

Consultation

Statutory consultation to modify Standard Licence Condition 31F (Requirements relating to the Electric Vehicle Recharging Points) of the Electricity Distribution Licence

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This statutory consultation sets out the proposal to remove the Provider of Last Resort (PoLR) provisions in Standard Licence Condition 31F (Requirements relating to Electric Vehicle Recharging Points) (SLC 31F) of the Electricity Distribution Licence. SLC 31F is applicable to Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) who own and operate the electricity distribution networks.

We would like views from the DNOs and stakeholders with an interest in the development of Electric Vehicle Charge Points (EVCP). We also welcome responses from other stakeholders and the public.

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1. Introduction

Section summary

This section sets out what we are consulting on with regards to the Electric Vehicle (EV) PoLR provisions contained in SLC 31F and the background information that has led to our proposals. It also informs stakeholders of the consultation process and how they can respond.

Background

- 1.1 In December 2022, we published our RIIO-2 Electricity Distribution (RIIO-ED2) Final Determinations (FDs)¹ in which we stated our intention to review and consult, in 2023, on whether the EV PoLR provisions contained in SLC 31F should be removed.
- 1.2 In our FDs, we decided that the introduction of a funding mechanism for PoLR activities was not in the interest of consumers and as such we decided not to include a funding provision for DNOs carrying out a PoLR role within the RIIO-ED2 price control. We set out that SLC 31F required further review and that we intended to consult on whether the PoLR provisions should be removed from SLC 31F.
- 1.3 In March 2023, we published an informal consultation seeking views on our proposal to remove the PoLR provisions in SLC 31F.² We received five responses, from four DNOs and one interested party. We have taken the responses to the informal consultation into consideration when preparing the licence modifications now being consulted on.

What are we consulting on?

- 1.4 We are consulting on our proposal to remove the PoLR provisions contained in SLC 31F 'Requirements relating to Electric Vehicle Recharging Points' of the Electricity Distribution Standard Licence.³
- 1.5 We are consulting on the removal of the following provisions within SLC 31F:

¹ RIIO-ED2 Final Determinations Overview document.pdf

² Informal consultation on proposal to remove EV PoLR.pdf

³ Electricity Distribution Consolidated Standard Licence Conditions (ofgem.gov.uk)

- SLC 31F.1 (b): Recharging Points
- SLC 31F.4 SLC 31F.12: Electric Vehicle Recharging Points; Provider of Last Resort (process)
- SLC 31F.13 SLC 31F.17: Electric Vehicle Recharging Points; provider of last resort (review)
- SLC 31F.18: Electric Vehicle Recharging Points: provider of last resort (general)
- SLC 31F.19 (c): Interpretation
- 1.6 Within this document we set out the reasons why we propose to make the above licence modifications and their intended effect. We also summarise and give our considerations to the concerns raised in the informal consultation published in March 2023.⁴
- 1.7 The proposed licence modifications required to remove the PoLR provisions from SLC 31F, are set out on the **Appendix 1** to this document.
- 1.8 SLC 31F is applicable to DNOs who own and operate the electricity distribution networks.

Related publications

- RIIO-ED2 Final Determinations | Ofgem
- Informal consultation on proposal to remove EV PoLR.pdf
- Electricity Distribution Consolidated Standard Licence Conditions (ofgem.gov.uk)

How to respond

- 1.9 We want to hear from anyone interested in this consultation on or before 1st December 2023. Please send your response to the person or team named on this document's front page.
- 1.10 Depending on the responses we receive through this consultation, we expect to publish our decision in January 2024. We are proposing for the licence changes to go live from March 2024.

⁴ Informal consultation on proposal to remove EV PoLR.pdf

1.11 We will publish non-confidential responses on our website at www.ofgem.gov.uk/consultations.

Your response, data and confidentiality

- 1.12 You can ask us to keep your response, or parts of your response, confidential.

