

**Blaby District Council**  
**Council**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	16 September 2025
<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>Depot Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure</b> This is a Key Decision and is on the Forward Plan
<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Cllr. Nigel Grundy - Neighbourhood Services &amp; Assets</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	Neighbourhood Services Group Manager
<b>Strategic Themes</b>	All Themes: Enabling communities and supporting vulnerable residents; Enhancing and maintaining our natural and built environment; Growing and supporting our economy; Keeping you safe and healthy; Ambitious and well managed Council, valuing our people

**1. What is this report about?**

- 1.1 This report seeks Council approval to increase the budget authorised in the capital programme to proceed with the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) project at the Council depot which is an action within the Blaby Plan. The report also details an opportunity to apply for funding from the government's Depot Charging Fund to contribute to the total cost of the capital expenditure.
- 1.2 The project will provide the infrastructure required to support the incremental electrification of the Council's fleet, enabling full utilisation of current government funding opportunities, future proofing the depot site for electrification and avoiding future cost escalation.

**2. Recommendation(s) to Council**

- 2.1 That Council approve the additional capital expenditure of £379,000 to fund the shortfall in project costs and update the capital programme accordingly.
- 2.2 That delegated authority is given to the Executive Director (S151) in consultation with the Neighbourhood Services & Assets Portfolio holder to make the final decision to progress with the project in full or a reduced specification within the authorised programme costs.
- 2.3 That Council note that the project is designed to align with the latest fleet replacement programme and will future-proof the depot for the transition to electric refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) and other electric fleet assets at the appropriate time.

### 3. Reason for Decisions Recommended

- 3.1 Approval will allow the project to progress and give opportunity for the Council to meet the timescales within the grant terms.
- 3.2 Delegation will allow an assessment to be made to take advantage of funding available or consider progressing the project at a reduced specification within the authorised project costs.
- 3.3 Having an electrification-ready depot supports existing electric fleet assets and ensures the Council is positioned to respond to Government plans to phase out diesel and petrol HGV production in the 2035.

### 4. Matters to consider

#### 4.1 Background

The Council's use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) is a pragmatic interim measure to reduce fleet emissions. While it delivers substantial carbon savings its long-term sustainability is uncertain. Transitioning to electric vehicles, supported by renewable infrastructure, offers a more resilient and future-proof approach aligned with the Council's strategic theme to enhance and maintain our natural and built environments.

- In September 2023, Council approved the installation of Solar PV panels and EVCI at the depot.
- The solar PV project is now complete, delivering 23.11 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> reduction annually and estimated electricity savings of £32,890/year.
- The EVCI element was separated to allow further design development; design is now complete for up to 17 chargers (10 × 22–50 kW rapid/semi-rapid, 7 × 7 kW fast).
- The scheme supports the Council's current electric fleet (1 electric RCV, 1 mini sweeper, 1 van) and enables further electrification in line with the fleet replacement programme.
- **The 'Council net zero by 2030' workstream agreed in the Corporate Action Plan 2025–26**, supports adaptations to the council depot to contribute towards our ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030. This will include installation of phase 1 electric vehicle charging infrastructure to facilitate the gradual evolution towards an electric fleet
- The proposed phasing aligns with the Council's annually reviewed vehicle replacement programme, ensuring electric alternatives are considered as viable replacements for existing HVO-powered vehicles as they reach end of life.
- **The intention stated by UK Government is to end the sale of new non-zero emission HGVs under 26 tonnes by 2035**, as part of its national decarbonisation strategy. The Council's project supports

early alignment with these commitments, enabling a planned and proactive transition to electric vehicles.

- **HVO is currently a cleaner alternative to diesel, reducing lifecycle CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by up to 90%** - However, as global demand increases, the risk of supply from less sustainable or poorly regulated sources grows — potentially undermining its environmental benefits.
- **Getting ready for LGR** - Preparing the depot for electric vehicles not only aligns with national decarbonisation policy but also strengthens the Council's strategic position ahead of anticipated local government reform. Early investment in scalable infrastructure enables shared fleet operations across merged authorities, improves funding readiness, supporting efficient service delivery and long-term resilience.

#### 4.2 Proposal(s)

The proposal is to increase the capital investment for the EVCI as follows:

- Total project cost: £970,000 – this is based on updated cost estimated which are expected to be closely aligned with actual tendered costs
- Capital allocation already approved: £591,000
- Additional capital expenditure requirement: £379,000

##### Opportunity to apply for grant funding:

Funding for EV charging infrastructure has become available in the form of the governments 'Depot Charging Scheme'. This provides funding for certain costs associated with hardware, civils, installation of charging points.

The Council is required to contribute 25% of the eligible costs with 75% of those costs provided through the grant.

Officers are in the process of applying for this grant which requires the works to be completed by 31 March 2026. This aligns with our Blaby Plan timescales and the design of the programme.

The closing date for applications is 28 November 2025 however we would expect to receive confirmation of the outcome of our application prior to that date.

- Eligible grant costs: £590,000 (covering civils, electrical installation, chargers)
- Potential grant funding: £442,000 (75% of eligible costs)
- All works must be completed by 31 March 2026. While the risk of not completing the full energisation of the system by this date exists, the majority of eligible costs (up to 90%) relate to hardware and installation, which can be completed and claimed even if final energisation is delayed.
- If the grant is secured the additional funding requested in this report will not be required to be provided through Council funds.

It is recognised that Council may have to commit to expenditure on this project prior to having confirmation of the grant application being successful. For this reason, it is proposed to request delegated authority to be given to

the Executive Director, in consultation with the Neighbourhood Services & Assets Portfolio holder, to make the final decision to progress with the project in full or a reduced specification within the authorised programme costs.

#### 4.3 Relevant Consultations

Net Zero Project Delivery Officer  
Senior Leadership Team  
Cllr Lee Breckon (Net Zero Lead)

#### 4.4 Significant Issues

No significant issues in respect of Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, or Public Health Inequalities.

#### 4.5 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities and there are no areas of concern.

### 5. Environmental impact

A Net Zero and Climate Impact Assessment (NZCIA) has been carried out and no adverse impacts identified.

- 5.1
- Future-proofs depot for transition to electric fleet, reducing long-term emissions.
  - Complements existing CO<sub>2</sub> reductions from Solar PV.
  - Supports Council's Climate Change Strategy 2020.

### 6. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

- 6.1 An additional £379,000 is requested to be added to the capital programme 2025/26 in addition to the £591,000 already approved by Council.

	2025/26
Revenue	n/a
Capital	£379,000

## **7. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?**

### **7.1**

<b>Current Risk</b>	<b>Actions to reduce the risks</b>
We may have a need to electrify fleet and will not be ready for it	By future proofing infrastructure facilitates the Council being able to make the switch to electric vehicles when appropriate.
Grant funding not secured	Council approves the revised investment in the capital programme
Missed grant deadline	Approve now to enable completion by 31 March 2026
Infrastructure underused initially	Align with fleet replacement plan; utilise for current EV assets
Cost inflation	Lock in prices via early contracting

## **8. Other options considered**

- 8.1
1. Do nothing – Rejected: would lose the opportunity of £442,000 grant, potentially face higher future costs, delay electrification readiness, and would require the writing off of abortive costs of the project.
    - Delay until EV fleet transition is confirmed – Rejected: time taken to prepare and mobilise for charging infrastructure may prevent electrification of fleet when opportunities arise and risks losing opportunity of grant funding.

## **9. Appendix**

None

## **10. Background paper(s)**

- 10.1 Depot Site Solar Panels and Electric Vehicle Charging – Council Report, 26 September 2023.

## **11. Report author's contact details**

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