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Council

**Soft Market testing**

Rochdale Borough Council – Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Soft market Test



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**1.** **Background to Rochdale borough**

1.1 Rochdale Borough Council is a local authority in Greater Manchester, England. Occupying a central location in the North West and sitting on the M62 growth corridor the borough is advantageously located to link with the Manchester city region as one of the ten authorities that comprise the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). It is a metropolitan district council, one of 36 in the metropolitan counties of England and provides the majority of local government services in Rochdale

1.2 Rochdale is a strategically located borough on the M62 north of Manchester City Centre. The borough has main line rail services and is part of the Greater Manchester Metrolink tram service. The borough spans 61.40 square miles. The borough is named after its largest town Rochdale, but includes outlying towns of Heywood, Middleton and Littleborough.

1.3 The population of Rochdale increased by 5.7%, from around 211,700 in 2011 to around 223,800 in 2021. There are 90,223 households in the borough; 3.0% increase between 2011 & 2021. 22% are occupied by 4 or more people. In 2021, residents from ethnic minority backgrounds make up 26% of the population.18.5% identify as Asian, up from 14.9% in 2011.

1.4 The borough is home to over 7000 business enterprises with good examples of very successful home grown enterprises such as Zen Internet, a multi-award winning internet service provider employing over 400 staff. Rochdale Town Centre has recently benefitted from an unprecedented level of investment, with a £250m regeneration programme almost complete.

1.5 Despite continued growth and success coupled with the transformation of the town’s physical and economic future, Rochdale remains a town of contrast. Rochdale is ranked the 15th most deprived borough in England (out of 326) based on a rank of the average deprivation scores for the local super output areas (LSOAs) in the area from the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019. 20 of the town’s lower super output areas are in the most deprived 10% LSOAs nationally.

1.6 With the national cost of living crisis taking hold after the Covid-19 pandemic poverty and deprivation are expected to increase in the borough effecting in particular vulnerable residents.

**2. Climate Emergency and Electric Vehicle Charging**

2.1 Rochdale Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 with the aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2038. The council published a climate change strategy and action plan in 2022 [Climate Change Strategies | Rochdale Borough Council](https://www.rochdale.gov.uk/downloads/download/371/climate-change-strategies)

2.2 The strategy sets out a target to increase the number of publicly available EV charging devices (all speeds) to at least the Greater Manchester average by 2025 which currently stands at 27 publicly available total devices per 100,000 people at Q4 of 2023.[[1]](#footnote-1) The council has also developed an EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy for Rochdale Borough which is currently in a draft form and is available on request.

2.3 It is estimated that the Rochdale borough requires between 900 and 3000 publically accessible charging points. The lower figure is based on the population of the borough and National Guidance. The higher figure is based upon the estimations of Private Charging point providers. According to ZapMap[[2]](#footnote-2) there are currently 79 publicly available chargers which are a mixture of fast and rapid chargepoints.

2.4 Given Rochdale’s industrial heritage a large proportion of the housing stock is terraced dwellings and some 28,000 have no off street parking available. Those properties without off street parking would be reliant upon publically accessible charging. The lack of off street parking is above the national average and as such the Council would expect the demand for publically accessible parking to be above the national projected requirements also.

2.6 It is increasingly difficult to accurately predict the exact number of Publically Accessible Charging Bays required. At this point our target is 1000 publically accessible charging bays made up of public and privately owned infrastructure. In addition the Council hope to introduce a local charging hub in each township. This target is to be reviewed annually as the true demand for charging becomes apparent along with the preferred method of charge delivery.

2.7 Rochdale Borough Council has also been working with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the Energy Systems Catapult (ESC) to develop a Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) for the borough. The LAEP aims to define the extent of the transformation needed across the borough (including a focus on identifying first steps to progress), and provide a robust evidence base and plan to help engage businesses and citizens in accelerating towards the carbon neutral goal. The LAEP looks at the likely future uptake of electric vehicles and explores the potential for publically accessible EV charge points.

2.8 The LAEP is available to download at [Rochdale Local Area Energy Plan - GM Green City](https://gmgreencity.com/resource_library/rochdale-local-area-energy-plan/)

**3. Scope of Services**

3.1 There is a need to provide on-street EV Charging on the Highway and Charging Hubs within Council Owned Car Parks much of the necessary infrastructure falls upon land in the control of the Capital Projects & Highways Service.

