

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 |
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| What is your company's name? | Westminster City Council |
| What is the nature of your company's business? | Asset Management of Highway Electrical Street Furniture (Public Lighting) |
| Why do you need to make new connections to the electricity distribution network? | New connections and service alterations are required to maintenance the Highway Electrical Street Furniture |

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| What past experience does your business have in getting new connections to the electricity distribution network? | The City Council are using the DNO for all connections and service alterations and have been doing so since privatisation of the Electricity Boards. |
| What areas of the country does your business have facilities in that have required new connections to the electricity distribution network? | The City of Westminster only |
| What type of connections do you make to the distribution network? | Mainly UMS connections and service alterations however there is an expectation that there will be a greater requirements for metered connections in the future to enable new types of Highway Electrical supplies Fast (electric car) chargers, Market trader supplies etc |

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

| Question | Your response |
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| 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? | The City Council employ a Service Provider to deliver the various connection requirements this is undertaken through the Transportation Commissioning Contract B (FM Conway) |
| 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>2 Customer service</div> <div>6 The time it takes to issue a connection quote</div> |

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| | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 The time in which a connection can be made <input type="checkbox"/> 1 The certainty around the cost of connection and the timetable for delivery <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Ability to offer innovative connection solutions <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Other <u>Clear communication & adherence to agreed programme</u> (please specify) |
| In the past have you had quotes for connection(s) from a range of companies, or solely from the local DNO? Please tick one box. | <input type="checkbox"/> A range of quotes – <u>please go to part 4</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X Just a quote from the local DNO – <u>please go to part 5</u> |

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

| Question | Your response |
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| 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? | |
| Please rank these factors that you described in the previous question in order of importance to you, with 1 | 1. 2. 3. |

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| being the most important. | 4. 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 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? | |
| How has your view on who to award work to changed with experience? | |
| When would you only seek a quote from the local DNO? | |

Part 5 – About why you chose to use the local DNO

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| Before engaging with this process, were you aware that you could use a company other than the local DNO to complete your connection? | <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes </div> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (Westminster is connected to an interconnected network) </div> |
| What do you think are the benefits in using a company other than the local DNO to provide a connection? | Competition may improve competitiveness (price and programme delivery) but it may also result in cherry picking the most profitable works leaving the high cost low profit works to be undertaken by the DNO. |
| What do you think are the risks/problems with using an independent connections provider? | Reduce cost can come at the expense of Quality and Safety and this is the largest risk however a well motivated focus team can deliver service improvements and efficiencies. While standards should be fully maintained a concern is these will be less important than the delivery of the project to programme which creates a risk. |
| What would need to change in order for you to use a different connections provider? | Interconnected network is a block for Westminster however if an opportunity were to present itself the option to use other suppliers (other than DNO) would be explored. However, Quality is the primary concern and audit would be a consideration and independ audit service may be helpful. |

Part 6 - About how the cost of connections informs the location of new business development

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| How much opportunity is there for you to freely choose the location of new business developments? | N/A |
| How big a factor is the cost of connection in your decision on where to locate your business? | N/A |

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.

Westminster's DNO is UKPN who have taken a proactive approach to UMS connections albeit I have no other reference point, they have a significant number of ICP's available and also enabled Local Authorities to access them easily through effectively single sign up rather than multiple sign up for each individual client. The interconnected network remains an outstanding issue in central London and a block to ICP's however the UMS connection services provided by UKPN are good better than anytime in the past and with communications also being very good the only variant will be cost.

While cost is an important factor in public finance, programme adherence and site management are as important and multiple organisations undertaking works on the Public Highway can complicate matters increasing cost.

While private monopolies are not good and may be that the competition for connection has been UKPN's reason/driver for change, the facts are that they deliver a good service in one of the most difficult and challenging environments in the UK. Whether this could have been achieved by firmer management enforcement by ofgem I don't know, the facts are they have improved.