

**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**  
(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

**Title of meeting:** Licensing Committee Briefing

**Subject:** Update on Rapid electric vehicle charge point installation

**Date of meeting:** Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the installation of rapid electric vehicle (EV) charging points for use by the taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) trade.

**2. Background**

2.1 Due to ongoing high concentrations of nitrogen dioxide, Portsmouth City Council (PCC) has been issued with ministerial directions from central government requiring the authority to take measures to bring air pollution to within legal limits in the shortest possible time.

2.2 Following detailed technical study of air pollution in the city, central government has mandated PCC to introduce a Class B charging Clean Air Zone (CAZ). This CAZ will result in daily charges being issued to 'non-compliant' vehicles which drive within the zone from 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Non-compliant vehicles are buses, coaches, taxis and private hire vehicles which are older than Euro 6 if diesel and older than Euro 4 if petrol.

2.3 The taxi and PHV trade in Portsmouth have been supported to upgrade their vehicles so that they become CAZ-compliant through grant funding. Drivers and owners of standard vehicles have been offered a grant of up to £1,500 per vehicle and for wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) this grant was up to £4,000 per vehicle. Following feedback from the trade about the high cost of replacing multi-seat WAVs additional funding for WAVs was requested and the authority was successful in securing up to £5,000 per WAV.

Electric vehicles

2.4 The CAZ requires vehicles to meet Euro 6 standard if diesel or Euro 4 standard if petrol - there is no requirement for vehicles to be zero emission capable for the CAZ.

2.5 Encouraging the increased adoption of EVs has significant advantages for Portsmouth over petrol and diesel alternatives. EVs emit less air pollution, fewer carbon emissions (or zero tail pipe emissions for full EVs) and less noise pollution than vehicles with internal combustion engines. Therefore the more

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lower emission vehicles that we have in the city, the sooner we will reach the legal requirement for reducing air pollution in the city.

- 2.6 To date the uptake of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles amongst the taxi and PHV fleet in Portsmouth has been low due to a number of concerns including range anxiety, the cost of purchasing the vehicles, availability of boot space and lack of charging infrastructure in the city.
- 2.7 In recent years there have been increases in the models of electric vehicles available and improvements in the range of the batteries. Costs of electric vehicles have also been reducing with some availability of second-hand vehicles. Through the CAF funding outlined in paragraph 1.3 above, drivers and owners of taxi and PHVs in Portsmouth have been able to use this funding alongside government plug in grant funding for the purchase of certain electric vehicles.
- 2.8 To address concerns about the lack of EV charging infrastructure in the city PCC requested funding from central government's Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) for the installation of rapid EV charging points in the city that could be used by the taxi and PHV trade. This funding request was submitted to central government as part of the Portsmouth Local Air Quality Plan.
- 2.9 Central government confirmed that they would not release the funding to install the rapid EV charging points unless local licensing policy was amended to encourage greater uptake of zero emission vehicles.
- 2.10 In December 2020 a decision was made by PCCs Licensing Committee to introduce a tightening of taxi licensing requirements to help drive the switch to lower emission vehicles in the city and to secure the funding detailed below from central government. From 2025 all taxi and private hire vehicles licensed for the first time will need to be zero emission capable.
- 2.11 Due to this change in licensing policy JAQU awarded PCC £499,279 for the delivery of rapid EV charging points.

**3. Progress since funding award**

- 3.1 Since funding was awarded for the rapid EV charging points, surveys have been undertaken with the taxi and PHV trade to understand which locations would be most convenient for them to use. A contractor has also been appointed to deliver the rapid charging points and is currently undertaking a technical and economic feasibility of the locations identified.
- 3.2 The locations suggested by the taxi/ PHV trade has been used as the basis for the feasibility studies, acknowledging that final locations will be limited by locations of PCC operated car parks and the availability of suitable electrical supplies.

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- 3.3 The 50kW Tritium chargers will allow a typical EV to fully charge from empty within an hour. An operation and maintenance contract has been agreed to run with a supplier who will be responsible for setting the charging tariff and maintaining the equipment for at least three years.
  
- 3.4 To ensure that there is good availability of rapid EV charge points as uptake of EVs increases, it is proposed that multiple rapid charge points are located at each site to avoid drivers having to search for another site should one of the charges be in use. The potential locations for the rapid EV charge points are included at appendix A. This shows all sites being considered, although the funding allocated is unlikely to enable chargers at all of them.
  
- 3.5 The rapid chargers will help to build-out existing and proposed EV charging infrastructure to support the increasing penetration of EVs across Portsmouth. This includes almost 100 on-street chargers being installed under the On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS).

**Appendices:**

Appendix A- Proposed locations of rapid EV charge points

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Location</b>
Cabinet Report 29/10/2019 Local Air Quality Plan Outline Business Case	<a href="https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s24649/Cabinet%2029.10.19-%20Local%20Air%20Quality%20Plan%20OBC%20cover%20report.pdf">https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s24649/Cabinet%2029.10.19-%20Local%20Air%20Quality%20Plan%20OBC%20cover%20report.pdf</a>
Cabinet Report 06/10/2020 Clean Air Zone: Consultation Feedback	<a href="https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s28269/Cabinet%206%20Oct%2020%20-%20Clean%20Air%20Zone%20report.pdf">https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s28269/Cabinet%206%20Oct%2020%20-%20Clean%20Air%20Zone%20report.pdf</a>
Licensing Committee Report 18/12/20 Amendments to Statement of Licensing Policy	<a href="https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s29255/Taxi%20Licensing%20Committee">https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s29255/Taxi%20Licensing%20Committee</a>