

The Questionnaire – For customers

Hello. Thank you for taking the time to complete our questionnaire.

We hope all the questions are clear, but if you have any difficulties please email connections@ofgem.gov.uk.

Once you have completed the questionnaire please send it back to us to the email address above. You need to return the completed questionnaire to us by 31 July 2014.

After we have read your answers we might want to have a chat with you to understand a bit more. We'll try and do this in August.

Part 1 - About you

Question	Your response
What is your name?	
What is your position?	
What are your contact details?	

Part 2 - About your business

Question	Your response
What is your company's name?	Medway Council
What is the nature of your company's business?	Local Government
Why do you need to make new connections to the electricity distribution network?	Highway lighting, new schemes and replacing existing stock.

What past experience does your business have in getting new connections to the electricity distribution network?	Continuous and ongoing use of local electricity supplier
What areas of the country does your business have facilities in that have required new connections to the electricity distribution network?	Just Medway Council authority area
What type of connections do you make to the distribution network?	Street lighting connections, disconnections and alterations.

Part 3 - About how you get a new electricity connections to the local grid.

Question	Your response
Does your business manage the process of getting a connection using your own staff, or do you use a consultant to guide you through the process?	Use own staff for DNO works but contractor manages process as they are a ICP.
What issues are important for you when getting a connection? Please rank in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and 7 the least important.	<div>5 The cost of connection</div> <div>4 Customer service</div> <div>7 The time it takes to issue a connection quote</div>

	<div>3</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>6</div>	<p>The time in which a connection can be made</p> <p>The certainty around the cost of connection and the timetable for delivery</p> <p>Ability to offer innovative connection solutions</p> <p>Other <u>Some jobs are being rejected because they are on islands or at junctions/roundabouts</u> (please specify)</p>
<p>In the past have you had quotes for connection(s) from a range of companies, or solely from the local DNO?</p> <p>Please tick one box.</p>	<div>x</div> <div></div>	<p>A range of quotes – <u>please go to part 4</u></p> <p>Just a quote from the local DNO – <u>please go to part 5</u></p>

Part 4 – About how you choose between a range of quotes.

Question	Your response
You've indicated that you normally receive a range of quotes for connection, both from your local DNO and other independent connection providers. When deciding which quote to accept, what factors do you consider?	<p>We have Three sets of prices, the DNO, our lighting contractor who are also a ICP and a external ICP.</p> <p>How much work, ICP's tend to want work in large batches rather than a single column replacement (i.e. after a RTC). So we have to look at the work before deciding who to use.</p> <p>Cost of work, the costs do vary but not by much, we would prefer to pay for better service than save £5 or £10. If our lighting contract carries out the work then it is one and done rather than multiple visits by different contractors.</p>

	<p>Type of work, The ICP's are not able to work on all cable types so a scheme may be split between two contractors.</p> <p>Timescales, Using the DNO gives some time control over the work, which is around 30 working days. If we wait for a batch of jobs for a ICP then it could be longer.</p>
Please rank these factors that you described in the previous question in order of importance to you, with 1 being the most important.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Timescales 2. Type of work 3. How much work 4. Cost of work 5. Etc.
Please give an indication of who you have tended to award work to.	<p>Please tick one box only.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Always the DNO</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mainly the DNO</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> About half and half between the DNO and others</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mainly an ICP or IDNO</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Always an ICP or IDNO</p>
What do you think are the risks/problems with using an independent connections provider?	Lack of staff, Lack of choice of contractor, High costs (prices seem to be very similar), Need to batch lots of works together and the risk that the DNO will reject permission for the ICP to carry out the work.
How has your view on who to award work to changed with experience?	If there is a risk that the job will be rejected then we will always go with the DNO
When would you only seek a quote from the local DNO?	As above

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Part 5 – About why you chose to use the local DNO	
Before engaging with this process, were you aware that you could use a company other than the local DNO to complete your connection?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What do you think are the benefits in using a company other than the local DNO to provide a connection?	
What do you think are the risks/problems with using an independent connections provider?	
What would need to change in order for you to use a different connections provider?	

Part 6 - About how the cost of connections informs the location of new business development	
How much opportunity is there for you to freely choose the location of new business developments?	I am free to choose, within reason.

How big a factor is the cost of connection in your decision on where to locate your business?

High, but not at the risk of good service or service delivery.

Part 7- Other comments

The questions we've asked are designed for you to give us important information for our review. We'd also welcome any other comments about the market for new electricity connections, or problems you've experienced.