

# Harborough District Council



## Report to Cabinet Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Title:</b>            | Procurement of Flex D and Rural England Prosperity funded electric vehicle charging infrastructure projects |
| <b>Status:</b>           | Public  |
| <b>Key Decision:</b>     | Yes   |
| <b>Report Author:</b>    | Elaine Bird (Head of Regulatory Services)   |
| <b>Portfolio Holder:</b> | Cllr Darren Woodiwiss (Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change)                                 |
| <b>Appendices:</b>       | Not Applicable  |

### Summary

- i. The report seeks extended Chief Officer delegated authority to be granted to the Director of Communities and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change, to approve contracts related to the delivery of the Flex D project or related contracts for the installation of electric vehicle charge points which have been procured through framework agreements, where the value of the contracts are greater than the Council's Standard Operating Procedure Rules for procurement, unless there is a timely cabinet available to approve them.

### Recommendation

**It is recommended that Cabinet:**

- 1. Delegates authority to the Director of Communities and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change, to approve the award of Flex D and electric vehicle charge point installation related contracts procured through framework agreements, which exceed the value threshold set out in the Council's Standard Operating Procedure Rules unless there is a timely Cabinet meeting available to approve those contracts.**
- 2. Delegates to the Director of Communities and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change and the Head of Legal Services, authority to negotiate and finalise the contracts, including minor variations.**

## Reasons for Recommendation

- i. To minimise delays in the delivery of the Flex D project and the roll out of electric vehicle charge point installations to meet the timeframes of the external funders.

### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval by Cabinet for delegated authority to the Director of Communities and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change to approve Flex D and electric vehicle charge point installation related contracts which have been procured through framework agreements which would exceed the value thresholds set out in the Council's Standard Operating Procedure Rules, unless there is a timely Cabinet meeting available to approve such contracts.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 Harborough District Council has been awarded funding from the Business Rates Pool and the national Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Pilot (LEVI) programme for the delivery of the Flex D project across Leicestershire. The total amount of funding received gives a total project cost of £2.3m. Details of Flex D and progress to date is set out in section 3 of this report.
- 2.2 In addition to the funding for the Flex D project, the council has been awarded £155,000 through the Rural England Prosperity for the installation of rural electric vehicle charge points.
- 2.3 Acceptance of the Flex D was agreed and included in the budget at the meeting of the Council on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

### 3. Detail

- 3.1 The Flex D project was designed to deliver innovative and collaborative approaches to increasing the charging infrastructure in Leicestershire. The council has led on behalf of all seven District and Borough Councils across Leicestershire and Leicestershire County Council have been supportive of the development of Flex D and have been involved with the delivery of the project.
- 3.2 Flex D consists of the following key aspects:
  - 3.2.1 7 charging hubs, one per District/Borough – consists of solar canopy, battery storage and 6 standard dual chargers delivering 12 sockets at 7.5kW per socket;
  - 3.2.2 4 rural EV car clubs – enabling rural mobility and driving uptake of EV's and use of chargers.
  - 3.2.3 21 standard dual chargers in smaller village locations – co-located with the car clubs to enable charging of vehicles, but also to develop the network of charging between hub towns and satellite villages.
  - 3.2.4 Staffing to manage the installations, to develop and deliver a behaviour change campaign including EV roadshow and to develop the car clubs.

- 3.3 Over the past 12 months, locations for each of the district EV charge hubs have been identified in each locality and where necessary planning applications are going to be submitted in the very near future.
- 3.4 In addition consultants have been appointed and have developed the technical specifications and procurement documentation in consultation with the Welland Procurement Unit.
- 3.5 During the year, a soft market testing exercise has been carried out in relation to the charge hubs. Three suppliers responded to the soft market testing with submissions for the total project costs of between £677K to £1.46M depending on the supplier. The grant funding for this element of the Flex D project is £1.41M and whilst one supplier's costs were in excess of this amount, generally the outcome of the soft market testing was in line with the funding available.
- 3.6 In addition, the council has been awarded £155K through the Rural Prosperity Fund to support the roll out of rural Electric vehicle charge points across the district. This funding must be spent by the end of March 2025.
- 3.7. Due to the similar nature of both projects, they will be delivered concurrently and procured through the Oxford City Council Dynamic Purchasing System for the Supply of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure and Associated Services framework agreement.
- 3.8 Due to the value of the contracts, under the Council's Standard Operating Procedure Rules, Cabinet approval would be required to award the contract which if there are not convenient Cabinet meetings scheduled would lead to a delay in the delivery of the project.

