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AGENDA

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Thursday, 30 June 2022
Time: 7.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT*

Membership:

Councillors Richard Darby, Steve Davey, Oliver Eakin, James Hall, Ann Hampshire, Nicholas Hampshire, Denise Knights, Pete Neal, Julian Saunders (Chair), David Simmons, Sarah Stephen, Eddie Thomas, Tim Valentine (Vice-Chair), Tony Winckless and Corrie Woodford.

Quorum = 5

Pages

Information for the Public
*Members of the press and public may follow the proceedings of this meeting live via a weblink which will be published on the Swale Borough Council website.

Link to meeting: To be added.

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1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

   The Chair will advise the meeting of the evacuation procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. This is particularly important for visitors and members of the public who will be unfamiliar with the building and procedures.

   The Chair will inform the meeting whether there is a planned evacuation drill due to take place, what the alarm sounds like (i.e. ringing bells), where the closest emergency exit route is, and where the second closest emergency exit route is, in the event that the closest exit or route is blocked.

   The Chair will inform the meeting that:

   (a) in the event of the alarm sounding, everybody must leave the building via the nearest safe available exit and gather at the Assembly points at the far side of the Car Park. Nobody must leave the assembly point until everybody can be accounted for and nobody must return to the building until the Chair has informed them that it is safe to do so; and

   (b) the lifts must not be used in the event of an evacuation.

   Any officers present at the meeting will aid with the evacuation.

   It is important that the Chair is informed of any person attending who is disabled or unable to use the stairs, so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.

2. Apologies for Absence and Confirmation of Substitutes

3. Minutes

   To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 May 2022 (Minute Nos. 21 - 22) as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

The Chair will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary Interests (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the meeting while that item is considered.

Advice to Members: If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

11. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To decide whether to pass the resolution set out below in respect of the following item:

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt

information as defined in Paragraph 3.

3.Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

12.	Food Service Plan 2022 - 23 - Appendix II	111 - 114

Issued on Monday, 20 June 2022

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Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

Environment Committee	
Meeting Date	30 June 2022
Report Title	Handover Report: Executive Model to Committee System
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service **Lead Officer**	Martyn Cassell Head of Environment and Leisure
Classification	**Open**
Recommendations	The committee is asked to **note** the contents of the report.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 This report is intended to ensure that all Environment committee members share a common understanding of the committee's remit, including the services it has oversight of, and of current issues and major pieces of work relevant to that remit. Similar reports have been or will be provided to all of the new service committees.

2 Background

2.1 Council agreed unanimously in October 2021 to move to a committee system of governance from the 2022/23 municipal year, and the new constitution was adopted in April 2022. The constitution establishes five politically-balanced service committees to undertake the decision-making on what would previously have been executive matters.

2.2 The Environment committee has a number of areas of responsibility on which it is able to make decisions under delegation from Council. These are set out in the constitution as follows:

- refuse collection and recycling
- street cleansing
- climate and ecological emergency
- environmental response, including fly-tipping, contaminated land, animal welfare, pollution control, littering and illegal encampments
- environmental health, including management of public health and safety risks
- air quality
- green spaces, open spaces and grounds maintenance
- flooding, sea defences and coastal protection
- active travel and
- public conveniences

2.3. The majority of these functions are delivered by the Environment and Leisure service, although environmental health is part of a shared service with Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone and active travel sits within the Property and Regeneration service.

2.4. The Environment and Leisure service also delivers some functions which are within the remit of other Committees but have a crossover with Environment, such as cemeteries, which sits in Policy and Resources; Churchyards, Play, Indoor and Outdoor sport which sit in Community committee. Seafronts and Harbours also sit within the Regeneration and Property committee.

2.5. Key management contacts are shown below:

- Martyn Cassell – Head of Environment and Leisure
- Alister Andrews – Environmental Services Manager
- Jay Jenkins – Leisure and Technical Services Manager
- Janet Hill, Climate Change Officer
- Tracey Beattie – Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
- Lyn Newton – Destination and Place Manager (active travel lead)

2.6. The 'Proposals' section below provides background information on the committee's areas of responsibility.

3 Proposals

Corporate plan objectives

3.1 The Corporate Plan 2020-2023, which was adopted by Council in October 2020, includes 20 strategic objectives grouped under four priorities. The Environment Committee will support a number of the Corporate Plan 2020 - 2023 objectives. The most relevant of these are in priority 2:

2.1 Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2030, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough.

2.2 Encourage active travel and reduced car use, including through the permeability of new developments, and work with partners to address air quality issues.

2.3 Establish a special projects fund to provide much-needed capital investment in the borough's public realm and open spaces.

2.5 Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible.

Key Policies and Strategies

3.2 One of the ways in which the committee system differs from the executive model is the absence of individual member decision-making and the need -

which to some extent flows from that - for members to direct the activities of the organisation by means of policies and strategies. While it will be for the Policy and Resources Committee to adopt all of the council's policies and strategies which are not reserved to Full Council, the Environment Committee will take a particular interest in those policies and strategies which relate to matters within its own remit, including but not limited to:

- Open Spaces and Play Strategy
- Electric Vehicle Strategy
- Environmental Enforcement Policy
- Tree Maintenance Policy
- Cemetery and Burial Regulations (shared with P+R)
- Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan
- Air Quality Action Plan

Current issues and large pieces of work

3.3 Recent highlights include:

- New grounds maintenance contract and arboriculture contract – enhanced specification with improved climate advantages such as electric vehicles, hand tools and reduced use of pesticides.
- Tree planting - over 5,000 new trees planted with 2nd phase due this autumn with another 6,000.
- Completion of the Faversham Recreation ground improvements and opening of new facilities.
- New toilet blocks at Minster Leas and Milton Creek country park.
- Replacement of Barton's Point bridge.
- Retention of Green Flags at our country parks.
- 3 Blue Flags retained for our resort beaches.
- Our Climate and Ecological Emergency action plan was rated in the top 20 nationally.
- Introduction of a new electric fleet for Council operations.
- Creation and delivery of Environment grants scheme.
- New food waste collection trials for marine Town residents.
- Implementation of anti-idling campaign and legislation.
- Delivery of public and environmental health asks from Government during the pandemic.
- Successful application for Government funding of 10 additional EV charging units across the Borough.
- Multi agency work and signage for illegal shellfish harvesting.
- Monitoring and declaration of AQMA for particulates.
- Development of Air Quality and Planning Technical Guidance document

3.4 Current workload includes:

- New Waste and Street Cleansing contract preparation – October 2023
- Contract Management of existing waste and street cleansing contract

- Waste and Recycling education and improvement
- Public conveniences – day to day management and future refurbishment plans
- Delivery of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan – multiple actions across all departments
- Management of grounds maintenance contract and tree maintenance contract
- Open space asset management (trees, pathways, furniture etc)
- Parks improvement
- Coastal management including cliff erosion
- Countryside management (woodland, coastal parks, watercourses)
- Air quality improvement projects
- Review of Air Quality Action Plan 2023 -28
- SBC owned Street Lighting LED Upgrade Project
- Environmental health – implementing the FSA Food Inspection Recovery Plan, working with partners to address illegal shellfish harvesting

3.5. Significant issues include:

- Challenging circumstances for major contracts following pandemic
- Rising costs of products and services
- Changing Government policy – particularly waste legislation
- Ongoing environmental crime across the Borough
- Air quality management areas
- Cliff erosion on Sheppey

4 Alternative Options

4.1 As the report is for noting only, there are no alternative options.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 As the report is for noting only, no consultation has been undertaken or is proposed.

6 Implications

6.1 As the report is for noting only, there are no implications arising from the recommendations.

7 Appendices

7.1 There are no appendices.

Environment Committee	
Meeting Date	30th June 2022
Report Title	Procurement of Electric Vehicle Charge Points
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins – Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell – Head of Environment and Leisure
Lead Officer	Grace Couch – Climate and Ecological Emergency Project Officer
Classification	**Open**
Recommendations	1. The Committee approves the appointment of Pod Point Limited via the Vehicle Charging Infrastructure 2 (VCI 2) ESPO Framework 636_21 from 15 July 2022 for the completion of works set out in Swale Borough Council's On-Street Residential Charge Point Grant, at a value of £148,554.57 (+ VAT) 2. That the Environment Committee approve delegated authority to the Head of Environment and Leisure in consultation with the Chair of the Environment Committee to purchase charge point equipment from Pod Point Limited.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 Swale Borough Council has been awarded £106,465.93 by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme. The Council recommends awarding the work to Pod Point Limited via the Vehicle Charging Infrastructure 2 (VCI 2) ESPO Framework 636_21 to provide 10 twin electric vehicle charge points and associated works.

1.2 This report summarises the procurement process and its results, and seeks Committee approval of the recommended supplier.

2 Background

2.1 The On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (hereafter 'ORCS') Grant has been awarded to fund chargepoints in Swale. The maximum amount of grant payable for the funding period between 29 April 2022 and 30 September 2022 will be £106,560 – 75% of the total project costs (excluding VAT).

2.2 A framework is an agreement between a contracting authority (such as Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO)) and one or more suppliers which establishes the terms under which a supplier will enter into a contract with a member in the period during which the framework agreement applies. In effect, this means that the Council is able to use this contract arranged by ESPO without having to go out to tender itself.

2.3 ESPO is a public sector owned professional buying organisation (PBO), specialising in providing a wide range of goods and services to the public sector for over 40 years. It offers a comprehensive, one-stop shop solution of over 25,000 catalogue products, 120 frameworks and bespoke procurement services, all with free support and advice available. With the tender process already conducted by ESPO, it is economically advantageous to use a framework in this instance.

2.4 The ESPO framework provides access to a vast range of vehicle charging infrastructure solutions including fast/rapid and ultra-rapid electric vehicle chargers and compatible back office solutions from market leading suppliers. Awarded suppliers are able to supply, deliver, install and commission electric vehicle charge points to organisation specifications, with the latest technology being available. Purchase and lease options are both offered. Service and maintenance of existing EVCPs, consultancy services and emerging technologies, including battery energy storage, vehicle to grid, car port chargers, wireless chargers, bi-directional chargers, integrated sockets, mobile chargers, bus chargers and opportunity chargers, are also available.

2.5 By utilising the ESPO framework for direct award the Council is able to complete the installation of the charge points within the funding period set by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles. Additionally, existing charge points in Swale Borough Council car parks (18 twin charge points across 4 sites) are supplied and managed by Pod Point Limited, therefore providing continuity within our car parks, with ease of use for customers. The Council also has first hand experience of the high quality service provided.

2.6 Charge Point equipment is being procured to install additional charge points at Rose Street Car Park (Sheerness) and create new charging hubs at Queens Hall Car Park (Faversham) and Albany Road Car Park (Sittingbourne). Charge point installation is required to encourage the transition to Electric Vehicles, which is essential to meet the council's target of net-zero emissions across the borough by 2030. This complements ambitions set out in the (DRAFT) Electric Vehicle Strategy 2022-2030, including the focus on 'charging hubs' in SBC car parks.

2.7 We have utilised data to understand where there is demand for EV charging. As part of our bid to ORCS, the Energy Saving Trust completed analysis of 'on-street charging demand' within the Swale borough. This was used to provide a shortlist of car parks most suitable to install charge points designed for slow, overnight charging for residents without access to off-street charging (e.g. those without driveways). These car parks were matched with local knowledge to provide the final locations for the ORCS application and subsequently funded charge points.

2.8 Additionally, data from Ringo parking transaction in our car parks demonstrates that EV charging has increased in Swale in the last year. The EV market share of parking transactions has increased from 1.87% in 2019/20 to 3.41%, representing a total of 12,266 transactions in SBC car parks.

2.9 Charge Point Locations:

Site no.	Car Park	Postcode	No. points	No. sockets
1	Queens Hall	ME13 8QE	3	6
2	Albany Road	ME10 1EB	3	6
3	Rose Street	ME12 1AJ	4	8
Total			10	20

2.10 3 x twin charge points are being installed at each location to increase the value for money of the ground works and Distribution Network Operator (hereafter 'DNO' costs from UK Power Networks (where required). At Rose Street, where there is already a DNO connection, it is necessary to remove 1 x existing 22kw twin charge point and install 4 x 7kw twin charge points to gain additional value for money by installing an array load balancing system and works that are required to future proof the site. Overall, there will be a net-gain of 18 twin charge points in Swale. The 22kw charge point that will be removed will be relocated at a more suitable site in the future.

2.11 The Pod Point Twin Charger is a dual Type 2-socketed vehicle charger suitable for commercial and public installations. The Twin charger is available for both single & 3 Phase electrical supplies and is compliant with a pay-as-you-go charging system for drivers. Every Twin charger includes and ships with a surface mount foundation plate. Specific models of the Twin Charger are RFID enabled, making them dual authenticating chargers.

2.12 The scope of works includes:

i. Provision of new power supply
ii. Civil and groundworks
iii. Electrical works
iv. Managed installation
v. 3 years smart reporting
vi. 3 years warranty
vii. Commissioning
viii. Delivery

2.13 Pod Point have confirmed that they meet the requirements for applications to ORCS, having completed applications with other local authorities in the past. UK Power Networks have been consulted by Pod Point to provide quotes for the DNO costs, including in the overall costs for this project.

3 Proposals

3.1 The Committee approves the appointment of Pod Point Limited via the Vehicle Charging Infrastructure 2 (VCI 2) ESPO Framework 636_21 from 15 July 2022 for the completion of works set out in Swale Borough Council's On-Street Residential Charge Point Grant, at a value of £148,554.57 (+ VAT)

3.2 That the Environment Committee approve delegated authority to the Head of Environment and Leisure in consultation with the Chair of the Environment Committee to purchase charge point equipment from Pod Point Limited.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 To 'do nothing', or not approve the direct award to Pod Point Limited, would result in a failure to meet the funding period set out by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles, resulting in repaying the grant, increased officer time to resubmit an application and slower progress on the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan aim to install charge point infrastructure in Swale.

4.2 The Committee could choose to award the works to a different contractor in the ESPO framework. This would prevent consistency across the charging infrastructure in our car parks, confusing our EV charging offer and complicating the customer experience. Additionally, we would not have the same first hand understanding of the quality of the product in which we do with Pod Point Limited, despite the reassurances of utilising a reputable framework agreement.

4.3 The Committee could choose to complete a full open tender process. This would also prevent installation being completed within the funding window, resulting in repaying the grant, increased officer time to resubmit an application and slower progress on the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan aim to install charge point infrastructure in Swale. There is also no guarantee that Pod Point Limited would be the successful tender in this round, therefore reducing consistency of offer in our car parks.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 In a survey conducted between 24th May – 7th July 2021, 267 respondents provided answers on plans for potential new EV charge points in the borough. Important findings from the survey include:

i. 12.2% of respondents currently own an electric vehicle or plug-in hybrid
ii. 36.22% of respondents indicated that they intend to purchase an electric vehicle or plug-in hybrid within the next 5 years
iii. 58.66% indicated that they would 'strongly support' an EV charge point being installed in a car park near their place of residence
iv. When asked where they would like to see charge points installed in Swale, an overwhelming number of responses included 'all SBC car parks'

5.2 As can be seen in another item of this Committee, there is a wealth of data reported through the Electric Vehicle Strategy 2022-2030 consultation to justify the installation of additional charge point infrastructure. This includes 70% of respondents stating that they either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the principle aims of the Strategy, one of which is to pursue 'charging hubs' in SBC car parks.

6 Implications

<table>
<tr><th>Issue</th><th>Implications</th></tr>
<tr><td>Corporate Plan</td><td>Appointing a contractor that meets a good quality standard as set out via the ESPO Framework and provides the scheme of works within the funding period of the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme contributes towards the corporate priorities, most specifically “Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges”.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Financial, Resource and Property</td><td>While this report requires the approval of the anticipated spend, 75% of the total cost has been provided by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles via a successful grant award from the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme. The remaining 25% was allocated from the Improvement & Resilience fund in 2021.

Anticipated spend via the ESPO charging infrastructure framework is £148,554.57 (+ VAT):

<table>
<tr><td>Total Works</td><td>£148,554.57</td></tr>
<tr><td>ORCS 75%</td><td>£106,465.93</td></tr>
<tr><td>SBC 25%</td><td>£35,488.64</td></tr>
<tr><td>Works not covered by ORCS (warranty & smart reporting)</td><td>£6,600.00</td></tr>
</table>

Payment of grant is to be in the following manner: 75% of the grant upon acceptance of the Grant Offer Letter, and 25% upon completion of the project. No money is to be paid in respect of a chargepoint unless (i) that chargepoint was installed before the end of the funding period and (ii) that chargepoint is fully functioning.

At the time of writing, the quotes from UK Power Network (DNO) included in the above works are being refreshed (standard procedure). It is likely that where some sites may go up and others may go down, the total project costs will stay the same. However, in the instance that they increase, the additional costs will be within the allocated budget for EV charging from the Improvement and Resilience Fund. To meet the project deadlines set by OZEV, it was essential to approve the works with Pod Point Ltd despite this.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Legal, Statutory and Procurement</td><td>The proposed framework agreement has met the Public Contract Regulations. The Council will ensure that the correct procurement procedure under the framework will be followed.</td></tr>
</table>

	Mid Kent Legal Services and Finance have approved the Grant Award Offer from the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles. This contract award meets the National Procurement Policy Statement national priority outcome for tackling climate change and reducing waste.
Crime and Disorder	The (draft) Electric Vehicle Strategy 2022-2030, also presented to this Committee, sets out the essential design and site considerations that must be taken to discourage crime and disorder. Although yet to be adopted, these criteria have been adhered to in the scope of works. Pod Point Limited charging equipment also 'designs out' opportunities for crime and disorder, such as no use of cash and being robust to vandalism.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The Climate and Ecological Emergency is recognised as the biggest global challenge this generation will face. Electric Vehicles are integral to reducing emissions and halting global warming. Encouraging low emission vehicles also contributes to improving air quality in the borough.
Health and Wellbeing	Improved air quality, as a result of the switch to electric vehicles, will have a positive impact on the health of residents, with a recognition of the need to encourage EV update both in AQMA areas and within the industries which travel through them most often.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The evaluation scheme of the ESPO charging infrastructure framework included assessment of health and safety procedures. Application to the On-Street Residential Charge Scheme also required adherence to the Minimum Technical Specifications, including IET Code of Practice for Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment Installation; Electric Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002; Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016. Pod Point Limited have provided evidence that they meet the Minimum Technical Specifications and have completed ORCS grant works for other local authorities in the past. The (draft) Electric Vehicle Strategy 2022-2030, also presented to this Committee, sets out the essential design and site considerations that must be taken to manage health and safety. Although yet to be adopted, these criteria have been adhered to in the scope of works. Including: equipment installation should be in accordance with the Institution of Engineering and Technology's

	'IET Code of Practice for Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment' ISBN:184919839X
Equality and Diversity	The (draft) Electric Vehicle Strategy 2022-2030, also presented to this Committee, sets out the essential design and site considerations that must be taken to ensure inclusivity. Although yet to be adopted, these criteria have been adhered to in the scope of works. Including: • Easy to use for disabled users - there should be a sufficient distance of level surface around the charge point to allow easy access to the charge point by wheelchair users on the footway. Other considerations include having a dropped curb where required, ensuring the slant of the screen is appropriate for people with visual impairments, and other measures. • Interoperability - Ensuring charge points can be used by all vehicle makes and models • Ensuring drivers do not need to sign up to a specific network for membership in order to charge • Ideally chargers should be within close proximity to the residence or destination of the users. The criteria of the ORCS grant, and additional assessment by the Energy Saving Trust, has ensured that charge points are to be installed where on-street charging demand is highest. By following demand in this way, and installing charge points for public use, the Council is increasing the accessibility of EV ownership for all residents.
Privacy and Data Protection	By awarding the contract to Pod Point Limited for these works, as the charge point manager and servicer, they privacy and data protection will be their responsibility e.g. we will not own the data. Pod Point Limited use a Smart Reporting System. The SRS is a cloud-based system, accessed by web browser. PP systems utilise Amazon Web Services, for secure storage of data. AWS are compliant with ISO/IEC 27001:2013.

7 Appendices

7.1 There are no appendices.

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Environment Committee Meeting	
Meeting Date	30th June 2022
Report Title	Electric Vehicle Strategy 2022-2030
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins - Director Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell – Head of Environment & Leisure
Lead Officer	Grace Couch – Climate and Ecological Emergency Project Officer
Classification	**Open**
Recommendations	Adopt the Electric Vehicle Strategy 2022-2030

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 The draft Electric Vehicle Strategy 2022-2030 (hereafter 'the Strategy') aims to clarify the council's position on EV charging infrastructure, addressing the balance between current demand for charging infrastructure and the ambition to 'lead the way' in addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency.

1.2 The Strategy includes:

- Clear vision and direction for the types and locations of charge points in Swale;
- Strategic and focused actions and measures to encourage Electric Vehicle uptake;
- Engagement and support process with all stakeholders and delivery partners on the installation of charge points;
- Recognition of the needs and demands of both EV and non-EV owners at the time of writing;
- Considerations of air quality improvement aspirations;
- Additional steps to futureproof the proposed strategy due to the nature of EV technology; and
- Implementation and delivery plan for the Electric Vehicle Strategy for 2022 - 2030.

2 Background

2.1 The Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan sets out the ambition to install EV charging points across the borough, as well as to develop an EV charging strategy including publicly accessible fast and rapid chargers, in council and private car parks (e.g. hotels, shopping centres), and working with KCC for on-street charging. EV charging is also identified as a measure in the Air Quality Action Plan, draft Transport Strategy and parking SPD.

2.2 The Strategy aims to establish where charging will be focused in the borough, and the relationship with Kent County Council as the Highways Authority. The current

EV ownership and parking levels are presented alongside the relationship with AQMA areas, before the key objectives, proposals and solutions for Swale are presented in section 7.

2.3 The objectives stated are;

i. Creating and facilitating a network of EVCPs that meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors, with sufficient coverage by 2030
ii. Design sites that take into consideration accessibility concerns and other road users/pedestrians
iii. Ensure the charging network has capacity for further expansion and is futureproofed
iv. Encourage the uptake of EVs through education, campaigns, supporting trials, initiatives and public engagement
v. Lead by example through use of electric vehicles wherever possible for delivering council service and promoting the benefits.

2.4 The Strategy identified home charging as the priority area to focus on, encouraging uptake of the home-charge scheme and installing charge points in council owned car parks in areas with high levels of on-street parking demand. Where this is not possible, cooperation will be sought with stakeholders to identify suitable locations for charge points, particularly in AQMA areas. This is followed by destination charging.

2.5 At present, on-street charging is not the most suitable solution for the parking demands of Swale, however technology in this area will be monitored. This also adheres to KCC guidance stating on-street charging should only be selected as an option where it is not possible to serve demand elsewhere. Additionally, KCC will not currently allow private EVCPs to be installed on the highway or charging cables to be brought from a private property to the highway land. This results in charging hubs in car park locations are the most coherent strategy for the delivery of EV charging infrastructure at present. The Strategy recognises the rapid changes within the industry, and therefore commits to learning from other local authority trials and create new solutions for on-street charging.

