

Decision Pathway – Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 05 March 2024

TITLE	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI) Bid		
Ward(s)	Citywide		
Author: Jacob Pryor	Job title: Transport Policy, Bidding and Strategic Projects Team Manager		
Cabinet lead: Cllr Donald Alexander, Cabinet Member for Transport	Executive Director lead: John Smith, Interim Executive Director Growth and Regeneration		
Proposal origin: BCC Staff			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member Decision forum: Cabinet			
Purpose of Report:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To note the Stage 2 bid for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI) funding and to seek approval to accept and spend the funding. 			
Evidence Base:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> As outlined in the One City Climate Strategy Bristol’s ambition is to be carbon neutral and climate resilient by 2030. Transport accounts for about 34% of the average Bristol resident’s carbon footprint with driving being the largest sub-category of this at 17%. A headline objective of the strategy is that by 2030 “all of Bristol’s cars primarily consist of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) and 90% of other vehicles to be ULEV”. Nationally ULEVs accounted for 2.1% of the entire fleet in 2022, but for the West of England that number was 1.4% and for Bristol it was 1.2% - about 2,364 vehicles. There are multiple factors that are preventing more rapid uptake of EV vehicles from high upfront costs, to perceived ‘range anxiety’ and a lack of reliable charge points. The UK government’s ‘Taking charge: the electric vehicle infrastructure strategy’ (2022) notes that the pace of delivery of public on-street charge points is a key challenge for the sector as this can be an area where the commercial case for charge point operators can be weaker. Recognising that on-street charge points require additional investment the government invited councils to apply for grants from the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund in February 2023. The fund has two main objectives: “Deliver a step-change in the deployment of local, primarily low power, on-street charging infrastructure 			

across England.”

9. “Accelerate the commercialisation of, and investment in, the local charging infrastructure sector.”
10. Bristol’s approach to applying for a grant from the LEVI fund will be to choose the ‘right charger for the right location’ which will include on-street chargers, chargers in community hubs and car parks and rapid chargers.
11. Bristol is in an advantageous position in terms of meeting both objectives of the fund given its recently launched partnership with Ameresco under Bristol City Leap (BCL)
12. Bristol City Council will seek to use BCL to accelerate the rollout of charge points under LEVI and bring in additional investment to match the government’s capital grant.
13. The LEVI funding bid has 3 stages of submission.
14. Stage 1 was an Expression of Interest which was submitted by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) and West of England (WoE) Local Authorities on the 26th of May 2023.
15. Stage 2 required WECA and WOE authorities to submit a draft tender document for review. This was submitted on the 30th of November 2023.
16. Should this Stage 2 application be successful WECA (and in turn Bristol) will receive 90% of its share of the WECA funding allocation upfront with the remaining 10% held back until Stage 3 submission.
17. Stage 3 submission is required in September 2024 and will require Bristol to finalise a draft contract with a commercial partner for review by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles. If OZEV approve the contract the remaining funding 10% of funding will be released and the project will progress to delivery.
18. The indicative funding allocation for the WECA area is £6,644,000 and Bristol may reasonably expect to receive up to £4m of funding, noting that the exact figure may be less than this.
19. The projected investment through LEVI will complement the council’s other efforts in the field of electric vehicle infrastructure delivery including up to £2.46m of ‘Green Recovery Fund’ ([see Feb 24 cabinet meeting](#)) which will see a further expansion of the public charge point network.
20. BCC’s Environmental Impact Assessment has determined significant beneficial impacts from the proposal: To achieve the transport related objectives in the One City Climate Strategy, BCC needs to coordinate the rapid and large-scale expansion of EV charging infrastructure. This proposal provides BCC the financial means to contribute a large quantity of this in a way that widens the opportunity for EV ownership beyond those citizens with private off-street parking.

Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That cabinet

1. Notes the submission of the Stage 2 LEVI bid.

Contractual:

2. Authorises the Executive Director for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the s151 Officer and the Cabinet Members for Transport and Housing Services and Energy to:
 - i. accept any grant awarded from the LEVI fund to the council (and enter into any grant agreements and other agreements required to accept the grant funding with central government and/or WECA

- and/or the other WoE authorities and
- ii. spend such grant funding in accordance with the objectives of the LEVI fund set out in this report, including procuring and entering into all necessary contracts for goods, services or works up to the limit of the grant funding including a contract for the supply of EV charge points and infrastructure with a potential duration of up to 15 years.
3. Authorises the Executive Director for Growth and Regeneration to invoke any subsequent extensions/variations specifically defined in the contract(s) being awarded, up to the maximum budget envelope outlined in this report.
 4. Authorises the Head of Strategic Procurement & Supplier Relations to approve appropriate procurement routes to market where these are not yet fully defined in this report, or if changes to procurement routes are subsequently required

Corporate Strategy alignment:

1. The proposal aligns directly with the Corporate Strategy objective ENV1 – Carbon Neutral

City Benefits:

1. By delivering an expansion of the electric vehicle charge point network the proposal will help to drive ULEV uptake which in turn will reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality.

Consultation Details:

1. Measures contained within this proposal will be subject to consultation

Background Documents:

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund bidding guidance: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/grants-and-loans/local-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-scheme/>

Revenue Cost		Source of Revenue Funding	
Capital Cost	£ ≤4m	Source of Capital Funding	Grant
One off cost <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

Finance Advice: The report, among other requests, asks Cabinet to note the submission of a Stage 2 Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) bid. The LEVI funding support Local Authorities in England to plan and deliver charging infrastructure for residents without off-street parking. This capital funding is provided by the Government to support chargepoint delivery and capability funding to ensure that Local Authorities have the staff and capability to plan and deliver charging infrastructure.

If successful, the council will get a share of the 6.644m set aside for the WECA area. It is estimated that BCC's share of this allocation will be approximately **up to** £4m, although the exact figure may be less than this. This funding if received will add to investment of £2.46m of 'Green Recovery Fund' already earmarked electric vehicle infrastructure delivery.

There is no requirement to match fund and as a result accepting this funding will have no impact on the approved revenue or capital budgets.

The council will, however, seek match funding from a commercial partner. While there is no requirement to secure match funding of a particular amount, the greater the amount secured in match funding from the private sector, the more attractive the bid will be to the funder.

The Stage 2 bid process seeks estimates from bidders of the likely number of charge points to be delivered from the funding earmarked. Final details of the actual number of charge points to be delivered will only be known at Stage 3 when the total funding identified (both LEVI and private) is known.

Further details of any match funding including future delivery costs will be reported to Committee later as part of any Stage 3 bid.

Finance Business Partner: Ben Hegarty, Finance Business Partner Growth and Regeneration, 16 January 2024.

2. Legal Advice: Whenever the council receives and/or spends grant funding, it needs to ensure this is in accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022. The relevant officers will need to ensure that appropriate advice is obtained prior to accepting and spending the funding.

Whenever the Council procures good, works or services over a certain value, it must comply with its own procurement rules and depending on value, also the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The relevant officers must ensure prior to entering into any contracts to spend any LEVI grant funding received, that appropriate advice is obtained from the legal and procurement teams within the Council.

Legal Team Leader: Sinead Willis, Team Manager Commercial and Governance Team, 2 January 2024

3. Implications on IT: I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity

IT Team Leader: Alex Simpson, Lead Enterprise Architect, 4 January 2024

4. HR Advice: The project will be delivered by existing internal resource, therefore no HR implications are anticipated

HR Partner: Celia Williams, HR Business Partner, Growth and Regeneration 2 January 2024

EDM Sign-off	John Smith, Interim Executive Director Growth and Regeneration	3 January 2024
Cabinet Member sign-off	Cllr Donald Alexander, Cabinet Member for Transport	22 January 2024
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	5 February 2024

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	NO
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Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	YES
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO