grants Advisory Committee:
 - a. reviews the proposed structure and funding criteria for the grant set out in **Appendices A and B**; and
 - b. agrees a recommendation to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance to approve the establishment of an Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Grant.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. An ongoing objective of the Business Plan 2022-23 is to “encourage the expansion of electric vehicle charging points across our sub-contractors and partners”. An overall budget of £150,000 was approved to assist delivery of this objective in 2022/23.
5. Circa £125,000 of this amount has been allocated to projects with an anticipated figure of £22,000 to £25,000 remaining, which would be available for other projects within this year. A grant scheme for parish and community buildings to provide publicly accessible EVCPs would meet this objective by engaging

partners in parish councils and community buildings and enabling the expanded provision of EVCPs in the district.

6. A decision is required with reference to the Council's Constitution Part 3.a Table 4: Responsibility for Executive Functions which states that approval of policies and criteria for grant schemes for which no award exceeds £5,000 is for decision by the Lead Cabinet member following consultation with the Grants Advisory Committee.

Details

7. The Council is committed to supporting the shift to net zero carbon emissions in the district by 2050, as demonstrated by the motion passed at its November 2018 meeting.
8. Supporting the transition to decarbonisation of transport and adoption of zero emissions vehicles is an important aspect of this commitment. With the Government's announcement in that sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles will end by 2030, it is evident that electric vehicles will form a key aspect of this transition.
9. A significant barrier to EV adoption is the lack, or perceived lack, of suitable EV charging infrastructure. This is a particular issue in rural areas, where demand is less concentrated than in urban areas, meaning EVCPs are less commercially attractive.
10. Sources of funding for public EVCPs are available to help address this disparity, notably through UK Government's On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) which is available to Local Authorities including parish councils. However, funding through ORCS has been recently reduced from 75% to 60% of a project's capital costs, leaving new applicants to make up the increased gap themselves. Therefore, an SCDC grant could supplement funding received through ORCS, in addition to any funds raised through other sources.
11. The main focus of ORCS is to facilitate EVCPs in areas with high numbers of properties that do not have off-street parking, as it is harder for occupants of these properties to charge at home.
12. Due to the rural nature of South Cambridgeshire there are more detached and semi-detached houses than the national average, and these typically have their own off street parking where EVs can be charged.
13. However there are still locations in SCDC where houses are without off-street parking, albeit somewhat more scattered than in more urban areas. Furthermore, other amenities such as shops, public houses, rail stations and other attractions can create demand for EV charging.
14. Village halls and community buildings already offer a range of amenities to residents and frequently benefit from adjacent car parks, and so would lend

themselves well to EVCP installations to support EV uptake in our villages, provided there is a good prospect of demand for their use by residents and visitors.

15. The Climate and Environment Team has been contacted by several parish councils and community organisations who wish to install EVCPs at their community buildings in response to the climate emergency and to provide a service for their residents.
16. This grant scheme would therefore enable and encourage such action by providing financial support in addition to other funding sources raised by the applicants.

Proposed Grant Criteria

17. Grant of funds would be subject to completion of an application form (**Appendix B**) which would be assessed by officers alongside the guidance notes (**Appendix A**) before a recommendation is made to the Grants Advisory Committee.
18. The application form requires applicants to describe and justify the location for the EVCP. There must be a good prospect of current or future demand for the EVCP, for the installation to be worthwhile. Demand may be from nearby residents who do not have access to on-street parking, or from nearby amenities such as shops, public houses, rail stations or other attractions where EV users may benefit from being able to charge their vehicle nearby.
19. There are many factors that influence demand for an EVCP; these can vary from site-to-site and there will always be an element of uncertainty. As such the justification for an EVCP will be assessed on a case-by-case basis for each application.
20. The application site will need to be accessible to the public, ideally for 24 hours a day, to maximise opportunities for charging and allow flexibility of use.
21. Applicants will also need to provide some level of match funding, either through their own funds or other grants or funding schemes.
22. Applicants will need to provide details of estimated project costs and timescales.
23. The application form also requires a commitment to manage and maintain the EVCPs and provide usage data for a minimum of 3 years from installation. Grant funding must be for the agreed purpose and spent within 12 months of award of the grant.
24. Proposals that meet these criteria will be funded on a 'first come first served' basis until the remaining funds are all allocated.
25. There would be a limit of a £5000 grant per project in accordance with Part 3.a Table 4 of the SCDC constitution. This limit may be subject to change, and could be revised down if demand for funding is shown to be high.

26. This upper limit is considered reasonable, as the cost of installing a standard 7kW EVCP with two sockets (able to charge 2 cars at once) is around £5000 - £7000 depending on the circumstances of the site.

Options

27. Following consideration of the above, the GAC could recommend to the Lead Cabinet Member to:

- a. Approve the proposed grant scheme
- b. Approve the proposed grant scheme with alterations
- c. Not approve the proposed grant scheme, giving reasons for this

Implications

28. In the writing of this report, considering financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

Financial

29. The proposed grant scheme would be funded via funds already allocated in the 2022/23 budget to public EV charging infrastructure.

Legal

30. Funding agreements with grant recipients will be drawn up in accordance with templates approved by the legal team. Funding agreements will allow variation or recovering of the grant in specific circumstances.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies

31. EV chargers at community buildings and village halls could encourage and support local businesses in their switch to zero emissions vehicles by increasing charging opportunities and supporting charging infrastructure at business premises

Being green to our core

32. Visual presence of EV chargers can promote behavioural change by encouraging uptake of EVs, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and reducing tailpipe emissions from petrol or diesel vehicles that would otherwise have been used.

33. This grant funding would represent encouragement from SCDC for the uptake of electric vehicles by supporting provision of public EVCPs and therefore addressing wider district emissions

A modern and caring Council

34. EV chargers at parish and community buildings would be used by, and benefit local people as well as visitors to the area

Appendices

Appendix A: Grant Criteria and Guidance Notes

Appendix B: Application Form

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