2.6 Other key features include:

- Recognising driver and pedestrian safety, inclusivity, coherence, attractiveness and reliability as key
- Recognition of technological advances and the actions that will need to be taken to ensure the charging network is future-proofed
- Summary of the resident consultation conducted Summer 2021
- Commitment to ‘lead from the front’ with an electric fleet
- The utilisation of a car club to provide an opportunity to trial an electric vehicle and encourage more sustainable travel
- Support for businesses and encouraging uptake of the workplace charging scheme
- The anticipated review of the taxi licensing policy as an opportunity to include mechanisms to encourage the uptake of ULEV taxis

- Utilisation of social media, Inside Swale and other marketing avenues to inform residents of the benefits of EVs and our charging network

2.7 The Strategy recognises the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme as a source of funding, with analysis undertaken by the Energy Saving Trust informing future plans. This funding has been granted to install 9 new twin charge points in 2022.

2.8 Swale's approach will also focus on the direct procurement of charging equipment rather than entering into profit share arrangements in which we do not own the equipment, for all infrastructure installed within council car parks. This enables full control of the equipment and maintenance, along with fee rates ensuring we can maintain the standards set out in this strategy. This will also ensure we can be responsive to what is a rapidly changing market in a way that is sensitive to the unique needs of the Swale district. This does not mean we need to manage all payments via the units as this is achieved via the charger company software. Other solutions for on-street charging are to be investigated on a pilot basis.

2 Proposals

2.1 Adopt the Strategy and commit to take forward the Action Plan to deliver electric vehicle infrastructure in Swale. By adopting the Strategy the Council can effectively deliver EV charging infrastructure in an effective and coordinated manner, continue to monitor demand by collecting data and encourage EV purchase via other initiatives set out in the Strategy.

3 Alternative Options

3.1 Members could choose not to have a Strategy. This is not a feasible way forward as we would lack a coherent direction for the installation of future charging infrastructure. The lack of clarity surrounding charge point design and clear stipulations against trailing cables (and other concerns surrounding on-street charging) could result in un-safe charge point installation across the borough. The lack of direction may also hinder charge point installation rates, preventing the Council from reaching net-zero targets set out in both the Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration (June 2019) and the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan (April 2020).

3.2 The Council could choose to adopt a more ambitious strategy which installs infrastructure at a much faster rate. At present there is not sufficient funding for this direction of travel, nor evidenced demand. Additionally, the rapidly changing nature of this industry, the infrastructure and charging solutions available. It is therefore sensible to focus on monitoring and responding to data-led demand, as well as changes in national and Kent-wide policy.

4 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

4.1 The Strategy was taken to the Environment, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee Meeting on 25th January 2022, pre-consultation, providing an opportunity for member discussion to inform the final version. Many areas were raised, including provision for taxis, the effect of the rising cost of electricity and the spread of EV charge points across the borough. The full discussion can be found in Appendix III.

4.2 Consultation on the Strategy was conducted between 07 March and 13 April 2022 via Survey Monkey, promoted to residents via social media and to stakeholders via the Swale Means Business e-Bulletin and Parish Council mailing lists. Full results of the consultation can be found in Appendix II.

4.3 70% of respondents stated that they 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the objectives stated in the Strategy.

4.4 When asked if they think anything is missing from the Strategy, 70% said 'yes' and the comments are summarised below. This includes where amendments were made to the final Strategy document, and where topics had already been sufficiently covered in the Strategy.

Consultation Comment	Strategy Amendment/Response
Lack of provision of On-Street Charging	Section 7.3 of the Strategy sets out the Council's position for on- vs off-street charging. As we are not the highways authority, our influence in this area is limited. Although we will still predominantly focus on creating charging hubs within our car parks, making data-led decisions, we have amended the Strategy to include the consideration to investigate on-street solutions, such as charging bollards, on a pilot basis - with the support of KCC.
Reduction in Car Ownership	Overall reduction in car ownership as a method of reducing CO2 emissions has been recognised in the Strategy, however the Strategy also recognises that some car ownership is to be expected, as this is the most practical solution for many people, especially those in rural areas. The transition to cleaner, electric vehicles is an integral part of our work to reach net-zero across the borough by 2030. Our strategy for this is included in section 8.2.2, including the recent launch of Faversham Car Club, however, links to Active Travel and Public Transport have now been emphasised.

Request to set more specific targets	The Committee on Climate Change, which advises the government, says there should be one EV charger for every thousand cars by 2030. This suggests that across all sectors in Swale there should be at least 75 EV chargers by the end of the decade, and the Strategy recognises that this target seems unambitious. Section 7.7 of the Strategy sets out the importance of future proofing as well as the rapidly changing nature of this industry, the infrastructure and charging solutions available. It is therefore reluctant to set annual targets within the Strategy but commits to monitoring and responding to data-led demand, as well as changes in national and Kent-wide policy.
Increased Promotion of EVs	The consultation re-affirmed local commitment to the climate emergency, with respondents encouraging the council to provide more information about its own work to encourage EVs, as well as promoting the move away from Internal Combustion Engine vehicles to residents. Information about our new Climate Webpages, a promotional plan agreed with the Communications Team, and recognition of the Energy Saving Trust Local Government Support Scheme, have now been included in the Strategy (Section 8.5) as developments launched after the Strategy consultation commenced.
EVCP Design/Solar Canopies	Comments were raised regarding the design of EV charge points. Much of this has already been highlighted in Section 7.6 regarding the safety of users, however additional weight has now been given to investigating innovative solutions in our car parks such as solar canopies (Section 9.3 Action Plan - 1.2d), which both provide a power source for charging and shelter for users.

5 Implications

Issue	**Implications**
Corporate Plan	**Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges** The Climate and Ecological Emergency is recognised as the biggest global challenge this generation will face. Electric Vehicles are integral to reducing emissions and halting global warming.
Financial, Resource and Property	The Strategy itself does not propose any immediate additional expenditure. £50,000 has already been approved through the Improvement & Resilience Fund to support the match funding

	required with the successful application to the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme. EV charge points will become an increasing asset to the Council which must be maintained and future proofed to prevent incurring additional costs later on – the Strategy recognises these challenges and proposes solutions.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The provision of EV charge points is not currently a statutory function.
Crime and Disorder	Car parks and assets within them such as charge points could be susceptible to vandalism adding to the annual maintenance costs. The Strategy sets out the requirement for adequate lighting. Encouraging community education and awareness is necessary to mitigate this.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The Climate and Ecological Emergency is recognised as the biggest global challenge this generation will face. Electric Vehicles are integral to reducing emissions and halting global warming. Encouraging low emission vehicles also contributes to improving air quality in the borough.
Health and Wellbeing	Improved air quality as a result of the switch to electric vehicles will have a positive impact on the health of residents, with a recognition of the need to encourage EV update both in AQMA areas and within the industries which travel through them most often.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The Council is required to meet its obligations on Health and Safety. The Strategy sets out considerations for driver and pedestrian safety, as well as the design requirements for the charge points.
Equality and Diversity	The Strategy aims to provide facilities for all residents in the Borough. It is recognised that EV charging needs to be accessible to all, including those without off-street charging, in order to increase the speed of transition to electric vehicles. The Strategy sets out the intention to maintain electric charging rates in-line with the market level for similar speed public charge points. The Strategy also states measures required to ensure inclusivity on a number of bases.
Privacy and Data Protection	Data Protection principles will be adhered to when implementing data collection exercises within the scope of the Strategy.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Swale Borough Council Electric Vehicle Strategy 2022-2030
- Appendix II: Consultation Results and Comment Summary Spring 2022
- Appendix III: Environment, Health & Wellbeing Committee Jan 2022 (551)

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Swale BOROUGH COUNCIL

Electric Vehicle Strategy

2022 - 2030

Contents

1. Foreword

Cllr Tim Valentine, Cabinet Member for the Climate and Ecological Emergency

One of the first actions the new administration took when elected in 2019 was to declare a climate and ecological emergency. The declaration sets very ambitious targets, including net-zero across the borough by 2030. The Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan, which was published in April 2020, sets out the requirement to install charge points across Swale guided by an Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy. The switch from diesel and petrol to electric vehicles is an important part of the strategy to reduce our carbon emissions from transport and to improve the air quality in Swale. However, EVs are only part of the strategy: steps to encourage walking and cycling and for more journeys to be made by public transport have an essential role to play. Furthermore, the Council will support car clubs to reduce the need for residents to run their own car or a second car.

In keeping with the action plan, the Council are leading from the front, showing what can be done, while supporting organisations, businesses and local residents on their low carbon pathway. To that end, Swale Borough Council has already made the switch to EVs for most of our own fleet, including the mayor's car. Leasing and running EVs saves the Council money compared to diesel vehicles.

The EV charging infrastructure can only be delivered in partnership with others. It requires grant funding from central government, liaison with Kent County Council as the Highways Authority, businesses to install workplace chargers and to switch their fleets, and for residents to switch to EVs.

Delivering the EV charging infrastructure will be a dynamic process; matching the availability of chargers to demand from EV drivers and exploiting the rapidly changing technology available. This is a new area for all local authorities. It is an exciting journey and is one we are enthusiastic to take in Swale. Electric vehicles will deliver long-term financial savings for car owners, cleaner and healthier air for all, as well as significant reduction of carbon emissions. Swale Borough Council will lead on this journey, but we cannot reach the destination alone. We need everyone to travel along with us, share ideas and to support each other.

2. Executive Summary

Our overall transport vision for Swale remains one based on identifying the transport improvements and solutions that are required to accommodate the anticipated changes in travel demand and promote a shift towards sustainable travel. Swale Borough Council recognises the benefits of sustainable transport, both to individuals, places and the environment more widely, and wish to reduce car use in favour of public transport and active travel.

However, we recognise that for certain activities and individuals, cars and vans remain an appropriate mode of transport. Moving these vehicles from petrol and diesel to ultra-low emission vehicles is critical, to reduce the impact of those journeys, and help us achieve our climate change and air quality ambitions. This includes the commitment to reaching net-zero carbon emissions across the borough by 2030.

Our vision for the Borough is that when residents travel by car and small van they choose ultra-low emission vehicles, and travel in a carbon neutral way. With the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans being brought forward to 2030, this is now becoming more crucial.

This strategy focuses on the role of electric vehicles across the Borough to deliver this vision, and the interventions we will be taking to support residents to a transition to electric. It looks forward to 2030, but as electric vehicles, and electric vehicle charging, is very much an emerging technology it is important for us to be able to adapt to changes and ensure a flexible approach to delivery of the strategy.

This strategy forms one part of the overall transport strategy for the Borough and should be considered alongside and read in conjunction with other relevant strategy documents, such as the Local Plan, Swale Transport Strategy, the Air Quality Action Plan and the Walking and Cycling Guidance.

Objective 1	Creating and facilitating a network of EVCPs that meets the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors, with sufficient coverage by 2030
Objective 2	Designing sites that take into consideration accessibility concerns and other road users/pedestrians
Objective 3	Ensure the charging network has capacity for further expansion and is futureproofed
Objective 4	Encourage the uptake of EVs through education using campaigns, supporting trials, initiatives, and public engagement
Objective 5	Lead by example through use of electric vehicles wherever possible for delivering council service and promoting the benefits.

3. Introduction

Electric vehicles (EVs) have the potential to offer great benefits to Swale residents, businesses and visitors in terms of health, the environment and reduced running costs over the lifetime of the vehicle. Electric vehicles are part of the tool kit for decarbonising transport emissions and are an important component of improving local air quality and reducing premature deaths and health risks associated with exposure to toxic air.

The Swale Electric Vehicle strategy aims to create awareness of the challenge posed by the transition to electric vehicles and how Swale Borough Council can look to face this. Department for Transport data shows that demand for electric vehicles has increased exponentially over the last five years and is projected to expand rapidly over the next 30 years. It is important that there is sufficient and accessible charging infrastructure in place to support this transition to low emissions vehicles, whilst keeping abreast of emerging technologies and key developments surrounding charging infrastructure and sustainable transport.

Awareness of the infrastructure that will need to be introduced by a range of stakeholders including local authorities and the private sector is key, whilst creating a forward plan to ensure the Council plays a strong enabling role. Residents and the Council alike need to be forward thinking and resilient to the way our transport systems will have to change, however this is the alternative to what will be a very different world if we continue to depend on fossil fuels.

Swale Borough Council recognises its role in supporting the uptake of electric vehicles and in light of the Council declaring a climate and ecological emergency[1], this strategy will provide guidance on identifying the appropriate charging infrastructure, located in the right places, to support the level of electric vehicle uptake that will be required to reach the target of net-zero across the borough by 2030.

This document will address the Council's role as an electric vehicle enabler by understanding the key stakeholders, the current and future market, and where this fits into the national picture. Focus will also be placed upon installing infrastructure in a way that meets the borough's local needs and follows best practice, so that pedestrians and other pavement users are not adversely affected.

The objective of this document is to fulfil one of the aims of the Swale Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan (April 2020):

To develop an EV charging strategy including publicly accessible fast and rapid chargers, in council and private car parks (e.g. hotels, shopping centres), and working with KCC for on-street charging

The Swale Electric Vehicle Strategy will include:

- Clear vision and direction for the types and locations of charge points in Swale;
- Strategic and focused actions and measures to encourage Electric Vehicle uptake;
- Engagement and support process with all stakeholders and delivery partners on the installation of charge points;
- Recognition of the needs and demands of both EV and non-EV owners at the time of writing;
- Considerations of air quality improvement aspirations;
- Additional steps to futureproof the proposed strategy due to the nature of EV technology; and
- Implementation and delivery plan for the Electric Vehicle Strategy for 2022 - 2030.

The chart below shows how this Electric Vehicle Strategy will fit amongst Swale Borough Council's existing suite of policy documents.

[1] https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Climate-Change-and-Ecological-Emergency/Climate-Change-and-Ecological-Emergency-Motion.pdf

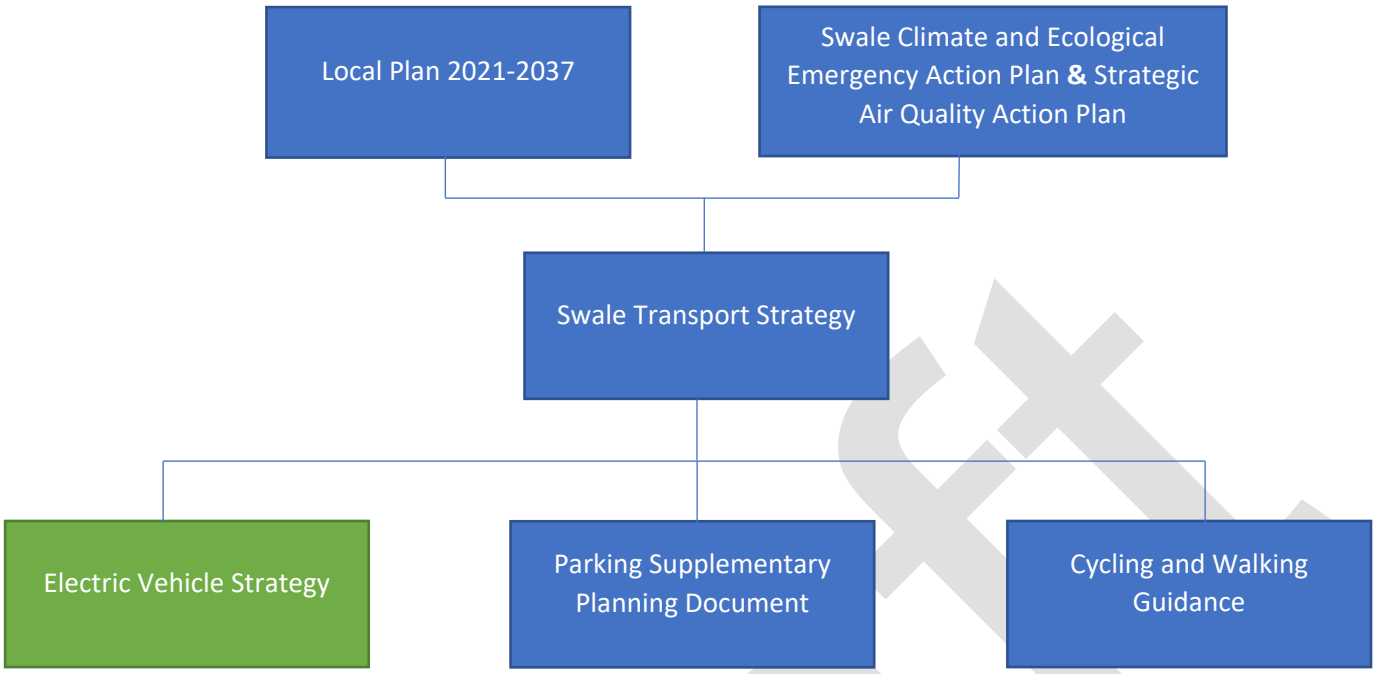

Figure 1 Existing SBC policy documents

4. National Position

4.1 National Context

It has been recognised in the National parking policy that restrictions on an individual's right to own and park cars are 'unrealistic', as restricting parking at the origin does not necessarily discourage car ownership. It is therefore important to encourage the sustainability of vehicle usage by taking steps to facilitate the switch to Electric Vehicles.

The uptake of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) has been increasing year on year: globally, EV stock has risen from 14,260 in 2010 to over 10 million in 2019 with the UK being one of the countries leading the way. Electric car registrations increased by 41% in 2020, despite the pandemic-related worldwide downturn in car sales. With the Government's target to end the sale of all new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030, on the basis of the existing market share, it is anticipated that EVs in the UK will reach between 2.7 and 10.6 million by 2030. This will be dependent on the work of the government and local authorities to produce the infrastructure necessary to support EV uptake.

Planning policy also supports the provision of infrastructure for ULEVs, with Paragraph 112 of the NPPF stating that local parking standards should require developments to: "be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations." The direction for Swale under this directive is set out in the Parking SPD. Other national legislation and policy will feed into establishing the UK's electric vehicle charging networking and is therefore important to be recognised in this document.

4.2 Road to Zero

The Road to Zero Strategy outlines how the government will support the transition to zero emission road transport, with a focus on developing world-class EV infrastructure, working in combination with the £400 million Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund[2].

The policies identified the government's long-term ambitions as:

- Reduce emissions from the vehicles already on our roads
- Drive the uptake of the cleanest new vehicles
- Reduce emissions from heavy goods vehicles and road freight
- Put the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles
- Support the development of one of the best electric vehicle infrastructures in the world
- Support local action

4.3 Automated and Electric Vehicles Act 2018

This legislation is part of the Government's industrial strategy to promote the development and deployment of both automated and electric vehicles and is in line with policies on climate change. The purpose of this legislation is both to amend the existing compulsory third party insurance framework by extending it to cover the use of automated vehicles and deal with electric and hydrogen powered vehicle charging infrastructure.

Part 2 of this Act relates to electric vehicle charging. It is intended to address incompatibility of charge points by requiring standard connectors for vehicles. It also improves access to charge points by requiring that they are accessible without membership, certain information is made available on charge points and there is a common method of payment.

4.4 Clean Air Strategy 2019

The Government's Clean Air strategy, published January 2019, sets out plans to meet ambitious legally binding international targets to reduce emissions of the five most damaging air pollutants by 2020 and 2030. This strategy outlines the government's ambitions relating to reducing air pollution, making air

[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-infrastructure-investment-fund

healthier to breathe, protecting nature and boosting the economy. The strategy sets out a clear direction for future air quality policies and goals. Emissions from road transport have been in the spotlight because of their impact on local air quality, but the government is committed to cutting air pollution from all forms of transport. As a local authority Swale has a statutory duty to improve air quality, as set out in the Air Quality Action Plan (2018-22)[3].

4.5 Climate Change Act

The Climate Change Act 2008 sets up a framework for the UK to achieve its long-term goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to ensure steps are taken towards adapting to the impact of climate change. The Act saw the UK tasked with reducing emissions by at least 80% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels. However, this target was made more ambitious in 2019 when the UK became the first major economy to commit to a 'net zero' target. The new target requires the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050, reducing emissions by 78% compared to 1990 levels by 2035.

[3] https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s11020/Appendix%20I%20AQAP_SwaleBC_2018%20nv%202.pdf#:~:text=This%20Air%20Quality%20Action%20Plan%20%28AQAP%29%20is%20being,in%20Swale%20Borough%20Council%20between%202018%20and%202022.

5. Local Position

5.1 Location

The Borough is located on the North Kent coast and measures approximately 144 square miles. Swale has an estimated population of 150,000 (BEIS figure 2019) and is predominately rural with three main urban areas: Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheerness. Canterbury, Ashford, Maidstone and Medway surround Swale, creating a high demand on transport infrastructure. The area is well connected by road, with access to the M2, the M20, M25 and M26. Based on 2011 Census data, car ownership in Swale has risen to meet the Kent average.

The borough includes extensive and important rural areas, accounting for around a quarter of the population, which take in the whole of the Isle of Sheppey and part of the Kent Downs area of outstanding natural beauty.

Swale's demographic make-up includes a mix of affluent and less affluent areas, but in general the borough is less well-off than is typical for the south-east. The diverse makeup of the borough will require an Electric Vehicle Strategy which recognises the challenges faced by different areas, populations and sectors.

Swale's charging network will be impacted by policy created at both the county and district level. The below publications include commitments to supporting electric vehicles, with this document bringing these aspirations together through a coherent strategy.

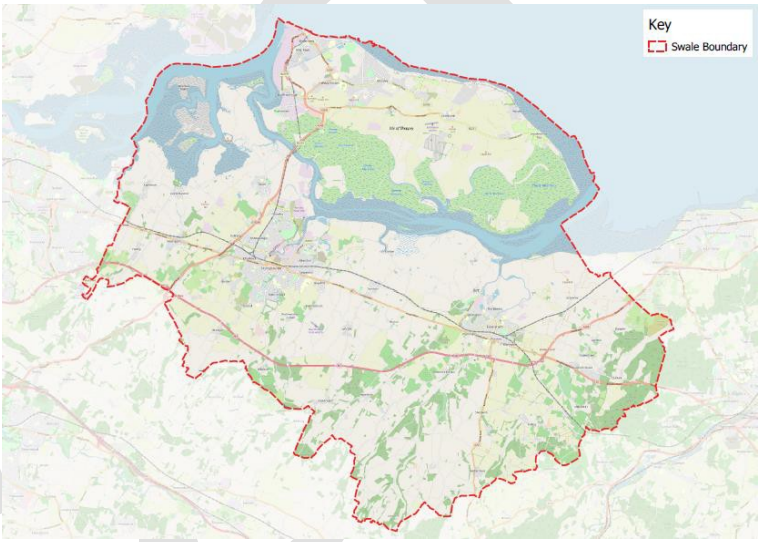

Figure 2 – Swale Borough Boundary

5.2 Local Policy

5.2.1 Swale Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan

The Swale Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan[4] includes the below actions in relation to electric vehicles:

Action	Timescale	Progress
Install EV charging points across the borough.	2025	*8 charge points installed in council-owned car parks in 2020*
Encourage high-quality, medium-high density dwellings near to transport nodes. Development could be supplemented by restricted parking, and EV pool-cars.	Short	*Supported through the local plan review*
Develop EV charging strategy including publicly accessible fast and rapid chargers, in council and private car parks (e.g. hotels, shopping centres), and working with KCC for on-street charging.	Short	*Complete*
Replace Swale Borough Council's fleet vehicles with electric vehicles	Short	*This action was completed in December 2020*

Table 1 – CEE Action Plan 2020 EV Targets

This document expands on how these actions will continue to be achieved and embedded in the council's operations to increase and encourage EV ownership across the borough.

