

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

Q4 December 2024

Summary

This meeting was shorter than usual, as a full day meeting took place two days prior to begin discussions on preparation for the development of the next business plan which is for the ED3 period (2028-2033).

NPg's CEO Phil Jones joined the meeting to share his reflections of 2024 and what the horizon looks like for the company. Also, in this meeting we were joined by Bridget Hartley, the Head of Regional Energy Strategic Planning from NESO (National Energy System Operator) to provide an update on the plans for the RESPs moving forward.

The meeting also included updates on NPg's external affairs work, progress on the low carbon technologies uptake with vulnerable customers, the DSO Review Panel¹, updates from the Business Plan Engagement Group (BPEG) leads and some broader NPg business updates.

Reflections from Phil Jones

Phil reflected that 2024 was a good year all round, it could have been better and has had its challenges, but it remains focused particularly in keeping momentum in our response during storms and to not become complacent. Ofgem's ED3 framework consultation remains a priority for NPg.

Plans for the Regional Energy Strategic Plans (RESP) - Bridget Hartley

It was acknowledged the RESP's need to be more regionally focused than centralised to succeed in the changing energy landscape, and that whole energy systems interactions play a vital role.

NESO are proposing 11 RESP teams will be set up across the regions and will be driven by regional recruitment aiming to drive consistency. Local governance plays a key part of this, and there will be regional strategic boards, supported by working groups. Details of this are still being worked out.

Decarbonisation support for vulnerable customers

NPg are pleased with their overall performance against its targets; although it is not yet where it wants to be, it is making good progress.

It is in talks with organisations who have links with installers, as NPg only funds the advice. NPg is also looking to introduce some advice on 'Green Finance' to support people with borrowing who may not have the credit scores that the banks typically ask for.

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

NPg is also exploring setting up a dedicated mailbox, and to build an area on the NPg website where customers can self-refer.

External Affairs

NPg updated over the last 12 months the sheer volume of engagement and activity that has taken place which has been significant, and the real win is the shift from NPg being reactive to being proactive in its approach.

The last three months has been about shifting NPg's focus into 2025, as it cannot lose sight of planning for the next price control period of ED3, and External Affairs will help lead the engagement of this. NPg needs to get it right for its customers, and the organisations who represents its customers.

Business Plan Engagement Group (BPEG) update

NPg confirmed the last quarter has been a busy one in terms of engagement, particularly around connections reform. NPg is trying to help customers figure out what's going on, in this fast-moving environment.

NPg is also getting ready to host a series of six regional workshops, and its Net Zero for the North Conferences in 2025.

There has been a real appetite within NPg and its Sustainability Delivery Group, which meets every two months, to help the business understand what it is trying to achieve regarding sustainability objectives. A developing dashboard provides clear framing of approach.

Broader Northern Powergrid Updates

NPg confirmed it is making progress with the connection's congestion queue, and continues to focus on the delivery, as it manages the 'ready to build' developers.

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