

Verian Group UK Ltd

Attn: [REDACTED]

By email to: [REDACTED]

Date: 10/10/2024

Your ref: n/a

Our ref: PS24231

Dear, [REDACTED]

Behavioural Science Call-off Framework - RAF067/2324

PS24030

Award of contract for the supply of Public understanding of carbon budgets and engagement with net zero policy pathways PS24231

Thank you for submitting a response for Public understanding of carbon budgets and engagement with net zero policy pathways through PS24030 – Behavioural Science Call-off Framework - RAF067/2324 we are pleased to award this contract to you.

This letter and its Schedule(s) set out the terms of the Contract between:

- (1) Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, a statutory corporation whose registered office is at 3-8 Whitehall Place, London, SW1A 2EG (“DESNZ”); and
- (2) Verian Group UK Ltd, with company number 13663077 whose registered office is at 4 Millbank, London, SW1P 3JA (the “Supplier”).

Unless the context otherwise requires, capitalised expressions used in this Award Letter have the same meanings as in the terms and conditions of contract PS24030 – Behavioural Science Call-off Framework - RAF067/2324 set out in Schedule 5 to this Award Letter.

For the purposes of the Contract, DESNZ and the Supplier agree as follows:

Term

- 1 Commencement Date: 14/10/2024
- 2 Expiry Date: 31/03/2025
- 3 The terms and conditions of this Contract shall apply throughout any extended period.

Description of Goods and/or Services

- 4 The Specification of the Services to be delivered is as set out in Schedule 11.
- 5 The Suppliers response is set out in Schedule 3

Charges & Payment

- 6 The Charges for the Services shall be as set out in Schedule 22.

- 7 All invoices should be sent, quoting a valid purchase order number, to:
ap@uksbs.co.uk

To avoid delay in payment it is important that the invoice is compliant and that it includes a valid PO Number, PO Number item number (if applicable). Non-compliant invoices will be sent back to you, which may lead to a delay in payment. If you have a query regarding an outstanding payment please contact our Accounts Payable section by email to ap@uksbs.co.uk

We thank you for your co-operation to date and look forward to forging a successful working relationship resulting in a smooth and successful supply of the Services. Please confirm your acceptance of the award of this contract by signing and returning the enclosed copy of this letter to professionalservices@uksbs.co.uk. No other form of acknowledgement will be accepted. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications relating to this contract.

Yours faithfully,

Signed for and on behalf of Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

Signature:

..  .

Name:



Position:



Date:



We accept the terms set out in this Award Letter and the Schedule(s).

Signed for and on behalf of Verian Group UK Ltd

Signature:



Name:



Position:



Date:



Schedule 1 - Specification

1 The Suppliers shall provide the Services in accordance with this Schedule

Background to the Requirement

In 2019, the UK became the first major economy in the world to legislate for a binding net zero target, committing to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. A large proportion of reductions in emissions in the Government's net zero pathway will require the public to make changes to their everyday lives. This will range from adopting low-carbon heating, electric vehicles or choosing more sustainable products¹. In addition, the public will see wider changes in their local communities, including new clean energy infrastructure. Public support and willingness to participate in the net zero transition is critical. Evidence shows that across the UK, 89% of people are aware of the concept of net zero and 84% agree that if everyone does their bit, we can reduce the effects of climate change¹. In another recent national survey, 87% wanted to hear more about the measures to achieve net zero². This demonstrates that the public is somewhat engaged in the path towards net zero and there is appetite to hear more. However, evidence is lacking on how best to communicate our pathway to net zero and involve people in decision making on issues extending so far into the future.

Our pathway to net zero involves meeting a series of carbon budgets between now and 2050³. The next to be set is the Seventh Carbon Budget (CB7), which will run from 2038 to 2042, with a statutory deadline to set the target by 30 June 2026. For decarbonisation over the 2030s and beyond, we anticipate that many of the actions for abating emissions will be more visible and require greater public acceptability and action than those taken to date, for example impacting how we travel and heat our homes.

DESNZ want to understand public views and ability to engage on our net zero pathway, including how we communicate and could involve the public in the development of carbon budgets, to ensure that their perspectives are represented as part of the broader democratic discussion on how we meet our climate commitments. This will help to inform the department's overall approaches to public participation. Understanding how best to present our carbon budgets targets and the associated delivery plans to the public, alongside the wider net zero pathway, is also crucial to maintaining public support for the actions needed to remain on track for net zero.

Public participation in the context of our proposed research refers to communications, information provision and raising awareness in relation to:

- i. individual net zero and sustainable behaviours the public can undertake themselves e.g. installing a heat pump and/or insulation measures.
- ii. increasing understanding, awareness and acceptability of wider infrastructure changes being made as part of the net zero transition e.g. infrastructure network.

The proposed research will support us in understanding public views on possible pathways to net zero (in line with Government commitments in this area) and support our strategic approach to public participation as part of delivering the Clean Energy Superpower Mission.

Research Aims and Questions

This project has three overarching research questions, each with sub-questions within.

¹ DESNZ Public Attitudes Tracker Winter 2023 results <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-winter-2023>

² DESNZ Energy and Net Zero Winter 2023 results (awaiting publication).

³ DESNZ Carbon Budgets guidance <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/carbon-budgets>

- 1) **How much do the public understand about carbon, net zero, and related terms and do they want to increase their level of literacy?**
 - a. How carbon literate is the UK population and how does this vary by demographics?
 - b. Do the public want to be literate on net zero related terms, and if so, how would people like to increase their carbon literacy?
 - c. Would enhanced carbon literacy for the public be useful in engaging the public on carbon budgets and net zero?
- 2) **Does the public want to be involved in the setting of carbon budgets and wider net zero policy development and what type of engagement would they want?**
 - a. Do the public feel that they have enough of a say in the development of carbon budgets and net zero policies?
 - b. How do the public think their perspective should be considered in the setting of carbon budgets and policy design (e.g., direct consultation, engagement with civil society representatives)? Does this differ depending on the specific type/element of policy being considered?
 - c. Are there organisations that they trust to speak on their behalf?
 - d. Do the public think they have the knowledge and tools needed to engage in the way that they want to?
- 3) **What kind of information and materials do the public need to understand the overall net zero transition?**
 - a. Is it helpful to set out information sector-by-sector, or for different groups?
 - b. Is setting out the wider vision and strategy for net zero by 2050 helpful? Why/why not?
 - c. How do participants find projecting out to future scenarios and giving preferences on these options?⁴

What are the best methods for talking to the public about decisions decades into the future?

Suggested Approach

Our proposed methodology is indicated below, although we also welcome suggestions from suppliers in their bid. To best answer the above research questions, we expect that this project would require focus groups and an online survey. We encourage the successful supplier to apply a behavioural lens throughout the project to assess any barriers to consumers engaging with carbon budgets and net zero pathways, and to identify any behaviourally-informed opportunities to make these topics more effective in engaging the public.

Stage 1: Consumer focus groups

We suggest a set of five focus groups with the public. The focus groups will explore the public's understanding of the purpose and language used in carbon budgets (and net zero more broadly), what role they could realistically play in setting of future carbon budgets and how they could best be engaged. We expect the successful supplier to use qualitative methods and behavioural science to understand participants' ability and motivation to engage on carbon budgets and net zero more widely, and deliberative techniques to help explain complexities of new concepts to participants.

Beyond discussion to answer the research questions, there should be the use and testing of various materials and approaches to presenting future pathways. Pre/post-group

⁴ We note that answering this research question will be more difficult than the other questions, likely with no straightforward conclusions. The sub-questions will be a helpful guide to drawing out positives and negatives to engaging the public in this way.

activities could also be considered to allow for a more deliberative approach, and encourage participants to think about the topic ahead of their participation. More innovative methods could also be applied, such as the use of a game (e.g. <https://ig.ft.com/climate-game/>, for inspiration) to explore the challenges and difficulties people may face when thinking about future scenarios and decisions, and to explore what may improve this (testing best practice methods from literature).

Methodological approach including sample:

- We suggest five focus groups, lasting 90 minutes, with 6-10 participants each (total sample size of at least 40 participants). Suppliers should suggest the optimum number of focus groups, split and number of attendees and justify this choice. Suppliers may also want to consider splitting participants by specific characteristics (e.g. environmental attitudes) if appropriate.
- Sample must be broadly representative of the UK public. Suppliers should source the sample and provide a breakdown of their sampling and recruitment approach to ensure coverage across the defined sample. Minimum quotas will be agreed with the successful supplier.
- Focus groups can be conducted online or in-person; justification should be given for the decision either way.
- Incentives may be required. These should be costed for within the total budget, be cost-effective and justified.

Stage 2: Online survey questions

We suggest the successful supplier then uses online survey questions to test key themes from the focus groups and obtain generalisable findings from a representative group of the UK public. Note that a random probability sample would be deemed most adequate for this research, given the need to generate reliable, quantitative measures across the population. From the survey, we also would be interested to explore any correlations between carbon literacy and knowledge of, or attitudes towards, carbon budgets and/or net zero pathways.

We also would like the successful supplier to consider the merits and feasibility of including an experimental aspect to the survey to explore, for example, how the framing of carbon budgets and net zero pathways in public engagement impacts how engaged the public feels in the UK's path to Net Zero. Alternatively, it could look to test different futures framings on levels of engagement.

Methodological approach including sample:

- The survey is expected to last 10-20 minutes (depending on inclusion of experimental aspect)
- Suppliers should outline their predicted response rate and ideally achieve a minimum of 500 responses, or more if possible.
- We suggest a random probability sampling approach. Suppliers are expected to outline their sampling approach in detail. This should cover how representativeness will be achieved. Utilising pre-existing access to a random probability panel could help to achieve samples required within tight timelines.
- Ideally, results would be nationally representative for the UK, including to demographic sub-groups such as gender, age, income, region, and education level.
- Incentives may be required and should be costed for within the total budget. Suppliers should outline their justification and cost-effective approach to incentives. Suppliers should also describe their approach to inviting participants to take part and any reminders.

