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Meeting minutes

05 Gas Advisory Council

Date: 29/01/2026 **Location:** IGEM House, Kegworth

Start: 10:00 AM **End:** 4:00 PM

Participants

Attendee	Attend/Regret	Attendee	Attend/Regret
Grant Wilson	Attend	Martin Shannon (NESO)	Attend
Lizzie Blaxland (NESO)	Attend	Michelle Niits (NESO)	Attend
Katy Gatfield (NESO)	Attend	Max Lambert (NESO)	Attend
Sim Ashley-Kaur (NESO)	Attend	Jessica Onubogu (NESO)	Attend
Usman Farooq (NESO)	Attend	Abby Towl (NESO)	Attend
Joint Office	Attend	Gas Networks Ireland	Attend
UESO	Attend	Hydrogen UK	Attend
Interconnector	Attend	INA	Apologies
Dragon LNG	Apologies	E3G	Attend
Xoserve	Attend	Energy UK	Apologies
Energy UK (Uniper)	Apologies	Energy UK (ESB)	Attend
FEN (SGN)	Apologies	IGEM	Attend
Mutual Energy	Apologies	ICOSS	Apologies
University of Lincoln	Apologies	Energy UK (Equinor)	Apologies
OFGEM	Apologies	DESNZ	Apologies
FEN (Grissan)	Attend	National Gas Transmission	Attend
CCSA	Apologies	E3G	Apologies
SGN (guest)	Attend		

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Discussion and details

1. Opening Remarks

The chair welcomed the group & ran through the agenda, aims, actions some personnel changes.

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2. NESO Headline Report

An overview was provided covering current key insights, publications, and live consultations. Updates on industry code changes were shared, with a commitment to continue regular updates at future meetings. A discussion was raised on how gas market participants outside the Uniform Network Code could engage in code review activity, including whether a broader GB-wide review forum could be explored.

3. NESO Updates

NESO updates were split into 3 main sections:

1) EMAC Updates

Summary of the December EMAC minutes for which can be found:

<https://www.neso.energy/document/375311/download>

2) Whole Energy Industry Readiness (WEIR) update

An overview was given of work to strengthen GB energy system resilience across gas and electricity. Three main areas of activity were outlined:

- Biannual industry readiness and preparedness reporting
- Annual emergency process assessments (expanding to whole-energy in 2026)
- Development of cross-industry protocols for disruptive events

Key resilience themes include maintenance practices, operational challenges, weather impacts, industry coordination, and emerging risks. Q&A covered the handling of hybrid or malicious threats (noted as a separate security function) and the treatment of major political change (which sits outside the WEIR remit but is monitored through horizon scanning).

3) Mike Thompson the Chief Economist at NESO presented on the FES Costing and economics publication

Recent analysis on energy system costs to 2050 was presented. The work compares costs across different future energy scenarios, highlighting trade-offs between investment, fuel costs, and volatility. It was emphasised that the scenarios are not cost-optimised but represent plausible futures.

Key messages included:

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- Current energy-related spend is approximately £300bn per year, rising in the 2030s before falling by 2050.
- While slower transition pathways appear cheaper initially, accounting for carbon costs makes the holistic transition pathway the lowest cost overall.
- Uncertainty outweighs differences between pathways, reinforcing the importance of committing to a chosen pathway rather than frequent policy shifts.

4. Future Market Plan

The discussion focused on the early development of the Gas Future Market Plan, with emphasis on clarifying its purpose, scope, and assumptions. The initial version of the FMP will primarily draw on existing analysis, with future editions identifying gaps and commissioning further work over time.

Key discussion themes included:

- Clearly articulating assumptions and scenarios underpinning the plan
- Ensuring consumer impacts central, particularly in relation to transitional costs
- Address security and resilience of supply, including the role of LNG and domestic production
- Improve whole-system visibility, especially around gas-fired generation and emerging demand such as data centres
- Highlight cross-border and carbon signal challenges where current frameworks may be ineffective
- Promote transparency, digitalisation, and accessibility of market data and models

Overall, the FMP is positioned as a strategic, evidence-based framework rather than a prescriptive policy document, with close engagement planned with government throughout its development.

5. GAC Projects

Updates were provided on three active GAC workstreams:

- **Gas Storage:** Focused on supporting government consultation on security of supply, with close engagement on analytical approaches and scenarios.
- **Hydrogen Blending:** Concentrated on identifying evidence gaps, particularly around costs and practicality, to inform policy decisions on blending at transmission level.
- **Biomethane:** Exploring policy options for the post-2030 period, with stakeholder engagement underway and a summary report to be shared with members.