 We'll respect this, subject to obligations to disclose information, for example,
 under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information
 Regulations 2004, statutory directions, court orders, government regulations or
 where you give us explicit permission to disclose. If you do want us to keep your
 response confidential, please clearly mark this on your response and explain why.
- 1.13 If you wish us to keep part of your response confidential, please clearly mark those parts of your response that you *do* wish to be kept confidential and those that you *do not* wish to be kept confidential. Please put the confidential material in a separate appendix to your response. If necessary, we'll get in touch with you to discuss which parts of the information in your response should be kept confidential, and which can be published. We might ask for reasons why.
- 1.14 If the information you give in your response contains personal data under the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) as retained in domestic law following the UK's withdrawal from the European Union ("UK GDPR"), the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority will be the data controller for the purposes of GDPR. Ofgem uses the information in responses in performing its statutory functions and in accordance with section 105 of the Utilities Act 2000. Please refer to our Privacy Notice on consultations, see Appendix 4.
- 1.15 If you wish to respond confidentially, we'll keep your response itself confidential, but we will publish the number (but not the names) of confidential responses we receive. We won't link responses to respondents if we publish a summary of responses, and we will evaluate each response on its own merits without undermining your right to confidentiality.

General Feeback

- 1.16 We believe that consultation is at the heart of good policy development. We welcome any comments about how we've run this consultation. We'd also like to get your answers to these questions:
 - 1. Do you have any comments about the overall process of this consultation?
 - 2. Do you have any comments about its tone and content?

- 3. Was it easy to read and understand? Or could it have been better written?
- 4. Were its conclusions balanced?
- 5. Did it make reasoned recommendations for improvement?
- 6. Any further comments?

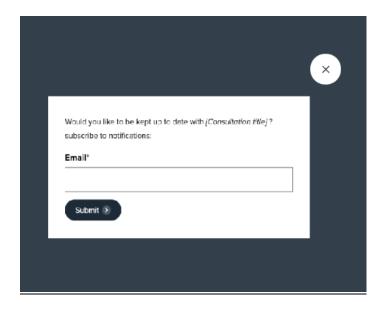
Please send any general feedback comments to stakeholders@ofgem.gov.uk

How to track the progress of the consultation

You can track the progress of a consultation from upcoming to decision status using the 'notify me' function on a consultation page when published on our website.

Ofgem.gov.uk/consultations





Once subscribed to the notifications for a particular consultation, you will receive an email to notify you when it has changed status. Our consultation stages are:

Upcoming > **Open** > **Closed** (awaiting decision) > **Closed** (with decision)

2. Removal of the Provider of Last Resort Provisions in Standard Licence Condition 31F (Requirements relating to Electric Vehicle Recharging Points)

Section summary

This section sets out our consideration of the responses to the informal consultation regarding the removal of the PoLR provisions in SLC 31F and our proposed change to the Electricity Distribution Licence.

- 2.1 In 2021, Ofgem introduced a new licence condition "Standard Licence Condition 31F Requirements relating to Electric Vehicle Recharging Points" to enact relevant parts of the EU Clean Energy Package (CEP). SLC 31F is intended to limit the circumstances in which DNOs can 'own, develop, manage or operate' EV charge points (EVCP).
- 2.2 SLC 31F currently contains two exemptions from the general prohibition which in summary allow:
 - DNOs to own EVCPs to be used by their own fleets e.g., when DNO fleets become electrified (used only by the licensee in connection with distribution business, i.e., employee or visitor. Not accessible to the public); and
 - DNOs to operate EVCPs as a backstop where there is no other provider following a tendering process and no other parties could do so at a reasonable cost or in a timely manner.
- 2.3 The latter exemption permits DNOs to act as PoLR and operate EVCPs, "where the Authority is satisfied that no person other than the licensee is able to own, develop, manage or operate an [EV] charging point or could not do so at a reasonable cost and in a timely manner".
- 2.4 There is no specific funding mechanism available for DNOs to recover any costs associated with undertaking EV PoLR obligations within RIIO-ED1 or RIIO-ED2.
- 2.5 In our RIIO-ED2 Draft Determinations (DDs), we set out our proposal, with options, to manage EV PoLR funding for DNOs. Responses on how EV PoLR should be funded were mixed. All DNOs supported a funding mechanism, with most favouring a Directly Remunerated Services (DRS) funding mechanism, if SLC 31F remained in place. However, the majority of DNOs questioned the existence of EV PoLR provisions in SLC 31F. DNOs cited reasons such as "an alternative method"

- [to PoLR] would be preferred" and that DNOs are "likely to incur higher than necessary costs for this activity since it is not their primary business expertise".
- 2.6 Following the consideration of the responses received in DDs, in our FDs we decided to have a further review of SLC 31F and consult on the proposal to remove EV PoLR provisions in SLC 31F.
- 2.7 Our informal consultation sought views on our proposal to remove EV PoLR provisions in SLC 31F. Responses to this are discussed below.

