



**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE: 16 JANUARY 2025**

**UPDATE ON ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE  
PROJECTS**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the Council's progress on Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) projects.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. The County Council approved its Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy and Action Plan in December 2022. This outlines the Council's approach to achieving net zero as an organisation by 2030 and across Leicestershire by 2045. It describes the pathway to net zero as challenging but feasible, requiring a full roll out of EVs and a reduction in vehicle mileage across the County. The Action Plan aims to support the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles, including electric and hydrogen fuelled vehicles.
3. In February 2024, the Cabinet considered a proposed 2024/25 to 2027/28 Medium Term Financial Strategy. In light of the Council's financial position, the proposal to revise the Council's net zero targets for its own operations, from 2030 to 2035, and for the wider County, from 2045 to 2050, was approved.
4. In May 2024, the Cabinet considered a report setting out the Authority's approach to the development of the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) 2026 – 2040 which was subsequently approved in November 2024 following a public consultation. The LTP4 Core Document, which sets out the strategic vision, key themes and core policies which will underpin the LTP4, the strategic case and narrative for funding, and the Council's expectations relating to transport infrastructure including EV charging infrastructure. The Cabinet was advised that the LTP4 would support the rollout and implementation of alternative fuels including EVs.
5. In September 2024, the Cabinet considered and approved the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy (EVCS), providing the strategic framework for the Council's approach to public EV charging provision and its practical ongoing delivery. This Strategy is a key element in supporting bids to secure funding from the Government, such as the LEVI funding.

6. The Authority's commitment to public chargepoint delivery, as set out in the EVCS, will underpin the delivery of the LTP4 and will align with its five core themes and six core policies. Additionally, incorporating these themes and policies, such as Enabling Health and Wellbeing; Protecting the Environment, Delivering Economic Growth, Enhancing our Transport Network's Resilience and Embracing Innovation into the LEVI project will support the Authority's net zero ambitions.

## **Background**

7. With the sales of new petrol and diesel cars set to end in the UK from 2035, the uptake of EVs is forecast to rapidly increase over the next decade.
8. As of the end of 2023, there were approximately one million fully EVs on UK roads and a further 600,000 plug-in hybrids. This is a significant increase compared with just over 10 years ago, when there were around 5,000 EVs registered.
9. Modelling suggests that in Leicestershire, up to one in four registered cars in 2030 could be electric, and a minimum of 3,200 public chargepoints will be required. Currently, there are 470 public chargepoints (as of March 2024), shown on Zapmap's national chargepoint map, however, none of them are on-street chargepoints.
10. In November 2023, the Cabinet considered the Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium 2023. It highlighted that EV ownership in Leicestershire had increased by 61% since 2021/22 and advised that following a successful joint bid with Midlands Connect, the Council would work with four other local authorities (Lincolnshire County Council, Herefordshire County Council, Rutland Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council) to deliver 349 EV charging sockets across the Midlands, including up to 100 charging sockets across Leicestershire.
11. At present, most of the UK's charging demand is met through home charging (on private driveways/garages or allocated off-street spaces). However, publicly accessible charging infrastructure is now becoming increasingly necessary to enable wider EV uptake, particularly for those where home charging is not possible.
12. Whilst the delivery of EV infrastructure is not a statutory duty for local authorities, the Government expects upper tier local authorities to play an important role in addressing the gaps in provision currently being provided by the private sector. This includes adapting public assets, such as the highway, to deploy public chargepoints, to ensure that a network of public chargers is available for residents, commuters, visitors, businesses and fleet operators in the local authorities' area.
13. The Government remains committed to the ban on the future sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles and continues to support the transition to EVs by accelerating the rollout of new chargepoints.

## **Funding**

14. In March 2022, the Government published a national EV Infrastructure Strategy and announced a new £396m LEVI fund.

15. The LEVI fund is aimed at:
- a) Supporting local authorities in England to work with the chargepoint industry to deliver large scale public EV chargepoint infrastructure projects.
  - b) The deployment of local, primarily low power, on-street, overnight charging infrastructure across England (which will have less strain on the grid and attract relatively cheaper user tariffs than rapid/ultrarapid chargers).
  - c) Mainly residents who have limited or no off-street parking and need to charge their EV.
16. The funding is managed by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) and was available to all upper tier local authorities in England. It consisted of two funding streams:
- a) Capital funding (£353m) for public EV charging infrastructure;
  - b) Capability (revenue) funding (£43m) for officer resource towards project delivery and development of EV infrastructure strategies.