3.2 The Highways Service is working on engaging with OZEV and via TfGM to secure funding to install EV Charging On-Street and within Council owned Car Parks. The Highways department is also working to identify viable locations for local EV charging hubs and suitable locations for on-street EV Charging.

3.3 Rochdale Borough Council is offering a list of locations to form the basis of a concessions contract for a supplier who is willing to install, operate, and maintain Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) at these locations.

3.4 The EVCI supplier will be able to assess feasibility, install, operate, and maintain a network of EVCI in Rochdale without any financial support from the Council or external funding the Council has applied for.

3.5 The type/speed of EVCI may vary on the type of asset or location of the asset put forward by the Council. The Council anticipates that for central locations that serve a large population the infrastructure will be Rapid (50kW) or Ultra Rapid (>100Kw) and in more remote areas where the EVCI is only likely to serve local residents, Fast (7kW-22kW) infrastructure is more suitable.

3.6 In locations that are suitable for grant funding from the government, the Council is willing to work with the supplier to complete the necessary application. Any match funding that is required will be provided by the supplier. The Council would like the option to add extra locations if identified and offer them to the Supplier under the same arrangement over a specified period.

3.7 The Council has the aim of being Carbon Neutral by 2038 and therefore would not want to increase its carbon consumption by installing EVCI. The expectation, where possible, is that the electricity used for the EVCI is from renewable sources and if possible innovative solutions are considered such as solar car ports.

3.8 It is appreciated that EVCI is changing all the time as technology improves and legislation and government policy changes. The successful bidder would be expected to be able to keep pace with change and adapt, as necessary.

3.9 Rochdale Borough Council and Oldham Borough Council are involved in a PFI Community Lighting Partnership (CLP) to deliver street lighting and maintenance services[[3]](#footnote-3). The contract for the renewal and ongoing maintenance of life-expired street lighting has been awarded to E.ON UK .The contract covers some 60,000 pieces of apparatus over the contract period. The council is interested in exploring the opportunity for the utilisation of lampposts for EVCI and would welcome proposals from suppliers.

3.10 The Council also recognises the importance of establishing a public charging network that provides equity for residents of Rochdale no matter where they live. Therefore, the preference is for an easy to access system that maintains a low tariff.

3.11 The Council is providing land to a supplier for a commercial opportunity. Therefore, we would be interested in exploring the option of profit sharing, revenue share, rental income, or ongoing contributions from the Supplier per use of any EVCI on the Public network.

**4. Service Aims & Objectives**

4.1 The aim is to deliver a cost effective, efficient, quality, and reliable service that provides a value-for-money Electric Vehicle Charging Network within the borough.

**5. Budgets**

5.1 There is no budget for this opportunity as stated in the Scope, this is an offer of land for the provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure.

**6. Timetable**

The Council is currently in the process of completing its internal sign off arrangements and will be aiming to issue an opportunity to Market in **July 2024**.

**7. Questionnaire**

7.1 Rochdale Borough Council wish to better understand the market’s position on the above and have compiled some questions for your response/comments.