Reason and effect of modifying SLC 31F

- 2.8 The reason for proposing to amend this condition is because we consider that DNOs may not be the most appropriate parties to own, develop, manage, or operate EVCPs at reasonable costs. We consider that existing market participants would be better placed to act as PoLR. Existing market participants are likely already skilled and resourced to undertake PoLR activities and are less likely to incur the additional cost burden that DNOs may be exposed to in undertaking PoLR activities. Furthermore, there are various Government workstreams, funding provisions and regulations in place to support EVCPs, as set out below in our consideration of responses to our informal consultation. The reasons for our proposal are set out in more detail in our informal consultation document⁵.
- 2.9 The effect of this amendment removes the EV PoLR provisions, in full, from SLC 31F of the Electricity Distribution Licence, meaning that DNOs will no longer be permitted to operate EVCPs as a backstop where there is no other provider following a tendering process and no other parties could do so at a reasonable cost. By removing the PoLR obligation from DNOs we remove the risk of GB energy consumers funding any costs DNOs would be exposed to if they were to act as EV PoLR.

Summary of informal consultation responses

- 2.10 In the informal consultation we asked the following questions.
 - Do you agree with our proposal to remove the EV PoLR provisions from SLC 31F?

⁵ Informal Consultation on removal of the EV PoLR provision from SLC 31F | Ofgem

- Do you agree that other market participants would be better placed than DNOs to act as PoLR for EVCPs?
- 2.11 We received five responses to our informal consultation. Three DNOs and one industry stakeholder agreed with our proposal to remove the EV PoLR provisions from SLC 31F and agreed that other market participants would be better placed than DNOs to act as EV PoLR. One DNO disagreed with our proposal and disagreed that other market participants would be better placed than DNOs to act as EV PoLR.
- 2.12 SSEN, ENWL, NGED and one industry stakeholder, agreed with our proposal to remove the EV PoLR provisions from SLC 31F.
 - ENWL suggested that Ofgem should go further than the modifications
 proposed and "continue with the drive to simplify the licence where possible"
 by removing SLC 31F in full. ENWL state "This was a relatively recent addition
 and we consider that the prohibition is not required and should be removed in
 full".
 - NGED stated "DNOs remain focused on the provision of assets and services which provide the necessary capacity to facilitate the installation of EVCPs by other market participants, rather than the installation of the charge points themselves". NGED believe "SLC 31F should be revised to enable efficient use of EVCPs within the utility sector whilst retaining a restriction of access to the general public and a restriction of provision of balancing or equivalent services." NGED also set out that it may be prudent to consider extending SLC 31F further to enable other public bodies to utilise EVCPs at distribution premises when the need arises, such as for use by the emergency services.
 - One industry stakeholder set out that DNOs acting as EV PoLR would result in an unnecessary risk of increasing consumer bills and that funding for uneconomic EVCPs via consumers' bills is regressive. Furthermore, they added that "DNOs that have large rural areas that are likely to have high numbers of these otherwise uneconomic charge points will have a burden placed on their consumers' bills which other DNO areas, with more urban demographics, will not."
- 2.13 SPEN disagreed with our proposal to remove the EV PoLR provisions from SLC 31F. SPEN argued that through its project PACE (public access charging for EVs), it has demonstrated that DNOs are ideally placed to act as EV PoLR for EVCPs. SPEN stated that if the EV PoLR provisions are removed from the licence, and the

EV PoLR role falls on local authorities, DNOs should still be able to assist them as DNOs have a proven track record of having the required knowledge and expertise.

