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Planning

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure & Associated Services - LEVI Fund Portsmouth Partner Operator Concession Agreement - Preliminary Market Engagement

Portsmouth City Council

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-014127

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-050028

Published 9 April 2025, 10:30pm

Scope

Reference

P00005094

Description

1. Introduction

1.1. Portsmouth City Council - the 'Council' - is undertaking preliminary market engagement over April - May 2025 to inform its procurement strategy for the delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure within Portsmouth to be delivered via an open book partnership concession agreement.

1.2. Once the preliminary market engagement process has been completed the Council will review findings, finalise its strategy and documentation and submit these for approval by the funder - Office for Zero Emission Vehicles - by no later than 13th June 2025.

1.3. Once approved the Council will then undertake a formal procurement process over Summer / Autumn 2025 instigated via issue of a Tender Notice to appoint a partner operator for the supply, installation, maintenance, operation and, at the council's option, decommissioning of electrical vehicle chargepoints within the city on a mutually incentivised commercial concession basis.

2. LEVI Funding & Concession Approach

2.1. The Council has secured Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding to the value of £3,682,000, the majority of which will be used to part fund the delivery of a minimum of 3,600 new electric vehicle chargepoints (sockets) over a phased 5-year delivery programme.

2.2. The LEVI funding cannot be utilised for the on-going operation, maintenance and end of contract decommissioning of the infrastructure which will have to be met by the operator. Whilst the Council will work in partnership with the successful operator to help maximise successful development of the scheme and mitigate risks the operator will take risk in respect of demand.

2.3. In line with the LEVI funding objectives concerning commercialisation of networks, leveraging high levels of private sector investment and cross subsidisation, the council expects that the successful operator to secure and deploy the significant majority of the capital funding required to supply and install the target number of chargepoints.

3. Infrastructure Deployment & Programme

3.1. In line with the objectives of the LEVI funding and the council's own strategic objectives, the deployment of the charging infrastructure will need to be targeted within areas of the city where there is a lack of off-street parking available to residents.

3.2. In line with LEVI fund objectives, the chargepoints will primarily be low powered (up to 7kW), on-street and for the use of residents. However, on a secondary basis and only where there is a clear benefit to the scale and commerciality of the on-street resident charging offer, the council may also target the deployment of higher-powered fast charging (up to 22 kW) chargepoints. These may serve, for instance, resident focused car club scheme bays and off-street Council owned -car parks used by residents and visitors to the city.

3.3. There is some flexibility on the type of chargepoint technology to be deployed, with lamppost charging, free-standing bollards and other innovative unit designs permitted. Currently, chargepoint gullies, rapid and ultra-rapid (50 kW and above) chargepoints will not fall within the scope of the future procurement process.

3.4. The installation locations will be decided collaboratively between the successful

operator and the council after contract award. The successful operator should commit to providing equitable coverage across the city, focused on serving those without off-street parking who are currently unable to charge at home. There is a need to meet the demand for residential EV infrastructure now and in the future, to support residents of Portsmouth to convert to electric vehicles. It is not envisaged that a list of pre-defined sites will be released as part of the tender pack for the future procurement.

3.5. The Council is targeting to have appointed the successful partner operator by January 2026 who will then be required to work in partnership with the council to rollout a minimum of 3,600 new chargepoint (sockets) installations by a target date of 2031.

4. Out of Scope ORCS Funded Infrastructure

4.1. The Council has also recently undertaken a procurement process in Autumn 2024 to appoint an operator - Zest Eco Ltd - via a 15 year concession agreement to deliver and operate approx. 300 new on-street chargepoints (sockets) using approx. £887,000 of On-Street Residential chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) funding. Roll out of the new chargepoints is underway and is expected to be completed over the course of 2026. Under the concession agreement Zest will also take on delivery and operation of chargepoints at approx. 100 existing on-street chargepoint locations.

