

SP ENW DSO Stakeholder Panel

Meeting notes – 3 September 2025

Present:	Andrew McIntosh (AMc), Greg Dodd (GD), Matt Fawcett (MF), Kate Gilmartin (KG), James Johnson (JJ), Debbie King (DK), Meriel Lakin (ML), Craig Morley (CM),
In attendance:	Paul Auckland (PA), Helen Daly (HD), Paul George (PG), Ben Grunfeld (BG) Christos Kaloudas (CK)
Apologies:	Jonathan Edwards (JE), James Shaw-Stewart (JSS), Stuart Dearden (SD)

Welcome, safety moment and conflicts declaration

AMc welcomed all attendees, apologies were noted, and no conflicts of interest were declared.

BG shared details of SP ENW's monthly safety theme of positive challenge and gave a short update on the launch of the new brand identity.

Standing items - review of actions

The action log was reviewed, and updates given on the outstanding actions.

Standing items - Industry issues raised by Panel members

NIC/NISTA study - PA delivered an update on the 14 recommendations set out in the NISTA report and the Government's response. The panel noted DESNZ's caveat about unlooping activity and encouraged SP ENW, as part of its unlooping programme, to consider customer groups that were most at risk of being left behind in the net zero transition. PA confirmed that this would be fed into SP ENW's ED3 planning and that the panel would continue to be involved in this process. Aligned to this the panel noted the importance of local authority and community energy voices being included in the ED3 development process.

RESP - PA updated the panel on RESP, noting that a consultation on tRESP was expected in September. Panel members commented on the high volume of information requests received from NESO and JJ shared some guidance that had been published by the regional net zero hubs regarding interactions with the tRESP: [Act-Now-on-tRESP-Guidance-for-local-authorities.pdf](#)

Topics raised by the panel for discussion at future meetings were:

- [Clean flexibility roadmap](#)
- [Report](#) and [consultation](#) on consumer engagement with flexibility

Standing items – ISG & DSO panel chairs updates

HD reminded the panel of the changes that SP ENW had recently made to its stakeholder advisory panel structure. It was noted that the IOG had been replaced by a new Independent Stakeholder group (ISG) and that the existing stakeholder advisory panel chairs would continue to meet with the ISG on a bi-annual basis to discuss SP ENW's ED2 performance. AMc confirmed that he had met with

Todd Holden, the ISG Vice Chair, to discuss the information that the ISG would like to receive on DSO ED2 performance and it was noted that this had been built into the panel's forward plan.

Standing items – DSO delivery

PA updated the panel on SP ENW's score from the Ofgem DSO Performance Panel and the interim feedback received. PA then shared the DSO team's key deliverables for 2025/26 before looking in greater detail at SP ENW's social DSO fund. PA outlined the key features and strategic objectives of the fund and shared details of the pilot projects, development of the flexibility toolkit and monitoring framework.

The panel was supportive of the progress made and the forward plans outlined. Panel members noted the importance of providing education and support around the commercial aspects of flexibility and asked how SP ENW would ensure equity across community projects. PG explained how flexibility would be remunerated in both constraint management zones (CMZs) and non-CMZs, noting the importance of social impact and community benefit in both areas.

KG observed that SP ENW's objectives were aligned to GB Energy's local power plan proposals and was supportive of ongoing dialogue and knowledge sharing. **Action: SP ENW**

Standing items – communications and stakeholder engagement

HD shared details of recent DSO stakeholder and comms activity as well as forthcoming events and publications.

CK gave an overview of SP ENW's forthcoming DNOA report and the new features that were being included. The panel would be invited to provide feedback in due course.

Session theme 1 – Panel terms of reference

HD summarised the feedback from the recent panel member survey and SP ENW's best practise review. She outlined SP ENW's proposed changes to the panel's terms of reference, which the panel approved. **Action: HD to update the panel terms of reference**

The panel also agreed to consider potential candidates to fill the membership gaps identified. **Action: panel members**

Session theme 2 – Flexibility services

PG updated the panel on the DSO commercial team's priority areas of focus in the coming months, and the results of the spring flexibility tender.

The panel was particularly supportive of the education and engagement that SP ENW was undertaking and highlighted its importance for non-industrial/commercial participants.

The panel noted the positive outcomes from the spring tender, in particular the improvements in conversion rates, number of CMZ's covered and MW contracted.

The meeting discussed the potential impact of both connections reform and the lowering of the transmission impact assessment (TIA) threshold on future tenders. PG confirmed that the impact of connections reform was actively being looked at by the DSO and connections teams. PA confirmed that SP ENW had some data on the impact of the TIA change and would circulate this to panel members. **Action: SP ENW**

Session theme 3 – Conflicts of interest risk register

HD provided an update on recent changes made to the conflicts of interest risk register (full details had previously been circulated to the panel). The panel approved the changes and also requested that SP ENWL add some additional detail to the register to reflect the change of business ownership and the vertical integration within SP. **Action: SP ENW**

Session theme 4 – DSO benefits and KPIs

HD gave a brief update on SP ENW's work on enhancing its CBA model to incorporate a wider suite of societal benefits, including social, economic and health-related benefits. A more detailed update is scheduled for later in the year.

The panel also reviewed SP ENW's KPI scorecard, noting the strong performance as a result of the recent flexibility tender. The panel requested that the RAG status of each KPI was added to the scorecard for ease of reference. **Action: SP ENW**

Standing items – Panel forward plan

The forward plan in the meeting pack was noted.

AOB and close

Load related expenditure reopener – the panel expressed concern that Ofgem had disallowed funding for motorway service area connections in its minded-to decision on SP ENW's submission. The panel noted that it was keen to support SP ENW in further discussions with Ofgem on this topic.

Consultations/policy updates – the panel noted that there was a high volume of consultation/policy updates expected during September and October and requested that time was earmarked at the November meeting for an update/discussion. **Action: SP ENW**

AM thanked panel members and ENWL for their time and contribution to the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for 20 November 2025.