
Title: Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Support Scheme

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1** The Scottish Government launched the Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Support scheme (LCVPS) in June 2010 as a means of encouraging the development and use of low carbon vehicle technology to help meet targets set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. As part of this promotion Transport Scotland has recently offered Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership a grant of up to £85,000 to provide subsidy for the purchase of Low Carbon Vehicles and their associated charging/refuelling infrastructure during the current financial year 2010-11.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership agrees to the terms and conditions contained within the offer letter and formally accepts the grant offer.

Each partner organisation should notify the Community Planning Manager by Friday 11th February of any proposed vehicle procurement to be considered using the scheme which will allow funds to be distributed accordingly.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1** A similar scheme, the Low Carbon Vehicle Public Procurement programme (LCVPP) has already been successfully implemented in England which resulted in around 200 low carbon vehicles being introduced to public sector organisations.

The LCVPS scheme provides public bodies with an opportunity to introduce and evaluate low carbon vehicles in a wide range of operating environments and to provide feedback to the Scottish Government on their use and suitability.

The Scheme does not allow for the retro fitting of vehicles and new vehicle orders must be made by 31st March 2011.

- 3.2** The grant is to be used to bridge the gap between the costs of an internal combustion engine vehicle and a low carbon alternative. The scheme is open to cars, vans and minibuses which must be powered either by electricity, biomethane, biodiesel, bioethanol, hydrogen or be a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle. The scheme does not include the procurement of petrol or diesel vehicles or hybrid engine passenger cars.

Feedback from other local authorities in Scotland has indicated that electric vehicles can be unreliable, expensive and don't have satisfactory ranges (less than 90 miles), making them more suited to urban environments.

Ashwoods, one of the main suppliers of hybrid commercial vehicles has quoted the price difference of a standard diesel van and a hybrid vehicle to be approximately £12,000. Argyll and Bute Council, along with a number of other Scottish local authorities, has successfully trialled this vehicle and is keen to replace the Council Officer's vehicle with a similar, smaller model. Further information on Ashwoods vehicles can be found on the website, www.ashwoods.org

- 3.3** Hybrid vehicles drive like standard diesel and petrol vehicles and have been proven to exceed the range of standard variants by 15 to 25% as well as reducing CO2 emissions by similar amounts. Plug-in charging is not required as the vehicle charges on-the-road through regenerative braking and, in the event of a system fault, the vehicle will revert to standard diesel giving no downtime.
- 3.4** Vehicles purchased can be badged accordingly to let the public and employees know that the vehicle is low carbon and that the organisation is making a positive contribution to reduce emissions.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1** The Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Support Scheme is designed to accelerate the introduction of low carbon technologies onto the UK vehicle market by using the public sector as an exemplar model. Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership can use this scheme to introduce low carbon vehicles at no additional expense to conventionally powered vehicles and be seen to be taking a leading role in reducing road transport carbon emissions.

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