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21 November 2024

Sent via email to helen.chandler@northerngas.co.uk

Dear Helen

I write in response to your correspondence dated 18 October 2024 regarding Draft 1 of the CDSP Business Plan for 2025-28 (BP25). Thanks for taking the time to provide written feedback, it is much appreciated. Your letter and this response will be published on the BP25 portal in reflection of the non-confidential nature of each correspondence.

I hope that addressing the points you have raised in the following categories will be helpful.

Business Plan Information Rules (BPIRs)

It is pleasing to hear that you recognise the influence of UNC modification 0841 on the content and that you can see extra detail has been provided – given that BP25 is the first plan that is subject to the BPIRs, there has been some degree of interpretation required. We are therefore encouraged by an adjusted compliance score of 83%. We are working through some recommendations that the assessor made following their review of Draft 1 and aim to further boost our compliance as the BP25 cycle proceeds. You raise an interesting point about a related Key Performance Metric / Performance Indicator, and I will ensure that this is discussed as part of a forthcoming CoMC review of the suite of KPMs and PIs that is planned in the coming weeks.

Draft 1 content and format

As you rightly state, BP25 is a much bigger, more detailed suite of information than previous Business Plans. This is necessitated by the introduction of BPIRs. We recognise that this might place an additional burden on individuals responsible for reviewing and feeding back on each draft of the CDSP Business Plan. Our decision to break down this information into separate documents (rather than consolidating it all

into one very large document) was taken with the reader in mind. We recognise that individual consumers of Business Planning content prefer different media formats – we are aiming to provide a ‘bitesize’ version of the Final Draft.

Competition Readiness

In your letter, you question whether Xoserve becoming ‘competition ready’ is out of our scope. We believe being able to ‘compete’ various aspects of CDSP service provision is in customers best interests. I would be happy to have further discussions with you on this subject if that would be helpful.

Project Trident

We agree that more information than we were able to share in publicly available BP25 documentation regarding Project Trident (e.g. a further breakdown of the associated 2025-26 costs) was necessary. We provided extra details during a confidential briefing to DSC Contract Managers on 11th November 2024 – thank you for attending. As you know, we have adopted a cautious approach to openly sharing commercially sensitive information in publicly available documents to protect the integrity of future procurement activity.

Digital UX

Your letter questions the ambitiousness of delivering this investment alongside the other investments in BP25 (e.g. Project Trident). Whilst we continue to recognise the benefits of enhancing the way customers engage with CDSP service digitally (and the related benefits in terms of a more targeted approach to communication), in response to customer feedback, we are withdrawing the investment proposal from BP25.

We remain committed to enhancing the CDSP communications strategy and have recently hired an interim Head of Communications whose remit includes implementing a more targeted approach. We will reassess the Digital UX investment proposal ahead of the BP26 cycle, ensuring that we re-engage with customers as to scope and appetite.

I trust this letter is helpful and look forward to further discussion as BP25 development proceeds.

Kind regards

James

James Rigby

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