



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel - Climate Change and Nature**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Tuesday, 30 January 2024 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor S E Keeton (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C M J Evans
M H Jones
B J Rowlands

Councillor(s)

E W Fitzgerald
W G Thomas

Councillor(s)

O G James
M W Locke

Other Attendees

Andrea Lewis

Cabinet Member for Service Transformation

Officer(s)

Matthew Bowyer
Ioan Brannigan
Stuart Davies
Liz Jordan
Mark Wade

Group Leader, Highways & Transportation
Transport Strategy Officer
Head of Highways & Transportation
Scrutiny Officer
Director of Place

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

No disclosures of interest were received.

2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

No declarations were made.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

Panel agreed the Minutes of the meeting on 28 November 2023 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Public Question Time

No questions were received.

5 Public Electric Vehicle Charging Provision

Cllr Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Service Transformation and relevant officers attended to brief the Panel and answered questions.

Discussion Points:

- Panel asked if Council has investigated installation of EV slow charging points on lamp posts and if there are any plans to trial it anywhere. Heard Council not able to do this at the current time for a number of reasons.
- Panel asked what is being done in terms of engaging with the private sector to help out and put in its own infrastructure, for example petrol stations and local supermarkets with car parks. Cabinet Member stated she is happy to commit to writing out to local supermarkets but the Council has no control over what they do, and petrol stations are also outside of the Council's control.
- Panel queried if the Council has looked into using community buildings for installation of EV charging points, for example Churches and community centres. Heard it has been investigated but not seeing clusters of demand which would justify installing these, when areas are identified where there is demand for infrastructure, they will seek to put it in.
- Panel asked if it would be worth informing community organisations that they could get a grant to install EV charging, and in the long term could earn income from it. Heard grants available require a significant element of grant funding, up to 50%, which the community organisation would have to find.
- Panel asked why EV charging installations cannot be put on private land with the owner's consent. Informed it is much easier in terms of planning, liability, and licencing if Council land is used which it has full control over. Also heard Council has had limited success with grant funding so has had to concentrate it on Council owned areas as there are difficulties if start to 'lease spaces' in a private car park.
- Panel stated that in terms of destination car parks along the Gower Road corridor going west, the nearest car park is Port Eynon, so there is a huge gap in provision, unless people stop off in the City Centre. If EV charging points were on the other side of the road to the precinct there would not be that gap for people going west towards Gower. Informed as well as Port Eynon, private sector is installing charge points in the car park in Kittle.
- Panel asked if it is worth the Council contacting community organisations, churches etc that are suitable for EV installations to see if any are interested in installing it, as there may be some organisations that will have the match funding for grants. Cabinet Member agreed to consider this.
- Panel feels there needs to be a mix of slow and fast charging installations. Cabinet Member agreed that if there are car parks where people can charge overnight, slow charging could be an option and agreed to look into it to identify need for this type of overnight parking.
- Panel queried if information is available on usage of each of the EV charging installations for all car parks in the area. Informed usage, total consumption etc is monitored for all charge points in Council car parks.
- Panel interested to hear if Council has a plan for generating and storing electricity on current or future sites to reduce carbon, for example taking it from the grid and storing in off peak times or generating power via solar or wind at a site and storing it there. In terms of generating on site, heard Council is currently in the process of installing its first rapid charge hub in

Oxford Street car park. This will have a solar canopy and battery storage. Solar panels provide a useful function in balancing out the load on the grid.

- Panel discussed how there are EV charging points in the underground car park at the Guildhall but there is a need to look at installing points in the Rotunda car park to make it more accessible and to consider members of the public using it in the evening, not just Council staff. Cabinet Member stated the Sustainable Transport Strategy is looking at this in terms of customer and staff accessible EV charging infrastructure at Council sites but not sure of timescale.
- Panel likes the idea that people going into work can charge their cars whilst at work and queried if this idea is being progressed. Informed current charging infrastructure is specifically for the Council fleet. However the team is looking at a software package which will allow a member of staff with a card to use the EV charging infrastructure when it is available and pay for electricity that they use via the card. This would be on sites where the Council has charging infrastructure.
- Panel expressed concern for people who live in areas where they cannot charge outside their properties. Heard this is why the Council has decided to focus on more urban shopping centres and districts as well to help bridge the gap for these people. Informed in terms of Council estates where there might be tower blocks or communal areas for parking, this is part of the HRA Strategy, and where possible the Council might look to put EV charging infrastructure in those communal areas.
- Panel queried if other sources of energy are being looked at to run vehicles in the future. Heard the Authority will look to see what technologies are coming forward and adapt accordingly.
- Panel queried if there could be an opportunity in future of recycling car batteries in Swansea area. Heard the team will watch closely what others are doing and will look at good practice. Cabinet Member is aware of car batteries being reused, for example as a home battery and is something the Council could work with universities on.

Actions:

- Cabinet Member to write out to local supermarkets to encourage them to install EV charging.
- Cabinet Member to consider contacting suitable community organisations about installing EV charging.
- Department to investigate the need for overnight parking provision for slow charging.

6 Work Plan 2023-24

Panel considered the work plan and noted items for the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 10.50 am