

Public

Meeting minutes

Independent Stakeholder Group – Meeting (Virtual)

Date: 05/02/2026 **Location:** MS Teams

Start: 09:30 **End:** 12:00

Participants

Attendee	Attend/Regrets	Attendee	Attend/Regrets
Nina Skorupska (chair)	Attend	Rosie McGlynn	Attend
Claire Dykta – NESO	Attend	Andy Manning	Attend
Rachel Smith – NESO	Attend	Stuart Cotten	Attend
Carole Hook – NESO	Attend	Goran Strbac	Attend
Paul Golby – NESO	Attend	Amanda Webb	Attend
Aaron Ludford – NESO	Attend	Janine Michael	Attend
Natasha Antill – NESO	Attend	Nick Sillito	Attend
Simon Targett – NESO	Attend	Janet Wood	Attend
Vicki Mustard – NESO	Attend	David Mitchell	Attend
Marko Grizelj	Attend	Elizabeth Allkins	Regrets
Sam Mackilligin	Regrets	Trevor Hutchings	Attend
Andy Wainwright	Attend	Gregory Edwards	Attend
Tony Green	Attend	Rachel Fletcher	Attend
Ian Radley	Attend	Mark Fitch	Attend

Agenda

Topics to be discussed

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Welcome and introduction | Nina S |
| 2. Conflicts of interest, minutes review from previous meeting | Nina S |

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3.	Q&A with Paul Goldby	Paul G
4.	Since we last met...	Claire D
5.	NESOI Latest	Carole H
6.	Enduring Framework Workshop	Rachel S & Simon T
7.	ISG Future	Nina S & Vicki M
8.	AOB and next steps	Nina S

Discussion and details

#	Topics discussed
1.	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <p>Nina opened the session, welcomed members and outlined the agenda.</p> <p>She welcomed Paul Golby the Chair of NESO's board, to his first ISG Session.</p>
2.	<p>Conflict of interest, minutes review & action log</p> <p>No conflicts of interest were declared, and no objections to the minutes were declared.</p> <p>Aaron summarised the action log, outlined the completed actions from the previous session, and highlighted those that are deferred to the next group meeting.</p>
3.	<p>Q&A with Paul Golby</p> <p>Paul introduced himself to the group and noted their contributions to the organisation. Paul outlined the value he sees in the group and is grateful for the opportunity to work with them.</p> <p><u>What Paul covered:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul outlined the Board's structure, independence and current membership • He emphasised NESO's role of providing expert, independent, evidence-based recommendations and does not lobby, with policy decisions remaining for government • He noted that NESO must speak truth to power while pragmatically implementing government decisions such as REMA outcomes <p>Paul then opened up to the group who asked questions on the following themes:</p> <p><u>ISG Question themes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Energy and the role it can provide for grid edge resilience • Clarity on ISG value add and the role of the group in supporting the board • Public debate on future of energy and pricing

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- How do the NESO board, a) prioritise activities, b) how do NESO deal with the digital demands required for said activities
- Reflections on the delays to Reformed National Pricing
- The position of Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP), RESP & Strategic Planning interactions, and the benefits they will deliver
- Public trust in NESO and transparency
- Governance structures of NESO's stakeholder groups.

4. What's been happening?

Claire ran through the most significant events associated with NESO and the wider energy industry since our last meeting, from November 25 – January 26. Key events included:

- Our first publication of our Gas Security Assessment – Nov
- The FES Costings – Dec
- Connections Reform Results – Dec
- North Sea Coalition – Jan
- The Contracts for Difference (CfD) Allocation Round 7 (AR7) Auction – Jan
- Ofgem's Enduring Framework consultation – Jan

Nina highlighted the need for plain-English communications and insights to provide accessibility to a wide range of stakeholders who will be interested in our newer publications like transitional Regional Energy Strategic Plan (tRESP). Claire agreed the importance of making sure all are accessible, and we are trying to improve how we engage effectively and clearly, with different groups.

Nina also suggested NESO take a role proactive myth-busting. Claire said that we are thinking about if / what role we should play in the energy debate, considering our independence. Claire highlighted some of our activity on FES costings. Claire welcomed views from the group on whether that is a space NESO should step into. Members also:

- Highlighted that NESO should do public explaining of the work we do and feels there is a role there due to levels of public challenge arising from political points. Claire agreed to take this point away and revisit at a next meeting.
- Asked how NESO perceives progress – as there is lots of activity, but how are NESO trying to make progress and where? Claire highlighted lots of digital work is underway and how we are making lots of progress that's less visible. These enhancements will hopefully increase speed of delivery. She also acknowledged longer term change from RESP, SSEP etc. Claire reflected on the code governance review and highlighted there needs to be speed with these changes as codes can be detrimental.

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5. NESO1 latest & Enduring Framework update

Carole provided a reminder of where we are on the current NESO1 business plan publication timescale.

Carole highlighted that Ofgem's Draft Determinations are now due for publication on 10 Feb, with Final Determinations expected sometime in the spring.

