

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure: Discussion Paper

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This paper proposes a methodology for ensuring that SEStran's Local Authority partners ensure that future Electric Vehicle charging needs are fully met in the most economically advantageous way, subject to the Scottish Government's vision for a just transition where no one is left behind from the benefits afforded by the transition to a net zero transport system.
- 1.2 The paper builds on the recently approved Concordat between SEStran and the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (ESESCRD), which is supported by Clackmannanshire and Falkirk Councils.
- 1.3 The Concordat demonstrates a commitment to work together in support of further integrating economic development, transport and land use planning and delivery in the region. It sets out how activities will be aligned to ensure that regional plans can deliver shared outcomes through targeted transport interventions. It also describes how new transport interventions will progress, from strategy to delivery, through the appropriate governance structure(s), depending on the activity.
- 1.4 In addition, this paper is the first step in delivery against key actions in section 14.3 of the SEStran Regional Transport Strategy including:
 - Work with the private sector and partners to develop a regional electric vehicle investment and charging strategy, with associated technical guidance, including a spatial strategy across the area for long journey, rapid-charging facilities and for local area hub/community charging
- 1.5 This paper also provides a brief overview of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure in the Scotland and the SEStran areas, and summarises the main activities to date. It then briefly outlines the potential benefits of a regional approach, proposes a methodology and governance, and recommends next steps.
- 1.6 The main aim of the paper is to secure commitment and funding from all partner Local Authorities to investigate and identify the optimal approach to the market as described above.

2. Background

- 2.1 In January 2022, The Scottish Government published a new draft vision statement for public electric vehicle (EV) charging in Scotland.
- 2.2 The vision places people and businesses first, outlining the accessible, affordable and reliable public network required for the future. A just transition is at the heart of the new approach, where no one is left behind from the benefits afforded by the transition to a net zero transport system.

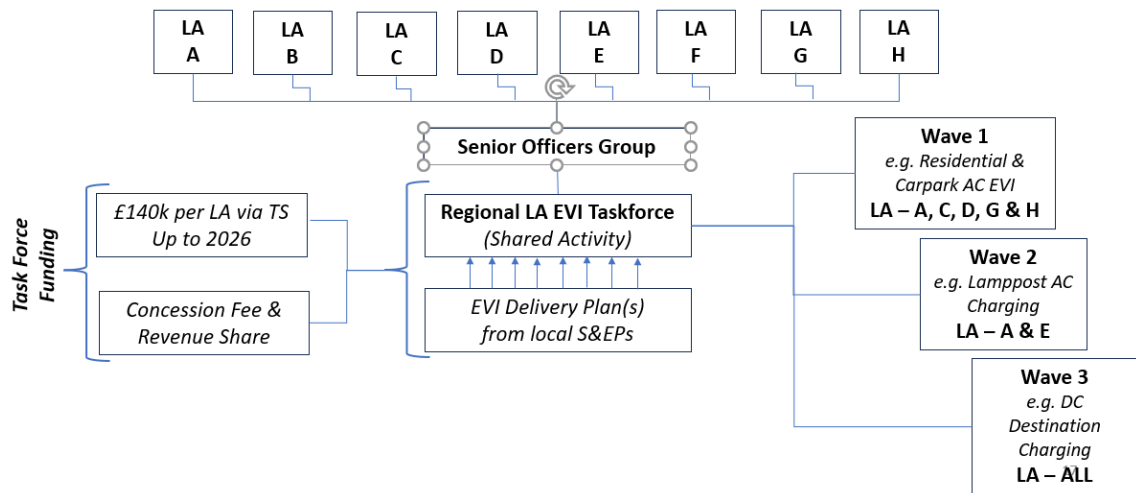
- 2.3 Building on existing provision and seeking to deliver more of the right chargers in the right places, a new public electric vehicle charging fund was launched in Scotland. The aim of the fund was to ensure that Local Authorities could leverage in private sector funding to enable delivery of infrastructure at the pace and scale required to meet demand and encourage car users to switch to EVs in order to support wider climate change objectives, collaborating regionally where possible.
- 2.4 Transport Scotland (TS) required LAs to develop EV Strategies and Expansion Plans (which forecast demand and how this will be met) in order to bid for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Funding (EVIF). Some LAs in the SEStran area have published their Expansion Plans and the rest are well advanced.
- 2.5 Some LAs have gone further and have submitted reports to Council Committees with the objective of commencing procurement of the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (EVI) required to meet this demand.
- 2.6 Transport Scotland and Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) are keen to support a joint approach to EVIF procurement where LAs consider this to be the preferred option. Although there are likely to be different needs for each local to expand their network, where there are similarities in both the type of solution and the commercial basis on which new works and services could be provided, a joint approach will help eliminate duplication of effort in preparing contracts and provide benefits of scale in negotiations.
- 2.7 Across Scotland, there are already several examples of this collaborative approach:
- Glasgow City Region (8 Authorities)
 - Ayrshires (3 Authorities)
 - North-East Scotland (4 Authorities)
 - Forth Valley (3* Authorities)
 - HiTRANS (Island Authorities)
- * This includes Clackmannanshire and Falkirk, who are both SEStran partners and involved in these discussions

