

Connection Customer Steering Group

Notes from the meeting held 24th February 2021 via Zoom

Present:

Olly Frankland	Regen SW	Alex Spreadbury	B&Q
Bean Beanland	Heat Pump Federation	Paul Graham	Sembcorp Energy UK
Hugh Taylor	Roadnight Taylor Ltd	Simon Dawson	GTC
Jordan Earlye	Aptus Utilities	Charles Deacon	Renewable Connections
Mark Tanner	Power Systems UK	James Barker	Electrical Testing Ltd
Edd Kenney-Herbert	Tesla	Mark Boyce	UCSM
Rahala Miah	Chargemaster	Pelin Morgan	UK Power Solutions
Andrew Maddams	Chargemaster	Gareth Jones	Leep Utilities
Helen Stack	Centrica	Lucy Naughton	Jack Jay
Patrick Smart	RES Group	Steve Gist	TUSC
Alison Sleightholm	WPD Resources and External Affairs Director	Grant Rogers	WPD Connections Policy Engineer
Tim Hughes	WPD Connections Policy Manager	Kester Jones	WPD Distribution Manager West Midlands
Vanessa Buxton	WPD Connections Policy Engineer		
Penny Carolan	WPD Connections Policy Coordinator		
Kate Sheehan	WPD Connections Policy Coordinator		

1. Introduction

Tim Hughes welcomed everyone and introduced the agenda for the day.

2. Director's Update

Alison Sleightholm gave an overview introducing WPDs first draft Business Plan for RIIO-ED2.

The presentation included;

- Our stakeholder engagement programme (4500 Stakeholders engaged)
- Co-creation with stakeholders
- What we have published
- Headlines of our plan – 67 Core Commitments
- Questions we would like you to answer
- Review of our consultation document by stakeholders

Alison informed SG members that WPD had published the first draft of its Business Plan in January 2021. An accompanying consultation seeking stakeholder views on the precise targets and/or suggest alternative commitments has also been issued.

Highlights included the fact that WPDs proposed an investment in the network for RIIO-ED2 period 2023-2028 is circa £6 billion. Alison also gave an overview of the 67 proposed core commitments, covering Ofgem's 3 core consumer-facing outputs.

Alison gave an overview on how stakeholders could download the first draft business plan and contribute to the consultation via our website.

<https://yourpowerfuture.westernpower.co.uk/have-your-say/riioed2-business-plan-consultation>

4. ICE Update and Moving Forward into RIIO-ED2

Penny Carolan, provided an update on ICE.

Looking Back and Looking Forward report published in May 2020 and available on our website www.westernpower.co.uk/ice.

Ofgem confirmed that all DNO's had met the minimum ICE Criteria for 2019/20

The Ofgem Final Decision Letter did include some areas of concern:

- ✓ Connections information and information systems rollout
- ✓ Request for additional information / engagement on the Distribution Service Operator ('DSO') transition
- ✓ Issues in the connections process relating to customer service
- ✓ Electricity Connections Offer Expenses and the concerns stakeholders raised in its application
- ✓ Reforms to the ICE process

Penny explained Ofgem's specific concerns against each of the subject areas.

Penny presented an overview of the current ICE 2020/21 plan and highlighted a selection of actions from the plan that had been completed.

The presentation covered;

- Heat Pump Strategy
- Community Energy & Innovation Jargon Buster
- Opening AMN Zones
- Distributed Generation Owner Operator Portal
- Connections Interactivity
- Motorway Services EV Charging

Penny concluded the ICE update by mentioning that WPD is starting to draw up the NEW ICE 2021/22 plan. She requested that SG members flag up any actions that might merit consideration for inclusion in the new Plan.

Stakeholder Comment (Alex Spreadbury)

Dismayed that Ofgem i had only just realised that Electricity Connections Offer Expenses was an area of concern from a customer point of view.

5. WPD's Connections Strategy: A Plan for RIIO-ED2

Tim Hughes introduced the Major customer's connections strategy relating to Ofgem's proposals for improving service standards for major connections customers. The Connections Strategy will be aligned to three high-level connection principles and twenty associated baseline expectations for performance.

DNO Connections Strategies should align with three high level principles and associated baseline standards;

Connection Principles	
Connection Principle 1	Support connection stakeholders prior to application by providing accurate, comprehensive and user friendly information
Connection Principle 2	Deliver value for customers by ensuring simplicity and transparency through the applications process
Connection Principle 3	Facilitate the delivery of timely and economical connections that meet customers' needs

Tim, then broke down the connection principles, inviting Stakeholder views/comments on how WPD should meet the baseline expectations under RIIO-ED2.

The group then disseminated into three 'break-out' rooms to discuss each Connection Principle and its associated baseline expectations SG members were invited to provide feedback on how WPD could develop initiatives to meet the baseline expectations.

During each feedback session the SG members were asked;

- What can we do to meet each of these baseline expectations?
- What would differentiate us in providing new connections from other DNOs?

Tim rounded up the session by outlining the next steps for the Connections Strategy. SG members were thanked for their input and advised that all feedback would be collated under one document and circulated in due course for information purposes.

6. Summary and Next Steps

Tim thanked the SG members for attending and invited general feedback.

Alison, also thanked the SG members and hoped that our next meeting may be face to face at Gloucester.

- Minutes and slides will be uploaded onto our website

<https://yourpowerfuture.westernpower.co.uk/our-engagement-groups/connection-customer-steering-group>

Future CCSG meetings:

Dates	Topics
Wednesday 23 rd June 2021	TBC
Wednesday 27 th October 2021	TBC