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| **Procurement** | | |
| 1. | Please indicate whether you are likely to bid for this opportunity and the reasons why?  The Council is seeking to understand whether there would be interest in providing a solution at all of the available locations. |  |
| 2. | Please state any factors that would influence your level of interest in this contract. |  |
| 3. | Which Procurement Procedure do you believe would provide Best Value for the Council in terms of the contract, and why? |  |
| 4. | What in your view are your key considerations for a successful procurement for Rochdale? |  |
| **Risk** | | |
| 5. | The Council is seeking to develop a contract under the principle that project risks should be allocated to the party best able to manage them. Are there any areas where you would consider that risks should remain with the Council? |  |
| 6. | What would you see as the key challenges and risks in delivering the contract? |  |
| **Contract Form** | | |
| 7. | What lease/licence term would you consider would provide best value to the Council? Please briefly outline your reasons. |  |
| **Timetable** | | |
| 8. | What would you consider to be a sufficient period between contract award and contract commencement, to allow for effective mobilisation of your operations? |  |
| **Financial** | | |
| 9. | The Council is interested in receiving some revenue from providing the land for EVCI. Would you offer a revenue stream as part of any proposal?  If so, what would be the terms of such an arrangement i.e., rental income, revenue share, profit share, etc. |  |
| 10. | How would you propose to ensure that tariff prices for residents are both competitive and affordable for residents of the borough? |  |
| 11. | Are there any other opportunities for risk and reward which you believe could benefit the Council in relation to EVCI? |  |
| **Performance** | | |
| 12. | How could the Council ensure that the network’s reliability is high? i.e., limit the time the EVCI is out of operation |  |
| 13. | How would you ensure that the equipment and technical solutions you would propose are fit for purpose and futureproofed? |  |
| **Operation** | | |
| 14. | What, in your opinion, would be the best strategy for enforcement and ensuring that the network is used only by Electric Vehicles that are charging? What in your view is the Council’s role in this? |  |
| **Suppliers event** | | |
| 15. | Following receipt of responses to this RFI, Rochdale Council intends to invite potential suppliers to attend a supplier’s event to set out their proposals in more detail. Would you be prepared to participate in such an event? | Yes/No |

**Project Timescales**

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| --- | --- |
| **Stage of the project** | **Anticipated deadline** |
| Soft market testing | Friday 12 April 2024 (4 weeks) |
| Progress to tender | Monday 1 July 2024 |
| Closing date for suppliers to have submitted documents | Monday 12 August (6 weeks) |
| Result of Procurement Process | Monday 2 September (3 weeks) |
| Contract Start Date | Monday 4 November (2 months) \* Indicative dates only |

**Soft Market Testing**

**THIS IS NOT A CALL FOR COMPETITION**

The Soft Market Test is intended to allow interested organisations with relevant experience to outline their views and provide information with no commitment to themselves or the Council.

The Council is looking to award a contract commencing Monday 4th November 2024\* Indicative date may be subject to change. If a decision is made to tender this service the maximum annual budget is £X (Concession Contract). It is further envisaged that the initial contract would be as indicated above.

This is an indicative timetable and subject to change at the Council's discretion

During the Soft Market Test we would like to gauge the level of interest.

**Stage 1 -** Interested suppliers are required to complete the following company information form and the questionnaire (at section 7.1). Suppliers who complete and return the questionnaire ***may*** be invited to meet with Council representatives to discuss its requirements.

The questionnaire should be returned via The Chest - <https://www.the-chest.org.uk/> by Friday 12 April 2024

If Suppliers have any questions about this soft market test, such questions should be submitted to the Council using the ‘Question and Answer’ facility within the opportunity advertised on The Chest. A copy of the question and a copy of the written reply may be circulated to all Suppliers, with anonymity of the Supplier preserved. Suppliers must not raise questions through any other channels, including emails direct to the Council or to STAR Procurement. No questions will be responded to, other than those raised through The Chest as described above

**We encourage your participation in this soft market testing exercise, but must emphasise that your involvement in this exercise will not carry any commercial advantage in any ensuing procurement process.**

**No information provided in response to this soft market testing exercise will be used in any evaluation of any subsequent response to a procurement exercise.**

1. **General Information**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **3.1** | Full name of your organisation: |  |
| Contact Details Name: |  |
| Job Title: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Telephone no: |  |
| Fax No: |  |
| Mobile No: |  |
| Email Address: |  |
| Web Address (if any): |  |

1. **Undertaking from the supplier**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name:\* |  |
| Signed: | Duly authorised on behalf of the Supplier  (Electronic signature required here) |
| Position: |  |
| Date: |  |

1. [Workbook: Five Year Environment Plan (2019-24) progress (gmtableau.nhs.uk)](https://www.gmtableau.nhs.uk/t/GMCA/views/FiveYearEnvironmentPlan2019-24progress/Transport?%3Aembed=y&%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Map of electric charging points for electric cars UK: Zapmap (zap-map.com)](https://www.zap-map.com/live/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [Lighting Up Oldham and Rochdale : Home (clp.uk.com)](http://clp.uk.com/oandr/Template.aspx?function=Home&menuIndex=0) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)