Any challenges contractors may face

A challenge is facilitating focus groups on a complex topic that consumers will likely find difficult to understand and engage with. The successful supplier may receive varied

views from participants in the workshop who want to stray off topic to talk about broader issues like climate change or cost of living. To mitigate this, we suggest piloting material and undertaking cognitive testing prior to commencing the workshops. The response to this bid should include a clear plan for how they will handle this and any other risks that may arise in the workshops.

Desired Outputs

Prior to the focus groups (Nov 2024):

- **Methodology and focus group materials:** A document explaining sampling, recruitment strategy, focus group materials and topic guides. We expect this to be co-produced with DESNZ who will consider and discuss this with policy teams before the fieldwork starts

Post focus groups (Dec 2024):

- **Initial findings:** Short presentation/ discussion of emerging findings in December.

Online survey (Jan 2025):

- **Methodology and survey materials:** A document explaining sampling and survey design. We expect this to be co-produced with DESNZ who will consider and discuss this with policy teams before the fieldwork starts.
- **Cognitive testing / piloting:** Brief summary of cognitive testing / piloting findings, highlighting any issues arising.
- **Raw data:** All raw data to be shared with DESNZ to allow possible secondary analysis.

Reporting (Feb 2025):

- **Final presentation:** 1-1.5hr presentation giving an overview of the themes derived from the focus groups and survey results, in addition to recommendations, with time for DESNZ colleagues to ask questions and seek clarification.
- **Report outline:** This should be shared before the drafting of the final report starts. Should include section structure and brief description of key points that will be included in each section.
- **Final report:** This should be publishable and provided in both Word and Pdf formats. Accessibility requirements will need to be applied to the final report. It should include: Brief introduction. Full analysis of all focus groups. Full analysis of survey results. Best practice guidelines for presenting carbon budgets and net zero pathways. This document will also include a full methodology section as an Annex. The report will be no longer than 30 pages (excluding annex).

All outputs must meet normal DESNZ reporting guidelines (per Behavioural Framework terms). This includes ensuring accessibility standards are met.

We expect that at least three drafts will be needed to reach the finalised report and these drafts should be delivered with sufficient time built in for review and comments (at least 3 working days for DESNZ to provide comments at each review round). Each draft must be proof-read and delivered at a professional and publishable standard and incorporate accessibility requirements.

Project Management

The following is expected throughout the contract:

- Weekly project meetings with the project team to update on progress. The agenda for these meetings should be provided by the contractor (with the

option for DESNZ colleagues to add to it). A read out should be shared by the contractor after the meeting detailing respective actions and any agreements made.

- Where both DESNZ and the contractor agree that no weekly meeting is needed, an email update should be provided.

The successful supplier will be expected to manage a project tracker and risk log which DESNZ colleagues have access to. This should be updated weekly.

Ethical and Delivery Risks

Subject area of research: Discussion of some changes which people may be legislated to make on our net zero pathway, such as energy efficiency, home heating, and policies related to these topics may be stressful for research participants, given current cost of living concerns. We will ensure that topic guides highlight this risk, so that interviewers treat these subjects sensitively. Participants will have the opportunity to withdraw from the research at any point. This risk should be managed by providing comprehensive information on the details of the research subjects ahead of the research. Furthermore, the salience of this issue makes this research increasingly relevant, therefore this risk must be managed rather than avoided.

Difficult to engage participants in carbon budgets or long-term thinking: It may be that this research finds that people do not want to be engaged in carbon budgets, as they don't want to be engaged with that level of granularity. It may also be that participants struggle to engage with the kind of long-term decision making required of carbon budget 7 and beyond. We are genuinely interested in this possibility and would invite the contractor to propose an alternative view on how to approach policy and public engagement. Should this emerge, then we would want to proactively adjust methodology (and wording) as needed to focus on net zero pathways, as feasible within the remaining research activities and within budget commitments.

Timetable

Key targets and milestones are listed below. Details of these can be seen in the desired outputs section above (Section 5). These timelines can be somewhat flexible, providing the completion date of March 2025 is met. All work must be completed this financial year.

- **October 2024:** (1) Project inception
- **November 2024:** (1) Draft methodology document for the recruitment strategy and focus groups and (2) Conduct 5 focus groups
- **December 2024:** (1) Presentation of initial findings from the focus groups and (2) Develop an interim findings report
- **January 2025:** (1) Draft methodology document for the survey, (2) cognitive piloting of the survey, and (3) survey delivery
- **February 2025:** (1) Continued survey delivery and (2) Initial development of final reporting materials

March 2025: (1) Reporting materials continued and delivered

Schedule 2 - Charges

- 1 The Charges for the Services shall be as set out in this Schedule 2. The total contract is £69,907.25 excluding VAT.



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Schedule3 -SuppliersResponse



