

## CABINET – 29 APRIL 2020

### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO REVISED CABINET PROCEDURE RULE 11.1

#### AGENDA ITEM 9 - ELECTRIC VEHICLE STRATEGY AND CHARGE POINT INSTALLATION

**Q1** Councillor Edwards to the Cabinet Member for Technical Services,  
Councillor Stanley

**Q1** I am very pleased that Arun District Council are supporting the County Council initiative to have more Electric Vehicle charging points to be installed in the District. The report says we will look for suitable places for them to be installed in Council owned car parks. Will other locations be considered? What criteria will deem a car park or other location to be "suitable", and can we have a list of places that are deemed suitable along with a list considered unsuitable?

**A1** Firstly Councillor Edwards I am pleased to hear you are supportive of our proposed participation in this initiative.

Where we are now is Officers are currently in the process of identifying locations at Arun owned sites, so other than car parks themselves car parking spaces at some of our parks are also being considered.

Other locations are being considered by other partners, County Council will also be putting forward various highways and other options of County owned land. I understand that further into the process there will also be opportunities for Parish and Town Councils to join the partnership if they wish to put forward land to potentially be included.

The suitability of sites will be determined by two stages, firstly by Arun Officers in identifying sites to put forward into the procurement process, I am happy to share which sites will be put forward by Arun in this initial tranche once Officers have completed their work.

The second stage will be undertaken by a strategic board that will consolidate the options and select from the sites put forward by all participating landowners, they will identify which are most suitable to be included in the network.

**Supp**

**Q** We have made a bold and the right strategy about climate change and a climate emergency. Is the Council looking to change its vehicle fleet to electric vehicles or other hydrogen technologies and if so what is the timescale to do this?

**Supp**

**A** The Group Head of Technical Services responded. The Council is tied in at the moment to a contract and we are looking at all options for what comes next with

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the contract. Following that, one of the features of the contract would be able to access that supplier to install charging facilities for staff vehicles if this is the route we go down.

The Director of Services added that the Council will looking at this as we come to procure that contract [electric vehicles] most definitely.

**Q2 From Councillor English to the Cabinet Member for Technical Services, Councillor Stanley**

**Q2** This report seeks approval for an Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy developed by West Sussex County Council. The collaboration with the County Council would be via an Inter Authority Agreement. This would commit Arun District Council to add its suitable car parks to a county wide portfolio of sites within a procurement process to select a supplier to install electric vehicle charge points on its land.

There appears to be little to no substance as to WHAT this agreement ties Arun and its residents to. We appear to be ensuring we have no say or exit clause should there be any future issues on servicing and charging. We are agreeing to so many unknowns and putting the whole matter into the hands of THREE? people via delegation.

I have huge reservations in the recommendation 2.3 of the proposal in delegating this huge issue to three? unqualified people. This is not to be disrespectful, but it is simply the truth!

For something so important there is no checks and balances included. It really must go to full council or at least to scrutiny overview to ensure the recommendation to sign up a 10 year contract of the magnitude has got a majority looking at the agreement and ensure our resident have not signed away any rights over charges and service nor speed at installations to name a few concerning issues.

How many authorities are delegating to three persons on a decision of this magnitude?

I would like to see the proposal 2.2 changed and set out below an idea that give more protection:

Delegate Authority to the Group Head of Technical Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Technical Services and Neighbourhoods, to enter into DISCUSSIONS IN REGARDS TO AN Inter Authority Agreement, and contract with a supplier. This to be reviewed by a Special working party reporting direct to council, for Council to vote on.

Following a **satisfactory completion** (*who determines it is satisfactory please?*) of a West Sussex County Council led procurement process (*certain*

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*ones have shown to be wanting?)* , and to agree other matters ( *what other matters are we agreeing to without knowing*) in concluding the process of installing electric vehicle charge points on Arun District Council owned land. We will and MUST have the opportunity to review what we are finally being asked to agree for Arun Residents going forward.

I would say at the moment we appear to be delegating responsibility to ensure a monopoly is created in which we have no future say or information being decided by delegation process to people with little to no knowledge of the matter in hand? Is this correct and are you happy to proceed without any changes to the recommendation?

**A2** Thank you Cllr English for your questions.

Firstly, I hope you know I recognise the importance of transparency and accountability of decision making in the Council.

Once a strategy has been approved and a procurement exercise has been agreed by Members, it is common practice for further decisions concerning delivery to be taken under delegated authority. For example, the County Council's decision to adopt the strategy was taken by their Cabinet. The decision to commence the procurement exercise was taken by an individual Cabinet Member, and the authority to award the contract is delegated to officers.

Regarding the qualifications of decision makers, the Inter Authority Agreement and contracts are still being finalised. If Cabinet decide to agree the recommendations, there will be the opportunity for these to be analysed by both legal and procurement professionals. This will inform the decision made by Nat Slade, our very able Group Head of Technical Services, in consultation with the two relevant Cabinet Members, myself and Cllr Dan Purchase on whether to proceed.

To answer one of the your other points as the lead authority ultimately the County Council will determine if the procurement process is satisfactory, however the tenders will be evaluated and scored by Officers from across the participating authorities which will support the County Council and inform them in their decision making.

Regarding the wording "other matters" this includes agreeing which of the sites put forward by participating Councils are selected for the installation of EV charge points, as detailed in the previous answer. It also includes authorising things such as allowing electric companies to run cables across Arun's land and granting individual leases to the supplier.

Unfortunately, Cllr English I cannot support your proposed changes to the recommendation. I would hope we all want Arun be on the front foot and not to

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lag behind other parts of the county in improving this increasingly important infrastructure. I am sure it wouldn't be the intention, but the fact is these changes would effectively prevent Arun from participating due to the fact decisions couldn't be taken in a timely manner, this is vitally important when working in partnerships.

We have a real opportunity in front of us today and I want Arun residents to be amongst the first in the county to reap the environmental and economic benefits of a comprehensive Electric Vehicle charge point network.

#### **Supp**

**Q** I still retain the point that Elected Members will have no final say on this corporate decision to be taken by the Council and that this has all been taken away from sitting Councillors. I do not see how any of the errors that West Sussex County Council has made in past which is putting everything all in the hands of one company will work – I would love to have the monopoly in my company for 10 years. I do infringe on the fact that we are elected to take part in these decisions, and this is removing us from that – I cannot see anywhere where we have had any input or say whatsoever. We as Councillors are elected to take part in these decisions – this removes us from this process.

#### **Supp**

**A** Councillor Dr Walsh - This is a reiteration of what you have said earlier and so no further response is needed.