

**energy
saving
trust**

**Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
(LEVI) Pilot**

**Local Authority Introductory Webinar:
5th April 2022 (10.00–12.00)**

Chat Function Q&A Responses



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Introduction

This document provides written responses to the questions asked by attendees of the 5 April 2022 LEVI Pilot introductory webinar, held for local authorities. Questions were originally posted in the live chat function. Similar questions have been grouped and categorised below according to theme. The webinar recording is available to access via:

<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/grants-and-loans/local-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-scheme/?loc=scotland>.

General

How complete do Pilot applications need to be?

Local authorities should complete all sections of the Pilot application form as comprehensively as possible to provide the best chance of success. However, alongside the weighted assessment criteria, the evaluation will acknowledge that some applications may have differing levels of detail depending on the individual proposal – for example depending on complexity, innovative technologies or specific commercial arrangements.

What are the chances of receiving LEVI Pilot funding? Why should I apply, and will unsuccessful applicants get another chance?

The £10m LEVI Pilot is only the starting point for a Government offering to support local authorities with over £400m of capital and £50m resource funding towards EV infrastructure rollout. Through the Pilot, we expect to fund 3-8 large-scale projects. LAs are encouraged to submit applications for Pilot funding, regardless of their level of experience with EV charging projects, or if proposals are speculative in nature. OZEV's external Support Body will provide expert technical, commercial and strategic guidance at each stage of the application process, providing value to all LAs irrespective of the initial LEVI Pilot application outcome.

Is there a preference for consortium bids (e.g. Combined Authorities) compared to individual LAs? Is either approach more likely to be awarded funding?

While all levels of local authority are eligible to submit applications, the LEVI Pilot encourages large-scale proposals (for example, seeking £1m+ of public subsidy). As a result, applications from groups of local authorities or Combined Authorities may naturally facilitate larger and more ambitious proposals which will be assessed favourably in the evaluation process.

Could increased private investment reduce the ability of LAs to keep costs low for their residents, reduce control over chargepoint operation, and increase risks?

LEVI Pilot funding is intended to help leverage private investment, enabling chargepoint projects to be commercially viable and provide residents with good local charging facilities. Chargepoint operators (CPOs) and third-party investors are encouraged to partner with local authority applicants, agreeing mutually beneficial commercial terms, operation arrangements, and risk sharing. Support and guidance are available to LAs via OZEV's external Support Body, led by the Energy Saving Trust.

What do the minimum contactless payment rules mean for Pilot applications?

As we work to make EV charging as accessible as possible, legislation requiring all new chargepoints above 7.1kW to have a non-proprietary, non-phone payment method (such as contactless) will be laid in Parliament later in 2022. This requirement will become effective for all new chargepoints two to three months after the legislation is laid, irrespective of whether chargepoints receive support through Government funding schemes.

To drive consumer confidence in EV charging and ahead of these new regulations, all applications to the LEVI Pilot (including those below 7.1kW) must have a minimum payment method enabled, such as contactless, which does not require the use of a phone or proprietary technology to receive funding.

Pilot timeline

Will the assessment of applications start before the deadline of 17th June?

OZEV's external Support Body will work with local authorities on their application development throughout April, May and early June. Full evaluation of applications will only commence following the closure of the Pilot window at 11:55pm on 17th June 2022, once all applications have been received.

When will successful grants be awarded?

Initial funding disbursement is anticipated from Summer 2022. Further details on funding disbursement timings will follow confirmation of a successful application outcome.

Will feedback be given to unsuccessful applicants?

Yes. Unsuccessful applicants will receive feedback from OZEV's external Support Body.

When do successful grant awards need to be spent? What are the project delivery and installation timescales?

There is no fixed deadline for installation or expenditure, however Pilot proposals should aim to have initiated delivery and installation by the end of this financial year (March 2023). This will be dependent on the type and complexity of individual proposals. As part of the evaluation process, OZEV and the external Support Body will consider the delivery timescales of each application.

Pilot projects and eligibility

Will LAs who have already received ORCS or Innovate UK funding be eligible for LEVI Pilot funding?

Yes. All LAs are invited to apply for LEVI Funding, regardless of any previous applications to existing public funding schemes, such as the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) or from Innovate UK. However, LAs should not submit applications across multiple public funding schemes for the same charging project.

Can LAs apply that do not already have a scheme under development?

Yes – all LAs can apply for LEVI Pilot funding prior to 17th June. Projects that have already been considered or planned prior to the Pilot will be at a more advanced stage of development and may find it easier to complete the Pilot application form. For LAs with less mature proposals, there may naturally be challenges in planning a new EV infrastructure project from inception within the Pilot timescales, however LAs are encouraged to use the support available to all applicants via OZEV's external Support Body.

Is it necessary to have an EV Charging Strategy? And will existing levels of EV charging infrastructure affect likelihood of funding?

It is not a LEVI Pilot prerequisite to have a comprehensive, fully formed or published EV charging strategy. However, LAs need be able to demonstrate in their application a clear long-term vision or plan for charging infrastructure rollout in their area – including how their Pilot proposal will contribute towards this. The strength of this alignment will be evaluated as part of the 'Strategic Fit' element of the Pilot assessment criteria. Existing levels of EV infrastructure will be relevant to this section, and may also help evidence LAs' approach and success with previous charging projects, however will not be assessed independently nor solely affect the likelihood of funding.

