

**OFFICER DELEGATION SCHEME
RECORD OF DECISION**

Date: November 2023	Ref No: 989
Responsible Officer: Jamie Rossi-Stephenson	
Title/Subject matter: Car Club Expansion and Procurement 2023	
Budget/Strategy/Policy/Compliance:	
(i) Is the decision within an Approved Budget?	Y
(ii) Is the decision in conflict with the council's policies, strategies, or relevant service plans?	N
(iii) Does the decision amend existing or raise new policy issues?	N/A
Is publication still required? (see guidance)	Y

Introduction

The way people travel in and around Bury is contributing significantly to the borough's carbon emissions and needs to change if we are going to achieve our target of being carbon neutral by 2038.

One way to reduce carbon emissions from transport is to introduce car clubs. Car clubs are a form of shared transport and encourage people to; reduce the number of vehicles they own, generally drive less, increase their active travel and public transport use, as well as ensuring they are using a less polluting vehicle when they do drive.

There are two car club sites operating in Bury at the moment at the Market Car Park and Fairfax Road Car Park in Prestwich, with two electric vehicles available at each location.

Originally the Council planned to work with Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and the other 9 Greater Manchester (GM) local authorities to expand the car club offer in Bury and across GM by procuring a supplier, or multiple suppliers to operate a car club across the region. This approach was agreed in June 2023 under Operational Decision From number 893.

The aim was to increase the car club offer in Bury from 2 locations to around 20 locations as part of a GM wide offer.

Unfortunately, there has been very little progress since this this was agreed, and TfGM have informed us that there is unlikely to be any further progress in the next 6 months. As this is a low cost, low regret intervention that assists with several of the Council's priorities we believe the Council should start a procurement process either on their own or with other GM local authorities who are ready to proceed.

The proposal is to procure a concessionary contract with a car club operator who will install, operate and maintain a fleet of car clubs. The Council would have to provide appropriate space for the car clubs to operate. This is likely to be a mixture of car parks and on-street. There will be no outlay costs for the Council, but a small amount of resource will be required to manage the project. There is a potential for there to be an impact on parking income.

Background

Car clubs are a form of shared transport. They allow individuals and organisations to have access to cars without being tied to ownership. They allow users to access a vehicle for short term use on a trip-by-trip basis.

There are different working models of car clubs including:

- **Back-to-bay:** This is the most common form of a car club in the UK whereby cars must be returned to their unique designated parking place.
- **Back-to-area:** This is similar to the back-to-bay model, but rather than returning the car to a designated parking place, it is usually returned to a small defined area, typically a street or two.
- **One-way / flex:** The car can be taken on a one-way trip and parked on-street wherever it is legal to do so (sometimes including pay and display bays).
- **Peer-to-peer:** People offer privately-owned vehicles for rent to others via an online platform. The platform provides insurance.
- **Community:** A local, member-based initiative that provides access to self-service, pay as you drive, low-carbon vehicles. Often community car clubs are run by local groups to support their communities.

Benefits of Providing Car Clubs

Car Clubs offer a substitute for private vehicle ownership and research from Collaborative Mobility UK (CoMoUK) ([link](#)) found that each car club vehicle in Greater Manchester removed 9 private vehicles from the road.

Car Club members have been found to walk, cycle and use public transport more than the national average.

Car club membership removes the costs of vehicle ownership (e.g. tax, MOT, fuel, insurance, servicing, repairs and parking permits). Helping those who cannot afford their own vehicle to still have access to a car.

Car club vehicles are often newer compared to private cars in the UK and therefore, have better emissions ratings. 100% of car club vehicles in the UK are compliant with Low Emission Zones.

We also require car clubs to help us with some of our regeneration projects such as the Prestwich regeneration joint venture with Muse. In this situation the number of parking spaces is staying the same even though there is an increase in residential properties. The car clubs offer an alternative to those residents who may not have space for a private car.

The stated benefits above show that car clubs help to reduce vehicle ownership, increase active travel and public transport use as well as using lower emission vehicles compared to the average private car. All of which will help the Council's aims of reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.