- 2.14 SSEN, NGED, ENWL and one industry stakeholder agreed that other market participants would be better placed than DNOs, to act as EV PoLR for EVCPs. For example, NGED stated that it recognised that significant changes had taken place within the EV industry, and that there was little evidence to suggest that the market would not be able to sufficiently deliver the required EVCP networks, whilst continuing to be supported by the DNOs in ensuring the required capacity is made available on the distribution network.
- 2.15 SPEN disagreed that other market participants would be better placed than DNOs to act as PoLR for EVCPs. SPEN argued that if EV PoLR role was to be passed onto local authorities, then without the inhouse resources or experience to deliver an EV charging infrastructure roll out, they would have to subcontract this work. SPEN also argued that in the event of EV PoLR there would be no subcontracting resources, as this market would have already been tested, therefore the logic of placing the obligation on local authorities is fundamentally flawed.

Our consideration of the informal responses

Section summary

In this section we set out our consideration of responses to our informal consultation and our position for this consultation.

- 2.16 We have considered the points raised by SSEN, ENWL, NGED and one industry stakeholder, on the proposal to remove the EV PoLR provisions from SLC 31F.
- 2.17 We do not agree with ENWLs suggestion to remove SLC 31F in full. The additional provision within SLC 31F prevents DNOs from owning, developing, managing, or operating EVCPs, with the exception of allowing DNOs to own EVCPs to be used by their own fleet. Without this provision there would be no limitation to DNOs owning, developing, managing, or operating EVCPs, which could have the potential to allow DNOs to unfairly monopolise the EVCP market.
- 2.18 We do not agree with NGEDs' suggestion to further modify SLC 31F to enable other parties in the utility sector or public bodies to utilise EVCPs at distribution premises. Significant further work to assess the practicalities of implementing

- such a proposal would be required before giving full consideration to whether doing so was in the interests of GB consumers.
- 2.19 We have considered SPENs' response, which disagrees with our proposal to remove the EV PoLR provisions from SLC 31F. We recognise that SPENs' PACE project, launched in 2019, highlights some of the benefits of involving DNOs in strategic site selection, enabling local authorities to deliver plans in a costeffective way⁶. However, since the inception of the PACE project, various UK Government workstreams have been carried forward, such as Government's EV Infrastructure Strategy, aimed to ensure adequate charging provision across the UK. Government has used the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI)⁷ fund to ensure all local authorities have local EV charging strategies in place for rolling out EVCP projects. Government is also supporting local authorities with capability funding to ensure strategies are in place.
- 2.20 We have considered the points raised by SSEN, NGED, ENWL and one industry stakeholder regarding market participants being better placed to act as EV PoLR. We agree that existing market participants are likely already skilled and resourced to undertake EV PoLR activities and are less likely to incur the additional cost burden that DNOs may do in undertaking EV PoLR activities. There have been significant changes in the EV industry and the various workstreams carried forward by the Government to support EVCPs. In the interim period the market is best placed to provide a solution to EV PoLR. EVCPs are particularly valuable assets not only for their location but also for their backend systems, technology, and grid connections, therefore it is highly likely other market players will acquire these assets and switch them over to their networks. We consider that local authorities and/or OZEV may be better positioned to monitor and put in place arrangements for the procurement of EV PoLR, if it is deemed to be required.
- 2.21 We disagree with SPENs argument that placing the obligation on local authorities is flawed. £2.5 billion of Government funding has been committed to the EV transition including £381m through the LEVI Fund. The LEVI Fund will ensure local authorities in England have the capacity and skills to deliver tens of thousands of local charge points, benefitting residents without access to off-street

⁶ PACE - SP Energy Networks

⁷ What is LEVI - What is the capital and revenue element of the fund and what does it do? (local.gov.uk)

parking. In addition, new regulations for public charge points have been announced by OZEV⁸ with accompanying guidance⁹. These new regulations aim to help improve EV user confidence in the charging network. Given these strategic plans and funding provisions already in place we consider it is more suitable for Government or local authorities to manage any EV PoLR provisions, if they are considered to be necessary.

