

Appendix 3

A joined-up, collaborative approach to EVI Deployment: Transition of Oxford City Council's Go Ultra Low On-street Project and Estate to Oxfordshire County Council

Existing On-street and Go-Ultra Low On-street Transition

The City Council was awarded Go Ultra Low Oxford (GULO) funding in 2015 to deliver on-street EV Charging Point (EVCP) sockets across two project phases. The City and County Councils entered a partnership agreement in 2017 to enable the delivery of these EVCP. This provided the City Council the rights to deliver on street, in partnership with the County EV and Highways Teams.

To date 49 On-street EVCP have been delivered, maintained and upgraded under GULO P1. GULO board approval on 12/03/23 confirmed that GULO P2 will fund a further @142 On-street EVCP in areas, servicing a minimum of 1600 users, where there is need and/or projected demand. This includes 100 units on street, 30 GUL-e units and 12 units in Car Parks.

GULO phase 2 was paused by the GULO board on 28/02/21 to enable the delivery of the GUL-e pilot project, and improve city EV BAU (Business As Usual) readiness, setting up an EVI procurement system, the Oxford EVI contract management facility and ensuring that there was a strategically integrated approach to ongoing EVI deployment for the City, including on the highway, which resulted in the Oxford EVI Strategy (OxEVIS).

Resuming GULO P2 was planned for early 2022, then delayed by one year due to the small-scale nature of the proposed EVI estate, which meant that the remaining funding would be insufficient to achieve the number and quality of provision committed for under GULO P2. The City Council Project Manager for GULO was also heavily involved in developing the initially unsuccessful Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) Pilot grant application.

The Government announced the LEVI funding in February 2023, with a new restricted allocation to Tier 1 authorities only (unitary, county council or combined authorities) in England, on behalf of their constituent authorities. to support local authorities in England to plan and deliver charge point infrastructure for residents without off-street parking.

Under LEVI, Oxfordshire has been provided with an allocation of £3.655M Capital and £529k revenue funding for delivery of EV Infrastructure, with the funds held by Oxfordshire County Council, subject to approval of the County Council's application with a detailed proposal.

County and City Council officers sought ways to incorporate GULO into LEVI, to maximise the GULO grant funding and ensure residents using GULO EVPCs are not disadvantaged over residents using LEVI EVCPs. In addition, officers concluded that incorporating GULO into LEVI would improve scale overall, benefitting not just Oxford, but all Oxfordshire districts.

Initially Oxford City Council was going to remain the contract owner, as per GULO P1, but with agreed third party rights on the on-street estate for County, and a managed transition aiming to novate contracts to County Highways, once resource and facilities were in place. More recently, following further review between officers at both councils and the fact that on-street deployment under LEVI will have to expand beyond city boundaries, Oxfordshire County Council as the Highway authority and LEVI funding recipient and accountable body to government has decided to take strategic control of all EVI deployment across the Oxfordshire Highway. In this context it makes greater sense that the GULO P2 element be procured from the onset under LEVI, with the County Council as the Contract lead.

This will involve combining GULO P2 and re-contracting of the existing GULO P1 estate into the LEVI procurement and subsequent contracting and will mean a further delay in GULO P2 delivery into 2024. However, this inclusion will allow drawing in more investment through LEVI and delivering better outcomes for residents; i.e., providing a joined-up approach across Oxfordshire for residents, visitors and commuters moving across district boundaries. Working drivers, in particular, will benefit from a consistent, reliable charging estate across the region.

In addition to the GULO grant, the City Council has invested both its own capital and revenue into delivery, upgrade and maintenance of the existing on-street estate and initiation of GULO P2. Transitioning the estate and remaining GULO grant to the County Council will also transition the future revenue income upon which the original up-front investment from the City Council was predicated.

Return of investment (ROI) on the GULO P1 estate has not yet been achieved and costs currently outweigh income. The existing partnership agreement includes a 50:50 income share arrangement on concession contracts. As such the revenue from the estate associated with GULO will continue to include a revenue share agreement to allow for cost recovery.

Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council are committed to collaborate to ensure a smooth transition from the current arrangement to Highways control in a manner that ensure comparable outcomes for Oxford residents to those committed to under OEVIS (Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle and Infrastructure Strategy), GULO and OxEVIS.

The LEVI project deadlines are November and there are some challenging timelines to prepare the documentation required to go to tender. To enable a successful transition of the GULO project and approval by the joint GULO Board, more time is needed to fully work through the detail.

The County Council will need time to review the funding obligations that they will take on. The appropriate legal requirements will then need to be put in place and agreed with the funder Office of Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV).

Therefore, Oxford City and County Councils have jointly agreed to seek mirror delegations to transition the On-street element of the GULO project.

As such we recommend that Cabinet resolves to:

Agree the On-street elements of the Go Ultra Low Oxford project (GULO) transition from Oxford City Council delivery to Oxford County Council delivery, subject to the following conditions being fulfilled:

- a) The County Council are satisfied that they can meet the funding obligations within the GULO funding agreement;
- b) The funding body for GULO agrees (Office for Zero Emission Vehicles/OZEV) for the transfer to take place;
- c) There is an agreement by both Councils on the methodology for delivery of the key outputs of GULO Phase 2, including the number of electric vehicle charging points

and cable channels (GUL-e) committed under GULO are delivered to updated timeframes that are agreed with Oxford City Council and the funding body;

- d) The existing GULO estate and highways related GULO Phase 2 funding are both transferred; and
- e) An updated partnership agreement, including a revenue share arrangement for the assets associated with GULO is put in place that recovers the City Council investment to date.

Note: In the unlikely case that the above conditions are not fulfilled, and the matter cannot be resolved at officer level, then the GULO partnership agreement conflict resolution procedure will be followed.

Joined-up, Collaborative Approach to EVI Deployment

In support of the joined-up and collaborative approach to EVI deployment across the City and Oxfordshire, the following other outcomes between City and County EV & Highways Teams have already been jointly agreed at officer level, pending cabinet approval:

1. LEVI funding will support meeting 2025 EVCP OEVIS targets & NEVIS projections. The GULO2 funding will remain 'ring-fenced' for Oxford (as required under the funding) and ensure the City OxEVIS targets are delivered.
2. Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) deployment on highways land will be subject to county strategic oversight under OEVIS. City will oversee inclusion of City Land Assets.
 - a. County will work with City to meet OxEVIS numbers.
 - b. New LEVI EVCP on highways land will be managed by County from the outset.
 - c. Workshops for transition arrangements to County Highways management and roles and responsibilities under OxEVIS implementation plan to be held.
3. County EV Infrastructure Strategy (OEVIS) is planned to be updated 2024 – City OxEVIS commitments & implementation plan will be assessed as part of this work with a view to ensure equivalent or improved outcomes for the City.
4. LEVI grant will be used for EVCP in areas that are strategically important but which the business case does not yet support. Typically:
 - Areas of deprivation/lower socio-economic output and rural areas
 - Areas with residents without access to off-street charging

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