Current situation

The Council took part in an E-Hub pilot, in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), Manchester Council and Enterprise Car Club. This was part of a wider EU Interreg North-West Europe funded project.

As a result of this pilot, the Council received electric car clubs at two locations. Two cars are available at Fairfax Road Car Park in Prestwich and two more are available at the Market Car Park in Bury town centre. These car clubs are available to anyone who has a membership and Council staff were offered a discounted private membership.

The Council has entered a corporate membership with Enterprise Car Club, which allows Council staff to use these vehicles for business related journeys. The mechanism is set up so that the Council is charged directly and therefore Council officers using the vehicles are not out of pocket. Unfortunately, there has been little take up for this option, which has worsened since the change in financial rules requiring an approved purchase order before a vehicle can be booked.

Table 1 below show the usage of the current car clubs.

Table 1

Location	Year	Number of bookings	Miles Completed
<i>Fairfax Road</i>	2022	26	1635

<i>Fairfax Road</i>	2023	97	9396
<i>Market Car Park</i>	2022	25	4042
<i>Market Car Park</i>	2023	53	5778

Fairfax is currently the most popular of the two locations but there have been maintenance and vandalism issues with the vehicles at the Market Car park, which has reduced availability.

The E-Hub pilot was due to end in September 2023 and TfGM are looking into extending this arrangement. Therefore, it is likely that this arrangement will remain in place, should the Council choose not to take forward the procurement. If the Council does choose to take forward the procurement, these two car clubs will be included as part of the offer.

Proposal

Following the work that has been done with TfGM the proposal is to follow the solution that has already been suggested. To procure a car club with a supplier using the 'back to bay' and/or 'back to area' models. The contract would be procured on a concessionary arrangement. This means that the Council will be providing land under a relevant agreement to a car club supplier who would own, operate, and maintain their fleet of car club cars. There may be an opportunity to explore a revenue option as part of the procurement.

The Council will explore different procurement methods including working with other local authorities in Greater Manchester, using an established procurement framework or completing the procurement ourselves.

The Council would be looking to have car clubs in up to 20 locations across the whole of Bury aiming to make them accessible to as many residents as possible. Once locations have been finalised the Council will carry out consultation with the affected areas.

Services such as Land and Property, Parking, and Regeneration will be consulted to ensure that the most appropriate land is chosen that will have the least amount of impact on parking revenue, current leasing arrangements, and future plans.

Options considered:

1. The Council could wait and procure a car club supplier as part of a joint procurement with TfGM. There is at least a 6-month delay to doing this and there is no guarantee

TfGM will take the project forward. However, if they did there would be a car club operator spanning the whole of Greater Manchester (GM), which would be a better solution for residents.

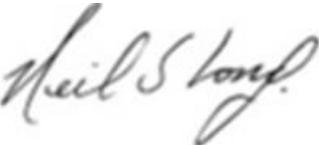
2. The Council could do nothing.

Recommendation:

1. To approve the expansion of car clubs across Bury by procuring a supplier to operate a car club across Bury under a concessionary model.
2. To explore whether we can combine with other local authorities in GM who do not want to wait for TfGM.

Decision:

1. To approve a procurement process to expand the car club offer in Bury by appointing a supplier to operate a car club in Bury under a concessionary model.

Decision made by:	Signature:	Date:
Executive Director of Operations		21/11/23
Assistant Director		21/11/23
Members Consulted (if applicable) [see note 1 below]		
Cabinet Member		21/11/23
Lead Member		
Opposition Spokesperson		

Notes

1. Where, in accordance with the requirements of the Officer Delegation Scheme, a Chief Officer consults with the appropriate Cabinet Member they must sign the form to confirm that they have been consulted and that they agree with the proposed action. The signature of the Opposition Spokesperson should be obtained if required, to confirm that he/she has been consulted. Please refer to the MO Guidance.
2. **This form must not be used for urgent decisions.**
3. Where there is any doubt, Corporate Directors should err on the side of caution and seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer.