

# Charging for multiple budget estimates

Consultation  
Outcome

February 2022

## Overview

**Western Power Distribution (WPD) is the distribution network operator (DNO) responsible for delivering electricity to eight million homes and businesses across the Midlands, South West and South Wales.**

**Earlier in January, we consulted on our proposal to charge for some budget estimates at 22kV and above. This document summarises the consultation exercise and the outcome from the consultation.**

**The document “Charging for multiple budget estimates” issued at the time of consultation provides the background and detail behind the consultation and should be read in conjunction with this document.**

## Proposal and Consultation

For budget estimates, we have decided to continue to provide most budget estimates free of charge but we consulted on charging for providing multiple budget estimates where works are required at 22kV or above. Our proposal was that customers would continue to receive a free budget estimate for up to two options for the same site but would be charged a small fee for each option over and above this.

Our aim is to ensure that we are cost reflective so that only customers asking for the enhanced budget estimate service pay for it. This will further improve efficiencies and ensure our staff resources are utilised in the most effective way, enabling us to deliver the best customer service we can.

We received responses from a wide range of stakeholders including developers, consultants and local authorities.

Thank you to all those stakeholders who responded to the consultation.

## Summary of consultation responses

During the consultation we posed a series of statements and questions.

The questions and the responses we received are summarised below.

### Question 1

Is the charge of £300 too high, too low or about right?

### Responses to Question 1

The majority of respondents (40%) felt that this charge was about right.

### Question 2

A restriction of six months will apply from issue of the budget estimate(s) for further free budget estimates to be issued at a site. Is the six months restriction for further free of charge budget estimates too short, too long or about right?

### Responses to Question 2

The majority of respondents (45%) felt that the restriction of six months was about right.

### Question 3

A site will be defined as the closest network point or point of connection (POC) rather than a geographic point or address. Is it sensible to use a POC on the network as the location or should we use a geographic location (i.e. address)?

### Responses to Question 3

The majority of respondents (55%) preferred a geographical location but a significant proportion of respondents (35%) preferred a POC. Some respondents stated that we should use both.

## Outcome of consultation

Customers will continue to receive a free budget estimate for up to two options for the same site but will be charged £300 for each option over and above this. (An option is defined as either a different capacity or a different technology type.)

A restriction of six months will apply from issue of the budget estimate(s) for further free budget estimates to be issued at a site.

A site will be defined as the closest network point or point of connection (POC) if the land is owned by one landowner or a geographical point or address within a radius of 1km. We will work with applicants to ensure that they (and us) apply this in the spirit of good faith.

## Timeline

We will introduce charging for multiple budget estimates (22kV and above) from 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

## Further Information

Any fees will be billed shortly after the budget application is received.

We will continue to fully support our customers during the connections process by offering guidance and advice and by holding regular connection surgeries. We also have a range of free online tools, such as the interactive costing tool and capacity maps that customers can access to help them with the assessment stages and their own due diligence before making an application to WPD.

We will review our Connections Offer Expenses annually and make information about any future changes publicly available.

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