

What are the main challenges to the uptake of ULEV?

ABC Council would consider the main barriers to the uptake of EV within our borough and our fleet as;

- Inadequate charging infrastructure.
- Reliance on battery imports.
- Reliance on imported components and parts.
- Incentives linked to local manufacturing.
- Range anxiety among consumers.
- High price of EVs currently.
- Lack of options for high-performance EVs

With financial barriers relevant to EV adoption include; high purchase price, high battery cost, poor understanding of fuel cost, and maintenance costs are probably the most common among both Council fleet staff and residents of our Borough.

However, the greatest barrier at present is most definitely the the lack of infrastructure; this compounds these misconceptions and fears about EV vehicles range and performance, and is probably the largest barrier at present.

Currently there are 19 EV Charge Points within our Borough, with a lack of rapid charging, it makes the conversion to EV by both the public and Council more difficult.

It will take time to overcome both cost and fear of obsolescence in the minds of potential purchasers, with many in fleet and the public thinking it is too early to buy, as the technology may change and current purchases may become dated, with the associated high cost of purchase in mind as well. This connects to the issues that are linked to range. Better batteries with greater ranges are inevitable but the universal charging network is more uncertain and more pressing.

If regulators were to make standardisation of chargers, charging points and their operating systems mandatory we could be sure that we were well on the way to delivering a high quality, competitively priced network of charging options rather than simply relying on industry to self-regulate effectively.

Regulation would help to remove the real and imagined range barriers. Once everything is standardised and easily accessible, it is not too difficult to see the electric station becoming as common as the petrol station.

What are the main benefits to the uptake of ULEV?

The uptake of EVs is very much a viable consideration for any business or Council fleet– and there are some good reasons why a strategic switch to EV cars and light

Electric Vehicle Response

van could represent the best possible vision of the future of Council fleets and for the residents of our Borough.

Traditional cars and fleets have a negative impact on the environment because of fuel consumption and consequent emissions of CO₂, leading to air pollution. These emissions are widely accepted as a trigger for global warming and legislation such as the Climate Change Act 2008 has been introduced to bring this under control.

Hybrid vehicles generate significantly reduced emissions and EV cars produce none. Under the Statutory Sustainable Development Duty Council have a legal obligation to promote and demonstrate the principles of Sustainable Development within its everyday operations. This means recognising and embracing its Corporate and Social Responsibility, organisations have the opportunity to take responsibility for the negative impact their operations has on its stakeholders and communities and furthermore. Switching to an electric fleet is a clear positive move on the Corporate and Social Responsibility front, can help to strengthen the environmental and social perception of Council in line with Climate Change legislation (reduce carbon footprint). In order to become a more sustainable organisation reducing carbon footprint is essential.

Major savings for fleets - evidence shows that electric vehicles can have lower service, maintenance, and repair costs than petrol or diesel equivalents. Inevitably, the larger your fleet of vehicles the more cost savings you could make. Fewer components and consumables in electric vehicles mean there's less to maintain.

EVs also provide cost reductions over the lifetime of ownership.

When comparing running costs, an EV can be driven for as little as 1p per mile, compared with 8-10p per mile for even the most fuel-efficient petrol and diesel vehicles. There is also potential for charging infrastructure to raise revenue for councils or to be installed for little capital expenditure. Different models will be appropriate for different areas.

Higher-power charge points and charge points in busy locations are likely to be more profitable and the best choice, with the option of slower charge points at our facilities and parks; but this will also depend on the council's appetite for taking on risk and the availability of government grant funding.

What support to assist a move to ULEV would you like to see from the NI Executive?

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Electric Vehicle Response

Regulation would help to remove the real and imagined range barriers. Once everything is standardised and easily accessible, it is not too difficult to see the electric station becoming as common as the petrol station. Grant or interest free government loans to allow Council to lead the way and quickly convert fleets where applicable to EVs. It is important that Councils become exemplars and key demonstrators of the EV change for the benefit of the public perception.

Looking at and considering alternative type of 'EV Charge Points' within the market, that have the potential to be more efficient, effective and multi-purpose – fit for the future. For Example – Charge Point on a Lighting Column that can service – EV's / Camper Vans / Street Lighting Xmas Features!

A joint up approach with all public bodies such as DfI investing, with Councils providing ongoing maintenance; the possibility of changes such as the utilisation of Street Lighting Columns as on street EV chargers during the day and at key locations a network of rapid chargers across the council. North to south and east to west.

There is real potential for local Council also to generate an income by providing this infrastructure and reinvesting that income back into their borough (green electricity). However, this will require financial support and expertise to get off the ground.

There are many different models for the deployment of charging infrastructure. This includes models where provision is left to private firms who will take on the commercial risks and the local authority exposure is minimal. There is also potential for charging infrastructure to raise revenue for councils or to be installed for little capital expenditure.

Different models will be appropriate for different areas. Higher-power charge points and charge points in busy locations are likely to be more profitable and the best choice will also depend on the council's appetite for taking on risk and the availability of government grant funding. Some councils have already shown that charging infrastructure can be a revenue generating opportunity for councils.

Do you believe there should be official targets for your sector and have you any views on the potential timescale this could take?

Yes, all public sector organisations should be provided with real and achievable targets for the conversion to EV vehicles were applicable over the coming decade 2020-2030.

Councils and public bodies need to be the key demonstrators of this technology and show the efficient use and benefits to encourage the more widespread uptake across each of their respective council areas.

Have you begun to plan for decarbonising your fleet and if so, could you provide some detail on this?

Have you estimated the cost of decarbonising your fleet?

Yes, ABC Council are at the beginning of strengthening the EV infrastructure within their own facilities and are also working towards the introduction of lighter EV vehicles within their fleets. Council are setting targets within our Sustainable Development Strategy, which will be real and achievable. This hopefully will be aided through a mix of internal budgets and government funding although this has not been fully costed at present and are currently setting out our strategic pathway for this.

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