

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Cabinet

## Agenda Item 184

**Subject:** Improving Electric Charging Infrastructure

**Date of meeting:** Thursday, 14 May 2026

**Report of:** Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure

**Lead Officer:** Name: Corporate Director- Operations

**Contact Officer:** Name: Kieran Fitsall, Paul Nicholls

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**Ward(s) affected:** (All Wards);

**Key Decision:** Yes

**Reason(s) Key:** Is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions (wards).

**For general release**

### 1. Purpose of the report and policy context

1.1 This report reaffirms the Council Plan 2023-27 commitment to invest in and expand the city's electric vehicle charging network as part of creating a sustainable, low-emission transport system. This supports the national plan to install hundreds of thousands of public chargepoints to support the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) and realise net zero emissions by 2050.

1.2 The report provides an update on the council's progress in installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure, details about the recent procurement of new contracts, the award of government grants, the results from a recent Your Voice survey about EV charging and sets out the council's plan for how it will be expanding the city's EV charging network, which will see it increase from 500 chargepoints currently to over 6,000 by 2040.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet notes the award of the LEVI-funded 15-year EV charging infrastructure contracts, the development of proposals for Ultra-Rapid EV Charging Hubs, and the intention for integrated EV charging infrastructure to form a core element of future Park & Ride schemes.

2.2 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Corporate Director of City Operations, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, to take all steps necessary to procure a new contract or modify the existing concession contracts following termination of the contract with Blink for the Lot 2 services for the supply, installation, maintenance and operation of 8kW to 50kW EV chargepoints.

- 2.3 That Cabinet notes the findings of the EV public consultation undertaken on the council's Your Voice platform during summer 2025.
- 2.4 That Cabinet approves the 'Electric Vehicle Charging Policies' as set out in the appendices to this report.
- 2.5 That Cabinet agrees to the use of the Department for Transport (DfT) EV Pavement Channel Grant to carry out a cross-pavement EV charging trial as set out in Section 3.4.

### 3. Context and background information

#### 3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 On 17 January 2023, the Environment, Transport & Sustainability ("ETS") Committee gave approval for officers to commence a new procurement to facilitate the expansion of the city's EV charging network. In March 2023 the DfT announced the LEVI (Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) grant funding scheme and the Council was subsequently successful in its application for the £2.85m of allocated capital funding.
- 3.1.2 This funding was subject to the procurement complying with the LEVI fund's Heads of Terms. These Heads of Terms were published after the ETS Committee had already approved a 10 plus 5-year term for the contract rather than LEVI's recommended 15-year term. Officers requested an exemption to this 15-year term requirement, which was considered by the LEVI Programme Board, but rejected.
- 3.1.3 Authority had already been delegated to officer level to "take all steps necessary to procure and award a new concession contract" and authority was therefore sought from the Corporate Director City Services to tender for a 15-year concession contract in order to comply with the terms of the funding agreement. This authority was approved on 28 August 2024.
- 3.1.4 The procurement for three 15-year concession contracts was advertised on 29 August 2024 as three separate Lots based on power output and included a minimum number of chargepoints to be delivered. Tenderers were permitted to bid for a maximum of two Lots to ensure that at least two chargepoint operators (CPOs) were appointed, thereby providing choice, flexibility and natural competition. Three contracts were awarded in 2025 and CPOs committed to delivering significantly more chargepoints than requested.

Lot	Power	CPO	Chargepoints required	Actual committed to
Lot 1	Up to 8kW	Char.gy	1200	6033
Lot 2	8kW to 50kW	Blink	350	1000
Lot 3	50 kW above	Believ	100	200 + 2 hubs

- 3.1.5 Following contract award but before the services commencement date, Blink have indicated their preference to no longer continue with the Lot 2 contract. Officers are currently in discussions with the respective legal teams to

facilitate that exit by mutual consent. Alternative provision will be made for delivery of the Lot 2 infrastructure in compliance with the procurement regulations.

- 3.1.6 In addition, the existing network of 501 EV chargepoints, operated by Blink under a contract awarded to them in 2019, and due to expire in October 2026, will be transferred to one or both of the other CPOs. Provision was made for this under the terms of the new concession contract.

## **3.2 Context**

- 3.2.1 The vision of the EV Charging Plan for Brighton & Hove is to make charging publicly accessible. Our objective is to create an inclusive, publicly accessible EV charging network that is convenient, affordable, and encourages those living and working in our city to switch to an electric vehicle. Our goals are to:

- Support residents and business to make the transition to an EV;
- Facilitate the provision of an accessible network of charging solutions to accommodate all users' needs;
- Future-proof the EV charging network, enabling expansion to meet increased demand, and
- Deliver a clean and sustainable environment that we can all be proud of.