[4] https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/Climate-Change-and-Ecological-Emergency/SBC%20CEE%20Action%20Plan%20Final%20with%20illustrations.pdf

5.2.2 Swale Borough Council Strategic Air Quality Action Plan 2018-2022

This Air Quality Action Plan[8] (AQAP) outlines the strategic and local actions to improve air quality in Swale Borough Council between 2018 and 2022. The current Air Quality Action Plan expires at the end of 2022 in which the Environmental Protection (EP) Team in collaboration with a stakeholder steering group will review and update the AQAP. The EP team will prioritise the most effective and feasible measures to ensure they are delivered, as part of the update.

The key priorities of the AQAP are to develop measures which deliver compliance of air quality objectives through a combination of strategic and local focused AQMA measures. The plan identifies measures which target reductions in emissions from vehicle fleets (HGV, LGV and cars). Measures within the updated AQAP will emphasize and encourage the switch to zero emission vehicles in line with this Electric Vehicle Strategy.

5.2.3 Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (2020)

Outlined below are the key findings of this strategy document:

- 14.3% increase in the number of vehicles on major roads in Kent between 2006 and 2016
- 43 Air Quality Management Areas, where air pollutants have been known to exceed government objectives
- Only a 4.5% fall in carbon emissions from transport since 2005
- Kent and Medway's mortality rate associated with poor air quality is worse than the national average[7]

Low carbon technologies such as electric vehicles and local renewable energy generation pose a challenge to the electricity grid network in Kent and Medway which is already significantly constrained, and which could inhibit future growth. Therefore, Swale must work with KCC to engage with the energy utility companies to create a more resilient, smart and innovative local energy network to ensure we have the energy we need, when we need it, at the right price and without any negative environmental impacts.

The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emission Strategy has shown that much of the county is already subject to electricity grid network constraints, which is making new connections increasingly difficult, particularly for new energy generation projects. Electricity demand is also expected to grow significantly to 2050, driven by the growth in electric vehicles and increased electrification of heating, which could see up to 60% of homes using heat pumps. A drive towards locally generated renewable energy, often from smaller, more dispersed sources, will further ramp up pressure on an already constrained electricity grid network.

Ambitions set out by Kent and Medway to which Swale can contribute and work as an important stakeholder:

High Level Activities:

- Work collaboratively with the public and private sector to roll out EV charging points and infrastructure for walking and cycling
- Support public transport providers, including school transport providers, to use lower emission vehicles

Short term (by 2023):

- Implementation of low-carbon mobility hubs for electric cars, electric bikes and push bikes, to include battery storage and solar panels where possible. Hubs to be located across the public sector estate and car parks, linking with communities, village halls and business parks.

For longer term consideration (by 2030):

- Increased control, regulation and charging for public parking in favour of electric vehicles and public transport

- Increased involvement in regulation of public transport and taxis to tackle poor air quality and lower greenhouse gas emissions

5.2.4 Swale Transport Strategy

Target 6 of the Transport Strategy 2014-31[5] aims to reduce NO_2 levels to below an annual average of 40 µg/m3 to comply with EU directives on air quality. Due to this, new developments will be required to develop robust travel plans with infrastructure measures as required as well as targets. The Swale Transport Strategy 2022-2037 (Draft)[6] replaces the Swale Transport Strategy 2014-2031 and provides a supporting evidence base to the Swale Local Plan (2021-2037) and has been prepared to provide the transport policy framework for Swale to the year 2037.

Two of the main objectives of this Transport Strategy are to:

- Identify the transport improvements and solutions that are required to accommodate the anticipated changes in travel demand and promote a shift towards sustainable travel;
- Promote sustainable travel as a measure to address localised air quality concerns and the global climate crisis.

5.2.5 Car Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document 2019

It has been recognised that parking design should accord with the most relevant technical requirements/standards. Justification and discussion of the type of charger with wired connection would need to be undertaken with officers at the application stage to ensure an appropriate provision. For example, it may be that a slow or fast charger would be suitable for office and residential uses where vehicles are parked for longer, yet for retail uses, a rapid charger may be more appropriate.

For residential developments, each dwelling with off-street parking should provide an electrical outlet within close proximity of the parking space. For communal residential parking areas and other car parks for non-residential uses, it is important to provide a mix of 'active' and 'passive' charging spaces (where the electricity supply is installed, however, the physical charging infrastructure is not, allowing the spaces to be converted into fully active spaces at a later date).

Details of how ULEV parking will be allocated and managed should be included within Transport Assessments submitted as part of planning applications. This should also set out how ULEV parking for visitors and disabled users will be accommodated. The parking standards for ULEVs are found in Table 2. This strategy upholds and encourages the enforcement of the ULEV requirements in the Parking SPD.

Residential Uses	
Dwellings with On-Plot Parking	1 Active Charging Point* per dwelling
Dwellings with unallocated communal parking	10% Active Charging Spaces with all other spaces to be provided as Passive Charging Spaces
Visitor Parking	A minimum of two visitor spaces or 10% of the total visitor provision (which ever is greatest) should be provided with passive charging provisions suitable for future conversion
Non-Residential Uses	
All Uses with Off-Street Parking	10% Active Charging Spaces with all other spaces to be provided as Passive Charging Spaces

* Please note, where reference is made to a charging point, more than one socket can be provided. The charging point that is implemented should be sufficient for the needs of the dwelling.

Table 2 Parking SPD EV References

Other recommendations within the SPD include:

- Mechanisms for discouraging high emission vehicle use and encouraging the uptake of low emission fuels and technologies
- Car club provision within development or support given to local car club/EV car clubs
- Designation of parking spaces for low emission vehicles
- Differential parking charges depending on vehicle emissions

[5] https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s993/Appendix%20II.pdf

[6] https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s16438/Appendix%20III%20Swale%20Transport%20Strategy%202022-2037.pdf

- All commercial vehicles should comply with current European Emission Standards
- Fleet operations should provide a strategy for considering reduced emissions, low emission fuels and technologies
- Use of ultra-low emission service vehicles
- Supporting the Highways Authority to provide on-street EV charging where suitable
- Contribution to low emission vehicle refuelling infrastructure
- Bike/e-bike hire schemes
- Contribution to renewable fuel and energy generation projects
- Incentives for the take-up of low emission technologies and fuel

5.2.6 Air Quality and Planning - Technical Guidance

(and any updated versions)

This document[7], alongside other similar versions across the Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership, seeks to develop consistent EV charging standards for new developments across the county. Support for electric vehicle infrastructure within this document, much of which is in-line with the Parking SPD, includes measures such as:

- Provision of a Car Club Scheme within the development or support given to local car club/eV car clubs
- Active and passive EV charging infrastructure – beyond standard measures.
- Parking arrangements including reserved spaces for EV/car

[7] https://services.swale.gov.uk/assets/planning%20policy%202019/FINAL%20AQ%20Planning%20Tech%20Guide%20July%202019.pdf

6. Current EV Position & Charging Network

6.1 Air Quality Management Areas

At a local level, Swale has committed to ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net- zero by 2030.

By 2031, it is anticipated that there will be almost 180,000 new homes and nearly 400,000 extra people, a 24% increase from 2011 levels, in Kent. The local economy is also expected to expand, creating an additional 170,300 jobs by 2031 a 21% increase from 2011 levels, in line with forecast population growth. It is estimated that in 2017, there were 922 deaths associated with particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) exposure across Kent and Medway.

It has been identified that pollution from road vehicles is the main cause of poor air quality across Kent and Medway and is also the largest source of carbon emissions. Five Air Quality Management Areas have been identified in Swale, with diesel cars as the greatest contributors to NOx source contributions:

	East Street AQMA	Newington AQMA	Ospringe & Teynham AQMA4	St Pauls AQMA
Petrol Cars	6.8%	6.8%	8.2%	7.0%
Diesel Cars	51.3%	50.3%	62.8%	53.6%
Petrol LGVs	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Diesel LGVs	20.4%	22.5%	9.4%	15.4%
Rigid HGVs	11.4%	12.2%	8.2%	14.5%
Artic HGVs	8.1%	6.0%	10.3%	6.6%
Buses/Coaches	1.3%	1.4%	0.3%	2.4%
Motorcycles	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%
Full Hybrid Petrol Cars	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
Plug-in Hybrid Petrol Cars	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Full Hybrid Diesel Cars	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%

Table 3 – AQMA NOx contribution sources

Since the analysis shown above was carried out, Swale have identified a new AQMA at Keycol Hill. As congestion from road traffic continues to be a problem, it is imperative to find a solution that encompasses the switch to less polluting vehicles, but also encourages residents and visitors to use alternative modes of sustainable transport. Keeping the county moving is a high priority, as congestion negatively impacts productivity levels and air quality." The KCC Energy and Low Emissions Strategy sets out targets to support the switch away from petrol and diesel to clean, alternatively fuelled vehicles.

This document aims to set out how EV charging will be included in the wider strategy to tackle air pollution in AQMA areas. These areas will be prioritised and investigated for charging hubs, working with partners such as parish councils to find suitable locations for EV charging. EV charging is a solution that is likely to be considered as part of a potential Low Emission Zone, which the guidelines set out in this document would need to inform if implemented.

6.2 Current EV uptake

The Council monitors usage of its public car parks in relation to vehicle type. Data on EVs is currently obtained using RingGo, which accounts for 53% of total transactions, equal to 359,696 transactions (as of Q3 2021). Electric vehicles currently make up 3.41% of transactions (2021/22 Financial year, YTD figure up until end of Q3).

Financial Year	EV Market Share of Parking Transactions
2019/20	1.87%
2020/21	2.43%
2021/22 (YTD as of January 01 2022)	3.41%

Table 4 – Growth in EV Market Share of Parking Transactions in Swale

This shows consistent growth of the market share from previous years. This 3.41% market share represents a total of 12,266 EV transactions in SBC car parks. As this data is only obtained from RingGo it's likely that the true number of EV customers using SBC car parks is up to double this amount.

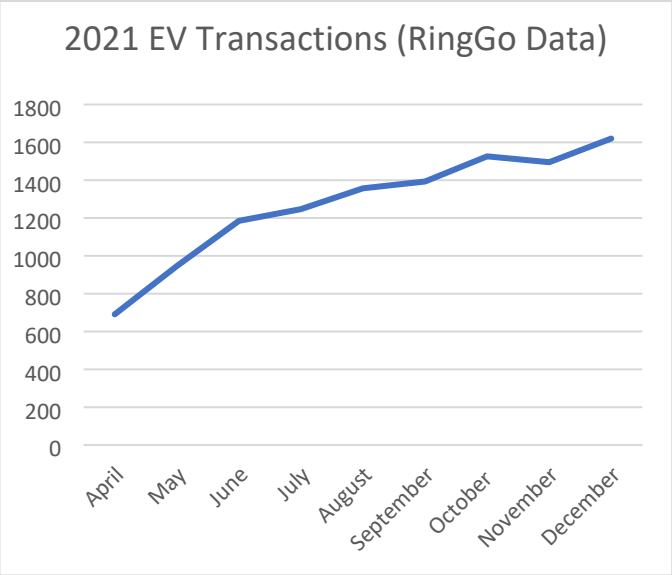

Figure 3 – 2021 EV Transactions Data in Swale Car Parks

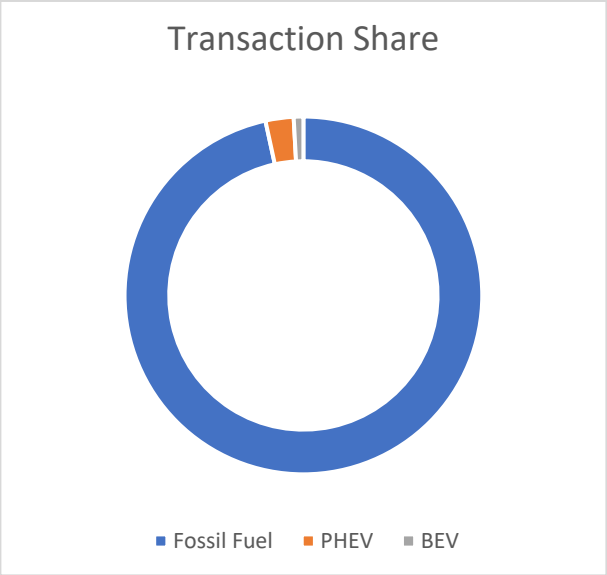

Figure 4 – Transaction Share of Fossil Fuel, Plug-In Hybrid, and Battery Electric Vehicles in Swale Car Parks in 2021

The latest Department for Transport figures (July 2020) show that there are 317,266 electric vehicles registered in the UK. Of which, 5,269 vehicles are registered in Kent, and 324 vehicles were within Swale. Table 5, below, shows the steady growth in the numbers of plug-in electric vehicles licensed across the UK from 2015 to 2020, with a steeper increase in 2021 numbers. Similarly, ownership levels in Swale are now ten times higher than they were in 2015.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Swale	51	80	116	161	237	324	525
Kent	841	1469	2263	3232	4406	6028	8544
UK	42k	74k	116k	168k	224k	317k	564k

Table 5 - Registered ULEV Ownership Figures (Q2) (DfT)

Figure 6, below, shows the number of registered EVs in each Kent local authority area in 2020. Sevenoaks (746) has the highest number of EV's registered, whilst Dover (257) has the lowest.

The 324 EVs in Swale represent 0.35% of the total 93,000 registered vehicles in the borough in 2020. Across Kent, the borough with the highest proportions of EVs is Sevenoaks (0.88%) and the lowest is

Swale (0.35%). The UK average is 0.8%.

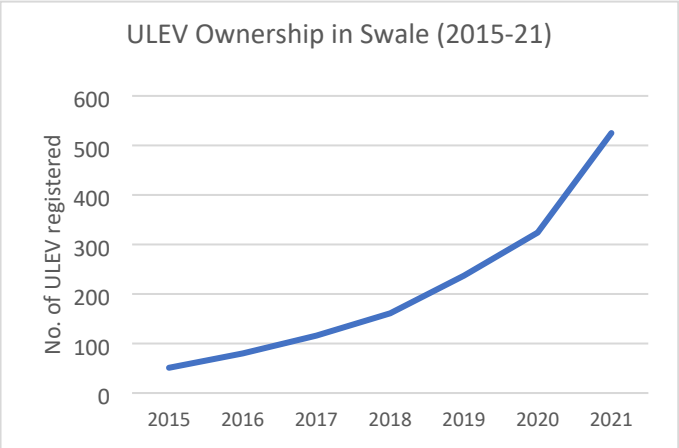

Figure 5 - Rising Trend in EV Ownership in Swale (DfT)

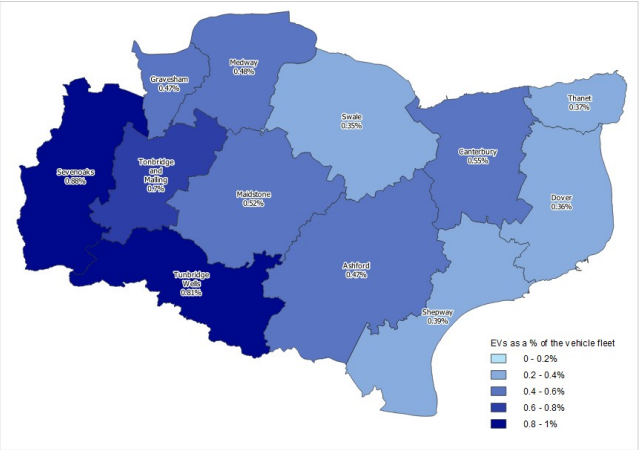

Figure 6 - Number of registered EV's per borough as proportion of total vehicle stock (Q2, 2020 - DfT)

6.3 Current EV Charging Network/Infrastructure

6.3.1 Public Charging

The national charging network has been growing in recent years to meet the demand created by an increase in electric vehicles being purchased. With the range of these vehicles improving, there is an emphasis on installing infrastructure that can charge larger batteries quicker, therefore favouring rapid or fast charge points (see section 6.2).

As of 1 July 2021 (UK):

- there were 24,374 public electric vehicle charging devices available in the UK
- of the total devices available, 4,551 were rapid chargers

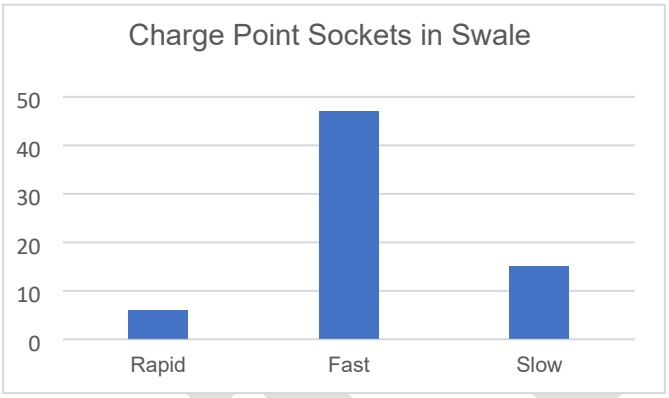

Figure 7 – number of charge point sockets in Swale by charging speed

Of these, there were 22 charge points registered via ZapMap in Swale (a full list can be found in Appendix B). Charge points have been installed at supermarket car parks, private workplace car parks, council owned car parks and other destinations. Some private residential charge points have also been registered via 'Zap Home' for public use and are included in this list. The connection types at these charge points include rapid, fast, and slow chargers, as show in Figure 7. This results in 68 separate charging bays/sockets across the borough's charging network. There is a mixture of charging speeds available; 7kW, 22kW and 50+kW units. A review of the comments left by users on Zap Map show that points are regularly out of service and unusable. This is common across the UK where businesses install low costs units or are not incentivised to maintain them. There are seven different charge point operators, each with different fees, Apps and accounts required.

Overall, there are currently few accessible charge points within the borough which suggests the majority of current EV users registered in Swale have access to private off-street charging facilities or perhaps charge outside of the borough. However, there has been an improvement through the Council's installation of charge points in car parks in the last 2 years, and this strategy commits to continue with this.

6.3.2 Residential Charging Infrastructure

In addition to these, Swale residents have been installing charge points at their properties to charge a vehicle at home. These are often 'slow' chargers which are utilised overnight. These charge points are to be encouraged, particularly 'smart chargers' which are designed to draw power from the grid when it is cheapest and in lower demand, lowering pressures on national electricity capacity. The national government Electric Vehicles Homecharge Scheme[8] encourages homeowners to install charge points at their properties by receiving up to £350 towards the cost. The below graph demonstrates Swale's current uptake of this compared to other Kent districts in 2021; this strategy sets out the commitment to continue to promote these schemes, as private and home charging will be an integral part of Swale's transition to electric vehicles. Work will also need to be undertaken to support those without access to off-street parking, therefore limiting their ability to charge at home (further details in section 6.3).

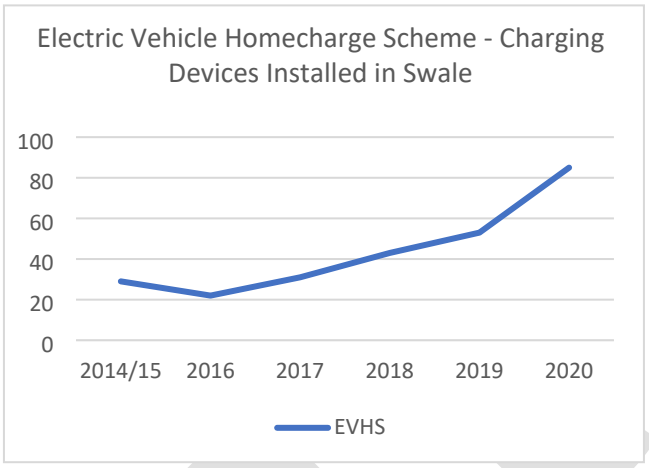

Figure 9 - Number of charging devices installed at domestic properties in 2021 in Swale via the EV Homecharge Scheme

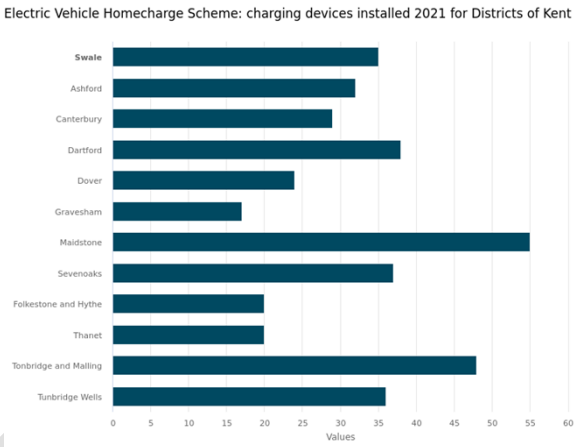

Figure 8 – Number of charging devices installed at domestic properties in 2021 across Kent districts via the EV Homecharge Scheme

[8] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/customer-guidance-electric-vehicle-homecharge-scheme/electric-vehicle-homecharge-scheme-guidance-for-customers

7. Future Charging Network

7.1 Future EV uptake scenarios

The number of EVs in all regions of the UK is expected to rise rapidly over the next ten years, accelerated by the ban on new internal combustion engine vehicles in 2030. Then by 2050 it is expected almost all vehicles will be electric. UK Power Networks set out the below future energy scenarios and have produced the below estimations of EV (PHEV and BEV) numbers in Swale by 2050. It is important to note that even in the lowest scenario, we can expect around 20,000 EVs in Swale by 2030.

- Low (Steady Progression) – Current trend progressing with little input from national power networks and authority stakeholders
- Medium (System Transformation/Consumer Transformation) – investment and encouragement from the system, network and stakeholders
- High (Leading the Way) – High level of investment and encouragement from the highest level of government, ultimately leading to lower levels of EV ownership due to overall lower car ownership in place of active travel and public transport.

