

# LCN Fund Full Submission

## Supplementary Answer Form

Tick if this answer is Confidential:

Tick if this answer has been provided verbally:

Project code:	NPG203	Question Number	4
Question date	29 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	Answer date	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2013
Submission section question relates to	2: Project Description - Early Bilateral		
Topic	Customer Behaviour		
Question	<b>How will the DNO engage directly with the community?</b>		
Notes on question			
Answer	<p>The ACE project has three different strands of customer engagement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Schools</i> - Engagement with residential customers via schools using education and projects with children to influence their parents via a proposition where the level of influence achieved can raise money for the school;</li> <li>2. <i>Wider Community</i> - Engagement with residential customers (and possibly some small businesses) in the wider community trials using internet based systems to facilitate various DSR propositions that provide customer information and an element of competition/co-operation within communities to raise money for local good causes; and</li> <li>3. <i>Local Authority</i> - Engagement with employees of the local authority via internal workshops and competitions to provide a DSR response from Council operated properties.</li> </ol> <p>Durham County Council will lead and facilitate the engagement of the Durham County Council employees (3) for the local authority trials and will facilitate the engagement of Schools in the trial areas (1).</p> <p>Northern Powergrid will lead the engagement of the customers for the wider community trials (2) assisted by a, yet to be appointed, social marketing or community engagement partner and informed by Durham University's expertise in understanding consumer responses to energy demand management and processes of public engagement.</p> <p>These trials require the recruitment of approximately 15 clusters, with about 125 customers in each, across a range of socio-demographic types in order to achieve a robust set of results that can be demonstrated to be applicable across the majority of all GB DNO customers.</p> <p>Individual householders are the people who will decide if they want to engage</p>		

with the DSR propositions and we plan to reach these individuals using various channels to bring the propositions to their attention.

Engaging with the community therefore means engaging with individuals who may belong to a range of different community types. Some may be part of a local physical community such as a tenants association, sports club, etc. and others may belong to groups which do not have a physical local presence, for instance an online community. To cater for a wide range of individuals we will have to identify a range of ways to engage with customers and explore a range of ways of presenting the benefits that customers can achieve through their participation in the DSR propositions.

Our approach to engaging the community in these trials will be based on identifying community champions and intermediary organisations through which we can share the potential benefits of the propositions. We will then work with these community champions and intermediary organisations to develop wider participation in each trial cluster. The design of the trial has been undertaken in order to attract this form of community engagement. The incentives work on the basis that individuals earn points for how well they respond to the demand side response propositions being trialled. Each point gives an entry into a monthly prize draw. Customers can group their points together with their neighbours and friends in the trial area to give more entries into the draw to raise money for local causes of their choosing, whether this is the scouts, cubs, a local football team or a school parent-teacher association. We believe that the community reward element of this proposition will make participants want to promote the proposition amongst their neighbours.

We will work with our own employees, Durham County Council and Durham University to identify community champions. We are working with the Voluntary Organisations Network North East (VONNE), who are the umbrella organisation for charity, voluntary and community organisations across the North East, to identify and communicate with grass roots community organisations and act as intermediaries to mobilise within their communities to ensure we maximise every opportunity.

Initial ideas are as follows:

***Identifying and engaging community champions***

- The Council has buildings (including schools, libraries, leisure centres, etc.) in almost every settlement of any size, so once we have selected the geographical area for the trials, the Council will offer publicity and promotion from these public buildings via posters, flyers, etc.
- The Council has around 7,500 staff working across the County, very many of whom also live in the County, so we will invite employees that live in the target trial areas to become "champions" for recruitment of their neighbours, with possibly a subsidiary competition amongst employees based upon the number of neighbours recruited. This could be duplicated with Northern Powergrid employees that live in County Durham and also with employees and students at Durham University, who have over 15,000 students and over 3,000 staff living in the region.
- County Durham is divided geographically into 14 areas, which are called Area Action Partnerships (AAPs). Each AAP consists of Councillors for that group of settlements, locally community members elected by the inhabitants of that area, and local experts from business, the voluntary sector, etc. Each AAP has a Board that meets regularly and public forums which are generally well attended. Each AAP also has an officer team in support that can do relevant work. Durham County Council will promote the project and any competitions or other actions through the relevant AAP to reach a wide cross section of that geographical area.
- There are also 104 Parish and Town Councils through which the Council can

promote the ACE project.

#### ***Working with and through intermediary organisations***

- Durham County Council works closely with Durham Rural Community Council (DRCC) which is a very well established organisation that has been working directly with communities across County Durham since 1935. They support several hundred community organisations, assist with community buildings and village halls, enable bulk oil and food purchases, lead community training schemes and run the One Voice network that speaks for all voluntary organisations in the county.
- Durham County Council will also provide us with the contact details of various community groups / organisations in our trial areas so that we can then engage directly with them with the help of our social marketing / community engagement partner. These groups will include scouting groups (i.e. scouts, guides, cubs, brownies, beavers, etc.), amateur sports clubs (i.e. football, cricket, rugby, athletics, gymnastics, boxing, swimming, etc.), pensioners groups, housing associations, voluntary organisations (round table, ladies circle, rotary, lions, women's institute, etc.). The list is extensive and all avenues will be pursued to achieve a diverse mix of customer types.
- The Voluntary Organisations Network North East (VONNE) have indicated that they would be keen to support the project through their various channels undertaking such activities as:
  - Helping us to recruit target clusters of communities who might be interested in being involved;
  - Assisting with the identification and selection of local good causes to support, which could be done in partnership with the County Durham Community Foundation with whom they have good links.
  - Considering the setting up of a specific good causes fund at the Foundation for the individuals in each cluster to pool their energy savings into and then give out grants to local projects.
  - Promoting the initiative widely through their e-bulletin, sent to 1500 subscribers across the North East, which could be targeted down to community groups and charities working in the County Durham area.
  - Sending out direct mailings to the targeted groups, endorsing the idea from VONNE.
  - Using their social media channels, in particular Twitter to promote the idea.