Details of the actions that will be undertaken to deliver these goals can be found in the 'EV Charging Deliverables – 2025 to 2040' in the appendices.

- 3.2.2 In drafting this plan, consideration has been given to national and local legislation and policies, as well as the economic, social and environmental drivers, and how they align with existing and developing local plans in respect of the delivery of electric vehicle infrastructure. This is further supported in the City Transport Plan published last year. Further details about the national context can be found in section 1 'Policy Framework' in the Background Documents.

## **3.3 Current position**

- 3.3.1 Brighton & Hove is home to approximately 284,000 residents, with more than half of all households lacking off-street parking and therefore dependent on public EV charging infrastructure. Despite this, 83% of these households are within a five-minute walk of a chargepoint, making the city the best-connected EV charging environment outside London. There are currently over 500 on-street public chargepoints of varying speeds across the city.
- 3.3.2 Looking forward, the council's Our City Transport Plan 2035 forecasts that more than half of all vehicles in Brighton & Hove will be electric by 2035, driven by national mandates requiring all new cars and vans to be zero-emission by that date. As of September 2025, 4,857 battery-electric cars are registered locally (4.35% of all vehicles) representing strong

year-on-year growth. By 2040, EV ownership is projected to reach around 82,000 vehicles, accounting for over 75% of registrations. Meeting this demand will require significant continued investment, with more than 8,000 chargepoints needed to support the transition and ensure accessible, reliable charging for residents without off-street parking. Further details about the national context can be found in section 2 ‘Localised Data & Forecasts’ and section 3 ‘Current EV Charging Network’ in the Background Documents.

### 3.4 Network expansion

3.4.1 The city’s public EV charging network has been developed through a contract with Blink Charging, in place since 2019 and due to expire in October 2026. Under this arrangement, more than 500 chargepoints of varying speeds have been installed across Brighton & Hove, largely funded through national support from the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) via the now-closed On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS). With ORCS discontinued in 2024, the council has transitioned to using the Government’s Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund and private investment to expand the network.

3.4.2 Through the LEVI capital fund, the council has secured £2.85 million to support further installations, alongside dedicated capability funding that fully covers the staffing costs of the EV Infrastructure team until 2029. After this point, the team will be expected to become self-financing through revenue generated by the charging network. The LEVI scheme requires each local authority to have a clear and formally approved Electric Vehicle Infrastructure strategy, which the EV Charging Plan is designed to deliver.

3.4.3 The table below details the projected income and expenditure associated with the charging network, and the LEVI grant capability funding. In accordance with the terms of the LEVI funding, revenue generated from the agreements is intended to cover only contract management and costs associated with administering or expanding the network. It is not the desired purpose of those terms for concession fees paid for by users to be excessive or generate significant surpluses.

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
<b>INCOME</b>	£80,000	£181,450	£281,654	£415,467
<b>GRANT FUNDING</b>	£213,000	£184,000	£184,000	£184,000
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	£292,617	£331,160	£328,767	£325,280
<b>SURPLUS</b>	£383	£34,290	£136,887	£274,187

3.4.4 In addition, the DfT has made £232k of funding available through its EV Pavement Channel Grant, which would cover the installation of 193 channels for households without off-street parking. The grant supports the installation of a channel or “gully” that allows a charging cable to be run safely through the pavement from the property to a vehicle parked on the road. While this method of charging will not be suitable for every household, it offers a valuable alternative where a public charging solution cannot be

provided. Further details are available in the draft 'Electric Vehicle Charging Policies' document in the appendices.

- 3.4.5 In response, it is recommended that a cross-pavement EV charging trial is undertaken to establish safe and reliable installation and management procedures, as well as to collect user feedback. Applications for the £1,200 grant will be invited from Blue Badge holders who rely on being able to park outside their home, and from taxi drivers who are seeking to switch to an EV.

#### **4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options**

- 4.1 Alternative options for the provision of EV infrastructure were considered as part of the ETS Committee report and the recommended option of procuring a non-exclusive concession contract subdivided into three separate lots; one for slow chargers, one for fast chargers and one for rapid chargers was agreed at the Procurement Advisory Board as the option providing the best value for money through a fair and transparent process.
- 4.2 The option of not applying for the allocated LEVI funding was considered, however without the capability funding the council would not have been able to fund the dedicated resources required to deliver the necessary expansion of the EV charging network. The EV team is funded in its entirety by the LEVI fund until 2029. In addition, the LEVI capital fund is subsidising the delivery of over 6,000 chargepoints.
- 4.3 The option of not applying for the allocated EV Pavement Channel Grant was considered carefully. This alternative method of enabling charging is very new and local authority officers across the sector have expressed concerns about it. DfT guidance has since been produced and product manufacturers are addressing these concerns. Whilst this method of charging will not be universally suitable, it is considered that it can supplement public charging.