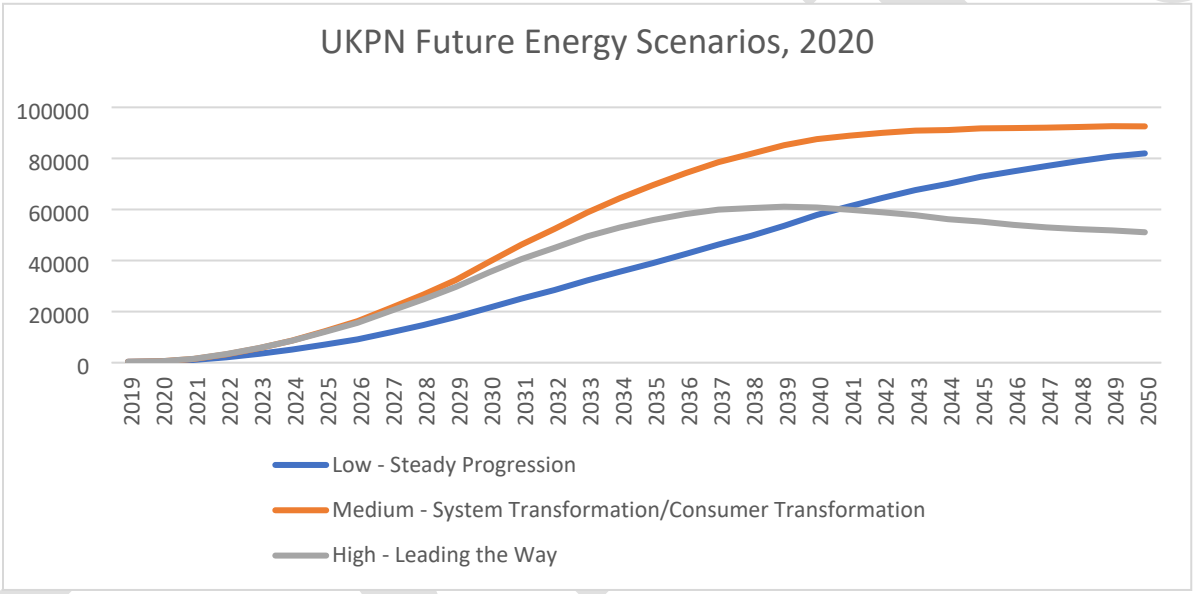

Figure 10 – UK Power Networks Future Energy Scenarios, 2020

7.2 7.2 Types of Charging

A charging network should be varied and include different types of charging infrastructure operating at different speeds (table x) to provide for a range of needs. Vehicle owners in Swale are at a relatively early stage in the adoption of electric vehicles and it will be particularly important that a network of public chargers continue to be introduced to help drive uptake. Different types of charge point are better suited to different locations, and design considerations need to be taken into account due to this (see Appendix D).

	Slow	Fast	Rapid	Ultra-Rapid
Power Rating	>7 kW	22kW	<50kW	120-350kW
Electrical Supply Type	AC	Usually AC, DC available at higher rates	Usually DC AC also available	DC
Charging time	6 to 8 hours	4 to 6 hours	25 to 40 minutes	10 to 15 mins

			(80%)	
Connector	Type 1 or Type 2 Mode 2 or Mode 3	Type 1 or Type 2 Mode 3	CHAdeMO / CCS Type 2 (AC)	CHAdeMO CCS
Best Use	Residential or overnight charging	Home / workplace / destinations	Destinations / long distance trips	Long distance trips
EV Compatibility	All	All	Not all BEVs and very few PHEVs	Very few vehicles currently on the market

Table 6 – Categorisation and features of slow, fast, rapid and ultra-rapid EV charging

A range of scenarios, stakeholders and factors need to be considered to ensure the correct charging network for Swale is implemented.

7.3 On vs Off-Street

The debate between on and off-street charging provisions is a complex one and continues as technology develops. This is particularly pertinent to Swale due to the high number of properties without off-street parking. This prevents many car owners from conducting slow, home charging overnight – often viewed to be the cheapest and most convenient form of EV charging. Additionally, many of Swale's higher density, terraced housing without off-street parking falls within areas with the highest levels of deprivation. This therefore creates another barrier to many of Swale's residents in switching to Electric Vehicles, especially as the 2030 deadline for the end of sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles looms.

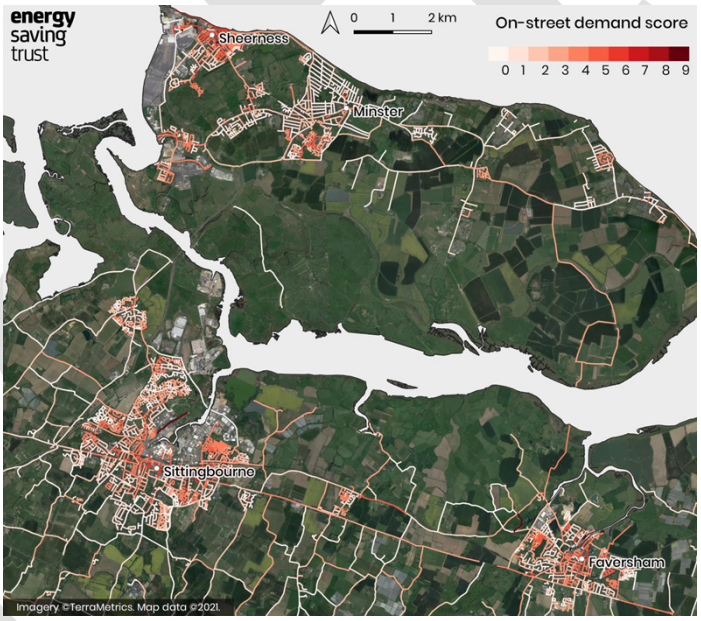

Figure 11 Map showing the on-street demand score for streets in and around the primary towns

However, on-street charging poses difficulties such as balancing existing non-EV demand, disabled and other permitted parking, and existing infrastructure.

Additionally, on-street charging must work around the existing 'Electric Vehicle Charging on the Highway' guidance from Kent Country Council. Headlines of this document include:

- KCC will not allow cables to trail across the footways from a private property or EVCP to a vehicle as this would present unacceptable hazards for pedestrians
- KCC will not currently allow cable gullies to be installed from a private property or EVCP to a vehicle as this would result in a maintenance liability and potential trip hazard.
- Although there is a preference for grouping chargers in hubs, the guidance does set out the process of applying under S115 for a district council to install EVCPs on the highway land. Overall, however, it is more cost effective, with less design barriers, to place charging infrastructure in hub locations in car parks.
- Placing EV charging infrastructure on the highway should only be selected as an option where it is not possible to serve demand elsewhere.
- KCC will not currently allow private EVCP's to be installed on the highway or charging cables to be brought from a private property to the highway land

The full guidance sets out the criteria that must be met to place an EV charger on the highway, however this strategy aligns with KCC to encourage charging hubs in car parks ahead of on-street solutions as the priority direction for charging infrastructure.

As more innovative on-street charging develops, this Electric Vehicle Strategy sets out the intention to consider these solutions alongside KCC, where required in future years. On-street charging solutions will have to be considered on a pilot basis in the short-medium term to investigate the most practical and accessible solutions for Swale residents. Additionally, this Strategy is open to solutions such as Gul-Es[9], looking towards trial projects by other local authorities, but recognising the requirement to comply with KCC guidance and S115 processes.

At present, the current pathway endeavours to use council owned car parks to meet charging demand in areas with low levels of off-street parking, with charging hubs as the central feature. This will reduce costs, ensure easy access to charge points and reduce risks associated with roadside charging, whilst understanding the existing demand for non-EVs particularly in resident parking scheme areas. The council recognises the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme[10] as a key enabling tool.

Where there are areas with on-street parking demand without council-owned car parks, Swale Borough Council commits to working with local partners and stakeholders to work creatively to find solutions to EV charging demand, particularly in rural areas.

7.4 Improving the Public Network

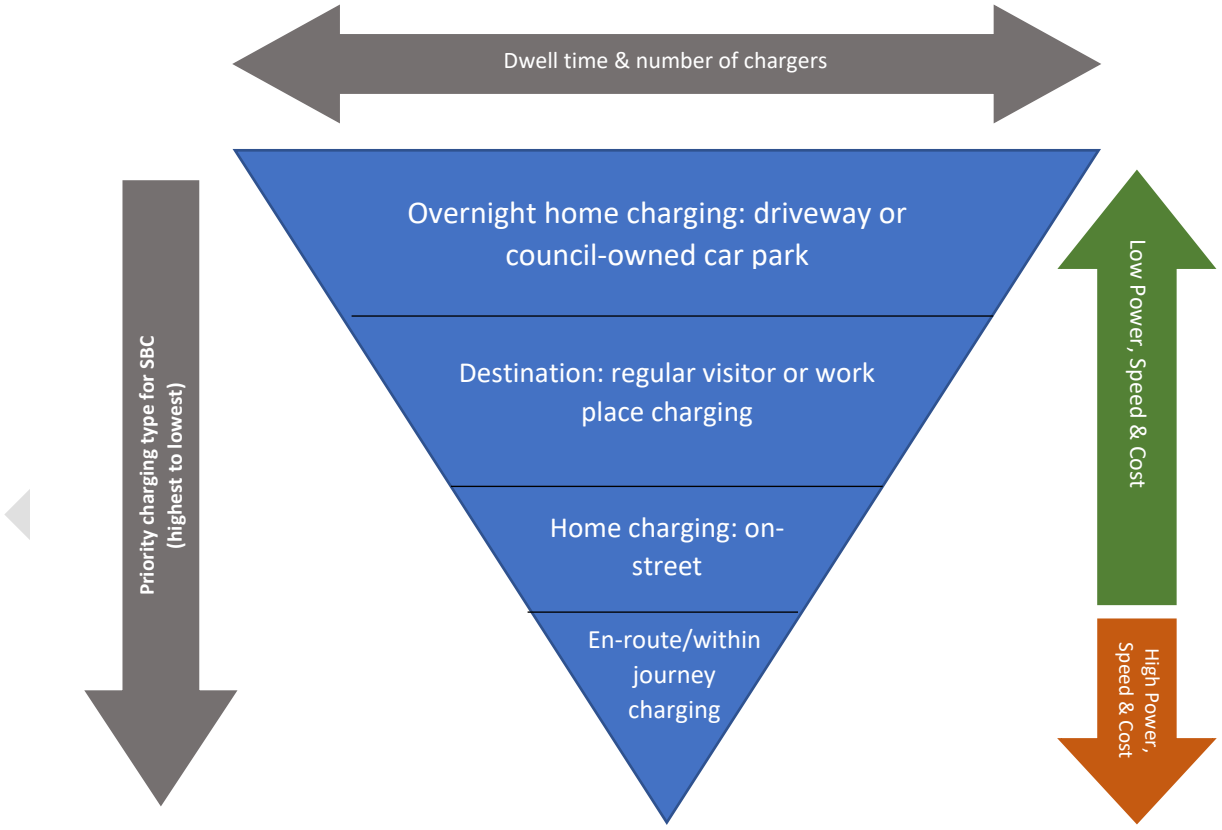

Figure 12 Types of EV charging by priority for SBC from highest to lowest

[9] https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/case-study/oxgul-e/

[10] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grants-for-local-authorities-to-provide-residential-on-street-chargepoints/grants-to-provide-residential-on-street-chargepoints-for-plug-in-electric-vehicles-guidance-for-local-authorities

The Committee on Climate Change, which advises the government, says there should be one EV charger for every thousand cars by 2030. This suggests that in across all sectors in Swale there should be at least 75 EV chargers by the end of the decade, although this target seems unambitious.

As indicated in the above diagram, charging infrastructure will be prioritised in the order of: slow home charging on driveway or at local council owned car park; destination charging for work or visiting (e.g. town centres); on-street home charging (as described in section 6.3); and finally en-route rapid charging points.

Swale Borough Council commits to keeping charges in-line with the market level for similar speed public charge points to encourage take up of EV ownership, and importantly, to accommodate those that do not have access to off-street parking and lower residential electricity rates.

Swale must work with KCC to engage with the energy utility companies to create a more resilient, smart and innovative local energy system to ensure we have the energy we need, when we need it, at the right price and without any negative environmental impacts.

7.5 Charging Hubs

Electric Vehicle Charging Hubs are recognised as centralised, convenient locations in which charging is accessible and reliable. To ensure residents are aware of their nearest charging location and to increase the likelihood of an available charging socket when they arrive, the Council will prioritise grouping charge points in hubs. Charging hubs provide additional benefits, such as a more streamlined approach to improving the necessary power infrastructure. There must be sufficient power infrastructure available to supply the EVCP. SBC to ensure communication with the Distribution Network Operator (UKPN).

Charging hubs also harbour greater potential to be supplied by on-site renewable energy sources, such as solar car park canopies and we will investigate the potential for creative solutions such as these. There is also greater flexibility and incentives to offer disabled charging bays where there are higher numbers of concentrated charge points, however solutions for on-street charging for disabled home-owners is recognised as an area of importance as EV uptake increases in future years.

Where possible sites will have potential to support multiple bays, either active or passive. This will ensure EV owners can be confident they will have EVCP availability, as charging demand increases. Double socket charge points are preferable due to their cost effectiveness.

7.6 Design and Site Considerations

When designing charge point locations and identifying potential sites and car parks, consideration should be given to the following:

- Driver and pedestrian safety
  - Adequate lighting where necessary to create safe user access at all times of day
  - Cables should not be run in such a way to cause an obstruction. More specifically, it would be unacceptable where this creates a trip hazard or is at body or vehicle height. Any cable obstruction will have negative implications for road safety
  - There should be sufficient drainage, especially near basements and in buildings to mitigate flash flooding or fire-fighting measures
  - Not positioning charge points too close to busy junctions or crossings
  - Equipment installation should be in accordance with the Institution of Engineering and Technology's 'IET Code of Practice for Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment' ISBN:184919839X
- Inclusivity
  - Interoperability - Ensuring charge points can be used by all vehicle makes and models
  - Ensuring drivers do not need to sign up to a specific network for membership in order to charge

  - Easy to use for disabled users - there should be a sufficient distance of level surface around the charge point to allow easy access to the charge point by wheelchair users on the footway. Other considerations include having a dropped curb where required, ensuring the slant of the screen is appropriate for people with visual impairments, and other measures.
  - Ideally chargers should be within close proximity to the residence or destination of the users.

- Coherence
  - Easy to use interfaces and payment methods
  - Clear signing directing drivers to charge points. Additionally, well aligned equipment that contrasts with the local environment will help increase the awareness of the existence of a charge point for pedestrians who may be visually or cognitively impaired.
  - Clear signing for length of stay/marked parking bays
- Attractiveness
  - Charge point may need to blend into existing surroundings e.g. heritage sites/conservation areas
  - Infrastructure should not clutter the streetscape
- Reliability
  - 24-hour access to charge points
  - Efficient maintenance and repair of the infrastructure to reduce downtime

A combination of technology change and behaviour change will result in changing infrastructure needs, so all parties should plan and procure for future projected need instead of for present need. This means finding a suitable balance between providing enough infrastructure to service current and expected demand and guarding against over-procuring. When installing public charge points, laying passive cabling, for example, at the same time will make it easier to install additional charge points at the same location in the future, as and when demand increases. Having said this, installing modular infrastructure, which can easily be updated without having to replace the entire unit, is vital. EV range will increase and charging times will fall as vehicle, charge point and battery technology all improve. Consumer charging behaviour may also change, supporting the importance of futureproofing.

7.7 Future Proofing

Delivering an electric vehicle charging network that meets the demands of residents, businesses and visitors, will involve keeping on top of emerging technologies and charging options as they develop, to ensure infrastructure remains fit for purpose and meets the needs and demands of users. This will also ensure less expenditure to replace obsolete charge points, increase public confidence, will create a practical and robust network, and reduced waste from removing infrastructure. The charging network in Swale will also need to compliment the growth of the national network and solutions introduced by the private sector. With advances in technology, some of which we are already witnessing, the charging needs of those within Swale may change.

Technological advances to be kept abreast of include:

Load Levelling	The capacity of the local electrical grid can limit the speed of chargers which can be installed, especially when multiple units are installed at one location. Load levelling is a basic form of smart charging which can vary the amount of power routed to each unit. When only one vehicle is charging then the maximum power can be provided but when multiple cars charge simultaneously then the power can be equally split between them.
Smart Charging	A system where the time at which the vehicle is charged is controlled to avoid overloading the local grid connection and avoid spikes in demand nationally. It has two advantages: • It allows car owners to charge at times when electricity is cheaper • Adjusting the time of charging to avoid local constraints. This might alleviate the need and cost of local grid upgrades
Vehicle to Grid	As the number of electric vehicles grows, there will be an increased demand on the national grid. One ‘smart charging’ solution is ‘Vehicle to Grid’ (V2G) which uses a

	bidirectional charger to feed electricity from an electric vehicle battery back into the grid, at peak times. At present this technology is in the experimental phase and it is not expected to be widely used in the short to medium term. Overall, it appears better suited to domestic charging. Uni directional chargers remain appropriate for public charging points, but it is important to monitor developments in smart charging to ensure that the infrastructure installed is future proof.
Wireless Charging	Wireless induction charging relies on a transmitter coil in a charging pad using electromagnetic energy to transmit power to a receiver coil within the object to be charged. Essentially, a car would simply need to drive over a charging pad and remain stationary in order to begin charging.
Hydrogen	Green and Blue Hydrogen generation is increasing in feasibility, with large fuel providers introducing hydrogen fuelling stations in the UK. While there are future plans for hydrogen stations to operate in the same way as a petrol station pump, it is recognised that this is unlikely to become a widely utilised fuel type in non-commercial transport. This strategy sets out the aspiration to investigate local hydrogen generation and supply, however focusing on the commercial viability of this solution.
Retractable Bollards	The development of low- impact charging solutions such as retractable bollards that sit flush to the pavement and can be raised using an app. These may provide a solution as and when on-street charging is deemed appropriate in future years.
Battery Size	The capability of chargers and the size of batteries are expected to improve significantly. In 2017, the speed of commercially available chargers on street increased by over 300%.

Table 7 – Technological advances with an impact on future-proofing charging infrastructure

8 Education and Engagement

8.1 Resident Consultation

Ahead of the completion of this Electric Vehicle Strategy, resident engagement was conducted on the matter of sustainable transport options. Questions were asked to provide evidence and inform decisions of future charge points.

In a survey conducted between 24th May – 7th July 2021, 267 respondents provided answers on plans for potential new EV charge points in the borough. Important findings from the survey include:

- 12.2% of respondents currently own an electric vehicle or plug-in hybrid
- 36.22% of respondents indicated that they intend to purchase an electric vehicle or plug-in hybrid within the next 5 years
- 25.4% cited not having off-street parking as the main barrier to purchasing an electric vehicle or plug-in hybrid, whilst 38.89% indicated this was due to there not being enough charge points
- 73.23% indicated that they would 'strongly support' or 'somewhat support' an EV charge point being installed in a car park near their place of residence
- When asked where residents would like to see charge points being installed, a high number expressed 'all council owned car parks' as their response

This strategy recognises the benefits of consulting with residents and other stakeholders to ensure a charging networking that is right for Swale. Swale Borough Council will continue to engage with residents on this topic.

8.2 Leading from the Front

8.2.1 Our Fleet

As part of Swale Borough Council's commitment to electric vehicles, it is important to 'lead from the front'. 2021 saw the fleet replaced with nine Nissan Env200 vans, charged at the Swale House council offices in Sittingbourne via eight new EV chargers.

Carbon Trust analysis indicated that our fleet accounts for 40 tCO_2 (2018/19) – we are already seeing a reduction, with 8474kg of carbon saved in the first year, from charging our fleet at the Swale House charge points alone (additional charging across the borough not included in this figure). Three environmental warden vans, three green space vans, two dog warden vans and a parking services van are now out on the road alongside the Mayor's car which was upgraded to an electric vehicle in December 2020. The new electric vans join the two Nissan Leaf electric cars already used by the council's civil enforcement team.

The council is also using its Commissioning Strategy to ensure that major contracts also utilise electric vehicles wherever possible. The grounds maintenance contract (2021) has also been updated to include provisions to replace diesel vehicles with EVs starting in year 1 and increasing over the contract period.

8.2.2 Car Clubs

Car Clubs have been proven to assist and complement the transition away from ICE vehicles. They provide socially inclusive, low emission mobility which helps to break dependency on private car ownership. Pay as you go cars offer affordable, occasional access to cars to benefit individuals. Car clubs provide their members with convenient access to cleaner vehicles without the hassles and expense of ownership (such as tax, MOT, fuel, servicing, repairs, depreciation and parking). For members who drive less than 6,000 – 8,000 miles per year, a car club could save up to £3,500 a

year[11]. This is therefore an affordable entry level access to electric vehicles, as well as encouraging use of public and active travel.

The introduction and encouragement of Car Clubs across Swale is being utilised for multiple purposes:

- to support residents wishing to move away from private car ownership
- encourage active travel
- provide a solution to businesses to looking for more sustainable travel plans
- provide an opportunity for residents to 'trial' an electric vehicle before purchase through car club hire

The scheme has initially launched in Faversham, with future expansion across the borough encouraged through s106 contributions or direct developer introduction. EV charging infrastructure will need to consider the car club and future expansion as a priority 'customer'.

Work around Car Clubs is complementary to Swale's Active Travel work and encouragement of public transport, encouraging lower car ownership. It is recognised that reducing congestion and overall numbers of cars will still be important to achieving the aims of a net-zero Swale, however Electric Vehicles will play a large part in the solution for many residents.

8.3 Businesses

In addition to the charge-points installed by businesses for customer use, many have installed charge points as part of travel plans encouraging staff to use electric vehicles. At present, the Workplace Charging Scheme[12] provides up to £350 per socket towards the cost of a charge-point for staff or fleet use. Swale's uptake of this scheme at present is mid-range when compared to other Kent districts. Promotion of the scheme to businesses, as well as support for creating and implementing sustainable travel plans will be an integral part of the strategy to increase EV uptake across the borough and across the sector.

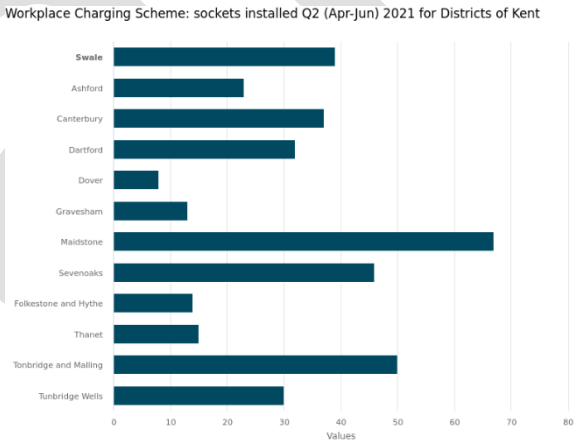

Figure 13 Number of charge points sockets installed at commercial locations via the Workplace Charging Scheme for Apr-June 2021

At present, businesses are being support by SBC to install EV charge points through the Clean Growth Grant. Future funding and support opportunities for clean growth and recovery will be considered.

Collaboration with businesses and other stakeholders may also be necessary to expand the charging network to difficult to reach areas.

8.4 Taxis

Swale is committed to working with partners such as KCC to ensure the right technology is implemented for commercial use, such as rapid charging at taxi ranks. Progress has been made on this area already (1 rapid charge point and taxi bay installed to date) and usage will be monitored to determine expansion moving forward.

The anticipated review of the taxi licensing policy will provide an opportunity to include mechanisms to encourage the uptake of ULEV taxis in the borough, in consultation with operators.

[11] https://como.org.uk/shared-mobility/shared-cars/why/

[12] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/workplace-charging-scheme-guidance-for-applicants

8.5 Marketing

Utilisation of social media, Swale Climate Action webpages[13], Swale Means Business[14], Inside Swale and other marketing avenues is important to ensuring Swale residents are aware of the below points:

- The benefits of switching to an electric vehicle, for both the driver and environment
- The importance of smart charging
- Awareness of the home and workplace charge point schemes
- Our future plans for EVCP installation

Additionally, surveys and consultations as described above are useful for understanding EV awareness levels amongst residents. For example, when asked where they would like to see EV charge points installed, many indicated car parks which already have charging bays. This could point towards a lack of knowledge of the current charging network, which may prevent non-EV drivers from switching to an electric vehicle.

In-person engagement will also be considered, where appropriate, to ensure residents can fully understand Electric Vehicles – the benefits and the practicalities. We endeavour to utilise the Energy Saving Trust 'Local Government Support Programme[15]', which provides specialised knowledge and innovative projects to engage with residents, businesses and taxi drivers about switching to EVs.

8.6 Other stakeholders

Overall, there is a recognition that creating a coherent and accessible charging network in Swale is not something Swale Borough Council can do on its own. Collaboration with other stakeholders is key to the success of this strategy, including KCC, schools, businesses, housing associations and other innovative collaborations yet to be determined. We recognise that pressure needs to be applied in a variety of sectors to ensure that we are driving this area forward while ensuring no one is left behind.

[13] https://cee.swale.gov.uk/
[14] http://www.swalemeansbusiness.co.uk/
[15] https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/service/local-government-support-programme/

9. Delivery Plan

9.1 Immediate Plans for Car Park Provision

To increase EV charging provision across the borough, we are currently conducting analysis and data gathering to shortlist the best locations for charging hubs. Successful applications to Government funding opportunities such as the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (and any future funding opportunities) will ensure charge points are installed in our car parks in areas with high on-street demand, as determined by analysis conducted by the Energy Saving Trust. At the time of publication, we anticipate this being in the region of 9 additional twin charge points across 3 car parks, creating 18 new charging bays, for 2022.

This data will be used to inform charge point locations in the future. Additionally, we have entered a data sharing agreement with the Energy Saving Trust in which we are in a position to advise local businesses investigating EV charging provision, of the most suitable locations in terms of demand.

Swale's approach will also focus on the direct procurement of charging equipment, rather than entering into profit share arrangements in which we do not own the equipment, for all infrastructure within our car parks. This enables full control of the equipment and maintenance, along with fee rates ensuring we can maintain the standards set out in this strategy. This will also ensure we can be responsive to what is a rapidly changing market in a way that is sensitive to the unique needs of the Swale district. This does not mean we need to manage all payments via the units as this is achieved via the charger company software. Although this will be a strict criteria for charging hubs within our car parks, we are open to different opportunities for on-street charging provision.

9.2 Objectives

This section details the objectives that Swale Borough Council has set and provides guidance on how these objectives are to be achieved.

Objective 1	Creating and facilitating a network of EVCPs that meets the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors, with sufficient coverage by 2030
Objective 2	Designing sites that take into consideration accessibility concerns and other road users/pedestrians
Objective 3	Ensure the charging network has capacity for further expansion and is futureproofed
Objective 4	Encourage the uptake of EVs through education using campaigns, supporting trials, initiatives, and public engagement
Objective 5	Lead by example through use of electric vehicles wherever possible for delivering council service and promoting the benefits.

9.3 Action Plan

Objectives	Actions	Time Scale
1. Create an EV charging network that meets the demands of residents, businesses and visitors, with sufficient coverage by 2030	**1.1 Residential Charging** a) Encourage the installation of charge points through charging hubs across the borough, working with KCC where on-street is suitable, and encouraging installation in developments, reviewing on- and off-street charging provision regularly b) Continue to consult with residents and respond to local demand by considering these locations for charging points if suitable, especially if residents do not have access to off-street parking c) Continue to encourage use of slow charge points over night in car parks in close proximity to residential areas via charging hubs based on local data d) Promote the Home Chargepoint Scheme to residents to encourage private charge point installation e) Support and publicise KCC guidance ('Electric Vehicle Charging on the Highway') prohibiting cables trailing across pathways f) Explore potential for local amenities such as village halls, parks and business parks within proximity to residential areas in which charge points could be installed to enable overnight charging where on- street charge points are not suitable (for example, engage with the KCC parish charge point scheme) g) Work to keep the cost of charging at council owned chargepoints below the market value to avoid disadvantaging residents without access to off-street parking h) Support the Parking SPD requirements for 1 active charging point per dwelling; 10% active charging spaces for dwellings with unallocated communal parking; minimum of two visitor spaces should be provided with passive charging provisions suitable for future conversion; and ensure this document is reviewed periodically and remains up to date i) Use the Local Plan Review to require that where a development is for more than 50 residential units measures such as the following be provided- ○ Travel plan including mechanisms for discouraging high emission vehicle use and encouraging the uptake of low emission fuels and technologies ○ A welcome pack available to all new residents online and as a booklet, containing information and incentives to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes from new occupiers. ○ EV car club provision within development or support given to local car club/EV car clubs. ○ Designation of parking spaces for low emission vehicles ○ Improved cycle paths to link cycle network. ○ Adequate provision of secure cycle storage. ○ Using green infrastructure to absorb pollutants. ○ Consider and research the benefits of introducing differential parking charges dependent on vehicle emissions and offering reduced costs for EVs **1.2 Town centres and other key destinations** a) Install EV charge points in council-owned car parks where demand is identified. Focus on charging 'hubs' in strategy for car park identification, in-line with KCC guidance, including investigating opportunities to develop wider 'mobility hubs' b) Ensure charge points are installed in high visibility, high footfall areas without compromising road or footway space c) Work with stakeholders to provide a balance of fast and rapid chargers in on and off-street locations. Rapid chargers are important for long distance travel, taxis and delivery/service vehicles which need to top up mid journey. Fast chargers are suited to local travel and sites with longer dwell times and will be the focus of SBC d) Investigate potential for renewable energy generation and create charging hub solutions, such as solar canopies.	Short – medium term

	1.3 Car clubs a) Develop a pilot programme to demonstrate the benefits of car clubs b) Swale Borough Council will encourage developers to provide electric Car Club vehicles where appropriate and viable to promote the shift towards electric and active travel **1.4 Taxis** a) Explore suitable sites for charge points near taxi ranks b) Use the review of the taxi licensing policy to provide an opportunity to include mechanisms to encourage the uptake of ULEV taxis in the borough, in consultation with operators. **1.5 Business/Industry** a) Continue to support the Kent REVS Van Trial (KCC) which launched January 2021 and will be available to any Kent (and Medway) business who would like to 'try for free' an electric van for up to two months b) Provide public charge points in council owned car parks, encouraging drivers who need to recharge during the day without returning to a depot or home (e.g. businesses or taxi/private hire drivers) c) Explore the DEFRA Air Quality Grant Scheme to support EV requirements in Taxi licensing applications d) Explore the potential for private car parks to install rapid charge points for workers or customers, encouraging the Workplace Chargepoint Scheme e) Promote business fleet decarbonisation - educate and inform businesses about the long-term benefits of decarbonisation f) Consider incentives such as introducing tax breaks (business rates) for businesses fulfilling decarbonisation targets g) Support public transport providers, including school transport providers, to use lower emission vehicles h) Encourage implementation of sustainable travel plans	
2. Designing sites that take into consideration accessibility concerns and other road users/pedestrians	a) Use best practice principles and guidelines when selecting and designing sites to ensure a unified approach b) Ensure that if a charge point were to be installed, it would not cause an obstruction to any other road/footway user c) Actively discourage chargepoints which require cables across footways, as per the KCC guidance, to ensure pedestrian safety is not compromised d) Ensure footway widths meet Council standards and charge points are accessible e) Consider charge point design in each setting and ensure the infrastructure fits in with the surrounding streetscape f) Monitor demand and consider dedicated disabled charging bays in car parks, where appropriate g) Stay on top of emerging technologies and charging options as they develop, to ensure infrastructure remains fit for purpose and meets the needs and demands of users	Short – long term

3. Ensure the charging network has capacity for further expansion and is futureproofed	a) Use the Parking SPD to encourage the installation of active and passive charging points in new developments to account for future growth and up-take b) Ensure charge point infrastructure and design are futureproofed through strong communication with charge point, including potential passive charging spaces c) Once charge points are installed, monitor usage data to ensure locations are suitable and charge points are being used - use parking data to make evidence-based decisions about future charge point locations d) Embed capacity for EV infrastructure into other Highways and Transport projects and programmes and ensure these are aligned with the EV objectives as far as possible, to encourage and support further expansion e) Support partners to find solutions to grid capacity implications Be open to renewable energy projects within the borough to support the ever-increasing demand for electricity produced by EV uptake f) Work through KCC to engage with the energy utility companies to create a more resilient, smart and innovative local energy system to ensure Swale Borough Council have the energy we need, when we need it, at the right price and without any negative environmental impacts g) Encourage the installation of smart chargers to mitigate the impact on the grid h) SBC to ensure communication with the Distribution Network Operator (UKPN)	Long term
4. Encourage the uptake of EVs through supporting trials, initiatives and public engagement	a) Monitor public demand for new charge point locations via consultation and webform processes, whilst clearly outlining plans to manage expectations b) Use trials and schemes to familiarise residents and users with the technology and raise public awareness c) Explore the potential to work with school transport providers to encourage use of EVs d) Ensure publicly available charging points are uploaded to www.zap-map.com so residents and visitors have access to one website showing all charge points e) Continue a plan of public engagement to ascertain the charging needs of the residents and businesses within Swale f) Ensure climate change webpages include adequate and up to date local EV information g) Engage with all appropriate stakeholder groups, such as KCC, town and parish councils and the business community	Short – long term
5.Lead by example and electrify the Council fleet	a) Install charge points in car parks and on all Council owned sites for use by council staff and visitors b) Understand the challenges faced by Swale Borough Council employees in the purchase of EVs c) Identify further locations to install EV charge points to benefit Swale Borough Council workers d) Explore grid implications of providing charge points for both council fleet and workers private vehicles e) Discourage the purchase of Internal Combustion Engine vehicles as part of the fleet (only to be purchased where market does not support electric alternatives) f) Encourage staff to switch to electric vehicles with promotion of grant schemes g) Using the Council's Commissioning Strategy to ensure that major contracts also utilise electric vehicles wherever possible.	Short - medium term

10. References

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11. Workplace Charging Scheme: guidance for applicants, Office for Zero Emission Vehicles, 2021, https://www.gov.uk/guidance/workplace-charging-scheme-guidance-for-applicants

11. Appendix A

Glossary

AQMA; Air Quality Management Area - Local authorities review and assess air quality; where UK pollution objectives are not likely to be achieved, it must declare an Air Quality Management Area and an Air Quality Action Plan must be produced.
BEV; Battery Electric Vehicle
CO_2; Carbon Dioxide - Pollution mostly as a result of the burning of fossil fuels
EVCPs; Electric vehicle charging points
EU; European Union
LEZ; Low Emission Zone
NOx; Nitrogen Oxide - When nitrogen is released during fuel combustion, it combines with oxygen atoms to create nitric oxide (NO). This further combines with oxygen to create nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). Nitrogen dioxide and nitric oxide are referred to together as oxides of nitrogen (NOx).
NO_2; Nitrogen Dioxide
OLEV; Central Government Office for Low Emission Vehicles
PHEV; Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle
PHV; Private Hire Vehicle
PM; Particulate Matter - also known as particle pollution, is a complex mixture of extremely small particles and liquid droplets that get into the air. Once inhaled, these particles can affect the heart and lungs and cause serious health effects
RFID; Radio-Frequency Identification - the use of radio waves to read and capture information stored on a tag attached to an object, such as a contactless payment card
ULEV; Ultra Low Emission Vehicle
ULEZ; Ultra Low Emission Zone
Type 1; EV charging connector common on older models of electric car, usually used for home charging on AV supplies with a 5-pin plug. Rarely seen in Europe.
Type 2; EV charging connector common in Europe, used for home charging on a single-phase electricity supply
Mode 2; The mode of chagrining is independent of the connectors. This is the default charging lead that comes with most cars. Mode 2 cables contain an in-line electronics box which emulates the communication of a smart charge point.
Mode 3; Most commonly used to enable fast charging and smart charging.
Smart Charging; Enables communication between the chagrining point and the car, with the ability for the car to instruct the chagrining point to turn off the power when the car is fully charged.
CCS; EV charging connector which permits rapid DC charging, found on newer models for charging away from home. The CCS socket is always combined with either a Type 2 or Type 1 socket
CHAdeMO; EV charging connector which permits rapid DC charging, found on some newer models and older EVs for charging away from home. The CCS socket is always combined with either a Type 2 or Type 1 socket. As a bi-directional charger, this connector type allows ‘vehicle to grid’ energy flows.

12. Appendix B

Current Charge Point Locations in Swale

Correct at time of publication; please refer to ZapMap for most up to date locations

Charge Point	Postcode	Location Type	Charge Points (sockets)
The Shurland Hotel	ME12 4EH	Hotel Car Park	1 (2x slow)
Plough Leisure Park (Zap-Home)	ME12 4JF	Caravan Park	1 (1x fast)
Tesco Superstore Sheerness	ME12 1RH	Supermarket Car Park	2 (4x slow)
Hyundai Medway	ME8 8PT	Car Dealership Forecourt	1 (2x fast)
The Rose & Crown	ME9 7SS	Pub Car Park	1 (2x fast)
9 Barn Close (Zap-Home)	ME9 8JW	Private Residential	1 ((1x fast)
Kent Science Park	ME9 8PS	Company Car Park	6 (8x fast)
Express Grass	ME10 2PG	Company Car Park	1 (1x fast)
Cook Classic Kitchen	ME10 3NH	Company Car Park	4 (4x slow)
BP Milton Regis	ME10 2AB	Service Station	1 (2x rapid, 1x fast)
Morrisons Sittingbourne	ME10 3EX	Supermarket Car Park	4 (4x fast)
Bourne Place Multistorey Car Park	ME10 3DW	Public Car Park	2 (4x fast)
The Swallows Car Park	ME10 4AH	Public Car Park	1 (2x fast)
Swale House Car Park	ME10 3HT	Public Car Park	1 (2x fast)
Perrys Vauxhall Sittingbourne	ME9 9AQ	Car Dealership Forecourt	2 (2x slow)
Morrisons Faversham	ME13 7DY	Supermarket Car Park	1 (2x rapid, 1x fast)
Sheerways (Zap-Home)	ME13 8TP	Private Residential	1 (1x fast)
Grain Store Studio	ME13 9LY	Company Car Park	1 (1x fast)
Boughton Golf Club	ME13 9AJ	Company Car Park	3 (2x fast, 1x slow)
67-69 The Street (Zap-Home)	ME13 9BE	Private Residential	1 (1x fast)
Rose Street Car Park, Sheerness	ME12 1AJ	Public Car Park	2 (4x fast)
Central Car Park, Faversham	ME13 8PW	Public Car Park	2 (4x fast)
Tesco Superstore Faversham	ME13 7AS	Supermarket Car Park	3 (4x fast, 2x slow)
Aldi Faversham	ME13 8ZB	Supermarket Car Park	2 (2x slow)
Red Lion Faversham	ME13 9LL	Company Car Park	1 (2x rapid, 1x fast)

*Slow = >7kW; Fast = 22kW; Rapid = <50kW; Ultra-Rapid = 120-350kW. More detail in section 6.2.

13. Appendix C

Car Parks in Swale

Car Park	Region	No. of Spaces	Current Charge Point Provision	Max Capacity of nearest substation (kW)	Future Provision
Institute Road	Faversham	40	0	>150	N/A at present
Queens Hall	Faversham	142	0	>150	Charge point installation being investigated
Central	Faversham	219	4	>150	Extended provision and car club being investigated
Partridge Lane	Faversham	55	0	>150	N/A at present
Ospringe Street	Faversham	30	0	>150	N/A at present
Beach Street	Sheppey	94	0	>150	Unsuitable
Beachfields	Sheppey	76	0	>150	Unsuitable
Trinity Place	Sheppey	57	0	>150	N/A at present
Trinity Road	Sheppey	62	0	>150	N/A at present
Albion Place	Sheppey	16	0	>150	N/A at present
Bridge Street	Sheppey	47	0	>150	N/A at present
Cross Street	Sheppey	82	0	>150	N/A at present
Hope Street	Sheppey	9	0	>150	Unsuitable
Jetty Car Park	Sheppey	6	0	50	Unsuitable
Park Road	Sheppey	25	0	150	N/A at present
Seathorpe Avenue	Sheppey	20	0	150	N/A at present
Minster Abbey	Sheppey	17	0	>150	N/A at present
Queenborough Library	Sheppey	44	0	150	N/A at present
Halfway	Sheppey	41	0	50	N/A at present
The Promenade	Sheppey	272	0	>150	N/A at present
Shellness Road	Sheppey	250	0	150	N/A at present
Coastal Park	Sheppey	100	0	150	N/A at present
Cliff Drive	Sheppey	20	0	>150	N/A at present
Ship On Shore	Sheppey	80	0	50	N/A at present
Rose Street	Sheppey	169	4	50	Extended provision being investigated
Shortlands Road	Sittingbourne	35	0	>150	Charge point installation being investigated
Albany Road	Sittingbourne	104	0	>150	Charge point installation being investigated
The Forum	Sittingbourne	86	0	>150	N/A at present
Swale House	Sittingbourne	72	2	>150	Extended provision continually monitored
Grafton Road	Sittingbourne	10	0	>150	Unsuitable
Cockleshell Walk	Sittingbourne	86	0	150	N/A at present
Spring Street	Sittingbourne	72	0	150	N/A at present
Central Avenue	Sittingbourne	60	0	150	N/A at present
Swallows Car Park	Sittingbourne	86	2	150	N/A at present
Milton Court	Sittingbourne	10	0	50	N/A at present
Crown Quay Lane	Sittingbourne	42	0	>150	N/A at present
Bell Road	Sittingbourne	24	0	>150	N/A at present
Bourne Place Multistory	Sittingbourne	308	4	>150	N/A at present

Contacting Swale Borough Council

The customer Service Centre deals with all enquiries across the Council, it should be your first stop when contacting us.

Call 01795 417850.

Copies of this report are available on the council website.

Front cover: stock photo, electric car charging

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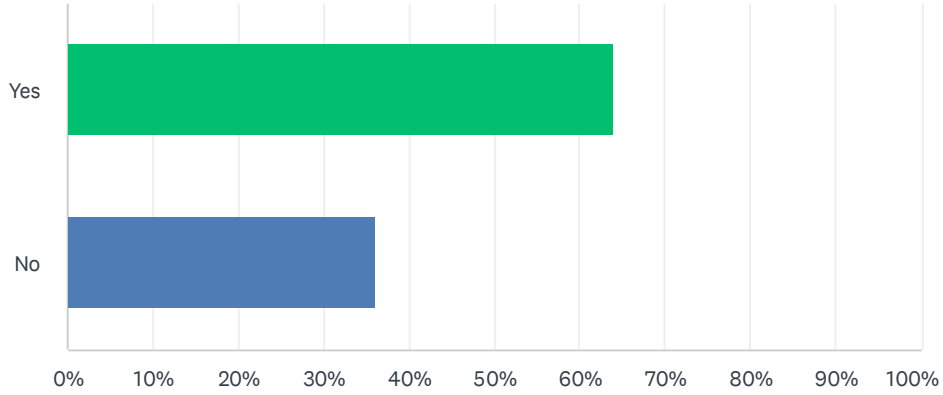
Q1 Have you read the Electric Vehicle Strategy?

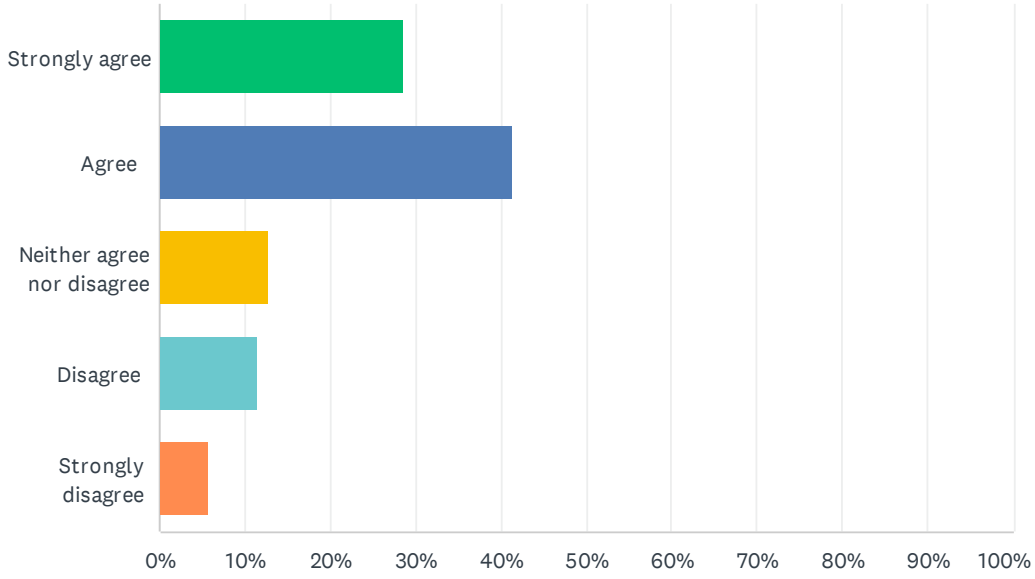
Answered: 89 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	64.04%	57
No	35.96%	32
TOTAL		89

Q2 Do you agree with the objectives stated in the EV Strategy?

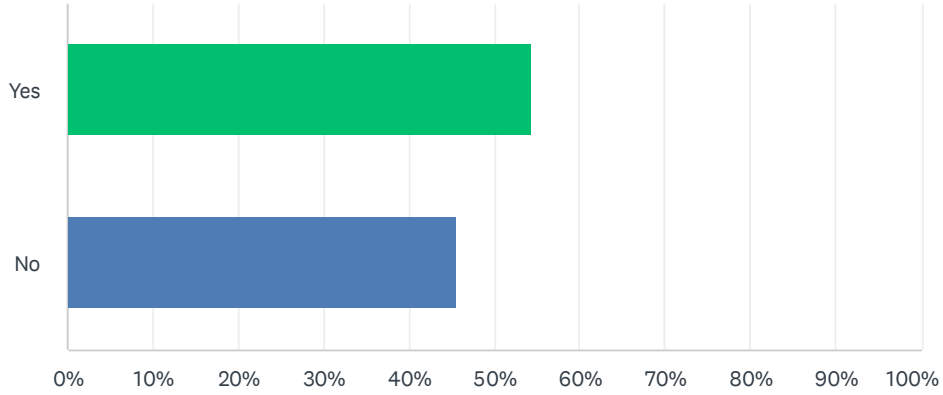
Answered: 70 Skipped: 19



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	28.57%	20
Agree	41.43%	29
Neither agree nor disagree	12.86%	9
Disagree	11.43%	8
Strongly disagree	5.71%	4
TOTAL		70

Q3 Do you think our strategy considers all road users?

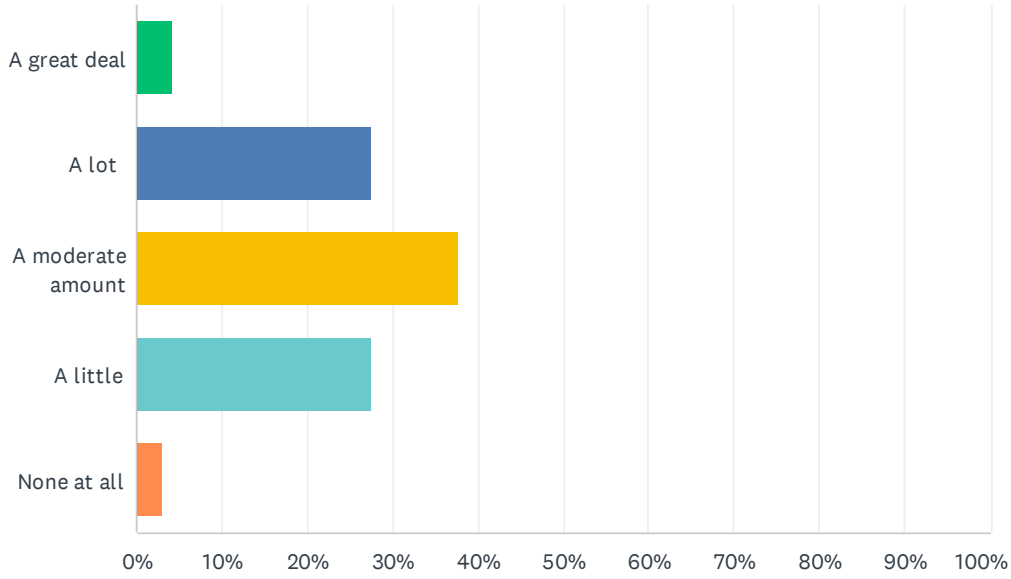
Answered: 70 Skipped: 19



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	54.29%	38
No	45.71%	32
TOTAL		70

Q4 Do you think the strategy considers EV demand now and in the future?

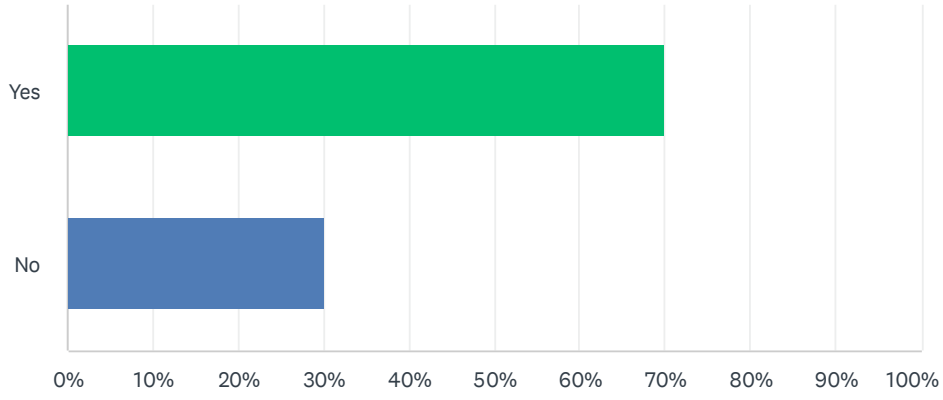
Answered: 69 Skipped: 20



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A great deal	4.35%	3
A lot	27.54%	19
A moderate amount	37.68%	26
A little	27.54%	19
None at all	2.90%	2
TOTAL		69

Q5 Do you think anything is missing from the strategy that needs considering?

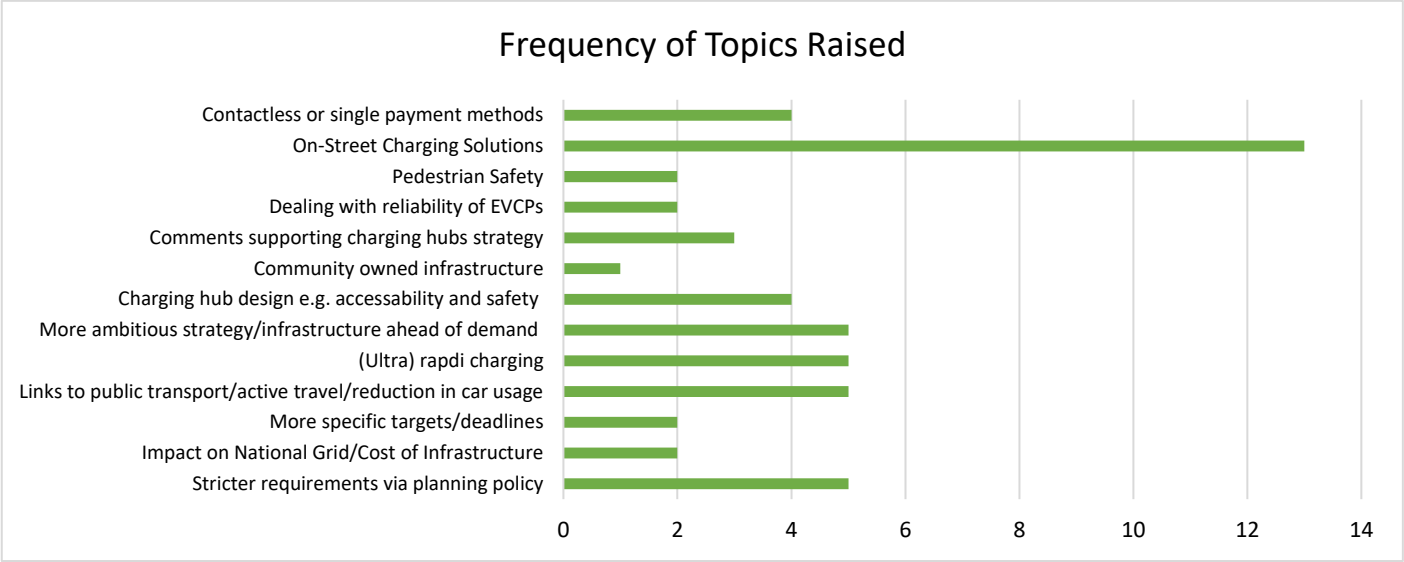
Answered: 63 Skipped: 26



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	69.84%	44
No	30.16%	19
TOTAL		63

Q6 If 'yes', please elaborate:

Answered: 44 Skipped: 45



More emphasis is needed on charging points on new developments. On street charging for residents is unhelpful
To get the best out of an EV battery, they need to be slow charged (less than 7Kw/h). This is called balancing. Public charging points do not have this type available. Even if they did, charging would take long so there will be practical(how to get there and back) and cost implications. There is no solution offered around on street parking which is the main gap in this paper. The challenge we have is not just Environmental (climate change, green house gas etc). Petrol is finite, it will finish. Also, relying on Petrol creates a security concern for the country (market volatility , war etc). So we dont really have other option. We have to make the best use of raw materials that make up the battery, since they are finite too. Regular Rapid charging physically damages the current battery packs. Regular Fast charging reduces battery pack capacity dramatically. Regular slow charging is the only way forward. Current battery pack capacities are not high enough. Reducing capacity by Fast charging is not the right way to about this. This is a good first attempt in defining our EV strategy. I believe there is an opportunity to make this strategy offer a genuine solution to many people like me who live in a terraced house hence do not have a drive way , and cant currently install an EV charger due to current regulations. I appreciate this is not just the Swale Councils challenge, it applies to the whole of UK. Governments should own this policy to fine details and set out guidelines. Another such national concern is lack of contactless payment option which makes it awkward to pay (download one of many apps , register etc which is not practical). What can we do to fix these fundamental challenges locally and beyond?
Infrastructure in line with say Westminster council (which is s is somewhat more professional)
Potential national supermarket chains becoming leading suppliers of EV points. Impact on local grid of higher levels of private take up of EV points
- confirmation that only central government will be used, and no additional costs are incurred by local council tax payers (council tax income should only be spent on public transport) - a more balanced rationale given that EVs use a lot more emissions to build…a better plan may be to focus on getting diesels cars (the most polluting) off the road - evidence that current SBC charging points are at capacity, so more are needed - do existing and proposed SBC charging points comply with the design and site considerations, especially interoperability - the action plan is too vague and has no actual targets, actual deadlines and allocated responsible officers; without these there will be no way of judging whether SBC has achieved its plan/strategy
The strategy needs to be linked to all policies. I moved to Hartlip in 2006 and both my older sons caught the school bus that ran through the villiages of Lower Halstow, Upchurch, Hartlip and Newington to drop the children to all schools in Sittingbourne. A 52 seater bus full. For political reason, you then could only get the bus if going to Westlands, bus shrunk to 12 seater. I believe it now doesn't run. As a consequence, all parents now drive their children to school and back, 50 cars now doing that journey. To avoid congestion through Newington which is constantly being dug up and at the Key Street roundabout, many parents and now taking their children to Medway schools, a further loss to Swale. Whilst no doubt it saved money, you now have 50 cars doing the journey of potentially one electric bus.
I live on a estate that as little parking and only on one side of the road on the part of the road that I live. the top of the road as parking cut into the pavement, the bottom of the road is the same, the part of the road that I live in as large grass verges each side but we can only park on one side of the road, this would mean that if I was lucky enough to be able to purchase an electric car, to charge it I would have to have wires from my flat going across the road to be able to charge the car. Also in cold weather the electric cars do not do what mileage is suggested by the manufacturers.

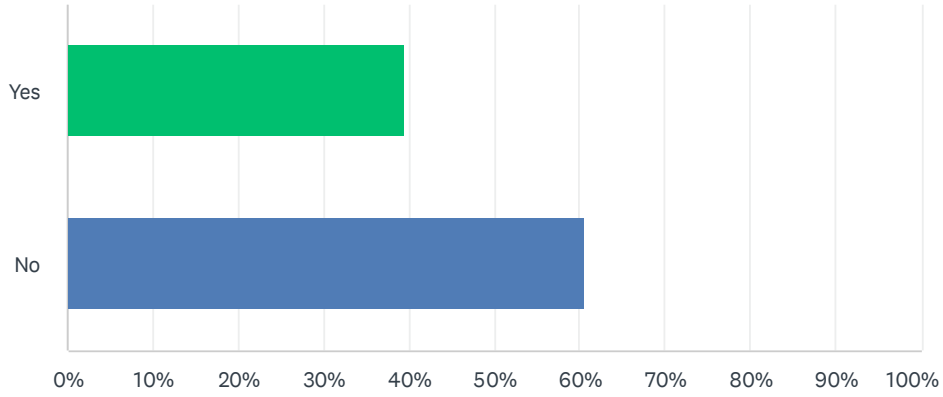
Road safety for pedestrians. Use of EV cars in winter, dead battery, no heating, loss of life
I do not believe local or national considerations go far enough when legally ICE vehicles will be replaced with EV's. We have 35 million cars in UK and nowhere near enough infrastructure in place to meet demand. The ideas suggested are a start but not ambitious enough. In my view as an EV driver all parking spaces should cover EV (eventually). I also think as part of local planning for business etc EV infrastructure should be included before planning is agreed. In addition, its good to say some EV chargers are in place but they only match what can be done at home 7kw maybe 20. There is a big need for 50- 100kWH chargers if we are to rule out ICE vehicles. There needs to be a bigger push if this is to work.
1 charger per 1000 is way too low, considering info was collated in 2020 and ev sales are rocketing. KCC need to be pushed to allow cable gullies or similar to assist ev adoption in on street parking areas. All new builds need to be required to install type 2 not just a socket. All new contracts for local services Refuse, Busses etc should require ev adoption NOW. All village halls need ev charge points even if only 7kw and remove the negative implication / cost / risk to the parish councils. Zap Map listing show restricted chargers not open to public Hyundai for instance. Qty of chargers shown on zap map does not represent what can be used ie Morrisons / BP show 2 rapids but only one can be used at a time due to connector type, therefore gives artificially high number of available rapids.
As the strategy notes, the target set by the Climate Change Committee of one public EVCP per thousand electric cars by 2030 sounds extraordinarily unambitious. There's a massive chicken and egg problem because people will remain reluctant to switch to EVs until they can see that the necessary charging infrastructure is in place. In urban parts of Swale (Sheerness, Sittingbourne, Faversham...), EVCPs should be incorporated into all lamp posts adjacent to on-street parking places and installed in all public and supermarket car parks without delay. Secondly, the stated objectives should all be measurable, or else should have indicators associated with them that are measurable. Ideal is "SMART," i.e. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-specific.
A lot of houses are unable to have charging points & can't facilitate on street charging either. The idea of having to leave your car at a park or industrial estate overnight to charge is frankly ridiculous as it would open up a 'car park accessories' bonanza for thieves - lots of cars all unsupervised in one place & at night!!!
Charge points must have canopies to give shelter from the rain - and lighting. Petrol drivers don't get soaked, and you need to see your card and phone. Lone users feel vulnerable without lighting. Simple bus shelter structures with a solar panel on top would suffice.
Greater emphasis on providing service in advance of demand. People will not adopt EVs unless they think it's practical. Greater emphasis on rapid +charging. Slow or fast charging is useless except at home or in car parks. I have used the gridserve forecourt in Braintree and it is the future, but at least 6 will be needed in Swale!
The strategy underestimates the likely growth in demand for EVs. As EV prices reduce and vehicles become more available (and more of a secondhand market develops) people are going to switch EVs. This is likely to place additional demand on the local electricity network Infrastructure. Home charge points are expensive costing between £750 and £1250. It seems crazy that all houses in Swale Should have them when they will be not in use for much of the time. Local charging hubs connected to communities would be a much better use of resources and a potential source of income to the council. The strategy fails to mention ideas such as Charge My Street https://chargemystreet.co.uk/ where it is possible for communities to own infrastructure. The council could participate and encourage these types of schemes. I didn't see a reference to the possible use of council owned chargers (for its own vehicles) being made available to Residents when not needed by the council.
The rating of the charger and ease of which you can connect coupled with a reliable service are the most important factors. People do not wish to use a charger locally that provides little or no charge for the time parked (shopping etc) as it would be easier to simply use a charger at home. The chargers need to be a minimum if 22kw so that any time connected provides a useful charge. I accept that some cars can only charge at slow speeds but this will change with newer better models coming online. Secondly the ease of which you can connect and authorise the charger is the single most frustrating feature to EV users. Make it contactless for either card or phone something the combustion engine drivers already do. No more apps or rfid cards as this just complicates matters. Especially for the elderly or IT illiterate. Thirdly the networks and charging points that you do provide must work 100% of the time and be maintained accordingly.
it needs to recognise more the inherent isues with towns designed in victorian eras and the car to house ratio that now exists
The section on how the Local Plan Review and planning policy can facilitate EV use in developments needs strengthening - I think there should be a clearer and stronger requirement on developers to install charge points in new residential developments. SBC should use the stick of planning policy mire. Currently the list of actions (welcome back, put together a travel plan etc) look weak.
Whilst it is good that active travel is mentioned in the document. The ambition of reducing vehicle use overall must be stated much more prominently and frequently, and should be one of the key aims of this strategy.
I don't think the policies do enough to tackle the problem for residents with no off street parking. Land is a scarce resource.. We need more densely populated dwellings which will worsen the off-street parking issues in the future.

Hasnt been thought through enough all properties including old builds and houses on a main road are going to have to have charging ports wires all over pavements causing trip hazards and so many more problems! Not to mention electric cars are hightly dangerous you cant hear them coming! Hows a blind person suppoused to cross a road when it's one of the main things they listen out for a car engine taking that away would cause so many deaths a year so yes eletic cars are not practical and certainly not safe!
1. Governmental figures suggest that at least 60% of dwellings in the UK do not have off road parking, therefore the availability of recharging points will never meet the demand that will only increase the nearer we get to 2030. 2. The only way to approach ' public ' recharging points is for the to be Fast Chargers, this would allow the maximum amount of vehicles per day. Vehicles need to be recharged in the same time frame as filling up with petrol. 3. There appears to be no standard plug and socket arrangement for the vehicle to cable connection, therefore this would be a negative aspect in the decision making to give up petrol and diesel power. 4. There needs too be a single method of payment at the recharging point i.e by Credit or Debit Card or a single 'Recharge Card' linked to the customers household account. Of course, this would not work if householders were on a payment meter (pay as you go) so already one solution creates another problem to solve. 4. Giving up relatively inexpensive fossil fuel vehicles for more expensive EV's which are restrictive in the distance being able to drive, which in turn means greater running costs will be unaffordable for the vast majority of vehicle users, therefore the availability of other forms of affordable transport has to be in place before 2030.
The need to make EVCP's accessible for people of all abilities and physical capabilities. So, no obstacles for wheelchair users, screens of varying/variable heights. Some sort of tap and charge capability to avoid the need to use multiple apps for those of us less able to use them.
An initiative for EVCP's in residential roads for properties that do not possess a driveway. For example, giving street lights the additional function to be used as charging points, such as is being used in London. Another example would be charging points imbedded into the curb along residential roads, which can be fed through to specific property owners or be council owned, such as being used in Oxford. Either of these above listed examples (where applicable) could be provided for those who also have a disabled bay in a road with no driveways.
This is the most stupid idea I have ever heard. Millions of ordinary people can not afford an EV and with the cost of electricity going through the roof, they never will be able to afford one. I have a diesel car but only travel about three thousand miles a year and have to pay almost £300 a year which will probably increase in the spring statement. Apart from the cost of the actual vehicle, there is the total lack of understanding by people in government, councils etc on how we will charge these cars. I live in a narrow road in Sheerness and the road that leads to my address has two or three cars per household. These cars travel past their own address as there is no parking space left outside their own house so they park opposite my address. How are these people meant to charge their cars, ?, maybe they could run some very very long extension leads from their kitchen plugs, trail them up the street and plug their cars in them and hope no one trips over the leads. I have heard the idea of installing charge points in lamposts, well, you would need to install a lot more posts to handle the number of cars in the streets, I would imagine that you would need at least one outside each and every residence. Totally unachievable. I agree that we need to move to sustainable alternatives but EVs will never work.
the added cost to the older motorist, can not afford to buy an ev
The likelihood that other technologies for vehicles, such as hydrogen will prove a better solution and that the take-up of electric vehicles will never, and should never, be a significant element since they in themselves have significant environmental disadvantages.
What is to happen with the current fossil fueled filling stations? Who will bear the cost of the underground & associated infrastructure cabling, actual charging point equipment & disruption to all applicable residents / communities?
I know that on street terraced houses has been mentioned about how difficult this can be. However, where options are available to improve these areas, this should be looked at. For example Hilda Road, Sheerness. Has wide grass verges both sides of the road. These could be taken away and charging points could be made available. Houses have already dropped their kerbs in this area and park their cars on drive, But due to new rulings regarding measurements most have been unable to. It seems madness to me that same can and come can't. I understand public car parks will have points installed but in this area there is no public car parks, all I can think of is the large Sheerness East car park could be utilised in some way.
More needs to be done around the move form petrol/diesel to EV
Reconsider pavement gulley for residential charging. It's a cost effective way to rapidly expand the viability of ev use
Provision of more rapid charge points in sittingbourne
Enforcement. Developers are obtaining planning permission for housing with conditions that elec charging points must be provided. However they are not being installed (E.g. old Milton pipes site - elec point NOT being provided for new houses that are being sold). Swale BC must get on top of this and check all site out otherwise it's pointless having conditions on any permission if it's not enforced

We need to reduce car traffic be that fuel or electric. Both cost too much money so need to invest in better public transport than cars. Sittingbourne cannot meet the parking demands now so how is this going to change. Less parking spaces for petrol/diesel vehicles. Can't create another mutli-storey and parking fees are too high. What are the health issues working near an electric charge point?
Price of electric.... the fact the most can't afford an electric car and the fact that vans can't go very far so will not be good for firms that travel.. lots can't get their car outside their house. What will happen to all the old batteries in years to come.
Further government grants to support installations of ev chargers in houses as well as flats, and a better service plan in place to service faulty charging stations, and better visibility of where to find charging stations.
Public charging points should be for the public to use and not council owned vehicles. Hybrid cars should be allowed to use charging points
Greater need for more car park charging across Swale, but the consideration of power network connection now before demand is greater increased on the network. Even if the provision of power is attained now this will secure this for the future and at todays costs.
The average person can not afford to buy a new electric vehicle
as the future will show, electric vehicles will not not be feasible for the average road user due to their low miles per charge, inability to tow, cost of purchase, lack of resale value once used, cost of replacement batteries when expires, will also impact on future contamination as the batteries cannot be recycled
There has been a £150 discount for council tax bands a-d. I'd like to see this extended to properties who have an EV. We've heavily invested in our own infrastructure with solar panels, expensive new car technology, home chargers etc and our energy bills have also gone up. Just because we live in a big house does not mean we have jobs that can finance huge energy bills, high council tax etc. Please cut us trail blazers a little slack!
Electric cars are more unreliable, more expensive and less environmentally friendly than petrol cars. The cost if this draft policy has not been stated
Much housing in Faversham is terraced. No-one will want to travel far for charging or want to wait for others to finish at hubs or other such locations. The strategy ignores how charging will work with on street parking.

Q7 Do you think the Strategy goes far enough to encourage EV uptake, working within our role as a borough council (e.g. not the Highways Authority)?

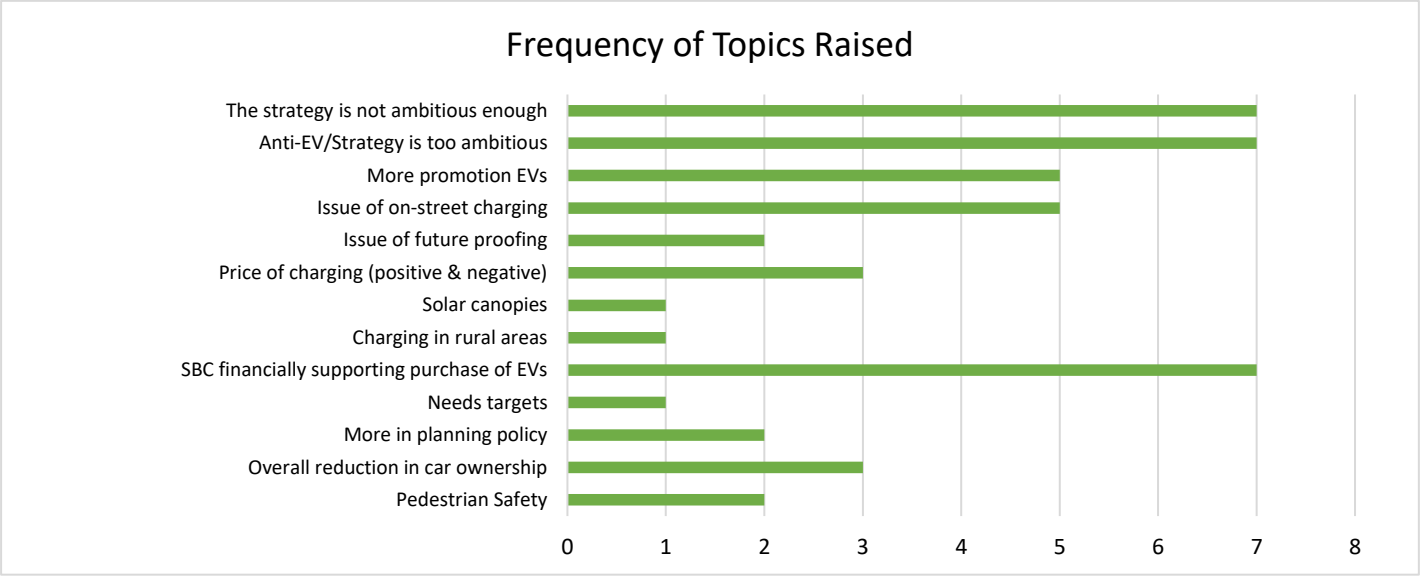
Answered: 61 Skipped: 28



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	39.34%	24
No	60.66%	37
TOTAL		61

Q8 Do you have any other comments on the Electric Vehicle Strategy (2022-2030)?