## **4 Implications of Decisions**

### **Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 The amendment to the Scheme of Delegation will help reduce delays in awarding essential contracts for the delivery of the Flex D and rural electric vehicle charge point, which will help deliver the following corporate priorities:
  - CO3: The rural nature of the district will be recognised, and our heritage and cultural assets are preserved.
  - CO4: Engagement of our local communities, the voluntary and charitable sector and ensuring they actively manage their own localities and shape their own places.
  - CO5: The district will be shaped through good design, that addresses local needs and promotes healthier life choices.
  - CO11: Our natural environment will be protected and enhanced, with improved access to green open spaces and increased biodiversity.
  - CO14: Green practices, such as energy provision and recycling, will be positively encouraged and usage increased across the district to help meet our net zero targets.
  - CO16: The environmental impacts of growth are mitigated as far as practically possible.

### **Consultation**

- 4.2 As this is an internal council governance matter there is no need for consultation however the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change is supportive of the proposal.

### **Financial**

- 4.3 No additional resources are required.

### **Legal**

- 4.4 Subject to the approval of the recommendations set out in this report procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions set out in the Council's Constitution.

### **Environmental Implications**

- 4.5 The Council has declared a climate emergency. This report addresses climate issues by supporting the delivery of EV charge points in Market Harborough and rural locations and consequently improving the EV charge point network throughout the district and neighbouring local authorities.
- 4.6 The project also includes behaviour change campaigns to encourage the take up of EV vehicles and the development and roll out of the rural car club model with support those communities with poor public transport links.

### **Risk Management**

- 4.7 The temporary amendment to the delegated authority will help minimise delays in the delivery of the Flex D project and the roll out of rural EV charge points through the Rural Prosperity Funding to meet the grant funders timelines.
- 4.8 The use of an approved procurement framework should save significant time and money, while still delivering a service specified to local requirements, and supporting local decision making and accountability.
- 4.9 Using a framework reduces the risk of non-compliance with the Public Contract Regulations (2015) They remove the need to independently undertake a full procurement process, as this has already been done as part of setting up the Framework.

### **Equalities Impact**

- 4.10 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Local Plan will be prepared and updated at key stages of the Local Plan making process. In addition, an EIA will be prepared for each public consultation stage.

### **Data Protection**

- 4.11 Not applicable for this report

## **5 Alternative Options Considered**

- 5.1 Option 1: Not to amend the current Scheme of Delegation to award contracts outside of the council's Standard Operating Procedure Rules and for each contract in excess of £50,000 to be considered by Council for approval.

This option is not recommended because the time this would take would delay the delivery of the Flex D project and roll out of the rural EV charge points.

## **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. **Delegates authority to the Director of Communities and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change, to approve the awarding of Flex D and electric vehicle charge point installation related contracts procured through framework agreements, which exceed the value threshold set out**

in the Council's Standard Operating Procedure Rules unless there is a timely Cabinet meeting available to approve those contracts.

2. Delegates to the Director of Communities and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change and the Head of Legal Services, authority to negotiate and finalise the contracts, including minor variations.

## 7. Background papers

- 7.1 Report to the Council meeting 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023 incorporating the [Flex D funding into the Capital Programme](#).
- 7.2 Report to Cabinet meeting 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 – [Governance Arrangements for Allocation of UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funding](#)