4.2. There is no expectation that the successful operator secured to deliver the LEVI funded chargepoints (sockets) will take on any of the approx. 400 in total chargepoints operated by Zest. Neither the successful operator appointed to deliver the LEVI funded infrastructure or Zest will be granted exclusivity by the Council to operate on street chargepoints within Portsmouth.

4.3. When the existing chargepoint locations, new ORCS funded chargepoints and LEVI funded chargepoints are combined this should equate to approx. 4,000 on-street chargepoint sockets being in operation within the city by 2031. These numbers have modelled using the LEVI Support Body's NEVIS Insights tool which shows that there should be sufficient demand for this number of on-street chargepoints within the city.

5. Contract Period, Terms, Estimated Value & Income

5.1. The contract will run for a period of 15 years, extendable by a further year if required to enable effective demobilisation. The contract will be let using flexible open book commercial concession terms prepared by the Council's Legal Advisors Browne Jacobson.

5.2. The council forecasts that the anticipated income that could be generated by the successful operator to deliver the minimum of 3,660 chargepoints could equate on average to £14,600,000 per annum. Over the contract period of 15 years this could equate to £219,000,000.

5.3. The anticipated forecast is based on the following:

- an average of 3,200 operational sockets (only reaches 3,600 sockets by year 5)
- consumption of 25 kWh per chargepoint per day, 365 days per year
- underlying electricity costs of £0.35 per kWh
- a £0.15 mark up between the energy supply cost and tariffs to cover overheads

5.4. The council is providing these estimates for transparency purposes only and is not placing any binding upper or lower volume and value parameters which could constrain development of the scheme in terms of scope and revenue generation. It is expected that the revenue generated will be impacted positively or negatively by numbers of chargepoints installed, speed of rollout programme, local electric vehicle sales, energy costs and a range of factors both within and outside of the control of both parties. The above figures, assumptions and associated demand projections will be tested as part of the preliminary market engagement process.

5.5. Whilst the Council is not seeking to make a direct profit from the operation of the chargepoint infrastructure, the operator will be required to provide an income stream to the Council which will be used by the Council to cover its own running costs.

6. Procurement Procedure & Programme

6.1. For the future procurement process, the Council envisages utilising an 'Open Procedure' procurement strategy in full accordance with the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 that apply to above threshold 'concession contracts'.

6.2. The envisaged outline programme which will be tested as part of the preliminary market engagement process is set out below:

- Issue Tender Notice & Procurement Documents - 1st August 2025
- Tender Return Deadline - 30th September 2025
- Completion of Evaluation & Submission to Funder for Approval - 24th October 2025
- Issue Assessment Summary & Contract Award Notice - 17th November 2025
- 8 Working Day Standstill Period Completes - 27th November 2025 23:59
- Confirmation of Award - 28th November 2025

Total value (estimated)

- £219,000,000 excluding VAT
- £262,800,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 5 January 2026 to 4 January 2041
- Possible extension to 4 January 2042
- 16 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 09310000 - Electricity
- 31213000 - Distribution equipment
- 31681500 - Rechargers
- 45113000 - Siteworks
- 45231400 - Construction work for electricity power lines
- 45233270 - Parking-lot-surface painting work
- 45233290 - Installation of road signs
- 45233291 - Installation of bollards

- 48110000 - Point of sale (POS) software package
- 48445000 - Customer Relation Management software package
- 48480000 - Sales, marketing and business intelligence software package
- 48612000 - Database-management system
- 51112000 - Installation services of electricity distribution and control equipment
- 65300000 - Electricity distribution and related services
- 71311300 - Infrastructure works consultancy services
- 71314100 - Electrical services
- 71510000 - Site-investigation services
- 79312000 - Market-testing services
- 79341200 - Advertising management services
- 79341400 - Advertising campaign services
- 79342100 - Direct marketing services
- 79342200 - Promotional services
- 79342300 - Customer services
- 79342310 - Customer survey services
- 79342311 - Customer satisfaction survey
- 79342320 - Customer-care services