Answered: 43 Skipped: 46



Still not enough ev points with the additional ones arriving in the next 2 years
This is a very good first attempt. Unfortunately, it doesnt solve the problem for many people like myself who live in terraced houses. On street charging seems to me to be the only way. I believe, where there is a will, there will be a way. Permanent cable gullies (made of steel, much like the drainage gullies currently on our pavements) for each terraced house seems a reasonable proposition to me. That way, terraced house owners can charge their cars overnight when their car is parked outside their house. Thank you
Too little which is too late.
More PR on what you are doing. I stumbled on this.
See above; overall, it doesn't cover much on which charging point operators are more likely to be future proof, and who is responsible for maintaining the points in future
Pricing of charges at different sites will be key to take up
A fuller examination of the disadvantages of EV cars should be included.
Ev open days to encourage public take up, like Medway had in 2021. Involve local Ev groups owners (Kent EV on facebook) can help dismiss the myths around ownership and how capable Ev have become. Be more ambitious, Challenge KCC over on street charging, why can other authorities give the go ahead but not KCC?
Yes. The strategy should have quantifiable deliverables / measurable goals in order to enable officers and the public to track progress. The public won't make the switch to electric on the scale necessary until the necessary charging infrastructure is in place.
EV's could well be old technology with the introduction of newer fuel cell technology ie hydrogen & not only that, the fact that lithium, LFP & NMC mining is really not good for the planet & especially the people doing it - then the fact that lithium mines would run out of productive material! Then there is the added fire risk that cannot be ignored - but I'm sure will be!
One major thing stipping more electric cars is the abioity get get them charged; therefore far mote charging points are required
1. Charge points should be future proofed - batteries are getting bigger. No public charger anywhere should be less than 50 kW. It takes me 1 hour on a 22Kw charger to add 25 miles of charge. If drivers can charge at home they will -because they feel safe plugging it in overnight. If they are using a public facility they are probably trying to get somewhere. No-one wants to wait 4 hours (or 12 hours plus at 7kW) to charge up. 2. Dependence on an APP is a complete pain and is gradually being phased out by most providers (you don't need an APP to buy petrol) 3. Weather protection and lighting is essential
It's not urgent enough. All new houses should have chargers and solar panels. All car parks should have chargers and solar panels above them on scaffolding which would also provide shade

I do not agree that the council owned infrastructure should be operated at below market value. This could have a negative effect on the development of the market. I agree however that EV's should be accessible to everyone. I consider that it would be better to support specific individuals (For example those on universal credit or others in need) through a shared ownership or grant scheme. This would be much more targeted support than selling electricity at under market value. If the council can generate profits from its owned infrastructure (in car park to example) then these profits could be used to subsidise access to EVs for those in need. Rural areas present particular challenges; while the strategy mention this, I think it needs further thought as to how Swale's strategy should respond to this.
Home charging points are extremely expensive to have installed. It would be useful if local authorities had some form of grant scheme to aid this, which in turn helps spread the need for public charging points
No on the whole it's a great start. More charging points available at shopping outlets and services for each type of user is required. 22-50kw for shopping outlets and 50+ for services as it reflects what a typical user will require in relation to speed if charging. The last point is cost, it must be enticing for the event driver otherwise they will not utilise the chargers and opt to charge at home. Lastly have the council considered a bud and taxi 100% roll out?
See my previous comment. The strategy is very good but I think there should be more on how planning policy can be used by SBC (and KCC) to require private developers and business to install EV infrastructure as part of community gain by design. Part of consenting criteria.
This document seems to be well intended but ultimately much too timid. To achieve the aims stated in the first paragraphs you will need to explicitly take on car dominance and be clear at all times that the aim is that overall vehicle use will be reduced.
All new builds need facilities around the edge of developments... Encourage people to park away from their front doors. Keep the inner streets of developments for pedestrians
Daft idea as well as dangerous!
If government - be it National or Local - want everyone to switch away from fossil fuels to EV (or another source of fuel) or to switch to buses and trains (I refuse to use the term Public Transport as there is no such thing in the UK, just lots of private companies offering very poor services) then these modes of transport will have to operate 24 / 7 and 365 days per year, in other words being available when the public want to travel, where to and at an affordable price. I offer these comments as a member of the Environmental Working Group and Vice Chairman of the Freight Council, Logistics UK
I believe we will need way more charging points than the government's recommendations. I also believe that financial incentives would help take up of non-ICE vehicles
Even more publicity and promotion can only be a good thing. I found this in the article in the local paper but had to carefully put in the address to my mobile. I'm someone who is planning on a used ev for our next vehicle so I took the trouble to read the article. We need a really big push to get the news out there that a) there are second hand evs available, still not cheap but they don't deteriorate with use like a fossil and it's now obvious that contrary to myth, apart from early Leafs batteries do not deteriorate b) although they are undoubtedly costly the running costs are a fraction of fossil fuel vehicles. Not only is electricity cheaper when charging using a home charger at night rates, or if like me that's not an option folk need to know that they can ask for a charger to be put in their local parking area. Another option to test out the type of car you might like is to try the all-in short term subscription services from various companies. The monthly cost seems quite high but if you can afford it for a single month you're fully covered for insurance, charging, maintenance etc. and you get to really test a particular vehicle. Knowledgeable promotion and myth busting is key I feel.
To promote charging of Electric Vehicles in public, charging points should be available in every single parking space within car parks/multi-storey car parks. This will also encourage drivers to think about getting an EV if they charge points are more readily available. Additionally, and a more specific point to my local area. The Shortlands road free car park (and other car parks of its like) should be resurfaced and charging points added to every space available, again, to encourage use of EV's.
Please stop this nonsense until you have found a way around all the problems that I have pinpointed.
not enough thought put into the infrastructure.
The strategy goes too far. Councils should inform but not push or coerce it's residents from their own choices. EV is not the answer to everything and is prohibitively expensive and fraught with supply problems.
What is will SBC recommendations to fossil fueled vehicle users who cannot afford or have the facilities for an EV?
I know that on street terraced houses has been mentioned about how difficult this can be. However, where options are available to improve these areas, this should be looked at. For example Hilda Road, Sheerness. Has wide grass verges both sides of the road. These could be taken away and charging points could be made available. Houses have already dropped their kerbs in this area and park their cars on drive, But due to new rulings regarding measurements most have been unable to. It seems madness to me that same can and come can't. I understand public car parks will have points installed but in this area there is no public car parks, all I can think of is the large Sheerness East car park could be utilised in some way.
Financial encouragement

I would like the council to look more at how to reduce car traffic full stop and make use of public transport in electric buses. Remove car parking fees if you want residents to shop in Sittingbourne High Street or Faversham. Retail parks are free parking as do the supermarkets so little incentive to come into town. The low/no noice risk of vehicles cause a huge safety risk for pedestrians and children.
Can the council really afford electricity vehicles as they are expensive and will they do the job you want them to.
To meet future demands of ev uptake, you need to work with car manufacturers to build a suitable plan to market ev cars and ev charging.
All charging points should be for public use during evenings and weekends. Council owned vehicles should not be parked in these spots. More charging points need to be installed.
In the right direction and EV usage in Sittingbourne is definitely in the rise. The more in public car parks will promote use from businesses and the public. This will bring more people to Sittingbourne which will increase economic stability and contribute to Swale becoming a environmentally conscious borough.
I will not be rushing to buy an electric vehicle
I have no faith in the 'electric car' technology and believe the headlong stampede has been badly thought out. As with 'windfarms' which the public were sold as -- will save money on energy bills --- which the evidence of today show was a pure fantasy by those pushing the projects -- the electric car will be shown as thew white horse of the future I believe - the money could be better spent elsewhere -- especially as since the war in Ukraine fired the first bullet, no matter what the uk now does, nothing will change what the environment will do in the future ---
Many of the charge points listed on Zap-Map do not work or are not actually for public use. Please just keep on adding charge points at all council car parks and incentivise the supermarkets to do so. Please offer council tax discounts to those of us who have self financed chargers and solar panels and role this out as an incentive for others to install the same. Please offer landlords a discount/grant scheme to purchase chargers or solar panels for rental properties.
It is reasonable to charge for charging electric vehicles. The cost should be controlled to ensure that people without access to home charging are not penalised.

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Environment Committee	
Meeting Date	30 June 2022
Report Title	**Member appointment to the Kent Resource Partnership**
EMT Lead	David Clifford Head of Policy, Governance and Customer Services
Head of Service	
Lead Officer	Jo Millard – Senior Democratic Services Officer
Classification	**Open**
Recommendations	The committee is recommended to: 1. ***Determine*** which members (there are two places) should be appointed to the Kent Resource Partnership. 2. ***Appoint*** those members Kent Resource Partnership.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 This report asks the environment committee to agree the council's member representation for the municipal year 2022/23 on the Kent Resource Partnership. Previously only one member had been appointed, but the council has been advised that there are two places for Swale Borough Councillors.

2 Background

2.1 A joint arrangement is one in which the council collaborates with other local authorities or agencies to provide services in partnership. Member appointments to the boards or committees exercising political control over such arrangements are distinct from nominations to outside bodies, in which members are asked to take on the role of directors or trustees of separate organisations, generally with a fiduciary duty to those organisations and not as representatives of the council.

2.2 In respect of joint arrangements, members are appointed to boards or committees with the express intention that they will represent Swale's interests on those boards or committees. Under the executive model, member appointments to boards, committees or steering groups covering joint arrangements were made by cabinet or by the executive leader.

2.3 This was logical inasmuch as joint arrangements generally cover services which were previously executive matters. Moving to the committee system, it is appropriate that these appointments are made by the service committee within whose remit the service in question falls. This is supported by Part 2.6 of the new constitution, which specifies two joint arrangements and the service committees charged with making appointments to them, including the Kent Resource Partnership and the Environment Committee.

3 Proposals

3.1 The Kent Resource Partnership is a partnership between the 12 district councils and Kent County Council. The District Councils collect domestic waste and recycling and KCC dispose of the materials. The partnership looks at how improvements can be made to waste management in Kent and their priority is the ongoing delivery of the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

3.2 The committee is now ***recommended*** to determine who should be appointed for the municipal year 2022/23.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 The governance mechanisms for the joint arrangements require members to be appointed to these roles, so there are no alternative options.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 This is a routine appointment to existing arrangements, so no consultation has been undertaken or is proposed beyond asking group leaders for their nominations.

6 Implications

Issue	**Implications**
Corporate Plan	The joint arrangements contribute to corporate plan Priority 2: Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges, and specifically to objective 2.5, 'Ensure that the borough is kept clean, that recycling remains a focus, and that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible.
Financial, Resource and Property	One of the reasons for the existence of the joint arrangements is to provide necessary services more efficiently and hence produce savings for the councils. There are no specific financial implications in the appointment of members to the governance bodies.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The joint arrangements are established in contracts or other agreements between the partner councils, which include provision for members to be appointed to governance bodies.
Crime and Disorder	No implications identified at this stage.

Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The work of the KRP is focussed on reducing waste and recycling more which will have direct impact on improving the environment and increasing sustainability.
Health and Wellbeing	No implications identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	No implications identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	No implications identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	No implications identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Political group nominations to the KRP – to follow

8 Background Papers

8.1 Link to information on KCC website about the Kent Resource Partnership.

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Environment Committee Meeting	
Meeting Date	30 June 2022
Report Title	Food Service Plan 2022 - 23
EMT Lead	Lisa Fillery, Director of Finance
Head of Service	Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
Lead Officer	Annmarie Goodwin, Food & Safety Team Leader (North)
Classification	**Open: Appendix I** **Exempt: Appendix II**
Recommendations	1. To approve the Food Service Plan 2022-23 and endorse the resource needed to meet future demands of the service.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 The Food Standards Agency (FSA) require all food law enforcement authorities to prepare a Food Service Plan to reflect achievements, plan for future challenges and identify resource to meet this need.

1.2 Given the impact the Covid pandemic has had on the hospitality sector, together with the recruitment difficulties we are experiencing, due to a national shortage of competent enforcement officers, this service plan outlines the challenges that lie ahead for the service and how managers and officers intend to respond.

1.3 At this point in time, with the UK position of importing food into the country, the impact of the UK leaving the EU is not anticipated to impact on the service should the authority have discretionary powers for issuing Health Export Certificates.

2 Background

2.1 The FSA require the Food Service Plan to demonstrate we follow principles of:

- Good regulation.
- Focus on key delivery issues and outcomes.
- Provide an essential link with corporate and financial planning.
- Set objectives for the future and identify major issues that cross service boundaries.
- Provide a means of managing performance and making performance comparisons; and
- Provide information on the authority's service delivery to stakeholders, including businesses and consumers.

The format for the plan is set down by the FSA, and as a shared service we benefit by providing comparison information for all partnership local authorities, Maidstone, Swale and Tunbridge Wells.

2.2 The Covid pandemic has had a major impact on the delivery of food enforcement over the last two years. The effect of numerous lockdowns on the hospitality sector is well documented, but for food enforcement this meant that the inspections that were due during times of lockdown have caused a backlog of inspections, that need to be addressed.

2.3 Locally, Kent has seen the creation of a new Border Inspection Post at Ashford and the reinstalment of Dover as one the busiest ports of entry to the country from Europe. This has had an impact on our ability to recruit and retain competent officers for food enforcement by creating even more competition for staff, on top of the competition from London authorities, plus individuals making life changes.

2.4 Lockdowns saw a surge in new food business registrations, a trend which is continuing. Some of these businesses are transitory (furloughed individuals) but they impact on officer time as we must process their registration, arrange visits for an initial hygiene risk rating, provide guidance and advise them.

2.5 The pandemic also required the service to respond to the numerous Covid enforcement measures, diverting resource to projects and activities as the county went through Tiers, Steps and eventually the opening of the economy.

3 Proposals

3.1 Members are asked to approve the Mid Kent Food Service Plan 2022-23 (Appendix I). It outlines the service achievements and future challenges we are aware of. It covers just one year as the FSA anticipate introducing a modernised food enforcement programme in 2023/24.

3.2 There are two focuses for the work of the team for the coming year:

Recruitment and retention of authorised officers
Completion of inspection programme

The current staffing level is not sustainable given the service demands and we need to review the service to ensure we continue with a core of well trained and competent officers.

We will work closely with the Director of Resource to ensure that the service remains within the financial parameters for the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 Members may choose not to approve the Food Service Plan 2022-23 or agree with the workplan for the coming year. This would be counter to requirement of the FSA Framework Agreement and suggest that the authority was not having due regard for their food law enforcement responsibilities.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 No consultation is required for the Food Service Plan.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	A Food Service Plan will demonstrate the Council is a well-managed organisation and support several priorities identified in the Corporate Plan 2020-23.
Financial, Resource and Property	The Service Plan has no additional resource implications over the current shared service charges to Swale BC, subject to any recommendations from the review of the recruitment and retention item which would be subject to the Director of Resources approval. The 2022/23 budget for F & S and Admin (at 60% for food work) is £274,568. The estimated cost of the food function is £239,591, other work undertaken by the team accounts for the residual cost.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The Council as a food law enforcement authority is required to produce a Food Service Plan as part of the Food Standards Agency powers under the Food Standards Act 1999. There are no consequences arising from the proposal that adversely affect or interfere with individual's rights and freedoms as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998.
Crime and Disorder	There are no Crime and Disorder implications.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	There are no Environment, Climate and Ecological Emergency implications
Health and Wellbeing	The Food Service Plan support the Health and Wellbeing aspirations of the Council.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	No safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults implications have been identified.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The Food Service Plan seeks to reduce risk to the Council of failing to deliver a service to meet the food law responsibilities by prioritising recruitment and retention of appropriately qualities staff. No health and safety implications have been identified.
Equality and Diversity	The proposal in the report has a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no apparent equality impact on end users.

Issue	Implications
Privacy and Data Protection	No data privacy implications have been identified.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Mid Kent Food Service Plan 2022-23
- Exempt Appendix II: Food Recovery Plan 2022-23

8 Background Papers

None.

MID KENT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

FOOD SERVICE PLAN

2022– 2023

Introduction

This plan explains the work undertaken by the Food and Safety Team, Mid Kent Environmental Health Service (MKEH). It is has regard to the Food Standards Agency's Food Law Code of Practice and looks forward to for the next year following which we anticipate the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to announce changes in the enforcement model.

MKEH Food and Safety Service aims to protect and improve the quality of life of the local community, workforce, and visitors to the districts of Maidstone, Swale and Tunbridge Wells. Officers are based at two locations – Sittingbourne and Tunbridge Wells but have utilised remote working as a way of maximising efficiency of time and planning visits and interventions; they also have access to Maidstone House when working in Maidstone.

The purpose of the Food & Safety Service, in relation to its food activity, is to reduce risk to the public from food purchased, produced or eaten in the Mid Kent area. We have a responsibility to ensure we provide accurate and timely advice to food businesses, based on national guidance produced by the FSA. Most of the team's work focuses on food safety, health and safety at work, infectious disease control and the registration of tattooing, cosmetic piercing etc. The service also delivers Shellfish monitoring for Swale and animal welfare for Tunbridge Wells.

Food composition, labelling, and feeding stuffs are dealt with by Kent County Council Trading Standards.

Included in this service plan is:

- Where we work and what we do
- How we deliver our food service
- Our achievements 2018 - 2021
- Planning ahead and the challenges we face

1. Where we work

The service is delivered from Swale House, Sittingbourne and Town Hall, Tunbridge Wells. Officers use Maidstone House as a place of work when working in or near the town, for meetings with other service areas and for administrative needs.

We support home working in line with HR policies to ensure that officers work efficiently and flexibly. We work according to business demands including evening and weekend visits to premises that are inaccessible during 'normal' working hours.

Tunbridge Wells

The main urban area is the historic town of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough and the two market towns of Cranbrook and Paddock Wood. Beyond these towns, the Borough is predominantly rural in character and nearly 70% of the borough is designated as an area of outstanding natural beauty. There are eleven premises approved under EU Vertical Directives, including a cheese manufacturer, meat and fish products and cold stores.

Swale

There are eleven premises approved under EU Vertical Directives, including a cheese manufacturer, meat and fish products and a cold store. Sittingbourne has one of the largest bottling and packing plants in Europe for cherries and other fruit, whilst Faversham has one of the oldest breweries in the country. In the summer months there is an increase in fast food and mobile food operators within the district and a general increase in business as tourism attracts an influx of people, especially on caravan and chalet sites on the Isle of Sheppey. As a coastal authority the Council has responsibility for sampling of shellfish from the Swale.

Maidstone

Maidstone is the county town of Kent and has the largest population of all the Kent Districts. A large, diverse number of food premises are situated in the town centre which also has a vibrant night-time economy. There are many catering establishments in the rural communities with much of the countryside designated areas of outstanding natural beauty. The M20 corridor along the north of the borough provides easy access to Europe and the rest of Britain for a number of food distribution sites. Maidstone has a flourishing weekly market (Tuesdays and Saturdays). Ten premises are approved under EU Vertical Directives, including dairy, meat, and egg products.

Table 1: Total Premises and EU Approved Premises

	Maidstone	Swale	Tunbridge Wells
EU Approved Premises	10	11	11
Total Number of Food Establishments (as reported in 20/21 Food Standards Agency return)	1488	1384	1292

All districts have a proportion of food establishments catering for world cuisines such as, European, Asian, Indian, Chinese, Nepalese, Mexican and many employees whose first language is not English.

1.1. Our Service Standards

We pride ourselves on the professionalism, integrity, and experience of our officers. The service reports to the MKS Shared Service Board for Environmental Health, members at each authority, and the public. As food authorities we must ensure we work to the standards defined by the Food Standards Agency Code of Practice and associated Practice Guidance as well as meeting the standards set by the Health and Safety Executive. We also ensure all officers' competency is maintained in line with FSA's competency framework. We also ensure that each officer working in food safety maintains their annual minimum of 10 hours Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in food safety matters to comply with the Food Law Code of Practice and 10 hours made up from other professional matters.

Our performance standards include:

- Responding to service requests within 5 working days
- Carrying out all food interventions within the timescales in the Food Standards Agency Code of Practice.
- Ensuring regular updates of national food hygiene rating scores (FHRS) to the Food Standards Agency website
- Applying a risk-based approach to prioritizing new food businesses

1.2. How we provide information, guidance and advice

We carry out advisory visits to food premises on request and payment of the relevant fee; we do respond to enquiries via the telephone or e-mail and make no charge. We provide technical information and signpost to national standards, guidance and legal requirements. Each authority website provides help and guidance with links to other reference sources and is updated regularly.

MKEH have a dedicated and trained administration team who triage many enquiries, update database information and are responsible for collation of system information. They can be contacted at:

01622 602460 or 01622 602450

e-mail: ehadmin@midkent.gov.uk

1.3. How we check compliance with the law, assess risks and let those we regulate know what they should expect from us.

We visit food businesses and respond to customer service requests. Using the Food Standards Agency Food Law Code of Practice we assess the risks to food safety and rate businesses accordingly. This process governs how often we will visit a food premises, for example, with A rated businesses (the highest risk) receiving visits every 6 months.

We give feedback to food business operators, verbally and in writing at the time of visiting, distinguishing between what is required by law and recommendations of good practice. If a business is rated 0-2 for National Food Hygiene Rating then a letter including photographs, when appropriate, is sent providing further detail. These letters are sent to ensure that the food business operator is clear about the work needed to comply with food laws.

Additionally, we give eligible businesses a rating under the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) published on the Food Standards Agency website. Ratings can vary between 0 [urgent improvement necessary] to 5 [very good]. Not all food businesses are eligible for inclusion in the scheme governed by the FSA's Brand Standard (for example home caterers and manufacturers are excluded).