#### **5. Community engagement and consultation**

- 5.1 In developing the Council's approach to the expansion of its EV charging network, officers carried out a public consultation on the Your Voice platform between 15 June and 24 August 2025. A total of 505 people responded to the survey, the majority of whom (91.7%) were residents of Brighton & Hove. Respondents provided detailed feedback on charging behaviour, priorities, and barriers to EV adoption. A copy of the detailed responses can be found in the appendices.
- 5.2 In addition, regular e-newsletters are published to our subscribers and the taxi trade, and news updates are posted to the council's website and via our social channels. In person public engagement is carried out annually at our Charge & Drive community events where the public is given the opportunity to test drive an EV and speak to experts. We also provide an opportunity for residents to suggest a location for a chargepoint; in the last 12 months we have had over 500 requests.

- 5.3 Chargepoint locations are determined through a combination of factors, including demand, site suitability and wider considerations of equity. The council and our chargepoint operators apply a data-driven approach that incorporates resident requests, technical assessments and evidence of usage patterns to identify appropriate areas for new infrastructure. The Council has final approval of all sites.
- 5.4 Most standard chargers use existing infrastructure like lamp columns, avoid creating EV-only bays, and therefore do not require formal consultation. Higher-powered chargepoints require dedicated EV bays and therefore go through a formal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process of consultation allowing residents to comment.
- 5.5 The council is committed to the expansion of EV infrastructure and takes great care to ensure chargepoints are sited in locations that minimise disruption to residents while maximising benefit to users. Final site selection also depends on various physical constraints, including the availability and location of a suitable electricity connection.
- 5.6 Over the past year, the council has strengthened collaboration across internal teams - planning, transport, housing, fleet, property - and with developers to ensure EV charging is embedded early in project design and across all service areas. This connected approach is helping future-proof the city's public realm, enabling EV infrastructure to be integrated into major schemes such as Valley Gardens and the A259 cycle lane project. The council is also exploring opportunities with partners to deliver large EV charging hubs, explore Park & Ride opportunities, and support the electrification of car clubs by trialling new models and expanding provision through the LEVI programme.
- 5.7 Electrification of the taxi, private hire and council fleets is a key focus, supported through regular engagement, tariff incentives, dedicated rapid chargers and licensing benefits such as extended vehicle age limits for EVs. Although EV uptake in the taxi fleet remains low, the council continues to explore additional measures to accelerate the transition. Fleet Services and the EVI team are also investigating home-charging solutions and advancing an "electric first" approach to vehicle procurement to ensure the council's own fleet decarbonises effectively and sustainably. Further details about internal collaboration can be found in section 4 'One Council Collaboration' in the Background Documents.

## **6. Financial implications**

- 6.1 The recommendations outlined in changing the contract holder for lot 2 do not impose any additional pressures to Parking Services budgets. The project is fully funded through a combination of grant and contribution from the bidders of the contract with the council receiving a revenue share.

- 6.2 The costs of the cross-pavement EV charging trial also do not impose any additional pressures to Parking Services budgets. As they are also funded through application of a grant.

Name of finance officer consulted: David Wilder  
Date consulted (03/04/2026):

## **7. Legal implications**

- 7.1 The procurement of three 15-year concession contracts has been completed in compliance with the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016. Following Blink's confirmation that it does not intend to continue with the services under Lot 2 concession contract, the legal team is working with officers to ensure the appropriate legal steps are taken to formally terminate that contractual relationship. Once the termination is completed, the legal team will continue to advise the service on the Council's available options for securing an alternative means of delivering the Lot 2 infrastructure and associated services. This will include any procurement or contractual modifications.

Name of lawyer consulted: Sabina Cherevichenko  
Date consulted: 01/04/2026

## **8. Risk implications**

- 8.1 The key strategic risks for delivery of the EV charging network expansion centre on delays and uncertainty in securing timely power for new charging sites, community acceptance and site suitability, as well as volatility in the energy sector and shifting national policies affecting demand. In mitigation, the length of the contracts awarded afford the opportunity of flexibility in how and when infrastructure is delivered. In addition, this programme is externally funded and no council expenditure is therefore at risk.
- 8.2 The risks of not approving the EV Charging Policies or use of the DfT Pavement Channel Grant, is inconsistency in EV charging decisions, reduced clarity for residents and developers, and the loss of a funded opportunity to trial cross-pavement charging.