3. Proposed methodology and governance

- 3.1 Therefore, although it is acknowledged that different LAs are at different stages in the process, and that some have defined future plans, there is an opportunity for all of the LAs in the region to work together to explore the potential of a joint approach.
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- 3.4 In previous discussions – in February, May and August of this year, Chief Officers agreed that this could be a fruitful area of collaboration. This has since been reinforced by constructive dialogue on the Concordat for joint working with ESESCRD authorities.
- 3.5 The subject was also raised at the ESESCRD Elected Members Oversight Committee on 3 November 2023, and it was agreed that LAs should work together and there was an expectation that SEStran would coordinate this work.
- 3.6 It should be noted that this work can be run concurrently with a LA's existing approach, giving the LA the opportunity to select the preferred option when this becomes clearer (i.e. whether to proceed with their existing approach or adopt the regional approach). It should also be noted that becoming a part of the regional approach does not tie a LA to any future course of action – local sovereignty will always be maintained and individual LAs will be at liberty to select which elements of the approach to adopt.
- 3.7 However, by being involved, LAs will potentially benefit from:
- Significant cost reductions through shared development of contracts and use of consultants
 - The sharing of best practice, as has been demonstrated at the 2 EV Forums held to date
 - Economies of scale when negotiating contracts, on the basis that the total regional population is likely to be more attractive to potential bidders than individual LAs' populations
- 3.8 SFT suggested one possible methodology and governance structure which was shared with Chief Officers and discussed at the last Chief Officers' Liaison Group (COLG) meeting. These were also discussed at the 2 EV Forums and, at the most recent, were recommended as the basis for the discussion at this meeting.
- The total aggregate Transport Scotland resource funding across the 8 SEStran LAs could be used to mobilise a shared EVI Task Force. If the EVI funding has already been committed, then LAs could support the Task Force with 'in kind' funding e.g. specialist procurement, legal, EV or transport resourcing
 - Establish a Senior Officers Group to govern the activities of the EVI Task Force. It is proposed that COLG could undertake this role, subject to appropriate attendance being agreed
 - From local Strategies and Expansion Plans, identify collaborative opportunities and a rolling programme of investment
 - Each "wave" of investment is subject to each council's approval process
 - From future contracts levy a minimum fee [say £50k] to manage the contract(s)
 - From future contracts levy a revenue share to build up a sinking fund to enable future investment
 - Future contracts would have a Lead Authority & an Inter Authority Agreement with Partners
- 3.9 The Task Force would manage the contract on behalf of the Lead and Partner Authorities

3.10



4. Next Steps

4.1 It is recommended that LAs agree to:

- Adopt the methodology and governance outlined above
- Work together to establish the resources required (skills, numbers) to operate the EV Task Force
- Fund the Task Force, either financially using EVIF funding or in-kind
- Adopt the COLG as the Senior Officers' Group (steering group for the Task Force) and identify the appropriate Officers, with sufficient decision making powers, oversight of Transport, and responsibility for budgets to ensure that real progress can be made in Group meetings

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