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Ronan McKeown
Electricity Branch
Utility Regulator
Queens House
14 Queens Street
Belfast
BT1 6ER

15/12/14

Dear Ronan

RE: Consumer Council response to Utility Regulator consultation on the introduction of contestability in connections

The Consumer Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation. While the Consumer Council does not have the technical expertise to comment on the majority of the issues raised in the consultation document, it is supportive of the principle of contestability in connections in Northern Ireland. The Consumer Council recognises that increased choice for consumers and the introduction of competition will potentially deliver benefits in terms of lower charges, improved connection times and better customer service.

In light of the complexity of the issues surrounding new connections the Consumer Council believes it is essential that the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) and any third party connection suppliers ensure information provided to customers is clear and easy to understand to enable consumers to make informed decisions about which supplier to use. The Utility Regulator recognizes in the consultation that quotes are sometimes difficult to understand because the content is not always clear. The Consumer Council recommends that the utility Regulator develops a standardized template to include all costs which the DNO and third party connection suppliers must

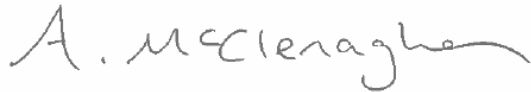


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use to provide quotes to customers as this will enable easy comparability of charges.

If you would like any further information please contact me on 028 9067 4808 or amcclenaghan@consumercouncil.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. McClenaghan'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

ANDY MCCLENAGHAN
Senior Policy Officer (Energy)