

Agenda Item	6
Report No	CCWG/13/20

The Highland Council

Committee:	Climate Change Working Group
Date:	17 September 2020
Report Title:	Electric Vehicle Strategic Control Plan Development
Report By:	EV Infrastructure Project Manager & Salix Fund Manager

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the development of a Strategic Control Plan (SCP); a strategic piece of work comprising the approach towards future vision, internal structure and funding bids associated with electric vehicle infrastructure.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – The EV Project Manager from the Climate Change Team and a Project Manager from the Transformation Team are assigned part-time on developing the SCP to assist programme delivery and secure funding.

This work is being undertaken by two members of staff juggling multiple large scale and complex projects with competing priorities. It is time critical and needs to be progressed quickly whilst being mindful of any negative impacts on other projects and/or tasks.

- 3.2 Legal – There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – There is no requirement or need to communicate the SCP development to communities but as funding comes on board the proposed programme will be communicated on a project by project basis as appropriate.
- 3.4 Climate Change/Carbon CLEVER – It is imperative, more so now during a financially challenging period, that the Council maximises external funding to enable the delivery of low carbon projects to aid our climate change targets. It is envisaged that the SCP and approach taken can be rolled out across key focus areas of the climate change agenda, therefore supporting our strategic aspirations and further reducing the organisations emission levels.
- 3.5 Risk – Failure to proactively address identified issues to improve performance and co-ordinate funding bids as part of a cohesive programme will result in a failure to realise our

vision – this in turn will negatively impact the organisations reputation and make it challenging to attract essential funds in the future.

3.6 Gaelic – There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

4. EV Project Background

4.1 The Scottish government has pledged to phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans across Scotland by 2032.

4.2 The Local Authority Installation Programme is an annual funding programme which further develops EV charging network so that EV drivers can confidently travel throughout Scotland – across urban and rural locations. The programme is funded by the Scottish Government and administered by Transport Scotland and includes the [Electric A9](#) project which is a high priority national project.

4.3 The Highland Council has been awarded over **£3m** since the first EV charge point was installed in 2012 (~£2.1m of which has been awarded since 2018).

4.4 The Highland Council was successful in securing a funding allocation for delivery resources for 19/20 and 20/21 (this amount was capped at £40k per annum).

4.5 To date, The Highland Council has successfully delivered over 30 EV charge points around the region. It is expected that upon completion of the current 20/21 projects, this provision will have increased to over 80.

4.6 To expedite this programme and ensure continued improvement and growth in this area it is essential, particularly given the Council's current financial picture, that further external funds are secured.

5 The Case for Change

5.1 Discussion with funders and ongoing engagement through the EV Project Managers peer network, made it clear that significant additional funding was going to be made available to support national climate and EV transport targets.

5.2 These discussions, combined with project monitoring and lessons learned exercises, also highlighted that the Council's track record of delivery (with regards to securing and delivering on funding proposals) was mixed, and this had negatively impacted our reputation as a safe or trusted funding partner. This was further compounded by a lack of forward planning; instances where funding proposals were developed with little notice resulting in sub-standard submissions and significant on-site challenges with delivery (due to the proposal lacking robustness and detail).

5.3 Due to limited availability of capital funds, it was agreed that these concerns needed to be resolved as a priority through a targeted piece of work to ensure the Council is well positioned to attract essential external funding.

5.4 Soft market intelligence, looking at the successful organisation and their approach, identified the need for the development of a strategy and vision; something to inform funders and partners of our aspirations and also help inform operational activities and better align the two. For example, Dundee City Council, one of the leading authorities in the development of EV infrastructure, established a vision very early on which was essential in helping them securing large amounts of funding.

	Dundee City Council	Highland Council
Vision:	To be Scotland's exemplar region for enabling the electrification of transport in the context of a smart, integrated, sustainable mobility system.	No agreed vision
Funding received:	£8.6m (since 2012)	£3.3m (since 2012)

5.5 Low carbon transport (including EV and EV infrastructure) remains a priority area within the Scottish Government's current Programme for Government (as part of the commitment to The Climate Emergency Response Group). Given the Council's challenging geography and land mass, and a need to enable and support the delivery of a connected and sustainable EV network, we should be endeavouring to secure more funds that support the delivery of improved infrastructure; setting out a vision and establishing a supporting governance structure to support the vision and control the processes is an essential first step in that journey.

6. Progress to Date

6.1 In June 2020 a specialist project team was assembled to develop and produce a Strategic Control Plan; a significant piece of strategic work which will examine previous shortcomings and challenge past behaviours so that a refreshed approach can be taken towards the development of conceptual projects, and subsequently apply for funding. The objective is to position the Council as well as possible to have the best chance of success when bidding for future funding schemes.

6.2 The overarching theme within the Strategic Control Plan is the application of structure and control to the project development and funding bid process, with three pieces of interdependent work in development:

1. **Vision:** a point of reference – something to substantiate our proposals and bids
2. **Structure:** pragmatic governance with appropriate control, support and scrutiny (including performance management)
3. **Funding:** shaping funding opportunities for Highland through effective relationships and credible project proposals

6.3 Effective and trusting relationships with delivery partners, funders and other local authorities (with past successes in this area) have been established, allowing the project team to take stock and inform the new approach using business logic and lessons learned to improve performance, better co-ordinate bids (from initiation through to completion) and begin to lay out the direction of travel for the next 3 years.

