

Council planning ahead for electric vehicles

The council will consider next week how they can best support those residents and businesses using electric vehicles by involving the Regulatory Committee. The Transport and Environment Committee already commissioned a report by Energy Savings Trust (EST) on the need for charging points in the capital, and they considered the business case in October. It was decided then to refer the matter on to the Regulatory Committee who meet on 7 January for their input.

EST reckoned that we will need 211 charging points in Edinburgh by 2023 which will cost £3.3 million to install. They also estimate that the running costs will be less than the revenue earned, and they recommend a mix of fast charging sites and charging facilities at park and ride sites, and at taxi ranks since there may be 623 electric taxis on our streets by then. The business case worked up has estimated charging around 20p per kWh to everyone, whether they are residents, businesses or taxi drivers.

Around 70 sites have been identified across Edinburgh which would offer a network of strategic charging points. If these were all used then the savings in carbon and nitrogen dioxide would be quite considerable.

In December 2017 the council approved their Electric Vehicle Action Plan anticipating a rise in the number of electric vehicles in the city. Meantime the council will apply to Transport Scotland for the sum of £2 million needed for capital works until 2020.

The Scottish Government is supportive of encouraging electric vehicles as part of its own climate change and transport policies and has stated that it wants to phase out fossil fuel

engines by 2032.

A six week public consultation is planned to gain support for the introduction of the necessary infrastructure.