## **9. Equalities implications**

- 9.1 The rollout of new public EV chargepoints is designed to improve equity by providing coverage across both central and residential areas, and by ensuring inclusive access through multiple payment methods and charging options. Although EV ownership still tends to favour more affluent residents due to higher purchase costs, the expansion of the second-hand market is helping to make the benefits of lower running costs more widely accessible.
- 9.2 To ensure disabled people are not disadvantaged, all chargepoint operators will be required to follow the national PAS 1899 accessible-charging standard in the provision and design of chargepoints, to minimise barriers such as heavy cables and inaccessible payment terminals. Locations and equipment will be assessed carefully to avoid creating obstructions and to

align with the city's Accessible City Strategy.

- 9.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been carried out. It that expanding EV charging will have overall positive impacts but identified risks around accessibility, digital exclusion, cost, and physical safety, particularly for disabled people, older residents, those without smartphones or bank access, and communities with limited existing provision. It recommends designing and locating chargepoints to accessible standards (including PAS 1899), ensuring multiple and non-digital payment options, addressing safety issues such as trailing cables and lighting, and maintaining ongoing engagement to deliver an inclusive, equitably distributed charging network. The EQIA will be reviewed in line with the agreed policies and procedures.

## **10. Sustainability implications**

- 10.1 Brighton and Hove's strategy for decarbonising transport is primarily outlined in Our City Transport Plan 2035 (also known as the fifth Local Transport Plan, or LTP5). The strategy contributes to the city's broader ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- 10.2 The strategy focuses on three core pillars; 1. Reducing the need to travel, 2. Shifting how people travel, and 3. Transitioning to zero emission vehicles. The EV Charging Plan sets out the actionable items that will contribute to delivery of the third pillar. In addition, each of the appointed CPOs have committed to delivering carbon reduction across their contracts and supply chain and will be monitored against their Sustainability Action Plan. Further details about the decarbonisation impact of EVs can be found in section 5 'EV Chargepoint Usage' in the Background Documents.

## **11. Health and Wellbeing Implications:**

- 11.1 The EV Charging Plan is expected to have a positive impact on residents' health and wellbeing by supporting a shift away from petrol and diesel vehicles, which are a major source of roadside nitrogen oxides (NOx) in urban areas. Electric vehicles produce zero tailpipe emissions of NOx and particulate matter, reducing pollutants most closely linked to respiratory and cardiovascular illness. Increased uptake of EVs, enabled by access to reliable charging infrastructure, is therefore expected to contribute to improved air quality, particularly in areas currently experiencing the poorest air quality. By supporting cleaner transport choices across all neighbourhoods, the Plan has the potential to help reduce health inequalities linked to traffic-related pollution while contributing to the city's wider climate, air quality and public health objectives.

## **12. Conclusion**

- 12.1 The recommendations set out in this report provide a clear and deliverable pathway for expanding Brighton & Hove's EV charging network in line with national policy, the Council Plan 2023–27, and Our City Transport Plan 2035. Approval of the Electric Vehicle Charging Policies, the recently awarded LEVI-funded concession contracts and the proposed

cross-pavement charging trial, will ensure that the city has a coherent, future-proofed strategy to support the transition to zero-emission transport.

- 12.2 The scale of investment secured through the LEVI programme, combined with long-term partnerships with experienced CPOs, places the council in a strong position to deliver a comprehensive, accessible and reliable charging network for residents, businesses and visitors. Approving the recommendations will help to reduce barriers to EV adoption in a city where many households lack off-street parking and rely on public charging. This approach also supports wider ambitions to improve air quality, cut carbon emissions and create healthier neighbourhoods. The Electric Vehicle Charging Plan provides the strategic framework to manage this transition responsibly, equitably and efficiently, ensuring that Brighton & Hove remains at the forefront of clean transport innovation.

## **Supporting Documentation**

### **1. Appendices]**

1. EV Charging Policies 2026 (Draft)
2. EV Charging Deliverables 2025-2040
3. EV Survey 2025 Responses

### **2. Background documents**

- 1) Policy Framework
- 2) Localised Data & Forecasts
- 3) Current Ev Charging Network
- 4) One Council Collaboration
- 5) EV Chargepoint Usage
- 6) References