We will undertake enforcement revisits to food premises where the risk to health requires action to be taken before the next inspection, usually premises with a rating of 0, 1 or 2. We charge £168 (2022/23) for requests for re-inspection for re-rating purposes. This enables those businesses that wish to improve their score quickly and demonstrate to officers they have completed the necessary work, will get the opportunity to have their rating reviewed, there is no limit to the number of times they can request a re-inspection for re-rating purposes. Businesses have a 'right to appeal' the officers original risk rating and a 'right to reply'. By publishing the ratings consumers can make informed decisions about premises they visit.

- **How we deal with non-compliance**

We advise and educate to achieve compliance. Persistent and/or serious non-compliance may lead us to serve statutory notices requiring action within a specified time and/or to prosecute offenders in line with our enforcement policy.

- **Our Enforcement Policy**

This explains in more detail our aim to provide a service that is proportionate, targeted, transparent and consistent. All three local authorities have adopted the Government's Enforcement Concordat and we have a common Enforcement Policy based upon its principles. The Enforcement Policy is consistent with the Regulator's Compliance Code.

We seek to ensure that local businesses comply with important statutory requirements designed to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees, the public and the environment whilst placing the minimum possible burden on businesses.

This is achieved by targeting food business operators posing the highest risk to food safety and taking a 'softer touch' to lower risk and fully compliant operators.

- **Our fees and charges and the reasons behind them**

We carry out our services because we are legally obliged to as a 'Food Authority'. We charge for the following services.

- Attestations for exporting low risk goods
- Voluntary surrender certificates for insurance claims
- Requests for a re-inspection for re-rating purposes
- Advice visits

Fees are calculated according to how much it costs us to provide the service. These must be reasonable, and we do not make a profit.

- **How to comment or complain about our service**

Each council has a complaints policy that can be found on their respective websites or by contacting EH Admin.

2. How We Deliver our Food Service

We do this by:

Enforcing food safety in all food premises through targeted interventions, investigate and respond to food service requests/complaints, investigate food poisoning notifications and outbreaks, undertake food sampling, imported food, infectious disease control, sampling and classification of shellfish, and dealing with general enquiries from the public.

2.1. Programmed food hygiene inspections & Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

We target those businesses posing the highest risk to food safety, interventions are carried out in premises risk-rated as A - D, with A rated posing the highest risk. Premises rated as the lowest risk, E (unless they are Approved Premises) are targeted as part of an alternative enforcement strategy, using questionnaires every 3 years to track changes in food operations that may trigger an intervention. If a response to the questionnaire indicates higher risk activities are being carried out an inspection will be made. Visits may be made as a follow-up to a 'non-response' by a business.

Other premises will be targeted where intelligence arises from various sources including the public, FSA and neighbouring authorities or other agencies.

Premises profile

On the 1st April 2022 there were 3872 operating food premises within the Mid Kent Shared Service. The table below shows the number of food businesses in each risk category per area.

A = indicates the category with the highest risk.

O = those premises registered but outside of the inspection regime, usually because the risk is perceived to be so low or they may be inspected by other agencies.

The figures vary during the year as new businesses open, some premises close or change food business operators. Table 2 shows the FSA Local Authority Enforcement Management return figures for 2021 – 22.

Table 2: Premises by Risk Category

Category	Maidstone	Swale	Tunbridge Wells	Total
A	1	2	2	5
B	13	17	17	47
C	129	113	161	403
D	597	560	444	1601
E	660	630	526	1816
O	57	40	111	208
TOTAL	1457	1362	1261	4080

2.2. New premises

New food businesses are required to register with the local authority and are allocated to officers for inspection. The figure varies, but averages about 16 new businesses per local authority per month. An initial inspection will be carried out to assess the business risk rating and subsequent routine inspections frequency will be based on the overall risk profile.

2.3. Investigating complaints about food and food premises.

All officers are expected to respond to all food service requests within the time scales specified in the service Standard Operating Procedures, currently 5 working days. Priority is based on the perceived risk to health and depends on

information received from the complainant, the resource available. Some service requests will not be investigated as they pose no risk or we have no powers, however, contact will still be made with the complainant to advise them of this.

2.4. Investigating cases of food poisoning, food borne diseases & other infectious diseases.

We investigate cases of food poisoning, or suspected food poisoning, usually associated with food consumption. Notifications are received from the Kent branch of UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and are investigated using Department of Health Guidelines and our Food Poisoning / Infectious Disease Investigation Procedure.

'Other' infectious diseases generally refer to Hepatitis or Legionella and we assist the UKHSA in the investigation and prevention process of a variety of infections, either locally or part of a wider outbreak.

Outbreaks of sickness and diarrhoea, often associated with Norovirus type infections are also investigated, although many people can be affected, such outbreaks are rarely associated with food safety. Where a problem of wider importance is discovered, relevant food enforcement authorities and the Food Standards Agency will be notified in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice

2.5. Approving and monitoring compliance with food law in businesses manufacturing products of animal origin.

These 'specialist' food premises often pose a potential higher risk to food safety because they distribute their food products over wide areas, sometimes internationally. Typically, producers of meat, fish and dairy products are required to be 'approved' rather than registered with their local authority to reflect slightly more stringent requirements of food law.

2.6. Sampling and arranging for microbiological analysis of food.

Sampling is carried out in accordance with our Sampling Policy. To prioritise resources, this is based mainly on the national sampling programme produced by UKHSA and Local Government Regulation (LGR) and co-ordinated across Kent by the Food Sampling Sub-Group.

The exception to this is sampling of shellfish in the Swale estuary. 60 shellfish samples are submitted annually for microbiological examination (5 per month) with additional samples tested for the presence of algal toxins. Sampling is undertaken by the Port of London under contract with Swale BC.

The purpose of sampling is to provide potential evidence to assist when suspect food has been implicated in food illness, to gain information about emerging trends in food safety or to monitor food business controls of food likely to support bacterial growth.

We provide feedback and guidance to those food business operators on sampling results.

2.7. Maintaining a register of all Food Businesses (except exempted businesses)

We are obliged to maintain a register of food businesses within each district under the Food Law Code of Practice. This can be provided from the database on request in hard or electronic copy. It contains the name, address and nature of all the relevant food business (i.e. restaurant, manufacturer).

2.8. Food Safety Incidents & Food Alerts

We receive food alerts, either from the FSA or local businesses where action needs to be taken because of a problem with food that has been distributed, usually affecting more than one local authority area. We may need to prevent the distribution of food and help trace where it has been distributed to prevent further food safety issues.

2.9. Supporting Businesses

Imported Food Products & Checks for Illegally Imported Foods
Checks are made during our visits to businesses to make sure food can be traced back to its origins. This includes checks on imported food to ensure fitness and that it has the correct documentation.

Advice on Good Practice in relation to Food Safety

We not only enforce the law, but we give advice to food business operators and members of the public about food safety and health and safety at work. If a business asks for advice, we can give over the telephone there is no charge, however, if an advice visit is requested this is chargeable (as above). In addition to this there is information available on all 3 websites including signposts to FSA and other relevant external agencies.

2.10. Maintaining a High Quality, Professional Workforce

The service organisation chart is provided in section 5 together with the cost of the Food & Safety Service.
We consider the development and training of staff important to our success in delivering quality services are to our customers.

All officers are appropriately qualified and receive regular training to maintain their level of competency and continuous professional development. Regular update training is provided in-house for policy and procedures, especially when new legislation or for changes in approach, all officers have access to a high-quality online training platform.

We have fortnightly team meetings involving all officers to promote consistency and work across boundaries to ensure targeted work is achieved. We encourage shadowing between officers including inspecting more complex food operations (approved premises) and team leaders have a programme of accompanied visits to support officer development and provide constructive feedback on inspection skills. We participate in the annual Food Standards Agency annual national consistency exercise as well periodic inhouse consistency exercises.

2.11. Working with Government Agencies & other Organisations to Maintain or Improve Standards in Food Businesses

We are committed to ensuring the enforcement approach we take is consistent with neighbouring authorities and authorities with similar premises. We have regular contact with colleagues in other Kent authorities. There is a conscious effort between the organisations to ensure that there is a consistency of working practices. Arrangements to ensure engagement and collaboration are:

- Kent & Medway Food Liaison Group - review legislation and Codes of Practice and develop good-practice guidance to be available for use by all Kent authorities.

- Kent & Medway Sampling Sub-Group - co-ordinate sampling, exchange ideas and provide low-cost training opportunities.
- Inter-Authority Audit Schemes via Kent & Medway Environmental Health Manager's Group
- Local Government Regulation (LGR) – for guidance and advice
- Food Standards Agency – for guidance and training
- UK Health Security Agency for support in sampling, food poisoning and outbreak control.
- Planning and Building Control Sections – Notification of relevant planning applications are submitted to the team for perusal and comment and food safety advice is often provided before the formal application is submitted.

3. Our Achievements in 2018 - 21

3.1. Programmed Inspections

Each authority is required to submit annual returns to the FSA. The following information provides a summary of the workload and outputs achieved by the teams over the last 3 years. There are a range of interventions carried out by the team to reflect the needs of the food businesses we regulate, this includes the programmed inspections and audits, verification & surveillance and reactive interventions such as advice and education.

Table 3: Type of Intervention Undertaken

Category of Intervention	Maidstone			Swale			Tunbridge Wells		
	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21
Inspections and audits	**341**	**429**	**269**	**307**	**395**	**256**	**221**	**350**	**179**
Verification and surveillance	**14**	**48**	**42**	**26**	**36**	**46**	**30**	**35**	**19**
Food sampling	**50**	**14**	**16**	**58**	**11**	**41**	**33**	**117**	**0**
Advice and education	**36**	**220**	**43**	**53**	**221**	**47**	**178**	**257**	**52**
Information/intelligence gathering	**86**	**141**	**87**	**94**	**107**	**101**	**60**	**132**	**71**
TOTAL	**527**	**852**	**457**	**538**	**770**	**491**	**522**	**891**	**321**

3.2. Service Requests

Reactive work is generated by complaints or information from the public, other local authorities and agencies.

Table 4: Service Request by Type and Year

Category	Maidstone			Swale			Tunbridge Wells		
	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21
Food	**47**	**43**	**41**	**42**	**38**	**50**	**30**	**37**	**27**
Hygiene of Premises	**133**	**127**	**71**	**99**	**97**	**92**	**87**	**78**	**66**
TOTAL	**180**	**170**	**112**	**141**	**135**	**142**	**117**	**115**	**93**

3.3. New Business Registrations

The service must inspect and risk rate new businesses that register with the local authority within 28 days of registering, with the FSA indicating these businesses should be regarded as high priority. In practice many businesses register before they are ready to trade which can require us to monitor their progress to enable officers to undertake an inspection. We also find that some registrations don't materialise into trading businesses.

Since the pandemic we have seen a noticeable increase in the number of food business registrations which places further demands on officers time.

Table 5: Number of New Business Registrations (average per month) per local authority

Year	Average number of new food registrations received per LA per month
19/20	12
20/21	23
21/22	16
22/23 to date	15

3.4. Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

Appeals against the food hygiene rating score and requests for re-inspection and re-score

Businesses have a right to appeal against the FHRS score decision made by food inspectors, the process for appeals is laid out in the FSA Brand Standard. Both Food & Safety Team Leaders review the inspection information for the business to provide a robust process.

Businesses also have a right to request a re-score of the initial inspection score, where they have completed the work required by the inspecting officer. Generally, this is where a business has scored below a five and would like to improve

their score to prevent negative publicity. The inspection for re-rating must be carried out by the service within three months of receipt of this request.

Table 6: Appeal and Re-Scoring Requests

Category	Maidstone			Swale			Tunbridge Wells		
	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21	18/19	19/20	20/21
Appeal	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**1**
Rescoring inspection	**7**	**18**	**6**	**9**	**17**	**2**	**17**	**11**	**5**

3.5. Projects and Initiatives

3.5.1. As a result of the Covid 19 pandemic the way we worked changed dramatically with officers being fully based at home. The way we conducted our inspections changed with the FSA requesting that all inspections from 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 ceased and when they did resume, they had to be undertaken in a covid secure fashion. Much of the 2020/21 and 2021/22 period was taken up with responding to the demands of Covid Enforcement, with officers involved in numerous projects. Visiting many local businesses to speak to them regarding their Covid secure measures and providing free of charge signage for mask wearing, social distancing etc. which was well received.

3.5.2. In the recovery phase of the pandemic ongoing proactive surveillance was/is essential to re-establish an accurate picture of the local business landscape and to identify open/closed/ recently re-opened/ new businesses; as well as businesses where there has been a change of operation, activities, or food business owner. We were successful in obtaining specific FSA funding relating to new businesses, all new food registrations received during the pandemic were subject to triage to identify premises which are deemed to be high priority for inspection.

3.5.3. We also successfully applied for funding from the Food Standards Agency to fund personal protective equipment and officer time for the inspection of the numerous fishing vessels registered within the Swale area. This project involved a Senior EHO making direct contact with fishing businesses and boarding each boat to undertake a food inspection.

3.5.4. In the summer of 2019/2020 we received a high number of reports from various sources, including Kent Police, regarding the illegal harvesting of shellfish from around The Swale. This posed a food hazard as the illegal harvesting was not from classified beds subject to regular sampling, and the qualities taken suggested that it may

enter the food chain rather than for personal consumption. Our officers attended various patrols along with Kent Police, The Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority and Kent & Essex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authorities. In association with these agencies and Natural England our officers designed signs which was subsequently erected at common harvesting points. The number of reports the following year was very low in comparison.

3.5.5. In July 2021 routine sampling of the Swale indicated the presence of microorganisms necessitating the temporary closure of Cleve Marsh Beds. Notices alerting the public were positioned either side of the Swale to inform the public. The beds remained closed until September following further sampling of shellfish and water indicating levels of contamination had reduced to safe levels. The beds were not being harvested by the authorised shellfish fisherman at the time due to low stock levels.

4. Planning Ahead & challenges 2022 - 25

4.1. Overview

There will be some notable external challenges ahead of us in relation to realigning the routine inspection plan to pre-Covid pandemic levels, due to several factors. The pandemic saw a high level of food business closure and opening, plus the present challenging economic environment; staffing shortages in the service sector, increasing energy and wage costs, and the backdrop of financial constraints on household finances.

Change is anticipated for food regulation in the UK that may include changes to how we regulate food safety following the UK leaving the EU – particularly in relation to imported food. Maidstone, Swale and Tunbridge Wells do not have port-based imported food inspection responsibilities, but our proximity to two of the busiest ports of entry into the country may impact on the future arrangements for inspecting food entering the country.

4.2. Workforce

We have a strong record of providing access to food training courses to ensure officers maintain and go beyond their professional CPD requirements. Looking forward it is even more important to ensure that suitable training provisions are available to deliver the agile and resilient workforce required to meet the demands of the future. We currently have 4.5 FTE vacancies within the Food & Safety team. Despite several recruitment attempts over the past two years we have been unsuccessful in appointing to these posts. This reflects regional pressures of high cost of living in the SE England, plus competition of London weighting salaries and very competitive Border Control Points at Dover and Ashford, within easy commuting distance to our authorities makes recruitment very difficult.

Given these pressures it is inevitable that we need to radically rethink of what skill set officers need to deliver interventions; to this end we are exploring alternative options to reflect recent changes in the FSA's competency framework for authorising officers. To address the short-term resource issue team leaders are undertaking more front line work, the vacancy budget is used to fund contractors, plus we offer overtime to staff on a voluntary basis.

4.3. Modernising Regulation

The FSA has introduced the Achieving Business Compliance (ABC) programme approach to modernising the way food businesses are regulated by the FSA and LA's. Today, 95% of our groceries come from 10 large supermarkets. Online food sales have substantially increased, with online food sales almost doubling in the last 5 years. In addition, businesses have more data available.

For some parts of the food sector, there may be more effective ways to make sure businesses comply with the rules than our current regulatory model, which is based heavily on in-person and regular inspection of food business premises by local authorities.

The ABC programme will develop a set of smarter regulatory approaches which:

- make it easier for businesses to provide safe and trusted food for consumers
- target regulatory resources at the areas which pose the greatest risk
- improve compliance across the system by working with and through others, including regulatory partners and influential businesses

4.4 Process Efficiencies

The service actively encourages officers to identify ways of making their inspection processes more efficient. We have introduced some pre-inspection checks to establish if the businesses are still trading following their food registration or they have a low inspection frequency. These checks are carried out by Admin and help save on journey time to businesses that have ceased trading or 'no show' visits.

4.5 Attestations & Export Health Certificates

The provision of Export Health Certificates has been currently suspended due to key trained officers leaving the service this will be re-examined when resources allow. We currently charge on a cost recovery basis for attestation service for food business operators who wish to export low risk food stuffs to the rest of the world, this may be a growing area of work but may have to withdraw this offer if staffing levels do not improve.

4.5 Mobile working

We have been working closely with the Mid Kent IT development team to explore more efficient ways of working using up to date technology, we have partnered with an external agency which is a market leader in field service and mobile workforce management technology. We will shortly be providing officers with new hardware to adopt phase 1 of this project, integration between the software and the Uniform database with an aim to extend this to food inspections later in the year. The objective is to streamline processes by recording visit and inspection outcomes directly to the database, allowing officers to focus time on undertaking inspections not the paperwork.

4.6 Hybrid working

In line with the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's flexible working policy our officers have adopted a hybrid way of working. Whilst officers have always spent time in the borough's undertaking various interventions. Alongside this however, we recognise the importance of maintaining strong team bonds to provide officers with sufficient support to enable them to develop and have confidence that should they need support when faced with serious enforcement

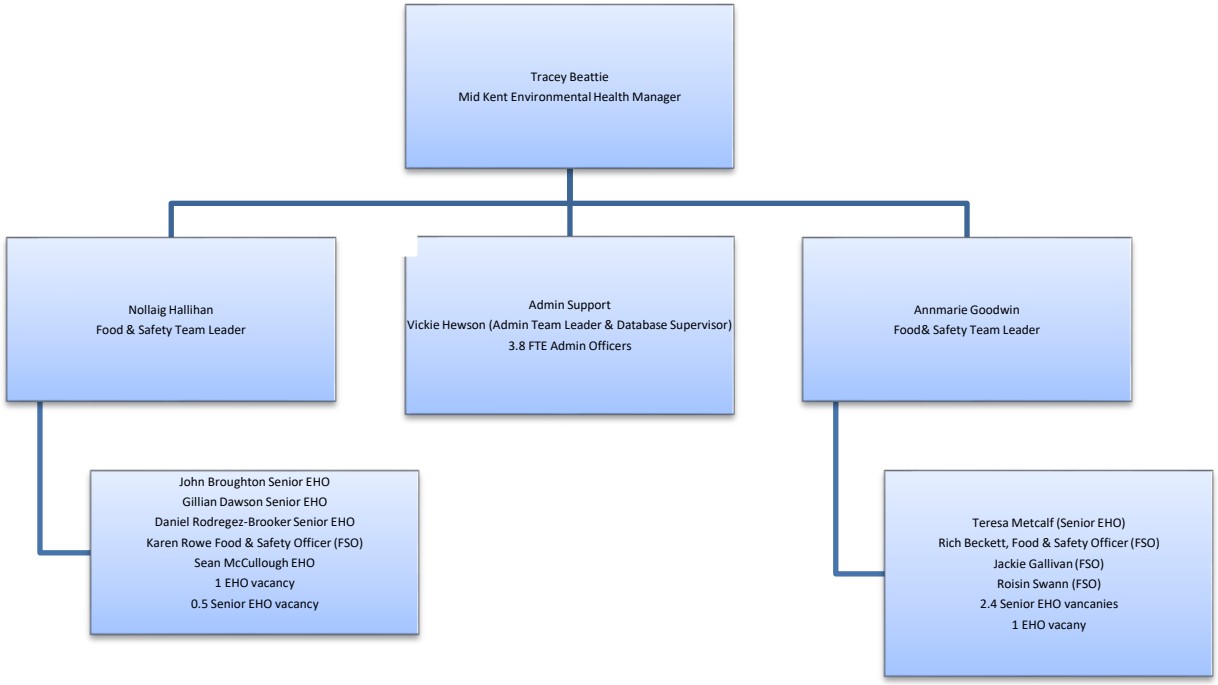
situations. To this end Team Leaders encourage team working days in the offices and annual Service Planning days, where system improvements are identified by all participants.

4.7 Internal Audit Jan – March 2023

The Food & Safety team will be subject to an internal audit in early 2023 to ensure we are maintaining our service standards etc.

5. Resources

Mid Kent Organisational Chart (As of 1 April 2022)



6. Budget Allocation to Food Safety

The allocation of budget across MKEH is provided in the table 7 below. The budget set for 2022/23 remains the same as the previous Mid Kent Service Plan. It is based on an estimate of 60% of Management time, 80% of Professional officer time and 60% of Admin time spent on food functions. Table 8 provides the cost to each local authority.

Table7: Total Shared Service Costs for Food Safety

	Budget 2022/23 (£)
Management costs (60% of team leader time & 30% Service Manager)	100,914
Professional Employee Costs (Includes overtime, PRP, NI and Superannuation and training)	530,924
Mileage & Transport Expenses	21,912
Administrative support costs	86,502
Income (est)	-14,000
TOTAL (Available expenditure)	728,777

Table 8: 2022/23 Food costs per Local Authority

	Maidstone	**Swale**	**Tunbridge Wells**
Food Service costs	228,763	240,424	259,590

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Environment Committee Forward Decisions Plan

Report title, background information and recommendation(s)	Date of meeting	Open or exempt?	Lead Officer and report author
Handover report	30.06.22	Open	Head of Service: Head of Environment and Leisure, Martyn Cassell Report author: Martyn Cassell
Contract award for Electric Vehicle charge points	30.06.22	Open	Head of Service: Head of Environment and Leisure, Martyn Cassell Report author: Grace Couch
The Electric Vehicle strategy	30.06.22	Open	Head of Service: Head of Environment and Leisure, Martyn Cassell Report author: Grace Couch
Kent Resource Partnership	30.06.22	Open	Head of Service: Head of Policy, Governance and Customer Service, David Clifford Report author: Jo Millard

Food Service Plan 2022 -25	30.06.22	Partially exempt	Head of Service: Environmental Health Service, Tracey Beattie
Climate and Ecological Emergency Annual report 2022 draft	Nov 2022	Open	Head of Service: Head of Environment and Leisure, Martyn Cassell Report author: Janet Hill
Air Quality Action Plan	Nov 2022	Open	Head of Service: Environmental Health Service, Tracey Beattie
New Waste and Street Cleansing Contract award	Dec 2022	Open	Head of Service: Head of Environment and Leisure, Martyn Cassell Report author: Martyn Cassell
Public conveniences contract award	Early 2023	Open	Head of Service: Head of Environment and Leisure, Martyn Cassell Report author: Alister Andrews
Open Spaces and Play Strategy	Early 2023	Open	Head of Service: Head of Environment and Leisure, Martyn Cassell Report author: Jay Jenkins

Air Quality Action Plan	Early 2023	Open	Head of Service: Environmental Health Service, Tracey Beattie

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