Contract locations

- UKJ31 - Portsmouth
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Engagement

Engagement deadline

9 May 2025

Engagement process description

7. Preliminary Market Engagement (PME) - Introductions & Aims

7.1. Prior to undertaking the formal procurement process, which is currently targeted for commencement on 1st August 2025, the Council is seeking to obtain the views of Operators in respect of, but not limited to, the following:

- Market Capacity & Interest
- Procurement Process & Programme
- Number of chargepoint sockets
- Installation Site Selection
- Chargepoint Solutions & Associated Technology
- Phasing of installations & Programme
- Communications & Marketing
- Demand & Revenue Projections
- Risks & Opportunities
- Partnership Working & Reporting
- Commercial Model, Funding & Income
- Service Levels & KPIs
- Exclusivity

- Tariff Setting

7.2. NB: Whilst operators are encouraged to take part in this process they should note that there is no obligation to take part in this exercise and that if they do not take part, it will not preclude them from the subsequent related procurement process. However, this will be the only opportunity available to operators to provide input to the Council on key considerations as it forms and refines its strategy.

7.3. Engaging operators will not receive preferential treatment in any procurement tender process, and this is in no way an indication of the selection of any organisation or a guarantee of future work.

8. PME - Programme, Briefing & Questionnaire

8.1. The Council is running the Preliminary Market Engagement process and activities in line with the summary programme set out below:

- Issue Preliminary Market Engagement Notice - 9th April 2025
- Deadline for Expressions of Interest - 23rd April 2025 14:00
- Online TEAMS Briefing - 24th April 2025 10:00 - 11:30
- Issue of Slides & Market Engagement Questionnaire - 24th April 2025
- Market Engagement Questionnaire Submission Deadline - 9th May 2025 16:00

8.2. The Council will run an on-line briefing via MS TEAMS on Thursday 24th April 2025 between 10:00 and 11:30 where key members of the Council's project team, including its technical advisors WSP, will provide an overview of the Council's objectives, local context, proposed scale of the scheme, commercial arrangements, delivery approach, key requirements and considerations, programme, envisaged procurement approach, etc.

8.3. In order to attend the briefing, interested operators must complete and return the following documentation via the Council's e-sourcing system In-tend through submission against the EOI stage by Wednesday 23rd April 2025 14:00. The template documents for completion are available via In-tend through accessing the EOI stage document pack.

- Expression of Interest form
- Non-Disclosure Agreement
- Conflict Assessment form

8.4. The Expression of Interest form requires that interested operators provide a high-level summary of their business activities which are of relevance to the Council's requirements e.g. operation of electric vehicle chargepoints.

8.5. If no details are included of current or planned relevant activities, and cannot be subsequently provided through clarification, the Council reserves the right to set aside the application and not invite the relevant organisation to take part in the briefing and subsequently submit a market engagement questionnaire.

8.6. Operators who are unable to attend the briefing but still wish to take part in the preliminary market engagement exercise can do so by submitting the required forms by the deadline stated above.

8.7. Following the briefing the Council will issue the presentation, a recording of the TEAMS event, any further supporting documents and a market engagement questionnaire to all operators who formally expressed interest via In-tend through publication of a subsequent PME Questionnaire stage.

8.8. The deadline for submission of the questionnaire is Friday 9th May 2025 16:00. All questionnaires must be via In-tend through submission against the PME Questionnaire stage.

9. PME - Engagement Analysis & Report

9.1. The Council will then undertake an analysis of the questionnaire responses which will inform the strategy and documentation it will develop and submit to the funder for approval, the deadline for which is 13th June 2025.

9.2. The Council will reserve the right to engage directly with operators during the analysis period where required to ensure clear understanding of the approaches and considerations proposed by particular operators.

9.3. Following completion of the preliminary market engagement process the Council will compile a summary report in accordance with Procurement Act 2023 requirements which, without breaching commercial confidentiality for all parties, outlines the purpose of the engagement, engagement process, market response, summarised high-level findings, options review and incorporation or not within final adopted strategy.

