

ESBN DMSO Advisory Council – Meeting Minutes

Meeting	Advisory Council 8
Date/Time	18.09.2024, 10.30 – 13:00
Location	Hybrid – The Clayton Hotel, Cardiff Lane & Remote
Attendees	<p>ESBN: Teresa Fallon (TF) – Chair, Alan Keegan (AK), Carol Murphy (CM), Gerry Noone (GN), Aoife Bradish (AB), Eilis McFarlane (EM), Fiona O’Donnell (FOD), Ken Murray (KM) and Jennifer Ward (JW).</p> <p>Apologies: Richard Kelly</p> <p>External stakeholders in attendance: Brian O’Shea, Caoimhe McWeeney (CMW), Conall Bolger (CB), Bobby Smith (BS), Gillian Baker (GB), Philip Connor (PC), Robert O’Rourke (ROR), Frank Burke, Kevin Brophy (KB), Patrick Liddy (PL), Paddy Finn (PF), Eoin Kennedy (EK), Frank Burke (FB), Aidan Mahony</p>
Agenda:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & actions update • Customer Update • XLEU Lighthouse Project • Flexibility Multi Year Plan and in-flight initiatives update • Demand Flexibility Product Update • Flex Demand Connections: • Round table discussion
Compiled By	Jennifer Ward

Minutes

Welcome, Housekeeping and Actions update

- TF welcomed all attendees to the meeting. Attendees introduced themselves.
- Action 1 on Beat the Peak Domestic was closed.
- Action 2 on Flexible Generations was closed.
- Advisory Council 7 minutes were approved.

Customer Update

- CM gave an update on the ‘Is This a Good Time’ participation, insights and outcomes. She highlighted the impact of the recruitment campaign when we partnered with another organisation and issued a Branding Partnership Request to suppliers/FSP’s to partner with ESB Networks in promoting the ‘Is This a Good Time’ campaign to their customers and employees.
- CM highlighted that locational ability to flex up and down is key and there are eight specific locations with network congestion where we want to stimulate market appetite for flexibility products or services. TF commented that we haven’t had a great response here to date and CM asked what route to market might encourage participation.

- PL asked if we need to be careful with the challenges associated with customers all doing the same thing.
- PL asked if there is data available to third parties that links MPRN level information to locality? It's unclear what transformer customers are connected to. Providing this information would simplify the process.
- TF & AK: information available for certain market segments for specific purposes but we'd need to tread carefully in terms of management and treatment of this of data. TF commented that we don't need to be that granular, Piclo maps show boundaries of areas where we are looking for flexibility.
- TF commented that we could put it in our plan to do a map of geographical boundaries.
- PF: ESB Networks previously made available capacity maps with a downloadable file (transformers in system with level of capacity) to cross reference. This was useful but the file is not available anymore.
- CM commented that a lot of SMEs didn't understand flexibility but wanted to work with their suppliers to best understand their options.
- Suppliers and FSP members asked for a platform that signal when flexibility is needed.
- PF commented that quantification of carbon benefit has been raised a few times but is not being addressed even though it would be the primary benefit and motivation for LEU participation in flexibility.
- PF asked is there any assessment of project cost vs. the tangible benefit that it delivers. Fox example we don't know if the payment for ITAGT good value to Irish customers.
- TF commented that we benchmark with the UK what we pay for flexibility. TF commented that we'll have a look at the value provided to customers and see if we can publish something. CM commented that for business customers the cost is complex and might not be worthwhile. AK stated that this was considered internally previously and there were some concerns about sensitivities with making such information available.
- CMW: what about previous schemes?
- TF: yes good point but BTPD is probably doing more in this space in terms of numbers.

XLEU Lighthouse Project

- GN provided an introduction of the XLEU Lighthouse Project objective, context, ecosystem, benefits, how it would work and next steps.
- CMW: How does this interplay with Renewable Heat Obligation (RHO)? GN commented that RHO operates funding whereas ESNB is trying to create a demand for the product.
- GN: we sit on DECC Implementation Group. DECC plan says 5.7TWh of indigenous by 2030.

- PL asked if it would be better to stimulate domestic than going overseas for the gas. TF responded that this is a proof of concept to show proven capability for demand response and that a transition to Irish based biomethane production would be next step. GN commented that if data centre commits to burning biomethane behind-the-meter, this drives the contract for the AD provider.
- CB: What are the existing blockers i.e. why aren't similar initiatives happening already?
- GN: there is a project being worked on at the moment as far as we understand. Funding under RHO is unknown at the moment. The new Biomethane Strategy does help in terms of providing more direction and certainty.
- PL asked if this initiative would pave the way for an increased connection offer? TF responded that we're focusing on "proving the technology" and it will have to be done without a new connection. There's an XLEU decision element to this as well which is to be provided by CRU.
- EK commented that connection policy is CRU-remit and can't be done just by ESB Networks.
- PL recommended to get EPA involved.
- PL asked why doesn't CRU just let ESBN go ahead and implement? ROR responded that there are a few things to consider and that's why it's important to work closely with ESBN on the development of the lighthouse.

