

DATE: 3 February 2020

SUBJECT: Award of contract to install, operate and maintain electric vehicle charging points for the taxi trade.

REPORT OF: Managing Director, Transport North East.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the award of a contract to install, operate and maintain electric vehicle charging points for the taxi trade.

The region was awarded funding through the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) Taxi Fund to install electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure specific to the taxi trade in order to encourage the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles.

An open procurement process has been carried out via the NEPO portal and Contract Finder on the gov.uk website on behalf of NECA for the Joint Transport Committee to procure an operator who will install, operate and maintain electric vehicle charging points specifically for the taxi trade and thereby deliver the Office for Low Emission Vehicles' (OLEV) Taxi project.

Three submissions were received, and following the evaluation stage Swarco has been identified as submitting the most economically advantageous tender.

The tender price falls within the available budget of £500,000 and enables the full specification to be delivered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Head of Paid Service (Transport) is recommended to appoint Swarco to design, operate and maintain electric vehicle charging points within the region, in accordance with the specification included in the procurement process and on the basis of the terms and conditions set out within the tender documentation. The value of the contract is £496,882.05

1. Background

- 1.1 The Ultra-Low Emission Taxi Infrastructure Scheme funding opportunity was issued by OLEV in July 2018 and set out a £6 million scheme aimed at providing funding for Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) infrastructure dedicated to ULEV taxis and private hire vehicles. Although this is a purely capital fund aimed at providing funding for infrastructure, OLEV are looking for bids which include local measures which are either in place or planned to drive the transition to ULEV taxis including regulatory measures and local incentives.
- 1.2 OLEV offered several authorities the opportunity for the Energy Savings Trust (EST) to work with them in order to provide support with data analysis and stakeholder engagement as well as reviewing the final application. To receive this support, interested authorities had to submit an expression of interest. The Regional Transport Team (RTT) on behalf of the North East submitted an EOI and on 14th September we were informed that the North East had been successful in receiving full support to submit a funding bid.
- 1.3 The scheme aims to:
 - increase the uptake of ultra-low emission Hackney carriages and private hire taxis;
 - improve air quality in urban areas;
 - encourage investment and support jobs in the UK automotive industry; and
 - influence the uptake of ULEVs
- 1.4 The regional bid comprised a £673,000 capital infrastructure investment focusing on delivering electric vehicle charging units in strategic locations across the region. Furthermore, this infrastructure will be backed up by a series of focused campaigns and advice aimed at the taxi trade to encourage the transition to ULEV taxis.
- 1.5 Following discussions with the Office for Low Emission Vehicles, an extension until the 18th December 2018 was granted due to changes in the region's governance arrangements and to enable the bid to be presented to and endorsed by all seven local authorities.
- 1.6 The region was successful in its bid and awarded £504,750 by OLEV. A full procurement process was then carried out in order to procure an operator who will design, install, operate and maintain these newly installed EV charging points in the region for a period of five years. The charging points will be the property of the relevant local authority, and at the end of the five year period the management function will also transfer to allow for management in-house or transfer to a new maintenance provider.
- 1.7 The specification was published through the NEPO portal and three submissions were received. They have been evaluated in accordance with the procurement framework. The tender price of the recommended provider falls within the available budget of £500,000 and offers excellent value for money as it enables the full specification to be

delivered. Match funding from the provider is a requirement of the contract and applied to all bids.

2. Proposals .

To appoint Swarco to design, operate and maintain electric vehicle charging points within the region. The value of the contract is £496,882.05

3. Reasons for the Proposals .

The proposal represents an effective application of the grant funding available through OLEV, and enables the efficient and timely delivery of a scheme promoting the transition to electric vehicles of an important sector of transport provision in the North East.

4. Alternative Options Available

To not award or to delay the contract is likely to entail the loss of this grant funding and would cause the region to lose this valuable opportunity to help promote a major strategic transport priority.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

Swarco will be notified of our intention to award the contract and enter into the agreement. A contract will then be prepared and sent to them for execution. It is anticipated the infrastructure will be installed by summer 2020, subject to planning approvals and electrical connections.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

The delivery of new EV infrastructure within the North East will assist in delivering its key objective to move to a low carbon economy and to reduce transport-based carbon emissions

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

There are no known financial implications for the region as there is no public-sector match funding proposed.

8. Legal Implications

The contract will be consistent with the draft terms and conditions as set out in the tender documentation. The infrastructure will be open to all of the taxi market private hire and hackney carriage).

9. Key Risks

If ULEV infrastructure is not implemented through this funding opportunity, then there is a risk then each local authority would need to deliver this infrastructure through their internal resources to meet the increasing number of taxi vehicles becoming ULEVs.

10. Equality and Diversity

There are no specific equalities and diversity implications arising from this report.

11. Crime and Disorder

There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

12. Consultation/ Engagement

Work on this funding bid has involved engagement with all local authority officers plus Heads of Transport and licencing teams.

13. Other Impacts of the Proposals

No specific other impacts.

14. Appendices

n/a.

15. Background Papers

<https://northeastca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/North-East-Joint-Transport-Committee-18-December-2018-Agenda-Pack.pdf>

<https://northeastca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Agenda-Pack-JTC-19.11.19.pdf>

16. Contact Officer(s)

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17. Sign Off

- Head of Paid Service: ✓
- Monitoring Officer: ✓
- Chief Finance Officer:

18. Glossary

'OLEV'	–	Office for Low Emission Vehicles
'ULEV'	–	Ultra Low Emission Vehicles
'EST'	–	Energy Savings Trust
'EV'	--	Electric Vehicle