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Planning

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

Portsmouth City Council

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

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-069913

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-050028 ([view related notices](#))

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Scope

Reference

P00005155

Description

Portsmouth City Council - the 'Council' - is undertaking a further stage of preliminary market engagement (PME) to inform the development of its approach for the delivery of 'Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure' (LEVI) funded electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.

The Council is seeking to gain valuable market input through engagement with appropriately experienced & qualified EV charging infrastructure operators via a series of 1-1 on-line TEAMS meetings between the 14th - 21st November 2025. Further details on the booking process, deadlines, project team, meeting format, agenda discussion points, documentation, etc. are included within the PME brief document which is accessible via

the Council's e-sourcing solution In-tend.

The LEVI Fund has the following key objectives:

- Deliver a step-change in the deployment of local, primarily low power, on-street charging infrastructure across England
- Accelerate the commercialisation of, and investment in, the local charging infrastructure sector

The Councils own Portsmouth 'Electric Vehicle Infrastructure' (EVI) strategy has the following key objectives:

- Prioritise electric vehicle infrastructure for residents, enabling conversion to electric vehicles
- Transform charging infrastructure provision in Portsmouth to promote it as an EV friendly destination for those visiting and working here
- Working with fleet operators to support conversion to EV, including provision of infrastructure where required
- Work in partnership to support shared and public modes conversion to EV.

The Council has secured £3,682,000 LEVI funding, £3.5M of which will be used to part fund the delivery of EV chargepoints. The successful operator will be expected to secure and deploy the majority of capital funding required, in line with the LEVI objectives for commercialisation, leveraging private investment and enabling cross-subsidisation.

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.

Since the first PME process undertaken earlier this year over May - June (PME Notice: 2025/S 000-014127), the Council has undertaken further long-term demand analysis and infrastructure requirements modelling. As a result of this the Council is now considering altering its approach for EV infrastructure delivery in relation to chargepoint numbers, technologies, output, locations and customer access but is seeking to gain the views of the market before making any formal decisions.

The Council will use the market feedback gained from this PME process to finalise its approach. Approval will then be sought from the Council's Cabinet Member for Transport at the public meeting scheduled for 5th February 2026 to proceed to submission of the final business case and documentation to the funder, being the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV).

In line with LEVI fund objectives and the Council's objectives, most of the on-street charge points should primarily be low powered between 7kW and 22kW and for the use of residents.

The Council is targeting to have appointed the successful partner operator by September 2026 who will then be required to work in partnership with the council to install an agreed minimum number of chargepoints / sockets by a target date of 2031 on a phased basis.

In respect of a minimum number of chargepoints to be delivered over a 5-year phased programme, the Council is considering reducing the target from the 3,600 pre-dominantly single-socket lower powered (3-5kW) lamp post column chargers stated in the previous PME process to a lower number of higher powered (7-22kW) dual-socket standalone chargepoints.

This potential change in approach has been informed by revised CENEX and NEVIS v6 modelling to project the number of on-street residential EV charging sockets that are likely to be required to meet projected demand by 2050. The Council has also considered the increased flexibility that standalone chargepoints can offer for uptake of future technology driven upgrades when compared to lamp post column chargepoints which may be constrained by existing infrastructure. The Council is also investigating on-going operational performance and ease of maintenance benefits that stand alone units may offer.

Following funder approval, the Council will then undertake an openly advertised procurement process to appoint a partner operator for the supply, installation, maintenance, operation and decommissioning of electrical vehicle chargepoints on a mutually incentivised commercial concession basis. Dependent upon funder review timescales, the Council is targeting commencing the procurement process via publication of a Tender Notice in April 2026 with contract award subsequently targeted for August 2026 and contract commencement following in September 2026.

It is not envisaged that a list of pre-defined sites will be released as part of the tender pack for the future procurement. The operator will be responsible for proposing, surveying and designing sites for chargepoint installations which will primarily meet the needs of residents without off-street parking or the ability to install a private home chargepoint, using their own analytical tools and methodologies.

Following award, the chargepoint distribution, locations, access and phasing approaches put forward at tender will be developed and finalised in collaboration with the Council. Each phase will be subject to a series of milestone gateway checks including for seeking formal approval to proceed from the Programme Board and Cabinet Member for Transport.

The successful operator will be responsible for the design, installation (inc. civils works),

operation, maintenance and end of term demobilisation & removal of the chargepoint network.

The operator will be responsible for all installation works and costs, including any fees payable to the Distribution Network Operator (DNO), costs of obtaining necessary temporary and permanent licenses, consents, and Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) and appropriate parking bay marking & signing.

It will be the responsibility of the operator to work in partnership with the Council to comply with the Council's internal approval process, prior to installations.

The operator will be granted a concessions contract and associated section 50 licence (or permit for Statutory Undertakers) for on-street locations, or associated lease for off-street locations.

The contract will commence in September 2026 and 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.

