



MINUTES OF THE CHARGEUK POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS GROUP – AC BARRIERS
SUB-DISCUSSION MEETING
6 Sept 2023, 14:00-15:00

ACTIONS

ACTION	DETAILS	OWNER
1	Members to provide additional feedback about how CPOs support local authorities in the tender process	Members
2	Develop proposed solution to slim down site selection process	Secretariat
3	Secretariat to compile proposed solutions from AC and DC barriers meetings	Secretariat

Welcome and Introductions

1. VICKY READ opened the meeting and noted the purpose is to discuss LEVI and ORCS. She notes that these will impact the barriers piece of work where these schemes have come through as a barrier, and the relevance of these schemes for the House of Lords inquiry. She opened for general discussion and views. She noted the competition policy.

Discussion of AC Barriers

2. DAN SIMPSON gave an overview of the AC barriers, which according to ChargeUK's research tend to happen earlier in the process, either through accessing government funding or site selection. He noted that ChargeUK should suggest a market-based solution for longevity for the rollout of AC charging infrastructure while noting that there is a role for public funding. However, when public funding is involved there are often additional challenges where contracts have been awarded and sites selected.
3. VICKY READ opened to discussion about the barriers encountered around LEVI.
4. JAMES MCKEMEY noted challenges with disbursement and contracts with public funding. Private sector operators are much quicker and efficient. Public money is generally considered to slow things down. He noted reluctance to have any public funding provided at all and called for a consistent approach.
5. SIMON KENDREW agreed that projects slow down and stop on the customer side (i.e. local authorities) due to the lacking clarity around the ability to access public funding. This plays into the need for funding to have clear access and management. SIMON indicated support for targeted public funding, such as targeting areas that are not commercially viable, but that the current form doesn't add value. Often projects that look like they are progressing well get mired in public funding.
6. JAYNESH PATEL noted the discrepancy between the intention of the scheme and the actual rollout. He agreed with JAMES MCKEMEY'S point that public money can have a

distortionary effect and means the timetable is tied to a public funding timetable which can significantly slow down deployment.

7. CHRIS PATEMAN-JONES noted his agreement and added that the market is pretty much at standstill. He is concerned that all deadlines have already been missed. He flagged concerns with the overall process of local authorities developing business cases before going out to tender, which is slowing things down, and he doesn't think this is an adequate test of the market. He expressed doubt that any infrastructure under this programme will go in the ground before 2025. CHRIS also expressed concern about delays when procurement comes through due to planning permission issues. He noted that OZEV has not provided any guidance on what they would consider to be 'good', which places the onus on CPOs to keep educating local authorities.
8. DAN SIMPSON thanked everyone for their comments. He noted that there is little understanding in central government about the supporting role of CPOs before local authorities go to tender. DAN asked for further feedback on this point.
9. DAN SIMPSON noted that it is widely accepted local authorities don't have the adequate knowledge to develop business cases and formulate an EV strategy and asked members to put forward potential solutions, such as CPOs playing a role in the development process. DAN also noted that DfT sees their role as helping local authorities get maximum value for public money, and that this is done by being more proscriptive. ChargeUK need to be suggesting 2-3 potential solutions for central government to help expedite the process.
10. VICKY READ suggested further discussion of the issues in order to adequately describe them.
11. JAYNESH PATEL noted that CPOs are not in a position to criticise the billions of points in public funding being made available and that CPOs have to work with it.
12. CHRIS PATEMAN-JONES noted his agreement that criticising isn't the best way forward. In the U.S., they are treating it like a war and encouraging companies to go at the problem quickly.
13. JAMES MCKEMEY noted that it's important for ChargeUK to present a solution and asks for more detail around the US's approach.
14. CHRIS responded that there should be an element of recognition that some waste is inevitable, but that DfT needs to provide clarity around what 'good' looks like and how success is going to be measured.
15. DAN SIMPSON suggested that the problem is that most people driving EVs charge at home, but the public charge network needs to be expanded. Clarity around how public funding for on-street AC charging is being spent will help CPOs see where the gaps are. DAN noted that another issue is around timelines, and suggested the following could be a rough estimation:
 - a. Currently, OZEV is expecting councils to bring business cases forward by the end of the year. On an optimistic timeline, this could take about three months, meaning the council would have a yes or no answer around February 2024. Going out to tender could take about three months, which takes the process to May 2024. Site selection could take six months, with agreements finalised in November 2024. Then building could begin in January 2025 at the earliest.
16. CHRIS PATEMAN-JONES agreed with that timeline on the assumption that everything will go smoothly. He flagged that there are currently too many assumptions about the average cost per site which could change depending on the site, other variables in DNO costs, bay sizes, and other details that are not clear until the tender stage.
17. VICKY READ agreed that the timeline is too optimistic. LEVI has slowed tenders that are looking for public money and those that would go ahead without it.

18. DAN SIMPSON suggested putting this timeline to OZEV to get their thoughts. He suggested members consider which parts of the process can be trimmed. His first suggestion is around site selection, which would appeal to government as it would not involve 'cutting corners' on public procurement.
19. CHRIS PATEMAN-JONES suggested cutting back on OZEV's public review process. JAYNESH PATEL noted that OZEV likely wants to see the business cases in order to inform future guidance, and that it would be better to have fewer, good chargers in the right places rather than 15,000 randomly placed chargers.
20. VICKY READ suggested that one solution could be for deployment to begin and OZEV to retroactively apply funding, since the time between tender and kit going in the ground takes too long.
21. DAN SIMPSON noted that infrastructure around cars in local authorities can be very politicised. Local authorities must also maintain political appetite. The current processes are not made for dealing with EV charging infrastructure, so the formal processes need some course correction.
22. CHRIS PATEMAN-JONES suggested that government and OZEV step in more and give guidance on how to interpret regulations, since there is so much variation between councils for standards of size of bays and variation in planning applications. Clarity and guidance on these points would help local authorities move faster. There also need to be clarifications between rapid chargers and fast chargers and what is 'reasonable' for residents to object to. OZEV could provide case studies for what they would view as 'normal'.
23. DAN SIMPSON agreed that the government should issue advice on the planning aspects. The 2022 TRO consultation still has no response, indicating that there are a few levers available that are not being utilised. However, local authorities will only move more quickly if it will be popular with the local electorate, which can be addressed through the media. DAN added that Labour's policy in this area is to set targets for chargepoints. ChargeUK is not in favour of setting targets but it wouldn't be a bad thing if local authorities move more quickly because of it. DAN suggested that more sophisticated targets would be more appropriate rather than based on population.
24. VICKY READ agreed that ChargeUK can lay out low hanging fruit for the next Government to consider to come after LEVI.
25. JAMES MCKEMEY wondered whether there are international examples where things are going right..
26. JAYNESH PATEL noted the value of looking at radical approaches from a potential Labour government who may come in with serious alternatives.
27. DAN SIMPSON closed the meeting by highlighting the need for government clarity about what meets criteria of being 'good' and for guidance around planning. He added that more thought is required to propose a solution that will speed up the process of site selection.

ANNEX A ACTIONS

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Attendees:

Vicky Read, Connected Kerb
Jarrod Birch, Shell Recharge
Neil Broadbank, Raw
Agenese Chiesa, Liberty Charge
Jaynesh Patel, ChargePoint
Simon Kendrew, SSE
Sam Hazeldine, Gridserve
James McKemey, Pod Point
Chris Pateman-Jones, Connected Kerb

Secretariat for ChargeUK, Connect:

- Dan Simpson
- Harry Methley
- Olivia Ryan
- Krisha Indrakumar