

# **Soft Market Test for EV Infrastructure Project**

# **Section 1: Introduction**

## **1.** **General Requirements**

* 1. The purpose of this document is to briefly explain to suppliers the business and technical requirements and the expected scope of the Property Asset Management System in order that suppliers can explain the relevance of products, services, and their experience to the requirements.

1.2. Please note: this market testing exercise is not an invitation to tender or a request for formal expressions of interest. This document does not form any part of an invitation to tender. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is issuing this request for information only. Any supplier invited to present to WNC is doing so to support market research only and to help make any potential procurement process more focused and efficient. No supplier selection or supplier preference is implied.

## **2.** **Confidentiality and Freedom of Information (FOI)**

* 1. **Please note:** all information included in this Soft Market Test is confidential and only for the recipients’ knowledge. No information included in this document or in discussions connected to it may be disclosed to any other party without prior written authorisation.

2.2 All responses will be treated confidentially. However, please be aware that we are subject to the disclosure requirements of the FOI Act and that potentially any i information we hold is liable to disclosure under that Act. For this reason, we strongly advise that any information you consider to be confidential is labelled as such. In the event that a request is subsequently made for disclosure under FOI the request will be dealt with in accordance with the legislation.

## **4.** **Soft Market Test Timetable**

4.1. Please read this document and if you feel that your organisation is able to contribute to this exercise, please complete the questionnaire at the end of this document and return, via email to evinfrastructure@westnorthants.gov.uk by 10th October at 23:59. Any questions please also direct them to the above named.

4.2. Following receipt of the questionnaires, a minimum of 3 respondents will be invited to attend separate workshop sessions to present and discuss their responses, this will be based purely around the responses below and will provide no advantage on the decision process going forward.

4.3. A decision will then be made internally following governed approval on the best procurement approach on whether we use a national Framework or via a full tender process.

4.4. Potential responders will not be prejudiced in any future procurement processes by either responding or not responding to this soft market test exercise.

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| Overview & Questionnaire |  |
| West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has set itself challenging targets to reduce its own climate impacts to net zero by 2030, to support the achievement of net zero across West Northamptonshire by 2045. Sustainable mobility will play a key role in achieving this target. The Council has already submitted a bid for the LEVI capital funding Tranche 2. The secured funding c. £2.8m will be solely used to provide charging solutions for residents without off-street parking. The forecasted average number of chargers, based on the average cost of installation and the total funds available, is 1,450 (903 lamppost chargers [3.5-5 kW], 517 pedestal chargers [7 kW], 23 fast chargers [7-22 kW], 4 rapid chargers [50 kW], and 3 ultra-rapid chargers [50-150 kW]) as a minimum, and these installations will need to meet the LEVI funding requirement i.e. serve communities with no access to off street parking. A list of sites has been identified (Group 1), and the EVI team is currently checking the capacity availability at these sites. However, the Council is open to include additional sites (Group 2) under the concession contract to be procured and where the funding received should be a separate allocation than that for the LEVI scheme. Therefore, WNC is inviting Charge Point Operators (CPOs) to participate in this Market Engagement Questionnaire. We anticipate starting the procurement in December 2024 subject to receiving all approvals from OZEV and Council’s leadership. We are kindly encouraging the CPOs to respond to the maximum number of questions. Responses should be sent to evinfrastructure@westnorthants.gov.uk by 10/10/2024 at 23:59. |

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| **SECTION A: SUPPLIER DETAILS** |
| Supplier Name: |  |
| Company Registration Number: |  |
| Website: |  |
| **Supplier Contact Details** in relation to this questionnaire. |
| Contact Name and Position: |  |
| Contact Email Address:  |  |
| Contact Telephone Number: |  |

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| 1. **On October 28th, 2024, we will be following the new procurement act, known as PA23. This will mean we have two options to procure this requirement as this will be above threshold:**

**a) Open** **b) Competitive Flexible.****WNC’s new preferred option would be a Competitive Flexible procedure as this allows us to introduce dialogue sessions into our tender, along with early sight of tender documents before final bids.****The caveat to this will be shortlisting at the outset, please can the market provide any**  **reason as to why this would discourage you from bidding against an open procedure or whether you feel this is a positive step forward.** |
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| 1. **What is an adequate time frame for you as a Chargepoint Operator to review our procurement documents and prepare your bid response?**
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| 1. **a) We will welcome Consortium bids from operators; What actions can we take in designing our procurement to support consortium bids?**
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| **b) Are you confident in managing the charge point network across different geographies and technologies, and if applicable, what and how is your most favourable way to share a large number of sites with different charging technologies with another operator/s?** |
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| 1. **If a shared approach is not favoured, please explain your rationale for this.**
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| 1. **a) How will you ensure transparency in the cost of charging to the end user?**

