

Possibility of EV chargers in lampposts to be looked at

Electric vehicle chargers could be installed in lampposts in Edinburgh to serve residents without driveways.

The council has rolled out 140 chargers over the last three years and says around 780 more will be needed by 2026.

As plans get underway to expand the network to serve an estimated 20,000 electric vehicles (EVs) in the capital, incorporating power points into existing lampposts in residential areas is one option being mulled over by the local authority.

A report by council officers said that once a commercial partnership is agreed officials would “explore opportunities for the provision of additional types of chargers” including “lamp column chargers.”

The technology is already used by a number of councils in the UK and a senior Edinburgh council official said it was “very much on our radar.”

Transport Convener, Cllr Scott Arthur said introducing it could “bring challenges because there would be an expectation people would be able to park outside their property to access it”.

Speaking at the committee on Thursday the Director of operational services, Gareth Barwell, said: “This type of technology has been on the market for a while and it’s

changing almost on a monthly basis.

“We’ve engaged with various companies and we’ve also engaged with our street lighting colleagues to find out what can be used and what’s an acceptable way of using these types of units.

“It’s reliant usually on the street lighting column being at the kerbside of the footway, however we are in discussion with other companies that have looked at the development of channels that would allow charging cables to be from the lighting column to the kerbside. So there’s a number of things that are being discussed that we need to take into account but it’s very much on our radar.”

He said there was “no way we could ever guarantee a parking place specifically for a user” and “likewise we wouldn’t be able to grant a lamp post charger for a particular user”.

He added: “We can look at all the options and make sure they’re considered.”

Meanwhile councillors agreed to increase maximum stay periods across all types of chargers after an annual review found some customers said current limits were “too short.”

The time limit at ‘rapid’ EV chargers (50kW) will increase from one hour to 90 minutes, from “early summer.”

At ‘fast’ chargers (22kW) it will rise from three hours to eight hours. At park and ride sites, this will increase to 16 hours so that “people spending the day in the city for work or other purposes need not rush back to attend to their vehicle.”

However while maximum stays at fast bays are currently only enforced from 8am to 8pm they “must now be applied 24/7” due to changes to the payment service provider used by Charge Place Scotland, which is used by all Scottish councils to host their chargers.

And the stay limit at on-street 'standard' charge points (7kW) will remain 12 hours while also being lifted to 16 hours at park and rides.

by Donald Turvill, Local Democracy Reporter