The council will release funding to the operator incrementally in arrears based upon evidence of successful commission of charge points.

The council forecasts that the turnover income that could be generated by the successful operator over the term of the contract could equate on average to £1,800,000 per annum. Over the contract period of 15 years this could equate to £26,590,000. This includes potential income from the rapid/ultra rapid charge points.

The above figures, assumptions and associated demand projections will be tested as part of this preliminary market engagement process.

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. This will take the form of a guaranteed management fee which may be profiled plus a gain share mechanism.

The contract will be subject to open book reporting and will require the operator to provide information at regular frequencies and upon request on sales revenues, costs incurred, and profits generated.

The cost of charging an electric vehicle for residents, visitors and others should be affordable. Operators will be required to provide details of the tariff, or range of tariffs, that they would implement when the chargepoints are first commissioned as part of their

proposed financial model.

The Council is considering including for a pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh) margin cap with operators having the ability to set a cap in their tender response. It is envisaged that the cap would increase annually in line with inflation (CPI).

The operator will be able to apply to the Council to adjust the tariff periodically, ideally no more than twice per year at April and October. Any adjustments would need at least 2 months notice to allow for internal review processes and communication to network users.

For the future procurement process, the Council envisages utilising an 'Open Procedure' procurement strategy in accordance with the requirements of Section 20 of the Procurement Act 2023. The Council's position is that the contract falls under the definition of a Concession Contract as set out within Section 8 of the Procurement Act 2023.

The envisaged summary outline procurement programme which will be tested as part of this PME process is set out below:

- Tender Notice published on FTS - 6th April 2026
- Procurement documents available on In-tend e-sourcing system - 6th April 2026
- Tender return deadline - 1st June 2026
- Presentation & interview - w/c 15th June 2026
- Evaluation of tenders completed & submission of recommendation to funder for approval - 6th July 2026
- Issue Assessment Summaries - 3rd August 2026
- Contract award notice published on FTS - 3rd August 2026
- Standstill period - 4th - 13th August 2026
- Contract award - 14th August 2026
- Contract commencement - September 2026

Total value (estimated)

- £28,390,000 excluding VAT
- £34,068,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 7 September 2026 to 6 September 2041
- Possible extension to 6 September 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

Engagement

Engagement deadline

21 November 2025

Engagement process description

The Council is inviting suitably qualified & experienced operators to take part in exploratory 1-1 on-line Teams meetings which will take place between 14th November - 21st November 2025.

The Council's process and timetable for undertaking the PME process is set out below:

- Issue PME Notice on Find a Tender Service - 30th October 2025
- Publish summary brief & supporting documents on In-Tend - 30th October 2025
- Issue detailed brief and further documents via In-tend to only qualifying operators who have submitted COI, NDA & EOI - from 7th November 2025
- Deadline for 1-1 meetings expression of interest - ASAP, ideally by 12th November 17:00 & no later than 2 days before date of meeting
- 1-1 engagement meetings - 14th - 21st November 2025
- Production of PME report - December 2025
- Finalisation of approach - December 2025 / January 2026
- Cabinet Member for Transport formal approval - 5th February 2026
- Submission of final business case and documentation to funder - 9th February 2026

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 and documentation
- Clarification requests and response
- Expression of interest submission
- Allocation of 1-1 meeting slots

- Issue of Preliminary Market Engagement High Level Summary and Developer Specific summaries for review and agreement

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

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

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. Upon completing the simple registration process access to the system is automatically approved allowing for immediate access to the information and documentation.

Information on registration and subsequent operation of the In-tend system is included for with the Supplier Guidance document access via the Help area of the In-tend system and is also included for within the procurement documents for subsequent ease of reference.

The Council has 7 75-minute slots available and a further 4 back up slots in the event that operators cannot accommodate the 7 priority slots and / or higher levels of interest from the operator market. The 1-1 slots available are set out below and will be allocated on a first come first served basis to operators:

Priority Slots

- Meeting Slot 1 - Friday 14th November 9:00 -10:15
- Meeting Slot 2 - Monday 17th November 14:00 - 15:15
- Meeting Slot 3 - Monday 17th November 15:30 - 16:45
- Meeting Slot 4 - Tuesday 18th November 9:00 - 10:15
- Meeting Slot 5 - Tuesday 18th November 13:00 - 14:15
- Meeting Slot 6 - Tuesday 18th November 15:00 - 16:15
- Meeting Slot 7 - Friday 21st November 14:00 - 15:15

Back Up Slots

- Meeting Slot 8 - Tuesday 18th November 11:00 - 12:15
- Meeting Slot 9 - Thursday 20th November 9:00 - 10:15

- Meeting Slot 10 - Thursday 20th November 13:00 - 14:15
- Meeting Slot 11 - Thursday 20th November 15:00 - 16:15

Operators who wish to participate in this PME process are required to complete the Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), Conflict of Interest (COI) and Expression of Interest (EOI) forms accessible via the council's e-sourcing system In-tend in order to book a 1-1 slot and receive further detailed documentation.

Completed forms should ideally be submitted via the Council's e-sourcing solution In-tend using the correspondence function by no later than Wednesday 12th November 17:00 and no later than 2 working days before the operators 1st choice preferred slot. However, as access to 1-1 slots is limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis interested operators are encouraged to submit applications asap in advance of the deadline to help ensure that their 1-1 time slot preferences can be accommodated.

Operators are required to state which meeting slots they are able to attend and state ranked order of preference for the dates and times available within their completed EOI form. Operators will be allocated their preferred slots wherever possible, but priority will be given on a first come first served basis.

If all the slots are quickly taken and / or none of the slots which are available can be accommodated by a operator the Council may be able to make further slots available, however due to time and resource pressures this cannot be guaranteed. In the unlikely event that it is not possible to organise a 1-1 meeting, affected operators will be given the opportunity to provide written feedback to ensure that no interested parties are excluded from inputting into this PME exercise.

Operators will only be invited to attend a 1-1 meeting and receive the further documentation where:

- 1) no conflicts are declared which cannot be mitigated;
- 2) where an NDA has been appropriately signed & returned without any material amendments and;
- 3) where the EOI form has been fully completed - including for slot preferences, business & contact information and self-certification of meeting all stated minimum business activity & experience requirements stated within the EOI form and PME Brief.

As part of their completed Expression of Interest form operators are to provide case study details of one to three relevant EV charging schemes that they are involved in delivering. This may be in relation to schemes that are awarded but are still in planning stage, have been part delivered or are in full operation.

Operators are encouraged to provide 3 relevant case studies, if possible, but can use just 1 case study as long as this case study meets all of the essential requirements set out below. Conversely operators may include for 2-3 contract case studies which individually do not meet all of the essential requirements but collectively address all of the requirements.

The essential experience requirements that operators must be able to evidence are set out below:

- All of the contract case studies submitted must relate to the provision of electric vehicle chargepoints
- At least one contract must cover supply, installation, maintenance and operation responsibilities
- At least one contract must be on the basis of a concession model whereby the operator must manage demand risks
- At least one contract must include for identification and agreement of chargepoint sites in collaboration with the client
- At least one contract must be concerned with managing a network of at least 50 live residential on-street charge points
- At least one contract must include for local DNO liaison responsibilities
- At least one contract must include for significant (25% minimum) operator capital financing

Following receipt and review of completed EOI, NDA and COI forms the Council will issue further documentation to qualifying operators via In-tend correspondence. This documentation is currently being compiled and will be ready for issue from 7th November 2025. The further documentation will include for:

- Draft Specification
- Draft KPIs & Service Levels
- Draft Concession Agreement
- Draft RACI Matrix
- EV Infrastructure CENEX and NEVIS v6 Demand Modelling

- Mapping of current and planned ORCS funded EV chargepoints
- Latest EV chargepoint utilisation figures
- LEVI financial modelling & assumptions
- *Draft Procurement Documents - ITT, PSQ, QAQ, Financial Templates, Social Value (if available)

The Council is keen to discuss and seek views from operators on the following broad points through the 1-1 meetings. The list of items is non-exhaustive and will be developed within the 1-1 meetings through open collaborative dialogue.

Operators are encouraged to put forward their own items for discussion at the meeting, ideally providing this in advance either in their expression of interest form or subsequently via In-tend correspondence in advance of the 1-1 meeting.

- Infrastructure - demand projections, chargepoint / socket numbers, technology types, bays & user access, civil works efficiencies (passive infrastructure), upgrading
- Phasing & Programme - rollout period, collaboration, development of wider & phase specific programmes, identification of locations & equitable distribution, review
- Delivery - scope, roles, H&S / CDM, stakeholder management, consultations, viability, 3rd party approvals, accreditations
- Commercial - financial modelling, management fee, gain share, tariff management & margin, open book, private sector funding, bays & enforcement
- Operations - service levels, maintenance, upgrades, reporting, partnership working, customer experience
- Legal - exclusivity, concession agreement terms, insurance, liability, notice & termination provisions
- Procurement - process, programme, conditions of participation, award criteria, commercial evaluation, level of interest, social value
- AOB - further risks & opportunities, lessons learnt, etc.

The Council will compile developer specific summary reports following completion of 1-1 meetings and any subsequent further engagement. These reports will be shared with the relevant operator prior to finalisation and will be kept strictly confidential.

Following completion of the whole PME process the Council will also compile a high-level summary report in accordance with Procurement Act 23 requirements which outlines the purpose of the engagement, engagement process, market response, summarised high-level findings, options review and incorporation or not within final adopted approach, but without going to any level of detail which would identify particular operators, operator specific approaches and breach commercial confidentiality.

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

6 April 2026

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

Region: UKJ31 - Portsmouth

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government