- 2.22 For the reasons outlined above, we propose that the EV PoLR provisions should be removed from SLC 31F and that existing market participants are best placed to act as PoLR. We consider that DNOs are not the most appropriate parties to own, develop, manage, or operate commercial EVCPs at reasonable costs, even as an EV PoLR. DNOs are less likely, than existing market participants, to have the business infrastructure required to successfully develop, manage, and operate commercial EVCPs. For example, in addition to the capital costs associated with developing EVCPs, DNOs would have to provide additional services that they may not currently be equipped to undertake, such as ongoing maintenance (including hardware and software), price setting, and EVCP customer service. All these activities may see DNOs incur additional costs, which if DNOs were to be assigned as EV PoLR under SLC 31F, could result in the risk of being funded by the GB energy consumer.
- 2.23 We set out our proposed modifications to the SLC 31F in Appendix 1.

Statutory consultation question;

 Do you agree with our proposal to remove the PoLR provisions from SLC 31F of the Electricity Distribution Licence?

⁸ https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2023/9780348249873

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2023/9780348249873/pdfs/ukdsiod 9780348249873 en 001.pdf

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Appendix 1 – Proposed changes to Standard Licence Condition 31F

Condition 31F. Requirements relating to Electric Vehicle Recharging Points

- 31F.1 The licensee must not own, develop, manage or operate an Electric Vehicle Recharging Point, except where:
 - (a) the conditions in 31F.2 below apply; or
 - (b) the Authority has issued a Provider of Last Resort direction pursuant to 31F.5 and the licensee complies with it.

Electric Vehicle Recharging Points: exception for Licensee's own use

- 31F.2 This paragraph applies where the following conditions are satisfied in respect of an Electric Vehicle Recharging Point:
 - (a) it is not generally accessible to the public;
 - (b) it is used by the licensee only for the purposes of charging vehicles in connection with its Distribution Business; and
 - (c) it is not used in the provision of:
 - (i) any Balancing Services to the GB System Operator; or
 - (ii) any equivalent service in relation to the licensee's Distribution System.
- 31F.3 For the purpose of 31F.2 references to:
 - (a) the licensee include references to an Affiliate of the licensee; and
 - (b) the public do not include employees or contractors of the licensee or any visitors to any premises under the control of any of them in the ordinary course of business.

Electric Vehicle Recharging Points: provider of last resort (process)

31F.4 Paragraph 31F.4 applies where the Authority is satisfied that no person other than the licensee is able to own, develop, manage or operate an Electric Vehicle

Recharging Point or could not do so at a reasonable cost and in a timely manner.

31F.5 Where the Authority is satisfied that:

- (a) the circumstances described in 31F.4 are satisfied; and
- (b) the process described in 31F.6 to 31F.11 has been followed, the licensee must comply with any direction (a "Provider of Last Resort Direction") issued by the Authority in relation to the ownership, development, management or operation of an Electric Vehicle Recharging Point of a description specified in the direction
- 31F.6 Where the licensee considers that 31F.4 may apply to any Electric Vehicle

 Recharging Point, it must carry out a tender process, in an open, transparent and non-discriminatory manner, to determine whether any person is able to own, develop, manage and operate an Electric Vehicle Recharging Point at reasonable cost and in a timely manner.
- 31F.7 Prior to carrying out the tender process referred to in 31F.6 the licensee must prepare a statement of its proposed methodology for undertaking the tender process.

31F.8 The licensee must:

- (a) consult publicly on such methodology for a minimum of 28 days or such other period as the Authority may direct;
- (b) take account of the representations it receives in response to the consultation and revise the methodology as appropriate; and
- (c) within 28 days following the conclusion of the consultation, provide the Authority with the methodology together with any representations it has received during the consultation.
- 31F.9 The Authority may by direction, approve that methodology, with or without amendments.
- 31F.10 The licensee must carry out the tender process in accordance with the approved methodology.
- 31F.11 No later than 28 days following the conclusion of the tender process, the licensee must provide a report to the Authority setting out whether any person has been awarded the right to own, develop, manage or operate an Electric Vehicle Recharging Point.

- **Consultation** Statutory consultation to modify Standard Licence Condition 31F (Requirements relating to the Electric Vehicle Recharging Points) of the Electricity Distribution Licence
- 31F.12 Any of the steps described in 31F.6 to 31F.11 may be carried out by a person other than the licensee where the Authority considers this appropriate.