9.4. To ensure compliance with fair & equal treatment principles set out within the Procurement Act 2023, and not creating advantage or disadvantage that cannot be effectively mitigated, the high-level summary report is likely to be included within the procurement documents issued as part of the subsequent formal procurement process. However, all specific questionnaire responses and any subsequent discussions with specific operators will be kept strictly confidential.

10. PME - Administration

10.1. The Council will administrate the preliminary market engagement process using its e-sourcing system In-tend which will be used for:

- Access to and issue of information & documentation
- Clarification requests and response
- Expression of Interest & Questionnaire submission
- Post submission clarification requests and response
- Issue of Preliminary Market Engagement draft report

10.2. The In-tend system can be accessed free of charge via the following web link:

<https://intendhost.co.uk/portsmouthcc.aspx/home>

10.3. Operators who are not already registered on the In-tend system will need to register their details to access the documentation, raise clarification requests and return EOI and questionnaire submissions.

11. PME - Documentation

11.1. The following documents are accessible via In-tend and have been uploaded against the EOI stage. Operators that are not familiar with the In-tend system are advised to refer to Supplier Guidance included within the procurement documents and accessible via the Help area of the In-tend System.

- PCC LEVI PME Brief (this document)
- Expression of Interest form
- Non-Disclosure Agreement
- Conflict Assessment form
- Supplier Guidance

11.2. The following additional documents will be published via In-tend within a subsequent PME Questionnaire stage on 24th April 2025. These documents will only be issued to operators who have provided compliant submissions against the previous EOI stage.

- Briefing Slides & Recording (plus any further supporting documentation)
- PME Questionnaire

12. PME - Clarification

12.1. Any queries or questions or clarifications regarding the documentation or process must be made in writing using the project correspondence facility on the In-tend system.

12.2. To preserve equality of information, all questions and responses will be communicated to all Operators, except where a question is specific to a Operator's submission.

12.3. Operators should advise if they consider a question to be of a commercially confidential nature, to allow the Council to form an opinion as to whether the question and response should be made available to all operators. Subject to the Council's view, Operators will be given the opportunity to consider their position.

12.4. A single Master Clarification Log will be maintained throughout the process which will include all requests for clarification received from Operators (unless deemed commercially sensitive) and the subsequent responses issued by the Council. All requests included within the log will be anonymised to maintain confidentiality.

12.5. The Master Clarification Log will be issued using the In-tend system's Clarification function. Each version of the log will be dated with each individual clarification response dated as well to help operators quickly access the new information provided..

12.7. Any clarification requests which are deemed to be commercially sensitive will not be included within the Master Clarification Log and will be inserted into an Operator specific log. The response will be inserted into the log and issued to the Operator in question only via In-tend correspondence.

13. Non-Disclosure Agreement & Conflicts of Interest

13.1. As some of the documentation and information that will be disclosed is not ready to be issued in the public domain the Council requires that intertest operators complete and return the Non-Disclosure Agreement by the deadline stated. Any questions regarding this document should be addressed to the Council via In-tend.

13.2. The Procurement Act 2023 requires the Council to identify and keep under review actual and potential conflicts of interest. The Council must also mitigate conflicts of interest and address circumstances which the Council considers are likely to cause a reasonable person to wrongly believe there to be a conflict or potential conflict of interest.

13.3. A conflict of interest arises when an individual's personal interests, relationships, or activities have the potential to interfere with their impartiality or the integrity of the procurement process. This may include financial, personal, familial, or business interests that could improperly influence, or be perceived to influence, their decisions or actions.

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

1 August 2025

Procedure

Special regime

Concession

Contracting authority

Portsmouth City Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PCNL-5714-PRZV

Civic Offices, Guildhall Square

Portsmouth

PO1 2AL

United Kingdom

Email: procurement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/>

Region: UKJ31 - Portsmouth

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government