#### LEVI Capital Funding

17. The LEVI capital funding was initially launched as a £10m 'Pilot' through a competitive bidding process.
18. In August 2022, the Council, working with Midlands Connect and four other local authorities as a consortium (Lincolnshire County Council, Herefordshire County Council, Rutland Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council), successfully secured £1m of LEVI Pilot funding towards the delivery of an initial 350 chargepoints across the Midlands.
19. Of the funding secured, the Council has been allocated £223,000 towards up to 80 public chargepoints for Leicestershire. The chargepoints will consist of a mix of standard and rapid chargepoints.
20. In December 2024, the Council was allocated a further £3.151m of capital funding to deliver a large full scale chargepoint project (LEVI Full).

#### LEVI Capability Funding (Revenue)

21. On 30 March 2023, following a successful proforma submission to the OZEV, the Council was allocated a total of £530,000 capability funding towards officer resource for the development of the EVCS and the delivery of both LEVI projects (Pilot and Full).
22. A further update is awaited from OZEV (following the Autumn budget on 30 October 2024) to advise if any further capability funding will be forthcoming to support the four-year delivery programme for the LEVI Full project (2025-2029). Without this funding, the project will be at risk.

### **Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy**

23. The Government expects all upper tier authorities to have an EV Strategy by the end of 2024/25, including a long-term deployment plan for roll out of public chargepoints and their ongoing management.
24. The Government expects upper-tier local authorities to provide EV infrastructure, addressing gaps in the market, such as where home private charging is not possible and where the private sector is failing to deliver.
25. Leicestershire County Council's EVCS was presented and approved by the Cabinet in September 2024 following a Countywide engagement exercise, which was considered by this Committee at its meeting on 6 June 2024.
26. The Countywide public engagement exercise was carried out in October-November 2023 and included an online questionnaire which allowed current EV drivers to provide feedback about their charging habits, and prospective EV drivers to raise their concerns and an interactive 'social pinpoint' map which allowed residents to place a marker on a map of the County of where they would like to see a chargepoint.
27. The engagement will shape the locations identified for the LEVI Pilot project and the further Full rollout project, which will ensure that chargepoints are located in the areas where the residents require them.
28. The EVCS provides the strategic framework for the Council's approach to public EV charging provision and supports its delivery of the wider Council policies and strategies, including the Net Zero Action Plan and the LTP4.
29. The approved EVCS describes the Council's role and responsibilities. It sets out six key long-term goals, based on the approved LTP4 transport vision:
  - a) Social Equity;
  - b) Healthy Environment;
  - c) Creating Better Places;
  - d) Connected Network Meeting Demand;
  - e) Resilient and Safe Network;
  - f) Decarbonise Road Transport.
30. The Strategy identifies a set of objectives that will seek to deliver EV chargepoints in the short-term through the delivery of the LEVI Pilot and Full projects.

### **LEVI Pilot Project**

31. Following the approval of the EVCS by the Cabinet in September 2024, and in collaboration with chargepoint operator (CPO) Wenea, work will start on delivering the new chargepoints at on-street locations across the County as part of the LEVI Pilot project. Wenea will provide a complete charging infrastructure solution, starting from design and deployment through to operation and ongoing maintenance.