Flexibility Multi Year Plan and in-flight initiatives update

- TF provided an overview of the consultation and regulatory submission process for the Flexibility Multi Year Plans. TF also discussed the comprehensive submissions from respondents, the key themes emerging from the feedback and what ESBN are doing to address them
- TF provided an update on key In-Flight initiatives including Dynamic Instructions sets, Flexible Generation Connections, FlexCharging, BTPD 2.1 and CVR
- BS asked if Flex Charging is location specific. TF responded that it's implemented nationally in partnership with an American company "FlexCharging"

Demand Flexibility Product Update

- AB provided an introduction and overview of the Demand Flexibility Product development and consultation process to date. She noted the positive stakeholder engagement with 30 responses received following the 1st consultation.
- EMF talked about the recently published recommendations paper which incorporates stakeholder feedback and indicated that the 2nd consultation will go into a few areas in further detail, e.g., penalties, sharing factor and energisation arrangements. It will be published next month (October '24). An indicative timeline was presented showing signing of contracts as a key milestone by end December '25
- CMW queried the QSQ and RfT submission requirements and sequencing of events. EMF clarified that you have to respond to the QSQ to get invited to participate in the RFT and that there is a three month period in which to respond. AB commented that the QSQ does not require site details or grid details.

- PL stated that there needs to be strong levels of certainty/detail in the consultation to give as much info as possible for the developer so that they can actually participate with this product.
- BS queried if there will be a Commission decision as part of this second consultation process similar to the first consultation? AK confirmed that there will be a Commission decision and it would be the same as process as per the first consultation.
- ROR commented that the commission decision was to proceed with this back in July but they needed to see more details with a second consultation.
- CMW asked if it will just be one round of procurement. TF responded that it depends on what we receive, the location, how quick it can be delivered and at what cost.
- BS asked if everything need to be in place for the signing of contracts and FB asked if the plant has to be built right away?
- TF responded that the target to have it built before the end of 32 months – that was in the first consultation and was considered acceptable. Delays will lead to damages, and we will consider benefits if early/penalties if late as part of the second consultation.
- BS asked if the procurement is open to existing assets. TF responded that it is if it can provide the required service at specified locations and that we're technology agnostic.

Flex Demand Connections:

- FOD gave an overview of the Drivers for flexible demand connections, expressions of interest, timed connections versus Dynamic flexible connections, key deliverables and customer selection approach.
- CB asked if ESNB consider it being made available 365 days a year? FOD responded that it was and added that you would have your MVA for most of the year and that if networks conditions allow for it, participants will be allowed to use the higher level
- CB asked about the timeframe to implement and commercial and legal conditions. E.g. connection/DUoS charges. FOD commented that we're assessing what financial mechanism would makes most sense and that we're also considering interim measures.
- CMW asked if we would expect to change the demand reduction levels on a daily basis? FOD responded that we would study it daily but that we anticipate that the message would often be that no changes are required.
- CMW asked if we could look at it seasonally? FOD responded that we could probably provide a look ahead seasonally.
- BS asked how the interface with customers would work. FOD responded that initially it would be a phone call, in the future we anticipate it to be system-to-system.
- PF commented that his organisation has been trying to research customers who are under-utilising their MICs and that there might be particular market segments worth targeting e.g. county councils who provide street lighting only in hours or darkness.
- CB recommended to disaggregate route to market and technical changes.

- PL commented that he thought this was a fantastic initiative that will work.

Round table discussion

- BS recommended to consider flexible connections in the context of the Demand Flexibility Product as customers could use batteries to reduce their load. Important not to look at projects in isolation. Important to avoid network upgrades. BS has further ideas on this if ESNB would like to further discuss it.
- PL commented that initiatives ESNB have presented “brilliant” and really appreciated the presentation. Challenge will be informing and engaging customers of these options. Think about how these options are going to be presented to customers.
- FB commented that storage is a very important element to delivering flexibility and asked about how can/should suppliers talk to storage providers. Triangular discussions would be of benefit.
- PF: In general just want to commend the work being done by ESB Networks in this space. It’s a very challenging collective of work, a lot of delivery risk and progressing these initiatives is not easy.
- AK: Support is very welcome, and it can’t be done without the input from reps around this table. We’re progressing with initiatives to meet emerging requirements but also trying to maintain BAU, keep the lights on, etc. at the same time.
- CMW requested a discussion on more incentives on suppliers to get into the flexibility space. We should consider this. CMW offered that she is more than happy to engage further with the supplier reps or wider supplier groups to discuss.

Meeting Closed

- TF thanked everyone for their engagement and noted the rich level of information coming from the room. The meeting was closed.

Open Actions					
ID	Owner	Action Description	Date Raised	Date Due	Comments
AC8.1	All AC members	Request that members provide ideas on how we can stimulate market appetite for flexibility products or services in the 8 areas of congestion called out on Slide 10 (Finglas, Glasmore, Grange Castle, Inchicore, Midleton, Tullamore, Portlaoise, Fermoy)	18/09/2024	15/12/2024	

Open Actions					
ID	Owner	Action Description	Date Raised	Date Due	Comments
AC8.2	Paddy Finn (Viotas)	Investigate why NW Capacity maps are no longer made available my ESB Networks and if they can't be re-instated, could ESBN put it in our plans to create a map of geographical boundaries?	18/09/2024	15/12/2024	