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Award

VCMA project - Fuel Bank Foundation - Further expand Fuel Bank across Northern England

NORTHERN GAS NETWORKS LIMITED

F15: Voluntary ex ante transparency notice

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-004114

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04dc9e

Published 7 February 2025, 10:25am

Section I: Contracting authority/entity

I.1) Name and addresses

NORTHERN GAS NETWORKS LIMITED

1100 Century Way

LEEDS

LS158TU

Contact

Rebecca Rowley

Email

rrowley@northerngas.co.uk

Telephone

+44 7935077342

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UKE42 - Leeds

Companies House

NORTHERN GAS NETWORKS LIMITED

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.northerngasnetworks.co.uk>

I.6) Main activity

Production, transport and distribution of gas and heat

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

VCMA project - Fuel Bank Foundation - Further expand Fuel Bank across Northern England

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 73000000 - Research and development services and related consultancy services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

The FBF has delivered support since 2015, however our network of partners significantly increased from 2022, with support from Northern Gas Networks via the VCMA Programme enabling the charity to expand to meet some of the increased demand we saw following the COVID pandemic, and then the cost-of-living crisis. This funding removed some of the barriers to expansion where previously our network shape and the support we could provide was constrained by the funding we had available. Given that our Fuel Bank infrastructure is already in place, that we have already tested and proven the provision of support to households across the country, and the short time required to launch new Fuel Bank centres we have the potential to expand with a further 75 partners over the colder winter months and providing longer-term surety as we move into 2024. In peak winter 2023-24 we forecast average monthly prepayment meter top up will approach £300, a 74% increase on the winter 2021- 22 peak, further demonstrating the need for crisis fuel support being made available.

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKC - North East (England)
- UKD - North West (England)

- UKE - Yorkshire and the Humber

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The FBF has delivered support since 2015, however our network of partners significantly increased from 2022, with support from Northern Gas Networks via the VCMA Programme enabling the charity to expand to meet some of the increased demand we saw following the COVID pandemic, and then the cost-of-living crisis. This funding removed some of the barriers to expansion where previously our network shape and the support we could provide was constrained by the funding we had available. Given that our Fuel Bank infrastructure is already in place, that we have already tested and proven the provision of support to households across the country, and the short time required to launch new Fuel Bank centres we have the potential to expand with a further 75 partners over the colder winter months and providing longer-term surety as we move into 2024. In peak winter 2023-24 we forecast average monthly prepayment meter top up will approach £300, a 74% increase on the winter 2021- 22 peak, further demonstrating the need for crisis fuel support being made available.

An extension for the project has been requested as people in fuel crisis are continuing to require Fuel Bank emergency financial support and advice. We anticipate over a quarter of a million people in the UK will ask us for emergency help this winter to keep their lights, power and heating on because they must prepay for energy but cannot afford to. Overall this project helps many customers who are struggling to put credit on their gas or electric meters.

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Negotiated without a prior call for competition

- The works, supplies or services can be provided only by a particular economic operator for the following reason:

- absence of competition for technical reasons

Explanation:

These services are only able to be delivered by this independent charity.

The Fuel Bank Foundation (FBF) is an independent charity that aims to support families who pay in advance for energy, typically via a prepayment energy meter and are at risk of self-disconnection or severe rationing or indeed have self-disconnected. Self-disconnection is an unfortunate term: people don't choose to self-disconnect, when the money runs out the electricity and gas switch off too. And in the current climate we are seeing more people than ever turn to the Foundation for much-needed support.

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: No

Section V. Award of contract/concession

Title

VCMA project - Fuel Bank Foundation - Further expand Fuel Bank across Northern England - Extension

A contract/lot is awarded: Yes

V.2) Award of contract/concession

V.2.1) Date of conclusion of the contract

5 February 2025

V.2.2) Information about tenders

The contract has been awarded to a group of economic operators: No

V.2.3) Name and address of the contractor/concessionaire

Fuel Bank Foundation

Staffordshire

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UKG2 - Shropshire and Staffordshire

Companies House

Fuel Bank Foundation

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

No

V.2.4) Information on value of contract/lot/concession (excluding VAT)

Initial estimated total value of the contract/lot/concession: £698,150

Total value of the contract/lot/concession: £698,150

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

Northern Gas Networks

Leeds

Country

United Kingdom