6.4 The fundamentals of this new approach were reported to Members on 28 July 2020 at the Green Recovery workshop during the Climate Challenges & Opportunities presentation where it was well received with a high level of interest and very positive feedback.

6.5 The approach has also been shared with Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) as part of a peer review process. SSN are hugely supportive of the approach being proposed, to the extent they would like to develop a case study on the work to date to help inform and support other public sector partners.

6.6 From the outset, this process has been designed to be transferable across the climate change agenda; replicating this for other areas of work will further strengthen the

overarching commitment and help in the development of a wider, cohesive strategy and associated action plan.

6.7 The Vision, Values and Focus Areas of the SCP are as follows -

6.8 **Vision**

Our vision is a point of reference (something to substantiate our proposals and bids), it will be included in application forms and project documents to build confidence with funders and delivery partners so that they are assured The Highland Council has a clear direction of travel.

Factoring in the unique challenges of the region, we will deliver Highland solutions for Highland challenges. Our ambition is to create Scotland's greenest transport system across its largest area.

We will spearhead the development of a regional electric vehicle (EV) network, further supporting our climate change commitments and accelerating the transition to low carbon transport for The Highland Council and its communities.

We want to be a leading authority to help bridge low carbon connectivity for, and to, our city and rural communities. We will do this by adhering to the following –

- As the gateway to rural and island communities we will ensure equality of access to EV charging infrastructure
- Support economic recovery through investment in local EV infrastructure
- Enabling integrated transport initiatives for all by expanding provision for local residents, tourists and visitors
- Wherever feasible, maximise our use of natural resources to deliver sustainable, locally generated solutions
- Consider emerging technologies to ensure appropriate solutions are appraised as the sector and market evolves
- Support climate change targets through the electrification of The Highland Council fleet
- Attract external investment to progress our vision

6.9 **Values**

Our values set out core beliefs that are shared and embraced across the whole climate change agenda. They will be included in application forms and project documents to reflect the behaviours and considerations we promote that will help us achieve our vision.

Equitable: We believe it is important that regardless of rurality all Highland residents are treated equally and have access to the provision of EV infrastructure.

Determined: We are committed to delivering and embedding improved and widely accessible low carbon transport infrastructure solutions for the people of Highland.

Pragmatic: We will continue to deliver practical and realistic solutions that will address Highland specific challenges and demonstrate best value.

Enabling: We recognise that we have a responsibility not only to deliver positive change through our own programme but also by supporting locally driven low carbon transport transitions that benefit Highland communities.

Collaborative: We will build on existing partnership working with renewed focus to ensure the region benefits from a collective approach that understands the unique issues facing Highland.

6.10 Focus Areas

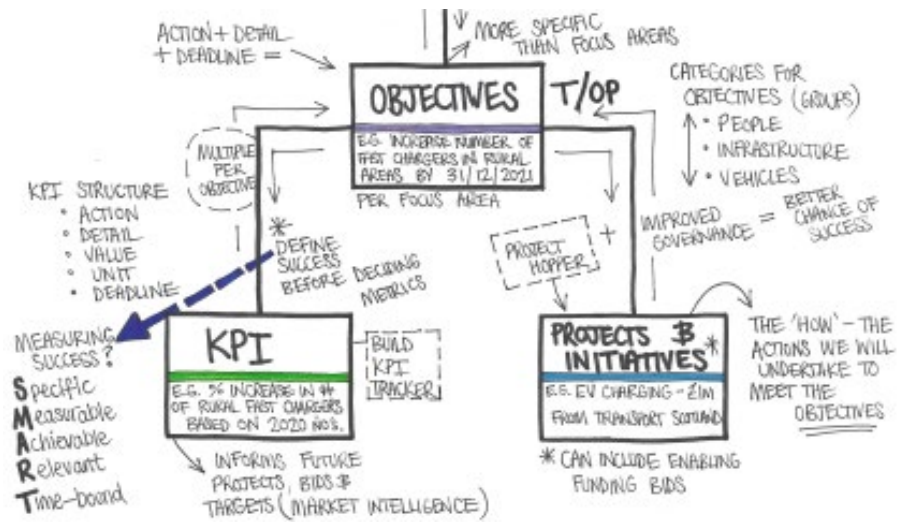
The Focus Areas are high level categories that we will concentrate on. They will be included in application forms and project documents to provide insight into the targeted interventions and changes we want to make at a strategic level.



7. Key Next Steps

7.1 The project team will now focus on translating the strategic vision, developed in conjunction with Elected Members and Senior Service Managers, into deliverable work packages through a series of workshops and sessions with operational managers and subject matter experts (SMEs). These sessions will focus on Stage 2 of the SCP development and will look to agree the following –

- Objectives: high-level statements that outline what exactly we want to achieve and by when. Once completed, an objective will be replaced by a new objective, supporting a rolling programme approach and ensuring continued support of the vision.
- Projects & Initiatives: detail that will clearly articulate the actions we are taking to meet our stated objectives (this could be existing projects, proposed projects or funding bids).
- Key Performance Indicators (KPI's): measurable values that show the organisation's progress towards achieving our key business objectives.



7.2 This stage is absolutely crucial in aligning the programme; not only will it serve as a useful exercise to help collate and better coordinate activity and respective resource implications, it will also help identify any gaps in the SCP – where the operational ability to deliver isn't aligned with the desired vision and allow the project team to proactively address.

Designation: EV Infrastructure Project Manager & Salix Fund Manager

Date: 10th September 2020

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