***Please consider those who are and those who are not paying for a monthly subscription to a mobile charging application, any transaction fee costs and overstaying fees.*** |
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| 1. **Typically, what are your transaction fees associated with charging sessions and your overstay fees?**
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| 1. **Will you consider returning a percentage of these fees to WNC as part of the LEVI project?**
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| 1. **Will you be open to purchasing electricity from the Council’s owned PV farms using a PPA?**
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| 1. **WNC are investigating the plausibility of introducing a ‘Green Tariff’, for certain residents who will have on-street EV chargers outside their terraced houses and flats for example. Do you have the capability and willingness to support such residents with a subsidised tariff? (Compared to the existing public rates). If so, please outline your approach to introducing such a tariff and additionally do you require any assistance from the council to support these measures.**
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| 1. **Can you integrate parking charges into your tariff? Please provide case studies or examples of where you have done this. Please provide further details if this is an area you are looking to integrate in the future.**
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| 1. **Where and how do customers receive receipts for their charging sessions, and is this service automated and available immediately upon completion of a session? Additionally, in what formats are receipts provided (e.g., email, mobile app, SMS), and can customers access or request past receipts through your system?**
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| 1. **With cable theft becoming an increasing issue across the UK with DC chargers, how will you mitigate against this risk to ensure all rapid chargers remain functional across the contract period?**
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| 1. **Outline and explain what deterrents you have in place to prevent the ‘ICING’ of EV bays, and do you require any assistance from the council to support these measures?**
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| 1. **We understand there are many varying functionalities and differences regarding the back-office software to manage the chargers and report on the utilisation of chargers. Please provide an overview of your functionality with a focus on: *The issuing of charging reports (frequency and format), any live dashboard visibility, and any other special or unique functionality***
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| 1. **For our LEVI project (delivering a large number of on-street chargers with fewer rapid chargers), what is your process for finalising sites with local authorities, DNO, highways teams and their permitting processes?**
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| 1. **As part of our approach for the LEVI project, our first choice is to install slow chargers on lamp posts. If this is not viable, we will feed chargers from available capacity at each lamp post. We also plan to conduct a survey to evaluate the structural integrity of the lamp posts, including weight-bearing capacity, wiring, and earthing.**

***Could you provide your approach for the streetlight survey and recommend any additional measures for streetlight chargers? Also, is there any further support needed from the council?*** |
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| 1. **a) Please outline your approach to conducting site surveys.**

**Explain how you ensure accessibility requirements are met and on-street charging challenges are overcome.** |
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|  **b) If required, would you consider adapting your survey approach to accommodate additional council criteria?** **Please confirm how would you ensure this is implemented.** |
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| 1. **Regarding our DNO, the National Grid, please explain how you envisage interacting and engaging with them and the roles and responsibilities split between each party – the CPO, the council’s EVI team and the DNO.**
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| 1. **Do you have experience submitting Section 50 applications to support electric vehicle infrastructure? If so, please provide examples of previous experience, lessons learnt and ‘best practice’ to adopt.**
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| 1. **Are you able to provide financial revenue modelling and forecast future utilisation of charge points across the West Northamptonshire region. If possible, please include examples of how you would calculate the projections for both on-street and car park locations.**

***Please feel free to upload additional document/s to support your answer*** |
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| 1. **As it has been stated in the intro, the concession contract will include the chargers we have committed to install in the LEVI Capital application (Group 1) and any additional chargers the CPO is interested in installing (Group 2). The LEVI capital allocation of £2.8m will be used as the Council’s contribution towards the cost of installing the chargers under Group 1.**

**a) Can you give an estimation of your contribution towards the costs of rolling out chargers under Group 1?** |
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| 1. **Will the cost for rolling out chargers under Group 2 be covered by the CPO?**
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| 1. **a) What is the revenue share model you anticipate for this contract, and do you have an estimation for the yearly value?**
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| **b) An avenue we are considering is grouping the revenue into years 1-5, 6-10 and 11-15 of the contract. If you would consider this approach, please state if this approach needs to be improved and the p/kWh you will revenue share in years 1-5, 6-10 and 11-15 of the contract.** **If you would advise against this approach, please explain why.** |
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| 1. **One of our key objectives from WNEVIS is to support economic growth across the region.**

**How do you intend to support us in achieving this goal?****Specifically, please describe how your approach will:****a) Create job opportunities locally** |
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| **b) Support local businesses and communities, to add, we would also like to know if you will support installers locally.** |
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| **c) Integrate with broader regional economic strategies.** |
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| 1. **a) Please provide examples of 3 previous charging projects you have completed, highlighting the obstacles you faced along the way and how you overcame these challenges. Ideally, at least 2 of these projects should be within the public sector and include On-street charging infrastructure.**
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| 1. **Please provide references and contact details of the clients for each of these charging projects. *WNC may wish to contact these individuals to further understand your role in the project and confirm details.***
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Please remember we are only looking for an overview prior to coming out to full procurement in late 2024.