Electric Vehicle Recharging Points: provider of last resort (review)

- 31F.13 Paragraph 31F.14 applies where the Authority has issued a Provider of Last Resort Direction, in respect of an Electric Vehicle Recharging Point.
- 31F.14 The licensee must within five years of the coming into force of the direction and every subsequent period of five years, or such other date as the Authority may direct, provide a report to the Authority on whether the circumstances described in 31F.4 continue to be satisfied in relation to the Electric Vehicle Recharging Point.
- 31F.15 The report referred to in 31F.14 is to be informed by a public consultation undertaken by the licensee of at least 28 days, or such other period as the Authority may direct, and must include any representations made in response to such consultation.
- 31F.16 If having considered the report referred to in 31F.14 the Authority considers
 31F.4 is no longer satisfied it may direct that the steps outlined in 31F.6 to
 31F.11 are undertaken by the licensee on such terms as may be specified in the direction.
- 31F.17 Where the Authority, following consideration of the report provided by the licensee pursuant to 31F.14 gives notice of revocation of the Provider of Last Resort Direction, the licensee must ensure that its activities are phased out within 18 months of the notice, including by way of a transfer to another person of the ownership, development, management or operation of the Electric Vehicle Recharging Point, and as part of the conditions of that procedure the Authority may allow the licensee to recover the residual value of its investment.

Electric Vehicle Recharging Points: provider of last resort (general)

31F.18 Any Provider of Last Resort Direction may relate to specific premises or premises of a general description, for such period of time and subject to such conditions as

may be specified in the direction.

<u>Interpretation</u>

31F.19 For the purpose of this condition:

- (a) "Balancing Services" has the meaning given in Condition C1 (interpretation) of the Transmission Licence;
- (b) "Electric Vehicle Recharging Point" means an interface which is capable of charging one electric vehicle at a time, or exchanging a battery of one electric vehicle at a time; and
- (c) "Provider of Last Resort Direction" has the meaning given in paragraph 4 of this condition.

Appendix 2 – Privacy notice on consultations

Personal data

The following explains your rights and gives you the information you are entitled to under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Note that this section only refers to your personal data (your name address and anything that could be used to identify you personally) not the content of your response to the consultation.

1. The identity of the controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

The Gas and Electricity Markets Authority is the controller, (for ease of reference, "Ofgem"). The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dpo@ofgem.gov.uk

2. Why we are collecting your personal data

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data

As a public authority, the GDPR makes provision for Ofgem to process personal data as necessary for the effective performance of a task carried out in the public interest. i.e. a consultation.

4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data

(Include here all organisations outside Ofgem who will be given all or some of the data. There is no need to include organisations that will only receive anonymised data. If different organisations see different set of data then make this clear. Be a specific as possible.)

5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.

Your personal data will be held for (be as clear as possible but allow room for changes to programmes or policy. It is acceptable to give a relative time e.g. 'six months after the project is closed')

6. Your rights

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right to:

- know how we use your personal data
- access your personal data
- have personal data corrected if it is inaccurate or incomplete
- ask us to delete personal data when we no longer need it
- ask us to restrict how we process your data
- get your data from us and re-use it across other services
- object to certain ways we use your data
- be safeguarded against risks where decisions based on your data are taken entirely automatically
- tell us if we can share your information with 3rd parties
- tell us your preferred frequency, content and format of our communications with you
- to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at https://ico.org.uk/, or telephone 0303 123 1113.
- **7. Your personal data will not be sent overseas** (Note that this cannot be claimed if using Survey Monkey for the consultation as their servers are in the US. In that case use "the Data you provide directly will be stored by Survey Monkey on their servers in the United States. We have taken all necessary precautions to ensure that your rights in term of data protection will not be compromised by this".
- 8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making.
- **9. Your personal data will be stored in a secure government IT system.** (If using a third party system such as Survey Monkey to gather the data, you will need to state clearly at which point the data will be moved from there to our internal systems.)
- **10. More information** For more information on how Ofgem processes your data, click on the link to our "ofgem privacy promise".