

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRA MEETING OF STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY
19TH JULY 2022, AT 7.00PM**

Committee Members present:

S Buck – Chairman, T Bhasin, A Cooper, M Cooper, S Dhaliwal, S Hayes, J Hyde, D Matthews, G Russell, B Saunders, J Smith, J Talbot

Also present:

Tom Price – Central Bedfordshire Council Senior Sustainable Transport Officer, Ward Member Steve Dixon, K Elliott-Turner – Town Clerk

152/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Anderson, B Collier, H Wightwick.

153/22 DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations of interests in respect of items on the agenda, and no requests for dispensations. Members were reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

154/22 PUBLIC SECTION

None present.

155/22 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Nothing to report.

156/22 RESCISSION OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTION – ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING POINTS – BROOK STREET CAR PARK AND MEMORIAL HALL CAR PARK

At the 6th July Council meeting, members resolved not to accept the Central Bedfordshire Council/BP Pulse proposal to install Electric Vehicle Charging Points at Brook Street car park or Memorial Hall car park.

As per Standing Order 9a, notice has been received with a motion signed by at least 5 councillors to reconsider the decision made, as follows:

“We, the undersigned, wish to request members reconsider providing approval for the use of land at Brook Street car park and Memorial Hall car park for the provision of EV charging points because not all members of the council were present when the proposal was rejected. As time is of the essence, we ask that an Extra Council meeting is called to avoid waiting until September.”

A member queried why this had been brought back when a decision had been made and was advised that the intention was to allow as many members to be

present to consider this matter, as there was a number unable to attend the meeting at which this was previously considered. Also, when last considered, there were quite a few questions raised, which the Clerk was unable to answer, and therefore hence why Tom Price had been invited to attend this meeting, to provide answers to those questions, and enable a fully informed decision to be made.

Members were previously provided with the report from Central Bedfordshire Council's Senior Sustainable Transport Officer, Tom Price, regarding proposed Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points in two town council owned car parks (Brook Street and Memorial Hall) and considered providing written approval for the use of the land in question for the level of provision being proposed in the report.

Tom explained that Central Bedfordshire Council has an adopted Sustainability Plan, which is their commitment to being net zero by the end of the decade, and electric vehicles play a large part in that. The Government has imposed a ban on the sale of all new petrol and diesel vehicles by the end of the decade, and by 2035 there will be no new sales of hybrid vehicles.

Central Bedfordshire Council has appointed BP Pulse in January/February of this year to look at two electric charging provisions – rapid charging along the main transport corridors, with a 30 to 40 minute charge time – usually where there is large scale retail and food outlets. The other focuses on provision for residents. They are focusing on areas where people don't have charge point provision at home. This enables those who don't have the potential for at home charging provision, such as in a terrace or flats, to feel comfortable with purchasing an electric vehicle.

They have mapped properties with no drive-ways or off-street parking, which resulted in a list of suitable sites. The results have also been lead on whether a site stacks up financially. There were 200 sites assessed by BP Pulse and CBC – they included CBC land, their car parks, and any sites put forward by T&P Councils and landowners.

The funding bid was reduced to 35 sites, with Brook Street, Memorial Hall and Arlesey Road listed as potential 24/7 accessible sites. UKPN then had to provide costings to the nearest connection point. This was assessed against expected demand, e.g. existing subscriptions for charging and capacity on the electricity grid.

That list was reduced to 13 sites, and of those, 2 are in Stotfold.

It is proposed to have 4 charging posts in each car park, with 8 bays.

Central Bedfordshire Council understands that loss of general parking provision is an issue, and therefore only 50% of the parking bays will be for EV only. Each site chosen would be future proofed, as although may not be in full use all of the time now, it will be in the future 2 to 3 years.

The idea of the location of these car parks is that it is within a 5 to 10 minute walk for people needing charge points.

Other options are charging from lamp posts, however most of the lighting stock in Central Bedfordshire is not of suitable rating to do that, where it would take 36 hours to charge a car which is not practical. You could also use on-street charging bollards, however this is a very costly option.

Most people (75%) will charge their electric vehicles at home, the supermarket or at work. So there is a need for charging everywhere, but there is still 25% of the population who can't charge at home.

There would be no cost to Town or Parish Councils, costs for Traffic Regulation Orders, signage, parking bay marking would be covered under the project. As a council, Central Bedfordshire Council is entitled to a 50% profit share of the chargers being installed. The agreement is that any landowner, i.e. Town or Parish Council that is allowing the use of their land for the charge points, would benefit from that revenue.

Responses to questions and comments:

- The charge points would be 7KW 'fast chargers', per socket. It would be around 8 hours for a full charge
- All new charge points have to have contactless payment method, so these charge points would be the most up to date
- As soon as the units go live, the cost of electricity is deducted from charge point income, and then 50% of the profit goes to the town council
- This project is being funded 70% by Government grant, 30% by BP
- When the term is up, the town council can change supplier
- This project is ongoing for the next 7 years
- Arlesey Road site was dropped off the list because of the cost for this site – it would be around £8,000 over budget and therefore went over the threshold as a potential site. It is still a site which BP network is looking at for a rapid charger – it would be a good location due to its proximity to the A507
- The Arlesey Road site does not cover enough people in the town who do not have the ability to have off-street charging, compared to the two other car parks put forward
- The reason for the Greenacre Centre car park not being pursued, is because it is not accessible 24/7
- To manage use of car parks, ANPR systems could be introduced. This could be match funded if required.

RESOLVED that the previous decision in minute 140/22 is rescinded, and that this council approves use of Brook Street car park and Memorial Hall car park for electric vehicle charge points, as proposed by Central Bedfordshire Council's EV Charge Point scheme with BP Pulse.

Councillors A Cooper and M Cooper requested that their names be recorded as voting against the decision.

157/22 QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS ON ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

None present.

158/22 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

Nothing to report.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.53pm.

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: