

Shaping Our Electricity Future (SOEF) Advisory Council Meeting #8 Minutes



Date: May 21st 2024

Time: 10:30 - 16:00

Venue: Hilton Hotel, Belfast, Northern Ireland

Chairs: Eoin Kennedy, Alan Campbell

Council Member Attendees:

Name	Representing
Alan McHugh (online)	Consultancy
Brian Diskin (online)	DECC
Donal Smith (online)	Renewables
Federico Londono (online)	Manufacturer
Frank Burke	Storage
Jag Basi	Conv. Production
John Fitzgerald (online)	New Technology
Jonathan Pollock (online)	NIE Networks (DSO)
Kate Garth	Renewables
Margaret Nee (online)	Renewables
Marie Therese Campbell	UR
Mark Alexander	TSO
Michael Conlon (online)	Academia
Neil Morris (online)	Large Energy Users
Noel Cunniffe (online)	Renewables
Paddy Finn (online)	Demand Response
Patrick Mohr	Consultancy
Peter Harte (online)	New Technology
Robert O'Rourke	CRU
Robin McCormick (online)	Consultancy
Rory Mullan (online)	Renewables
Teresa Fallon	ESB Networks (DSO)
Thomas O'Sullivan (online)	Large Energy Users
John Whelan (online)	ESB Networks (DSO)

Apologies:

Name	Representing
Brian Mongan	Demand Response
David Hill (Jonathan Pollock attended in place of David Hill)	NIE Networks (DSO)
Fred Mitchell	Large Energy Users
Jane McArdle	Renewables
Nicholas Harvey	TSO
Paul Blount	Renewables
Seamus Howard	Manufacturer
Tony Hearne (John Whelan attended in place of Tony Hearne)	ESB Networks (DSO)
Trevor Harron (Jonathan Pollock attended in place of Trevor Harron)	NIE Networks (DSO)
Zoe Crowe	DfE

[Introduction](#) - Eoin Kennedy, Alan Campbell, TSOs

- Eoin Kennedy and Alan Campbell welcomed members and guests.

[SOEF v1.1 Q&A](#) - Workstream Leads, TSOs

- **TSOs** provided an update across the four main workstreams of Markets, Operations, Networks and Engagement to prompt the Q&A session.
- **Note: Member** asked if RoCoF would change to align with future operational changes. The TSOs confirmed that the 1 Hz per sec RoCoF programme was closed out last year and this RoCoF standard is not expected to change.
- **Note: Member** requested a roadmap on Hybrids to ensure industry could be mobilised and ready - momentum needed. The TSOs confirmed that a roadmap is not yet available and that the timing of same would be based on regulatory decisions.
- **Note: Member** requested an update on the progress of the North-South Interconnector and noted the high level of constraints in Northern Ireland until the North-South Interconnector is built. The TSOs confirmed that of the 400 landowners on the North-South Interconnector, a significant number has gone through the voluntary process. For those who haven't engaged in the voluntary process, their files are transferring to ESNB who will make the Section 45 application to CRU who in turn is responsible for the 'special order' process and determination.
- **Note: Member** asked if it would be possible to reduce the must run requirement for synchronous generators in Northern Ireland from three to two in advance of the delivery of synchronous condensers. The TSOs confirmed that relaxing this constraint would be challenging without having more inertia on the Northern Ireland system. Low Carbon Inertia Services (LCIS) is critical for that change, but more studies are needed.
- **Note: Member** noted that even with all the candidate reinforcements (in SOEF v1.0 and v1.1) completed, constraint reports are showing high level of constraints. A path to reduce constraints was requested. The TSOs confirmed that Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios (TES) would seek to address constraints beyond the 2030 plan.
- **Note: Member** noted that Long Duration Energy Storage (LDES) could become a substitute for candidate reinforcements. The TSOs did not agree that all candidate reinforcements would be displaced by LDES but that it may help in the right locations. The TSOs agreed that LDES has a role to play but that it would not negate the need for reinforcements on the network. The TSOs issued a Call for Evidence on LDES which received a good response. The TSOs are engaging with the RAs on how to move on same.
- **Note: TSO (EirGrid)** provided information in relation to Renewable HUBs as some questions were raised during the SOEF 1.1 Q/A session. EirGrid is currently analysing the 4 HUBs indicated in SOEF 1.1. These HUBs will collect large scale renewable generation projects (several hundred MW). EirGrid has been engaging with both CRU and DECC on the topic of transmission renewable HUBs and this engagement is still ongoing. The matter is also part of the DECC ARE Task Force Connection Policy & Implementation Working Group.
- **Note:** Transmission system renewable HUBs include various layers and matters and EirGrid is undertaking work in relation to three themes:
 - Future proofing of stations in both Network Reinforcements and Customer Connections (Station Level HUBs - Cables oversized (TSO/DSO) & Extra bays and land acquired)
 - Development approach for Regional HUB stations and Network (take opportunity to resolve network capacity shortages in combination with 'shallow connections' of Customers)
 - Development of potential enduring process for HUB development in our path to Net Zero in a fair and transparent method
- **Note: Member** questioned how the above approach is in line with the SOEF plan led approach. TSO acknowledged that we are in a transition period between developer led and plan led approach when we consider customer connections. As the HUBs mentioned in SOEF 1.1 are being analysed, EirGrid will need to take developers plans in these areas into account as they may already have advanced developed plans.
- **Note: Member** questioned how best the Advisory Council members should review the Networks update which reported a RAG status of green given the high level of risks. The TSOs confirmed that the bulk of candidate reinforcements are in the Framework for Grid Development and that the DLR projects can be delivered relatively quickly. The TSOs proposed that members request specific updates in advance of Advisory Council meetings if there is certain presentation material, they require in the Networks update.
- **Note: TSOs** confirmed that extensive engagement is ongoing to expedite grid delivery. The Dublin Infrastructure Forum is working very well and since its inception has eliminated the need for an additional 22km of cable in the road networks. An information campaign on bulk supply points will be launched shortly. EirGrid is currently supporting DECC engaging coastal communities as part of the consultation on DMAPS attending briefings and information events.
- **Note: Member** noted that in relation to the Future Arrangements for System Services (FASS) programme, there is uncertainty in how the DASSA and LPF will work together. The TSOs confirmed that it would address this point and provide further clarity during the upcoming industry workshop scheduled for 5th June 2024. The TSOs confirmed that they perform the consultations on detailed design and subsequently provide recommendations to the Regulatory Authorities. The TSOs asked members to review the call for nominations for the System Services Code Working Group which has a closing date of end May 2024.

[Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios](#) - Ben Coultate, David Noronha, David McGowan, TSOs

- **TSOs** gave a presentation on Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios which was published on 16th May 2024.

- **Note:** TSOs confirmed that TES included a diverse range of scenarios and a balanced portfolio across each scenario. TES follows the policy framework from government, it builds on SOEF and looks beyond 2030. The TSOs acknowledged the need for further engagement as TES is an iterative process.
- **Note: Member** queried if analysis had been carried out on using the gas network for hydrogen and the cost of maintaining a gas network that could potentially be used very little in the future. Member suggested that a policy on the European funding model was needed to finance the transition for both gas and electricity networks.
- **Note:** TSOs noted the concept of exporting electricity and how scenario planning in each country is aimed at each country.
- **Note: Member** noted the high levels of imports on interconnectors which was leading to increased levels of dispatch down which in turn may drive up auction bids.
- **Note: Member** warned against jumping to conclusions as the scenarios in TES are not risk assessed or costed.

Grid Delivery in Northern Ireland - Rónán Davison-Kernan, Gareth Brown, SONI TSO

- **SONI TSO** gave a presentation on Grid Delivery in Northern Ireland.
- **Note: TSO (SONI)** noted that the existing distribution cluster policy has been very successful with 800MW+ of wind connected at 33kV. There are two transmission connected windfarms in Northern Ireland. Transmission Clusters more likely in the future (equivalent of renewable hubs in Ireland). RESS auctions are expected to take place in Northern Ireland in 2025. Two contracts have been awarded in Northern Ireland for Low Carbon Inertia Services. The benefits of batteries and Long Duration Energy Storage were highlighted to reduce constraints, provide voltage support and enable high renewables uptake. Magherakeel - Omagh Dynamic Line Rating (DLR) identified as primary focus of DLR working group.
- **Note: TSO (SONI)** took us through the key points of the Grid Acceleration Project. Winner approach adopted to identify areas of acceleration. Several areas for acceleration identified across a range of themes within SONI's control. Next steps to be worked through.

Members Discussion: "What Makes a Consultation Process Effective?" - Jag Basi, Member

- **Jag Basi** gave a presentation on "What Makes a Consultation Process Effective?" through collaboration with Electricity Association of Ireland. **NOTE:** presentation was focused on industry-focused consultations (e.g. market changes) and not on the consultation / stakeholder engagement approaches used for grid infrastructure projects.
- **Note: Member** requested earlier engagement, desk-top research for others to consider, bring industry on the journey from the outset. The member stated that a considerable amount of work is completed before it is consulted on, and industry is given a 6-week window to respond. The industry needs time and needs to be able to consider all options and alternatives. Co-creation of solutions is preferred by industry, experience of industry would support the process.
- **Note: TSOs** support co-creation of solutions and such an approach is already in place with the many bi-lateral meetings and workshops taking place across the market change programmes.
- **Note: RAs** asked what a quick win would like in terms of consultations. Member responded suggesting an 8-week response window as a minimum. RAs further questioned if it would be appropriate to stagger the consultations. Members responded that staggering consultations and increasing the response times would inevitably add more time and create longer consultations.
- **Note: Member** confirmed that the timing of consultations is not always clear and that the outcomes /decisions from RAs can take too long; a decision on one consultation could determine how one would respond to the next consultation.
- **Note: Member** advised that refining the problem before solutions are put forward would be very helpful.

HV Interface Forum - Louise O'Flanagan, Jason Kenna, EirGrid TSO

- **EirGrid TSO** gave a presentation on the HV Interface Forum.
- **Note: TSO (EirGrid)** confirmed that the HV Interface Forum is well-established. A Cooperation Agreement is in place (EirGrid, ESB, DECC, CRU, TII, CCMA & DoT). It is supported by five working groups:
 1. WG1 - North Connacht
 2. WG2 - Transitional Projects
 3. WG3 - Engagement Framework
 4. WG4 - Costs & Liabilities
 5. WG5 - Enduring Standards & Protocols

Progress made in all Working Groups and engagement is ongoing.

Members Discussion: Heat Section - Thomas O'Sullivan, Member

- **Thomas O'Sullivan** gave a presentation on the Heat Sector.
- **Note: Member** spoke about the new Electric Boiler (25MW) at the Aughinish Alumina plant, the constant need for heat in their manufacturing processes, very efficient unit, arrived on a single truck, no planning permission needed as housed indoors, no EPA licences needed as no emissions from boiler, a first of its kind in Ireland, essentially acts like a "big kettle", plans progressing for a further three electric boilers at the plant.

- **Note: Member** distinguished between thermal storage and battery storage; “thermal storage is coming” featured heavily throughout the presentation. It was highlighted that there is a need for industry to inform solutions.
- **Note: Member** stated that heat should be added to TES as there is huge potential from heat e.g. district heating.

Joint Outage Transformation Programme - Niall Kearns, Philip Kennedy, TAO, TSO

- **Niall Kearns (ESBN)** and **Philip Kennedy (EirGrid)** provided a briefing on the transmission outage review and the development of the joint outage transformation programme and roadmap.
- **Note: SOs** noted that success of the Joint Outage Transformation Programme is critical to the delivery of the Climate Action Plan (CAP). To meet electrification and renewable energy targets by 2030, significant change and investment is needed. The scale and pace of change to deliver the required renewables and electrification is exceptional. The JOTP's 18 interventions have the best potential for the scale of step-change impact needed by 2030 and are spread across 7 workstreams (Project Delivery, System, Programme, Regulatory, Policy, I&T, Customer and Industry). Initiatives are underway or being considered, improvements are transitioning into BAU to deliver exponential benefit across the NDP/integrated programme. Collaboration by all stakeholders across the end-to-end system is needed to deliver this scale of change including the industry and customers.

Housekeeping - Actions Follow-up, AC Member Refresh - Edel Leddin, TSO

- **TSOs** provided an update on Future Meeting Calendar, Actions from Previous Meeting/s, Feedback from Advisory Council Members, Advisory Council Member Survey (Jan 2024) and Advisory Council Member Refresh.
- **Note: TSOs** noted that the next Advisory Council meeting AC#9 will take place on Tues 24th Sept in Dublin. ACM#10, ACM#11 and ACM#12 will take place in March, June and October 2025 respectively.
- **Note: TSOs** confirmed that all actions from previous AC meetings were closed except for one on a TSO/DSO Operating Model Information Paper owned by EirGrid and ESBN.
 - **Action: Members** requested that EirGrid and ESB Networks consider publication of an information paper to set out the thinking and work done to date with conceptual worked examples to support understanding of the potential impacts. (**See Action # 17**)
- **Note: TSOs** noted that AC members had been requested to provide feedback on several questions raised at previous AC meetings on Working Groups, Delivery Challenges, Markets Programme Value Assessment, Programme Approval & Funding and Integrated Market Plans. The response levels were poor with 1-3 responses received on each question asked. Member requested that another opportunity be afforded to those who did not respond to the questions. The TSOs highlighted the importance of a good response rate from members of the Advisory Council to provide advice to the TSOs.
 - **Action: Members** to respond to **Actions #3, #6, #12, #14, #15 and #16.**
- **Note: TSOs** noted that there were 7 respondents to the survey that issued after the Advisory Council #7 in January 2024. TSOs asked members to take the time to respond to surveys as the TSOs will use the feedback to make the Advisory Council as efficient and as effective as possible. Feedback confirmed that presentation material is relevant and clear, the need for more breakout sessions and workshops, members confirmed that they are provided with opportunities to provide input and support, members' views and concerns are acknowledged /addressed, members have a better understanding of progress against SOEF milestones, notwithstanding that there is always room for improvement.
- **Note: TSOs** confirmed that as part of the Advisory Council Membership Refresh that it had received Expressions of Interest from 19 current AC members and 28 new applicants. The TSOs will endeavor to announce the membership by 30th June 2024.

Closing Messages - Eoin Kennedy, Alan Campbell, TSOs

- Next meeting to be conducted in Dublin, in September.
- The slide presentations, meeting minutes, and actions will issue to the Council following this meeting.

Meeting Actions

#	Topic	Action	Owner	Due	Meeting Xref
3	SOEF Cross-Programme Working Groups	AC Members to submit their ideas for the types of working groups that will benefit progression of the various SOEF programmes.	AC Members	ACM #9	Introduction
6	Delivery Challenges – Input from AC Members	AC Members asked to consider the questions posed during the SOEF v1.1 update and revert with their thoughts. Shown on slide 13 of the ACM #7 presentation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How might we work together more in mitigation these challenges? How can the Advisory Council Support? 	AC Members	ACM #9	SOEF v1.1 Reporting
12	Markets Programmes Value Assessment	Advisory Council Members are asked to take away the markets programmes information and provide input on whether these were the right list of programmes and on the programmes' value and complexity from their perspective	Members	ACM #9	Workshop: Markets Programmes Value Assessment
14	Markets Programmes Value Assessment	Advisory Council Members are asked to consider the two questions posed in the workshop: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Q1: <i>Can the industry support delivery of multiple large market change programmes?</i> Q2: <i>Does this list miss any markets change programmes?</i> 	Members	ACM #9	Workshop: Markets Programmes Value Assessment
15	Programme Approval and Funding	Members and TSO are asked to consider and respond to the following questions posed by an Advisory Council Member: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Is the current system of proposing and approving programme funding fit-for-purpose for the scale and speed of change?”</i> <i>Could industry author/co-author a proposed way forward for efficient programme approval and funding?”</i> 	Members TSOs	ACM #9	SOEF v1.1 Reporting
16	Integrated Markets Plan	During the Markets Update, the TSOs posed a question to members: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Can the Advisory Council provide guidance as to how we can develop such a shared integrated plan? 	Members	ACM #9	SEOF v1.1 Markets Update
17	EirGrid / ESB Networks TSO-DSO Operating Model	Members requested that EirGrid and ESB Networks consider publication of an information paper to set out the thinking and work done to date with conceptual worked examples to support understanding of the potential impacts.	EirGrid ESB Networks	ACM #9	Workshop: EirGrid/ESB Networks TSO-DSO Operating Model

#	Topic	Action	Owner	Due	Meeting Xref
18	Regulatory Consultations	TSO members to advise on how we mitigate the risk of industry engaging at consultation stage only rather than earlier in the process.	Members	ACM #9	Members Discussion: “What Makes a Consultation Process Effective?”