

Public

A Simple Guide to RESP Governance

How nations and regions will shape
their future energy system

August 2026

Governance that puts nations and regions at the heart of energy planning



Regional Energy Strategic Plans (RESPs) will identify the energy system requirements needed to support economic growth and deliver reliable, clean and affordable energy across Scotland, Wales and nine English regions.

Historically, planning for electricity, gas, heat, transport and local development has often happened separately, creating uncertainty about what infrastructure will be needed and when. RESP will bring these areas together into a single, joined-up view of future energy needs. Its governance will give leaders in each nation and region a formal role in shaping and approving the plan. RESP forms part of NESO's broader role in planning the future energy system in Great Britain, which you can find out more about by visiting [Strategic Planning](#) on our website.

This guide is for anyone interested in taking part in RESP governance within the nations and regions. It reflects the draft RESP methodology, which remains subject to approval by Ofgem and the Secretary of State. You can read the draft methodology, which includes the draft Terms of Reference for the governance groups covered in this guide, by visiting [RESP – Methodology Consultation](#) on our website.

Each nation and region will have a Strategic Board, supported by a **Local Government Working Group** and **thematic Working Groups**. NESO's independent energy experts, based in the nations and regions, will work with these groups to bring local priorities and technical evidence into a whole system view. GB-wide groups will help coordinate issues that cross boundaries or require a consistent national approach.

Why take part?

For the first time, local leaders will have a formal role in influencing the future energy needs of their area, helping to realise local development and investment ambitions. Taking part is an opportunity to bring local ambitions, priorities and evidence directly into long-term energy planning.

Members of the Strategic Board and Working Groups will help identify where infrastructure may be needed to enable economic growth, building a shared evidence base that will inform future distribution network planning and investment decisions.

The Strategic Board

What it will do: In each nation and region, the Strategic Board will steer the development of the RESP, providing strategic direction, considering the main choices and trade-offs and helping ensure the plan reflects local priorities while aligning with national goals. The Strategic Board has a formal role in approving the RESP.

How membership will be composed: Each Board is expected to have up to 16 members and is chaired by NESO. Membership will be drawn from the electricity and gas distribution networks, up to six representatives speaking collectively for local government and up to four 'cross-sector actors' bringing wider whole energy system perspectives. The Scottish Government or Welsh Government will also sit on the relevant nation's Board.

For local government, where strategic authorities exist, we expect them to be represented, with the remaining local government places shared across the rest of the nation or region up to the six-seat limit. NESO will seek a balance across different types of place and a range of social factors, so that the Board reflects the breadth of communities it serves.

Who we are looking for: All Strategic Board members will think strategically, understand and challenge complex evidence, communicate clearly and work towards consensus. They will exercise sound, transparent judgement and have the authority and credibility to participate in decisions that support the nation or region as a whole.

We expect Board members to be established leaders, operating at Director level or equivalent. For local government, Board members may be either elected members with a relevant portfolio or senior officers. Representatives may put forward a named substitute, operating at the same level of seniority.

To bring wider whole system perspectives to the Board, we are seeking up to four 'cross-sector actors' who can bring substantial experience in the nation or region and particular depth in the whole system energy transition, heat networks, commercial energy use, industry, maritime, transport, fuel poverty, community energy or consumer interests.

Local Government Working Group

What it will do: Local authorities across the nation or region will be able to participate through the Local Government Working Group. It will provide a formal route to shape the RESP by bringing together local plans, priorities, evidence and constraints; testing emerging proposals; and advising the Strategic Board. Representatives of local government on the Strategic Board will collectively represent the Working Group at that level.

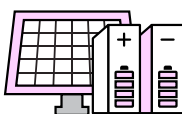
Who we are looking for: A local authority representative who understands their place's priorities and plans and can work across organisational and geographic boundaries. They will bring evidence into the process, listen to the needs of different places, help identify common ground and keep colleagues in their authority informed. We anticipate that membership will comprise officers in areas such as energy strategy and strategic planning.

Thematic Working Groups

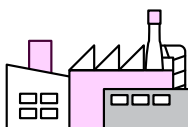
What they will do: Thematic Working Groups will bring practical experience and specialist insight into the development of the RESP. Participants will help review planning evidence, identify regional priorities and highlight risks, uncertainties and trade-offs. The precise structure may vary by nation or region, but is expected to cover the following themes:



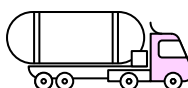
- **Consumer and Commercial Demand** – considering issues such as residential and commercial consumer needs, heat, commercial energy use and demand flexibility.



- **Generation and Storage** – considering issues such as electricity generation, community energy, storage and connections.



- **Industrial Decarbonisation** – considering issues such as industrial energy needs, decarbonisation pathways and infrastructure requirements.



- **Transport** – considering issues such as passenger and freight transport, charging infrastructure and alternative fuels.

Who we are looking for: Practitioners and subject-matter experts with relevant delivery experience or sector insight in their nation or region. Participants should be able to bring evidence and a wider sector perspective, test emerging proposals constructively and identify how different choices could affect delivery.

Operating across Working Groups

RESP governance is designed with stakeholder capacity at front of mind. We do not expect stakeholders to need to sit on multiple Working Groups or that there will be advantage in doing so. Throughout the development of RESP, NESO will seek to bring the views of Working Groups together to ensure a whole system approach.

What taking part will involve

Taking part in a Strategic Board or Working Group will involve preparing for and attending meetings linked to key RESP milestones, drawing on the views and evidence of the participant's wider place, sector or network, and responding to occasional time-sensitive requests.

We expect participants to remain involved throughout the first RESP cycle, which runs for two years to December 2028, and to commit up to eight days over that period. Participation is expected to be voluntary and unpaid and will not create an employment relationship with NESO, although reasonable expenses may be covered.

Everyone involved will act in the public interest and follow the Seven Principles of Public Life. They will exercise independent judgement, declare relevant interests, respect confidentiality and contribute constructively to collective discussions and decisions..

How to express an interest

NESO is writing directly to local authorities and energy distribution networks with further instructions on how to put forward expressions of interest.

If you are from another sector and are interested in putting forward an expression of interest for the Strategic Board or a thematic Working Group in one of the RESP nations and regions, please visit [Regional Energy Strategic Planning \(RESP\)](#) on our website.

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