Finding effective channels to communicate at a community level is a key component to our engagement and we're clear that strong partnerships will need to be established to deliver this. What we communicate and how we communicate it is of key importance and we recognise that expert resource will be required in this area.

We have begun to seek out experts in social marketing to help us to understand how we can communicate, what could be seen as a complex message, in a digestible and engaging way, and will also draw on the research expertise that Durham University has in this field. Social marketing and "nudging" through communications to achieve behaviour change has been used extensively and successfully in public health for a number of years and we are keen to utilise this learning and expertise to ensure that our communications and engagement deliver successful outcomes. We will also draw on the research experience nationally and internationally that documents the factors that shape community participation in energy and sustainability projects. Together with initial pilot research work, we will draw on this body of market research and research expertise to identify the critical factors that will shape engagement in the trial and to test and fine tune our incentives and communications.

Attachments	<p>Letter of support from Durham County Council (8 August 2013)</p> <p>The attached letter of support shows that Durham County Council is supporting our engagement with the wider community.</p>
Verbal Clarifications (Consultants)	

Contact: Maggie Bosanquet  
Direct Tel: 03000 265549  
Fax:  
email: Maggie.bosanquet@durham.gov.uk



Andrew Spencer  
Regulation & Strategy  
Northern Power Grid  
98 Aketon Road,  
Castleford,  
WF10 5DS

8 August 2013

Dear Andrew,

### **Activating Customer Engagement (ACE) Project**

I write to confirm that Durham County Council has agreed in principle to be a partner in Northern Powergrid's Low Carbon Networks Fund (LCNF) Tier 2 Innovation project '**Activating Customer Engagement**' (the ACE Project).

The Council supports the aims of the project which are to test the effectiveness of a range of customer engagement methods aimed at achieving a localised Demand Side Response. These will help to create the flexibility to facilitate the growth of low carbon technologies that will be connected to its electricity distribution network as the UK moves towards a low carbon economy, whilst keeping costs down for customers.

The Council recognises that the trials will involve active engagement with customers, mainly in the County Durham area, to test the extent to which electricity consumption can be relocated from peak times to create the headroom required for the connection of these technologies. The Council will be able to assist with routes to customers which will be as follows:

- Using schools as a hub for engagement with young parents;
- Using online participation techniques for engagement with the wider residential and small business community;
- Using access to Durham County Council buildings and employees to influence the electricity consumption profile of Council owned properties.

The fact that trials will be designed so that the results from the trials will be statistically robust and transferable to all areas across Great Britain makes this a valuable project which the Council wishes to support.

### **Corporate Resources**

Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL  
Main Telephone 03000 26 0000 Minicom (0191) 383 3802

Durham County Council is keen to partner with Northern Powergrid to explore new behavioural techniques that could be used to influence energy usage within its own portfolio of Council owned / managed properties and also amongst customers across the Durham area. This will support the work of the Council in tackling climate change, reducing energy costs for its communities and working towards a more sustainable future.

The Council will provide staff time to contribute towards successful completion of the project to facilitate the trials to be undertaken within schools in the County Durham area and to engage with Council employees to determine the extent to which electricity consumption can be relocated from the peak times. Staff time will also be used to provide relevant expertise from past projects in Durham and publicity for the ACE trials in general within the County Durham area.

Durham County Council has metering data for 750 council buildings from which a targeted shortlist can be created to engage with Council employees from around 40 premises. The Council will work with the Project to select a subset of between 10 and 25 schools for the purpose of communicating the ACE project and facilitating the inclusion of trial material in the curriculum for the selected schools.

Durham County Council will use their local knowledge to work with Northern Powergrid in designing the trials, including providing access to historical energy consumption and information from energy use / efficiency programmes already in place.

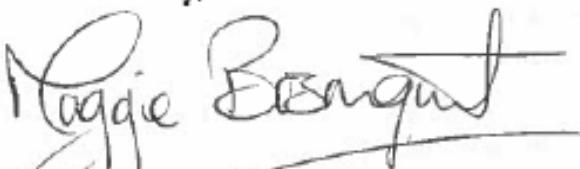
The Council will also be able to assist with wider community access in areas selected for all of the trials. This could involve the display of marketing material in its public buildings, using its community links such as Area Action Partnerships or existing community projects and its links with SMEs to increase awareness of and promote participation with The ACE Project.

Durham County Council is seeking further funding from the EU Structural Funds from 2014 onwards for several related projects including one to work with communities and investigate opportunities to save energy. If successful, Durham County Council will work with the ACE project to consider how this funding could be used to expand the range of interventions trialled in the schools and the wider community.

The Council will hope to play a key role in supporting Northern Powergrid in its primary responsibility for the successful delivery of The ACE Project and will be willing to play an active role on the Executive Board and the Project Board as required.

I hope that this information is helpful to you and I wish you all success with your bid.

Yours Faithfully,



Maggie Besarquet  
Sustainability and Climate Change Team Leader