

Part A

**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** Thursday, 16 December 2021

**Report author:** Senior Democratic Services Officer

**Title:** New scrutiny task group - Electric Vehicles

**1.0 Summary**

1.1 Watford Borough Council has an important remit in enabling residents to make more environmentally-friendly transport choices.

1.2 The government has banned the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 and so the growth in ownership of electric vehicles is expected to continue to grow exponentially. The council's remit extends into a variety of areas which impact the accessibility of using an electric vehicle in the borough.

1.3 The Portfolio Holder for Sustainability and Transport, Councillor Ian Stotesbury, has proposed that a scrutiny task group be established to consider how the council is supporting greener transport in this area.

1.4 The scrutiny committee is asked to consider the scrutiny suggestion and, if approved, agree the membership and chair from amongst the nominations received.

**2.0 Risks**

2.1

<b>Nature of risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Suggested Control Measures</b>	<b>Response</b> (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	<b>Risk Rating</b> (combination of severity and likelihood)
The scrutiny committee does not agree to the suggestion.	Non-executive members will have less opportunity to review how the council is supporting the use of electric vehicles.	None	Tolerate	2

### 3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 That Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the scrutiny proposal to review how the council is enabling the use of electric vehicles in the borough.
- 3.2 If the scrutiny proposal is approved, that Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees the task group's membership and chair.

#### **Further information:**

Jodie Kloss

jodie.kloss@watford.gov.uk

**Report approved by: Carol Chen, Group Head of Democracy and Governance**

### 4.0 Detailed proposal

- 4.1 With the development of the Sustainable Transport Strategy and the declaration of a Climate Emergency, enabling and supporting greener transport choices are key priorities for the council.
- 4.2 Whilst not the highways authority, the council has significant influence and powers in a number of areas which affect vehicle ownership.
- 4.3 The council's remit extends into a variety of areas including rolling out charging infrastructure, managing car parks and economic development. The council also has a role in encouraging and communicating sustainable choices by residents.
- 4.4 It is proposed that the task group consider the following questions as set out in the draft scope:
  - What are the barriers to encouraging wider use of electric vehicles for residents?
  - How is the council currently encouraging/enabling the use of electric vehicles?
  - Where are the gaps in the charging infrastructure?
  - What are the issues being faced in rolling out more charging infrastructure?
  - How widely understood is the messaging around the priority of enabling electric vehicle ownership for residents?
  - Case studies of good practice elsewhere in increasing uptake of electric cars.
- 4.5 The draft scope may be subject to minor amendments in the course of the work, in agreement with the chair.
- 4.6 If agreed, the task group would undertake a small number of virtual meetings with officers from Watford Borough Council in January to better understand how the council enables the use of electric vehicles and the issues being faced.

4.7 The task group's final report will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 February 2022 and then to Cabinet on 28 February 2022.

4.8 The scrutiny committee is asked to approve the task group's membership and appoint a chair. Committee members are reminded that a task group should comprise between three and five non-executive councillors. A list of councillors who would like to be on the task group will be circulated to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to the meeting. This will also include details of those who have indicated that they are interested in chairing the task group.

## **5.0 Implications**

### **5.1 Financial**

5.1.1 The Head of Finance comments that there are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **5.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report.

### **5.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 Having had regard to the council's obligations under s149, it is considered that any task group would need to take equalities obligations into account when making recommendations.

5.3.2 Having had regard to the council's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

### **5.4 Staffing**

5.4.1 The task group will be managed by Democratic Services with support provided by relevant services.

### **5.5 Accommodation**

5.5.1 There are no accommodation implications as a result of this report.

### **5.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 There are no community safety or crime and disorder implications as a result of this report.

## **5.7 Sustainability**

5.7.1 Considering how to enable more sustainable means of travel will be a key consideration of the task group.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Scrutiny task group proposal form
- Appendix 2 – List of councillors interested in participating and supporting statements for the role of Chair (to follow)

### **Background papers**

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report. If you wish to inspect or take copies of the background papers, please contact the officer named on the front page of the report.

- Emails from those councillors interested in taking part in the proposed task group.