

## **Request Details – FOI5685**

Please could you provide me with a breakdown of the usage of the electronic car charging points, which were installed in Birmingham City Centre in 2010. The figures, if available, should include the number of cars registered on the scheme and the number of hours of usage at charging points since they were installed.

## Response Details – FOI5685

Birmingham City Council considers that the requested information falls under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (“EIR”) rather than the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Environmental information **is deemed to be any information on** – that is, about, concerning, or relating to – the **various definitions** contained in Regulation 2(1) of the EIR. It is considered that the usage of the electronic car charging points in question to fall under the following definitions:

(b) factors, such as substances, energy, noise, radiation or waste, including radioactive waste, emissions, discharges and other releases into the environment, affecting or likely to affect the elements of the environment

(c) measures such as policies, legislation, plans, programmes, environmental agreements, and activities affecting or likely to affect or protect the elements of the environment.

The information requested falls within the EIR provisions as it is held by the Council.

The electronic car charging points is part of a jointly funded project between central government through the Technology Strategy Board and the car manufacturers (who provide the electric cars) and EoN (who provide the electric car charging points). The City Council is a consortium partner to facilitate the installation of the charging points.

The Council's involvement has been to work with EoN to identify the locations of the charging points and to facilitate the installation of these points in the city centre, and that there is no direct financial cost to the council tax payers of the City.

The CABLED consortium commenced a project in December 2009 on the performance of Electric Vehicle charging points at the following locations in the City Centre:

	Operational status
Bull Ring	Operational - 28/05/10
Margaret Street	Operational - 29/06/2010
Temple Row	Operational - 12/08/2010
Aston Street	Operational - 09/10/2010
Brindley Place	Operational - 09/12/2010
Brindley Drive	Operational - 23/12/2010

The project will run for 3 years and is scheduled to end in December 2012, after which the CABLED consortium will provide an evaluation on the performance and usage of electric vehicle charging points. The project was to supply an electric car to selected drivers and for that driver to use the car for a continuous period of 12 months. However not all the charge points were installed at the same time and therefore only became operational on the dates stated, and so any evaluation at this time would be incomplete. Accordingly, Birmingham City Councils feels it would not be beneficial at this time to release any data on the usage of electronic car charging points until after the project has been completed in December 2012.

Birmingham City Council considers that the information requested falls under the EIR exceptions, Regulation 12 (4) (d) – which relates to unfinished documents or is considered to be incomplete data at the time of the request. This exception requires

a consideration of the public interest test in disclosure as opposed to withholding the information requested.

Whilst Birmingham City Council recognises that there is a strong public interest in being open and transparent, it considers that in releasing the incomplete data on the usage of the car charging points would potentially undermine a 3 year programme because it is not due for completion until 2012. Furthermore, if we were to disclose the partial data into the public domain, not only would it be invalid but would also give a misleading impression, which could have an impact on the results of the programme.