

Report to CABINET – Part A

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI)

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Reason for Decision

The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Project was launched by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) to deliver a step change in the deployment of local electric vehicle charging infrastructure (EVCI) across England.

The LEVI programme objective is to encourage Charge Point Operators (CPOs) to supply, install, and operate Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (EVI) in areas that are presently not commercially attractive, through the provision of subsidies.

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and all ten Greater Manchester (GM) Authorities are collaborating on this project, to maximise CPO investment and reducing the number of tenders CPOs would otherwise need to respond to. EVCI is to be focused on areas lacking off-street parking or public EVI within a 5-minute walk.

This report seeks approval for Oldham Council to authorise TfGM to award the contract for the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) project to the preferred supplier following a fully compliant procurement process led by TfGM, and for Oldham to be a signatory to both the concession contract and the GM Authority Agreement, so that we can benefit from this contract arrangement.

In addition, the part b report provides clarity on the financial / commercial arrangements associated with current TfGM provided electric vehicle chargers on Oldham Council land and discusses the merits as to whether or not this arrangement should be continued / extended.

Recommendations

This report seeks approval for the following:

1. To agree that TfGM awards the LEVI contract to the preferred supplier
2. To agree that Oldham Council be a signatory to the contract and the GMCA Agreement
3. To consider the content of the part b report which includes financial and commercial information relating to the proposed and current electric vehicle charging infrastructure across Oldham.

Award of contract to preferred supplier for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure project**1 Background**

- 1.1 The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Project was launched by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) to deliver a step change in the deployment of local electric vehicle charging infrastructure (EVCI) across England.
- 1.2 The LEVI programme objective is to encourage Chargepoint Operators (CPOs) to supply, install, and operate Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (EVI) in areas that are presently not commercially attractive, through the provision of subsidies. OZEV has recommended achieving this by utilising a concession contract. TfGM and all 10 Greater Manchester (GM) Authorities are collaborating on this project, to maximise CPO investment and reducing the number of tenders CPOs would otherwise need to respond to. EVCI is to be focused on areas lacking off-street parking or public EVI within a 5-minute walk.
- 1.3 Transport for Greater Manchester TfGM successfully bid for LEVI funding and was awarded £16.158m from the Department for Transport's (DfT) OZEV LEVI Fund. Oldham Council's allocation of LEVI funding is £1,563,174.
- 1.4 Greater Manchester authorities also have City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) specifically for EVI investment. This funding was originally identified for the purpose of match-funding against bids for central government funding. The LEVI funding that has been awarded did not require match funding and therefore the CRSTS funding was allocated to local authorities to part-fund projects with chargepoint operators to help deliver charging in underserved areas that are otherwise less attractive to commercial operators.
- 1.5 Oldham Council's CRSTS allocation is £689,577. £110,000 of this funding has been allocated to fund an EVI resource in the Council to deliver the LEVI project. Since the purpose and objectives of the LEVI and CRSTS funding are broadly similar, several GM authorities, including Oldham, have included their CRSTS allocation in the LEVI project. The contract award therefore includes the remaining £579,577 of Oldham's CRSTS funding.
- 1.6 TfGM has been developing the contract strategy and tender pack, collectively with all ten Greater Manchester Local Authorities, in line with OZEV's direction and guidance. Officers from Bury, Manchester, Stockport, and Trafford represented the GM Authorities on the Tender Evaluation Panel.
- 1.7 The LEVI project will help provide publicly accessible charging infrastructure to residents who do not have access to charging at home. There are many properties across Oldham that do not benefit from off-street parking and are therefore unable to charge a vehicle near to their home.
- 1.8 By installing publicly accessible infrastructure near to residents' homes, this will remove barriers to making the switch to electric vehicles for people who are not able to charge at home. This switch will help to reduce vehicle emissions in the borough and contribute to Oldham Council's environmental objectives.

Risks

- 1.9 There is a section of the population who oppose the switch to electric vehicles, so there is a likelihood that some people will oppose the installation of EVCI near to their homes.
- 1.10 There are many terraced streets in Oldham where there is more demand for on-street parking than there is capacity. As the infrastructure will be installed in residential areas, there is a risk that some residents who are non-EV owners will consider the infrastructure to be effectively removing car parking from general use, solely for the benefit of EV users, especially if there are few existing EV users in the area.
- 1.11 This risk will have to be managed through communication and sensitive selection of sites wherever possible.
- 1.12 The government has a commitment to phasing out the sales of new combustion-engine cars from 2030. This phase-out will result in a gradual reduction in the number of petrol and diesel cars available on the secondhand market and the laws of supply and demand means that those which do remain available to purchase, may increase in price, leaving EVs as the only practical option.
- 1.13 The risk in not installing EVCI near to people's homes is that people would have limited access to charging and consequently another barrier to vehicle ownership and the social and economic advantages that this brings. As time passes, the likely higher costs due to the reduced availability of combustion engine vehicles could result in vehicle ownership being out of reach for more and more of our most disadvantaged residents. This would, in turn, harm the local economy as affected residents will be excluded from employment opportunities that are not easily reached by public transport. This would put residents at risk of not being able to reach their full earning potential, and perpetuating social and economic exclusion for our poorest residents.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 The procurement exercise was a Competitive Flexible procedure under the new Procurement Act 2023, which included a two-stage process for a 20-year bespoke concession contract covering design, construction, operation, and maintenance. It is supported by an Authority Agreement, which establishes the formal relationship between the GM Authorities to be implemented upon contract award.
- 2.2 TfGM undertook a prior market engagement exercise on the government's Find a Tender website (<https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Notice/027236-2024>).
- 2.3 The first stage of the tender process was a Procurement Specific Questionnaire (PSQ) which was advertised on the Pro-Contract Portal (ref. DN782439). The Top five shortlisted suppliers who scored the highest at the PSQ stage were taken forward to the main tender stage and their responses were received by the deadline of 8 December 2025. The key objective of the tender evaluation exercise was to recommend a preferred supplier who has the capability, capacity, economic and financial standing to deliver the LEVI programme of works.
- 2.4 After receiving the Main Tender responses an internal review of the LEVI procurement, TfGM identified that some aspects of the tender documentation and process required clarification and improvement to ensure that all shortlisted bidders were assessed on a clear and consistent basis, that solutions more closely matched TfGM's strategic aims and that bids were deliverable. These aspects related particularly to the installation period, the period

of grant funding and the feasibility of implementation programmes having regard to TfGM and GM Local Authorities constraints.

- 2.5 Therefore, TfGM decided to rewind the procurement to the stage immediately following PSQ selection and issued a clarified and amended Invitation to Tender to the existing shortlisted bidders in May 2026.
- 2.6 Following the decision to rerun the main tender, the top five shortlisted suppliers who scored the highest at the PSQ stage were taken forward to the main tender stage and their responses were received by the deadline of 29 June 2026. Two shortlisted suppliers decided not to proceed to main tender stage due to lack of resource or wider market challenges.
- 2.7 The key objective of the tender evaluation exercise was to recommend a preferred supplier who has the capability, capacity, economic and financial standing to deliver the LEVI programme of works.
- 2.8 All evaluators (representatives from TfGM, Bury, Manchester, Stockport and Trafford) were briefed and completed an independent assessment of each tender response that was received against a pre-defined evaluation criteria that was published in the evaluation matrix. The scores were compiled and moderated with the results recommending the Preferred Supplier.
- 2.9 Once approved by all GM authorities, TfGM will notify the successful and unsuccessful suppliers and publish the contract market notice, starting an 8-day standstill period. If there are no challenges, the contract with the service provider and GM authorities will be finalised.

3 Other relevant considerations

- 3.1 There is currently existing electric vehicle charging infrastructure (EVCI) on Council land which was installed by Be.EV under a contract managed by TfGM.
- 3.2 TfGM has several host agreements with Oldham Council to permit TfGM to host the chargers under their contract on Council land. The host agreements expire on 5 December 2026. However, there is the option to extend the agreements should the Council wish to do so. This is set out in more detail in the part b report, as Oldham Council must give consideration as to whether it wishes to extend the agreement or allow it to expire.
- 3.3 If the agreement is allowed to expire, under the terms, at the end of the agreement, TfGM must remove the equipment and return the site in a “good condition” to Oldham Council within a reasonable period.
- 3.4 Allowing the agreement to expire would free up sites in Oldham to enable new charging infrastructure to be installed under the LEVI contract. Although this approach would require money to be spent, Oldham Council will receive income from any chargers to be installed under the terms of the concession contract, whereas under the terms of the host agreements with TfGM, the Council does not receive any income.
- 3.5 The Council would receive an income through the concession contract, and the older existing chargers would be replaced with more up-to-date infrastructure. However, this would also divert a small portion of the LEVI investment to locations that are already served with Electric Vehicle Chargers which were funded by public money.