32. Whilst specific chargepoint locations have yet to be determined, the focus will be on the larger most populated settlements across Leicestershire; Appendix A shows the settlements that have been considered by the Council. In addition, the chargepoints will be:
  - a) Located on residential streets where there is a high proportion of housing with limited or no access to private off-street parking.
  - b) Located on the highway (on-street) and the chargepoints will be publicly accessible.
  - c) Mainly lower powered (3kW - 22kW) and suitable for overnight charging. A small number of rapid chargepoints (50kW+) will be considered, with one rapid chargepoint located in each district council area.
33. All of the Pilot project chargepoints will be subject to grid capacity checks with the Electricity Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) and to engagement with the local communities, with delivery planned to start in Spring 2025.
34. The delivery of the chargepoints will occur in a phased approach across the County and will be delivered in batches. Appendix B sets out the proposed timetable and key milestones for delivery of the LEVI Pilot.
35. The Pilot project is an important first step in understanding the work that the Authority will need to undertake in order to deliver the public EV charging infrastructure on a large scale. It is important to note that, in line with the Government's priorities and feedback local authorities received from the OZEV, the focus will be solely on on-street charging and the project will not include off-street carparks or chargepoints on third-party land.
36. In addition, this will not include cross-pavement charging solutions, such as cable gully channels. National guidance, which sets out the approach that a county council should take for this type of infrastructure, was published by the Department for Transport on 24 December 2024. The Council is currently reviewing this guidance to determine an appropriate way forward for cross-pavement charging.

### **LEVI Full Project**

37. In addition to the LEVI Pilot project above, Leicestershire County Council, again working with Midlands Connect, and a consortium of local authorities (Worcestershire County Council, Rutland Council, Warwickshire County Council and Shropshire County Council) submitted a application to the OZEV to secure capital funding of £3.151m.
38. As per the Pilot project, one local authority (Worcestershire County Council) will lead and take responsibility for the procurement, the legal support and the allocation of the grant funding to the consortium authorities.
39. With additional private investment from the CPOs, the Full project will allow the Council to build on the Pilot project and expand the number of public EV chargepoints across the County.

40. The Council and the consortium members were allocated funding for this wider project in December 2024. Further updates will follow in spring 2025 as more details are known.

### **Engagement**

41. An engagement is currently underway with district council officers in respect of the first batch of sites for the LEVI Pilot roll out. The County Council will be engaging with district Conservation Officers to consider how the County Council's proposals might be incorporated into and be more sympathetic with the surroundings, such as ensuring the colour of the chargepoints is suitable and if any wrapping on the chargepoint and feeder pillar maybe needed to ensure that they blend into the environment.
42. Engaging with district council officers will ensure that the on-street chargepoints locations align with the district councils' EV infrastructure, located within carparks as well as the future locations and charging provisions that have been identified.
43. The County Council's officers are working with Wenea and the district councils to ensure that a rapid chargepoint is located in each of the seven district councils' areas.
44. An engagement will then take place with the Local Members, the district councils and the parish councils, the local residents and the local businesses as a part of the wider pre-installation communication in January 2025. Local views on the chargepoint locations will be taken into account, however the siting of the chargepoints depends on the electric connections, parking spaces and the widths of the pavement.

### **Resource Implications**

45. The roll out of public chargepoint infrastructure, will be delivered through funding from the OZEV LEVI Capital and Capability funding allocations. At present, there is no County Council capital funding identified for chargepoint delivery.
46. The Council has secured at least £223,000 of capital funding towards the delivery of the Pilot project and the Council has been allocated an additional £3.151m towards further chargepoint delivery through the LEVI Full project, following the success of the business case, which was submitted to OZEV in November 2024.
47. Officer resource towards the delivery of both LEVI projects is currently being funded from £530,000 LEVI Capability funding (allocated across 2023/24 and 2024/25), supported by a contribution of £154,000 from the Environment and Transport Department budgets through to 2027/28. Future funding remains a concern and at present there is insufficient capability funding available to deliver the Full LEVI Project.
48. To date, the LEVI Capability funding has been used for officer resource to:
  - a) Prepare and publish the Council's EVCS.

- b) Prepare, publish, and analyse the results of the EV Countywide Engagement Analysis Report exercise.
  - c) Develop a bespoke Leicestershire EV chargepoint map-based planning tool, which gathers all of the available EV related spatial data and helps to inform the future chargepoint site selection decisions.
  - d) Work with Midlands Connect and the consortium of local authorities to develop the Pilot project proposals and support the CPO procurement.
  - e) Support the delivery of the Pilot project, including the project management, the communications, and the engagement and design approvals.
  - f) Provide all of the necessary data and information to support Midlands Connect to develop and submit a suitable business case to the OZEV, to secure the funding that the Council has now been allocated for the Full project.
49. If further LEVI Capability funding becomes available, it will be used by the Council towards resources to:
- a) Support the delivery of the Pilot and Full project from the winter of 2025/26 onwards (following the success of the business case submitted to OZEV and subject to any further funding that is made available to the Council by the Government).
  - b) Continue the ongoing contract management and liaison with the CPOs.
50. The Council, along with Midlands Connect, will continue to press the Government to provide further capability funding to enable the successful delivery of these projects.