6. Enduring Framework Workshop

Carole reflected on Ofgem's Enduring Framework Consultation and summarised the key points from the response we published before opening to the group for their thoughts.

Nina referenced the group's previous conversations on clarity of roles and responsibilities between NESO, Ofgem and DESNZ. She also highlighted the importance of driving towards delivery.

Simon introduced himself to the group and provided an overview of the session, with a focus on the future planning and performance requirements the NESO Regulation team would like to get views on for the future regulatory framework. Simon invited members to submit their thoughts via a poll, or via discussion.

Rachel began discussions by asking what good looks like for NESO2?

There was a range of member feedback including:

- Future business plans need for audience-specific framing including for:
 - technical stakeholders
 - non-energy stakeholders
 - local authorities
 - customers
- Plan needs to be agile, to show the plan and targets are still relevant given that nothing is final and subject to change.
- A commitment to show how NESO can play a role in cost reduction across energy system.
- "What does this mean for my business?" narratives encouraged.
- Articulate clearly to broader audience how and what we are doing against our 4 strategic goals and their importance.
- Each time there are changes, can NESO highlight changes to audiences.
- Important to report against performance.

Poll feedback: "accessible for all audiences", "draft business plan", "coherent across multiple strategic priorities", "Accessible for all audiences", "inclusive", "dependencies", "impacting delivery" and "recognise changing world".

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Simon then asked the group what good looks like for external regulatory reporting?

Members responded with a range of feedback including:

- What NESO reports on and level of detail, must be both cost effective and meaningful and not just more pages.
- Transparency on handoffs and Service Level Agreements (SLAs) across NESO– Transmission Owner (TO)– Distribution Network Operator (DNO) boundaries critical for developer confidence, and reporting against these will show progress.
- Need to balance detailed datasets and simplified summaries.
- Multiple Audiences: some stakeholders want dashboards while others want deep data sets, so NESO should publish both.
- Different performance requirements for different colleagues.
- Quality vs quantity is highlighted as a key issue on what NESO report.
- Don't let great get in the way of the good. Reporting can be improved upon, so ensure regular reporting is implemented quickly, then finesse it moving forward.
- Audit and verification must underpin reporting.

Poll feedback: “Transparency”, “proportionate” and “consequence”.

7. ISG future role

Vicki introduced herself to the group and the purpose of this section.

Nina then presented summary findings from her one-to-one interviews:

Cross-cutting themes:

1. Importance of strengthening NESO strategic clarity and its “independence”
2. Improved coordination across stakeholder groups (ISG, ICP, MAC, TAC, CAG)
3. ISG as a more forward-looking, voice of the customer “critical friend”
4. Increased meeting frequency and timeliness of information
5. Broader, whole-system ISG membership
6. Ensure enhanced transparency and outcomes-focused performance reporting of NESO1
7. Supporting NESO through system transformation and market reform
8. Stronger interface with the Ofgem-led Independent Challenge Panel (ICP) and NESO Board.

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A member responded to Nina, querying if there was a potential role for ISG in formal governance, and the formal role of the group as the stakeholder voice. Nina confirmed that point is being considered in her summary of ISG views report, with final publication end of February.

Vicki then reflected on Nina's findings and the views are similar to NESO's hope for the group. She stated she would like ISG to be:

- Be a sounding board for stress testing ideas – critical friend and learn from stakeholder views.
- ISG to be where we take source of truth, and test the feedback heard in other forums.
- Constructive challenge and critical friend to ISG.
- Create stronger links between NESO's other stakeholder groups, with ISG's role being recognised formally.

Vicki also provided an overview of the potential content and focus for upcoming ISG meetings. Members were invited to provide their views which included:

- The importance of understanding role and interactions of the other NESO stakeholder groups, how the other meetings are interacting. A lot of coordination is needed between the different groups.
- What output will the group provide to the NESO Board? If so, do they get the same output from ICP as they provide to Ofgem? Where do Ofgem sit in terms of interactions with other groups?
- Can ISG get a read out of discussions from other meetings on a more regular basis, potentially as a summary document in advance of ISG meetings.
- The potential for a dashboard of each other group/council, so ISG can understand their focus.

9. AOB and next steps

Carole outlined our current timetable for the launch of NESO, and confirmed an ISG meeting in late April / early May was likely.

Aaron to publish minutes, and date for next ISG Meeting to be confirmed.

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Meeting Actions

Action items: In progress and completed since last meeting

ID	Description	Owner	Due	Status	Date
34.0	Revisit resilience links and include DSO integration at next meeting.	Aaron	Jan 26	To be revisited at next ISG	April 26
37.0	NESO to reflect on role of ISG going forward	Aaron, Natasha, Carole, Rachel, Zoe	Jan 26	Ongoing discussions today to feed into final decision	February 26
39.0	Revisit Flexibility discussions in context of Market Facilitator working	Aaron	Jan 26	Follow up at next ISG meeting	April 26
40.0	Next meeting & scope of next ISG to be planned	Aaron	April 26	In progress	April 26
41.0	Nina to share final report on ISG views on group future	Nina	March 26	In progress	March 26