4 Options/Alternatives

- 4.1 **Option 1** – to agree that TfGM award the contract to the preferred supplier, for Oldham Council to be a signatory to the contract and GM Authority Agreement, and agree **not** to extend the host agreements with TfGM.
- 4.2 **Option 2** – to agree that TfGM award the contract to the preferred supplier, for Oldham Council to be a signatory to the contract and GM Authority Agreement, and **to agree in principle** to extend the host agreements with TfGM, subject to the terms of the extended agreement being to the satisfaction of the Council.
- 4.3 **Option 3** – not to award the contract to the preferred supplier and to agree in principle to the host agreements with TfGM, subject to the terms of the extended agreement being to the satisfaction of the Council.

5 Preferred Option

- 5.1 The preferred option is Option 1 – that the contract be awarded to the preferred supplier, that Oldham Council be a signatory to the contract and GM Authority Agreement, and to **not** extend the host agreements with TfGM. This would result in TfGM's chargers being removed from Council sites, giving the Council the option to replace them with new chargers as part of this contract, and generate an income stream for the Council from the replacement chargers.

6 Consultation

- 6.1 TfGM have provided updates to Members at key stages throughout the procurement process.

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The decision to award the contract to the preferred supplier does not have direct financial implications for the council.
- 7.2 The proposed expenditure to provide publicly accessible charging infrastructure to residents who do not have access to charging at home is capital expenditure. The expenditure is funded by the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement grant. The money is held by Transport for Greater Manchester and will be paid directly to the supplier.
- 7.3 Further financial and commercial details are set out in the part b report.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The proposal is lawful and in line with the Contract Procedure Rules. Oldham Council is party to the concession contract procured by Transport for Greater Manchester and appears to have been compliantly conducted. The council is party to the GM Authority Agreement which describes the arrangements for co-operation of the GM local authorities. The council has agreed to act as the concession contract manager in the eighth year following commencement, and also agrees to participate following prescribed standards.

9. Procurement Implications

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- 9.1 A search of the Find a Tender Service has identified the relevant procurement UK4 Tender Notice, published on 29 July 2025: *Greater Manchester Region Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) - Concession Contract*, Notice Identifier: 2025/S 000-044041, ProContract Reference: DN782439. The procurement procedure used by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) was a two-stage Competitive Flexible Procedure to let a concession contract pursuant to Section 8 of the Procurement Act 2023 for a term of 20 years. Clause 7.3.4 which provides for Oldham Council to be the contract manager for one year in the eighth year following Commencement. Also, Oldham Council commits to following the requirements contained in Schedule 2 Part B for the general operation of the contract.
- 9.2 The UK4 Tender Notice identifies Oldham Council as a participating authority within the procurement. While the Council was not involved in the evaluation of tenders, participation in the procurement reflects the collaborative approach adopted across Greater Manchester authorities and led by TfGM.
- 9.3 The proposed approach involves the Council entering directly into a long-term concession contract and assuming the associated rights and obligations of a contracting party for the duration of the agreement. It is understood that, as part of the wider governance, legal and commercial review arrangements supporting the procurement in 2025, TfGM obtained legal advice/input on behalf of Oldham Council in relation to the contract documentation: recommended proceeding with the documentation on the basis that legal advice had confirmed that the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 had been appropriately reflected within the revisions.
- 9.4 TfGM managed the procurement process, evaluation process and assessment of the preferred supplier, however information, assurances and recommendations provided through TfGM's governance, evaluation and approval processes, together with the information presented within this report provide assurance that due process has been followed.
- 9.5 Subject to the Council being satisfied that the information and assurances available provide an appropriate basis for decision-making, use of a TfGM-led procurement would typically represent a compliant route to market where the Council has been identified as a participating authority and its requirements have been accounted for.
- 10 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**
- 10.1 Yes – See Appendix A
- 11 **Key Decision**
- 11.1 Yes
- 12 **Key Decision Reference**
- 12.1 NEI-13-25
- 13 **Background Papers**
- 13.1 Background papers are included in the part b report
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14 **Appendices**

14.1 Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment (TfGM)



Part C - Schedule B
- Appendix 4 - EQIA