

Design & Cost Report: Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Capability Funding

Date: 18th October 2023

Report of: Senior Project Manager

Report to: Chief Officer Climate, Energy & Green Spaces

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

- The LEVI programme supports delivery of electric vehicle infrastructure project delivery through both capital and revenue funding. Both allocations are awarded to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) who then can provide grant funding to the respective districts in the region to support the resourcing of project delivery.
- Leeds City Council's allocation of the revenue funding – known as 'Capability Funding' is £197,936.00 to be paid across two financial years in equal awards of £98,968.00.
- This report seeks approval to enter into the grant agreement with WYCA for the sum of £197,936.00 from the LEVI Capability fund budget held by WYCA and the subsequent injection of funding to the revenue budget for Climate, Energy & Green Spaces service for the implementation of the wider LEVI programme.
- Part of the funding will also be used to allow Highways officers the opportunity to recharge an element of their time to this revenue budget.

Recommendations

The Chief Officer Climate, Energy & Green Spaces is requested to

- a) Note the proposed funding as detailed within this report and its appendices,
- b) Approve the entering into the grant agreement with WYCA for the sum of £197,936.00 and the subsequent injection of this funding to the CEGS budget for the implementation and delivery of the LEVI programme.

What is this report about?

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Chief Officer Climate, Energy & Green Spaces (CEGS) for the grant agreement between WYCA and Leeds City Council that will provide revenue funding to support the resourcing of project management and Highways expertise in delivery of the LEVI programme.
- 2 This project has been well publicised and briefed to key members as part of the wider programme of works being undertaken by CEGS to support improvements in Air Quality and decarbonisation of transport.
- 3 The proposal is to approve the entering into a grant agreement with WYCA in the sum of £197,936.00 that will be paid in two instalments of £98,968.00 to Leeds City Council by WYCA with payments made in 2023/24 and 24/25.
- 4 This will provide funding to support project management capacity from the CEGS team over 3 financial years of £169,659.00 in total – broadly equivalent to 1 FTW at PO4 – Senior Project Officer. This also provides £28,277 to Highways & Transport to allow for recharging of time by a Principal Transport Planner.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 5 In the context of the Climate Emergency and Net Zero ambitions of the City this funding will assist with project delivery that will support significant increased take up of electric vehicles and as such supports one of the Best City Ambition priorities directly. In terms of wider impacts this will support delivery of green jobs and skills development in the city as opportunities to work in this growing sector will be supported by the appointment of charge point providers to deliver the charging infrastructure and then more broadly in providing opportunities to work in the vehicle maintenance sector in the electric vehicle field.
- 6 Introducing EV charging points across the city as part of the regional programme will enable many currently unable to transition to electric vehicles due to lack of ability to charge at home to make the switch. Improved public access to charging will also support fleet change in the commercial sector. Ultimately this will support the already steady growth in EV uptake in Leeds that will directly support air quality improvements from transport sources and the decarbonisation of transport as the grid increasingly decarbonises with greater proportions of renewable energy generation.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 7 As stated above, the LEVI programme directly supports Zero Carbon priorities, but also contributes to improved health and wellbeing outcomes through improvement in air quality and offers new opportunities in the growing green skills and jobs in the EV infrastructure and vehicle maintenance sector.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: N/a

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 8 This project has been briefed and supported by Cllr Rafique and Cllr Hayden as in line with wider Zero Carbon, Sustainability and Transport strategy aims.

What are the resource implications?

- 9 The award is £197,936.00 and is to be funded the OZEV Capability Fund allocated to WYCA who are distributing this to regional Local Authorities. The wider LEVI programme is already committed to being delivered by Leeds City Council with final capital funding to support delivery of the programme also due to be allocated to districts via WYCA from the final allocation determined by OZEV. A separate report will be produced to approve that capital allocation.
- 10 No capital from Leeds City Council is being requested to support LEVI projects and no ongoing revenue through energy, maintenance or servicing costs are anticipated in support of installed infrastructure. The approach to LEVI delivery is to for charge point operators to cover ongoing operational costs and to provide additional capital in addition to the LEVI capital grant for delivery of charging networks. The operator of the EV charging points will take on the future responsibilities for servicing and maintenance as well as offering potential ongoing revenue to the local authority through the form of either/or lease fees or profit share mechanisms.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 11 Broader risks of the LEVI project will be managed at the regional and local level with risk management as part of the project management work package. There are no direct risks inherent to the acceptance of the grant award seeking approval.
- 12 All the risks associated with the installation and operation of the EV charging points delivered by the LEVI programme will remain with the operator. The operator will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the units and are the metered party, meaning that there will be no ongoing operational or revenue costs to the council for servicing, repairs, or the energy consumed.
- 13 Installations are carried out following an agreed set of RAMS with the specification of site designs and technology being agreed and determined by the local authorities as part of any tender process. Operators will also be following national guidelines on the installation process as well as engaging with relevant stakeholders during the installation.

What are the legal implications?

- 14 This is a Significant Operational Decision which is not subject to call-in but will be published on the register of decisions by the Council. The report does not contain any exempt or confidential information under the Access to Information Rules.
- 15 The WYCA Grant agreement letter has been reviewed by the commercial team within Procurement and Commercial Services and no legal issues have been highlighted.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 16 The alternative option would be for Leeds City Council to decline the grant offer and fully fund the resourcing of the capacity/resources required to deliver the LEVI programme.

How will success be measured?

- 17 The success of the project will be measured through the delivery of EV infrastructure over the LEVI programme, monitoring EV uptake in the region and EV infrastructure utilisation. Success may also be measured through realisation of revenue opportunities to the Local authority from fess or profit share agreements with charge point operators, however this will also be balanced with the need to ensure that reliable networks and good value is delivered to end users in support of the councils broader zero carbon priority.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

18 It is proposed, subject to the approval of this report, that the grant award letter is signed by the Procurement and Commercial Services lead and that the funding is transferred to Leeds City Council from WYCA to support delivery of the LEVI programme as soon as can be expedited. The CEGS project management team will engage with finance to support this work being undertaken.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Grant Offer Letter from WYCA.