Is prior CPO partnership necessary, or can procurement still be outstanding?

Partnership with a Chargepoint Operator (CPO) is recommended as early as possible so LAs can submit a well-developed and detailed Pilot application. However, there may be instances where CPO procurement remains outstanding, for example depending on innovative business models or commercial arrangements. One example could be a proposal where an LA intends to present specific commercial terms to the CPO market via an open competition, testing the level the private sector is willing to invest and how much public subsidy is required to make the project commercially viable. Any LAs which have not partnered with a CPO at the point of the application deadline (17th June) should clearly outline their upcoming plans for procurement within their proposal.

What costs are eligible?

Eligible costs for LEVI Pilot funding include: the purchase cost of the charging unit, installation hardware costs, electrical connection costs (including distribution network operator 'DNO' costs), installation civil engineering and labour costs, and capital costs relating to traffic regulation orders (TROs), where applicable. Further detail is provided on the Pilot webpage: [<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-local-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-levi-pilot-funding>].

What business models and commercial arrangements are eligible?

The LEVI Pilot is not prescriptive in the types of business models it permits. LAs are invited to submit innovative commercial arrangements with CPOs and third parties, or innovative procurement arrangements that test the market. In addition to models such as concessions or leases, commercial innovation could include franchising, joint ventures, community-led funding or community charging. Demonstrating commercial innovation is not a prerequisite for funding, however it is likely that the £10m Pilot will seek to fund a diverse array of commercial proposals.

What kind of technical innovation is expected?

The LEVI Pilot is open to all novel and innovative technical solutions for charging infrastructure, providing they have a minimum payment method enabled, such as contactless, which does not require the use of a phone or proprietary technology. Some examples of innovative solutions could include projects with solar canopies, battery energy storage, vehicle-to-grid or 'channel' type solutions. While 'Innovation' is a key Pilot assessment criterion, applications will not be judged on this alone.

Are ultra-rapid chargers eligible?

Yes, ultra-rapid chargers are eligible as part of a wider project proposal also including some form of on-street slow chargers. Rapid-only projects are ineligible for LEVI Pilot funding.

Is match funding required (e.g. a minimum level)?

No. The LEVI Pilot differs from the existing On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) as it does not specify a minimum or maximum level of public subsidy (from FY2022/23, the ORCS offers a maximum of 60% towards a project's capital costs). Pilot funding will only be provided to 'top-up' private investment to make the project commercially viable. As such, levels of public subsidy required will differ according to location, predicted utilisation, commercial model or technology. As part of the Pilot application form, LAs must outline the level, or anticipated level, of public funding sought and must justify why this cannot be covered by private investment.

Working with DNOs

Has LEVI engaged with DNOs to mitigate problems like lack of electrical infrastructure capacity in some areas (e.g. rural) and high costs?

OZEV regularly engage with distribution network operators (DNOs) and colleagues from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) on a range of grid capacity and network issues.

How can LAs best engage with DNOs?

LAs should engage with relevant DNOs as early as possible, initiating discussion around EV infrastructure proposals in their area. It is for individual LAs to lead their own DNO engagement, however OZEV's external Support Body are available to advise on how and when to engage, especially if LAs are facing specific barriers relating to DNOs.

Are DNO costs eligible for Pilot funding?

Yes.

Full LEVI fund

When will the full LEVI Fund open?

Following the Pilot, further funding will be available through the LEVI Fund later in FY2022/23.

What is the total value of available funds (e.g. 'EV Infrastructure Strategy' states £500m)?

The LEVI Fund is part of a wider package of funding to support charging rollout up to FY24/25, announced as part of the Government's 'EV Infrastructure Strategy' in March 2022. The LEVI Fund comprises £400m of capital funding and £50m of resource funding. This is in addition to further funding administered through the existing UK-wide On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS). The government has announced that ORCS will continue to run for FY22/23, offering £20m of funding to support LAs.

How will the £50m of LEVI resource be administered?

OZEV will confirm the disbursement method for the £50m of resource funding later in FY22/23. It is intended to complement the £400m of capital funding. The £50m multi-year resource fund will help LAs in England plan for and support the delivery of local EV charging infrastructure in their areas. This will support a lasting legacy of capacity and effectiveness, ensuring local charging needs are met in the context of the phase out of new petrol and diesel vehicles.

Deadline for project delivery and installation for the full LEVI Fund?

OZEV will confirm details around delivery and installation requirements for the full LEVI Fund later in FY2022/23.

What is the difference between the Pilot and the full LEVI Fund (will it mirror the Pilot, and will it also be seeking large-scale projects)?

The full £450m LEVI Fund will share the same core objectives as the Pilot, seeking to support LAs in accelerating the rollout and commercialisation of local public EV infrastructure. The £10m Pilot will trial the scope, criteria and delivery approach of the LEVI Fund, allowing OZEV to learn and iterate ahead of the full Fund's launch. The Pilot will also provide valuable data and insights, helping gather information on the EV infrastructure market and commercial trends.