

MEETING OF THE CABINET

TUESDAY, 22 APRIL 2025

ADDITIONAL PAPERS

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CABINET – TUESDAY, 22 APRIL 2025

Question from Councillor S Sheahan

‘Given the UK Government investigation into the sustainability of HVO fuels, questions around the robustness of the certification process and the tariff situation between the US and China, does the Council have contingency plans, in the event of HVO supply shortages; for example, at what point would the Council revert to diesel and what difference would this make to the Council's position on electric and hydrogen powered vehicles?’

Note - Council position on the use of palm oil, as recorded in the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee, 01/09/21’

Response from the Communities and Climate Change Portfolio Holder

‘The Council is confident about the HVO fuel supplier it uses, and they provide a robust declaration that the fuel sourced is used cooking oil from China, processed in the USA and there is no palm oil. They provide certification to which is recognised by Renewable Fuels Assurance Scheme.

Officers are not aware of any potential HVO stock availability issues and have confidence in our suppliers that we would be advised in plenty of time if this was on the horizon. If this were to arise, HVO is a drop in fuel so, whilst not ideal from an emissions perspective, the fleet can revert to diesel with no modification to any vehicles if there are any unexpected shortages.

The Council’s supplier has confirmed that at present there are no solid plans for tariffs to be placed on HVO from the US. They do have alternative suppliers from non-US sources that will be available if things change in the future. This however does come at a higher rate than the US based product.

In 2022 the UK lifted some EU anti-dumping and countervailing measures on the import of HVO from the US. This lift meant that importing HVO from the US was more feasible in the UK than imports from mainland Europe.

At present time, all trade lines are being monitored by suppliers very carefully to ensure they are proactively reacting to any measures being implemented. All contracts with suppliers are in place to support the volume requirements for 2025, so therefore they do not expect any interruptions to supply at this time.

The position on HVO would not impact on the existing electric fleet. The Council is operating a fleet of fifteen electric vehicles, including a housing trial. There is electric

vehicle charging available at Linden Way Depot, Whitwick Business Centre and Parks Depot.

Under the Council's 2021 Fleet Management Strategy, there is a clear ambition to explore alternative options to combustion engine vehicles wherever possible. Electric options are considered at the point of procurement but vehicles are proving significantly more expensive and may not provide the range required for a rural district or towing capability. Further investment in electric charging infrastructure at the depots will be required with electric fleet expansion.

With regard to hydrogen, this is not a solution the Council is currently considering but officers are aware of and following trials in other local authorities.'