### **Timetable**

51. Appendix B sets out the proposed timetable and key milestones for delivery of the LEVI Pilot, as highlighted in paragraph 34.

### **Conclusions**

52. The Committee is asked to note the progress that is being made on the LEVI Pilot project following the award of contract to the CPO Wenea.

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

53. A copy of this report will be circulated to all Members.

### **Equality Implications**

54. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), attached as Appendix C, has been completed in relation to the work of the LEVI Pilot project and a further EIA will be completed for the LEVI Full project.
55. The completion of the EIA showed that there would be a positive/neutral impact on all protected groups.
56. Throughout the course of the LEVI projects, impacts on the protected characteristics groups will continue to be assessed and addressed should any issues be identified.

### **Human Rights Implications**

57. The Council's approach to delivery of the LEVI projects will be carried out having regard to the 1998 Human Rights Act.
58. Where appropriate, human rights implications will be assessed and reviewed during the delivery of the LEVI projects as part of the EIA.
59. At this stage, there are no human rights implications arising from the contents of this report.

### **Health Implications**

60. The objectives of the LEVI projects will support and facilitate the transition for residents from petrol to diesel vehicles to EVs, which will make a major contribution to improving air quality and reducing harmful pollutants.
61. In agreement with Public Health, a high-level Health Impact Assessment (HIA) has been undertaken, to ensure that any potential negative impacts have been identified, as shown in Appendix D.
62. The completion of the HIA has indicated positive health benefits and it has sought to mitigate any potential negative health impacts.

### **Environmental Implications**

63. The delivery of the LEVI projects will make a positive contribution towards decarbonising transport and contributing towards net zero ambitions for the County, as transport contributes towards the most carbon emissions of any sector.
64. A Strategic Environmental Assessment will not be undertaken due to no negative environmental impacts being associated with the LEVI projects and the EV chargepoints. Any impacts associated with the increase in EVs and the chargepoints will be positive, such as reducing pollutants and improving air quality.
65. Environmental Impact Assessments will be completed as part of the site selections by the CPOs as necessary. Given that on-street works would be under permitted development and that the installations of any chargepoints is not considered to be the installation of "major infrastructure" by the Council, CPOs will not need to seek planning approval for the installation of the chargepoints and therefore Environmental Impact Assessments are unlikely to be undertaken for the installation of the on-street chargepoints.

### **Background Papers**

Midlands Connect: Supercharging the Midlands, September 2021 –  
<https://www.midlandsconnect.uk/media/i1spcsr1/mc-supercharging-the-midlands-document.pdf>



Department for Transport – Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy, March 2022 –

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6245ba40e90e075f15381cf0/taking-charge-the-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-strategy.pdf>

Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 –

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/faq/2022/4/12/Appendix-B-LCC-Strategic-Plan-2022-26.pdf>

Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy 2023 – 2045 –

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/net-zero/net-zero-leicestershire-strategy-action-plan-and-reports>

Report to the Cabinet on 24 November 2023: Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium 2023 –

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7080&Ver=4>

Report to the County Council on 21 February 2024: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 – 2027/28 –

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=7305&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet on 26 March 2024: Environment and Transport 2024/25 Highways and Transportation Capital Programme and Works Programme –

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7504&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet on 24 May 2024: Development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2026 – 2040 –

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7506&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet on 13 September 2024: Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy –

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s185083/FINAL%20Leicestershire%20Electric%20Vehicle%20Charging%20Strategy%20-%20Cabinet%20130924.pdf>

Zap Map national chargepoint map: <https://www.zap-map.com/live/>

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Settlements Considered for Standard and Rapid Chargepoints

Appendix B – Key Milestones for LEVI Pilot

Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix D – Health Impact Assessment

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