

Report on Northern Powergrid's (NPg) Independent Stakeholder Group (ISG) meeting

Q1 April 2024

Summary

This was the first quarterly ISG meeting of the year, and it welcomed its two newest members, Monica Collings, and Melanie Taylor.

The main items discussed in this meeting were the standing items of NPg business plan delivery, updates from the Business Plan Engagement Groups (BPEG), an update on the connections congestion queue and an update on NPg's progress of its DSO Review Panel¹ and DSO submission.

It was also decided that, as the 2024/25 ISG programme is being developed, monthly (virtual) meetings will start to take place again soon in addition to the quarterly face to face meetings.

Business Plan update

The ISG had recently had a Deep Dive with NPg into its report to gain a greater understanding of how it is collated. This report provides the ISG with one of its main insights into tracking NPg's progress in delivering its business plan commitments.

DSO Review Panel

The Chair of the DRP reported that the panel was now fully up and running, new members had been onboarded and it was making good progress on work scope and has a comprehensive programme for 2024.

The DRP would like NPg to focus more on the impact on customers and a discussion on this topic will be included as part of the Q3 agenda, where the Consumer Vulnerability Manager will be in attendance.

The DRP Chair confirmed she has reached out to other DNO DRP Chairs to understand how their panels are set up, and to encourage some collaborative working. The DRP is also exploring expanding its scope, looking at exactly what it covers as the DRP, and what is then covered by the ISG.

DSO Submission

NPg explained how it was seeking to make the most of this submission, adding that it set out its DSO strategy and plan based on what is right for its region, not just because of any incentive mechanism.

NPg are also working hard to back up its narrative claims with facts and figures which is a key learning from the Stakeholder Engagement Consumer Vulnerability (SECV) submission from previous years.

DSO Interview panel preparations are underway.

¹Find out more about Northern Powergrid's Distribution System Operation Review Panel here: [DSO Review Panel | Northern Powergrid](#)

BPEG update

NPg confirmed a refresh of the terms of reference had taken place. Each of the BPEG subgroups will now have a more business plan aligned and focused agenda.

NPg will now only include recommendations from its own engagement in its Insight Reports (quarterly summary reports including learnings from NPg engagement) but broader items are still included within the report for information.

It was also highlighted the ISG do not feel that Data & Digitalisation or Innovation are yet properly embedded into the BPEG process. NPg are still working to resolve this.

Broader Northern Powergrid Updates

NPg has recently changed its Policy and Markets Directorate to Energy Systems, with the DSO function being at the heart of it. Resourcing into the new directorate and the DSO part in particular will continue throughout the year.

The wider industry and DNOs continue to work hard to reduce project timescales, that are currently held up in the connections queue. They are making some progress and will continue looking to provide options for customers.

An update on NPg's current and expanding innovation portfolio was received.