

**1<sup>st</sup> June 2021**

**Renewables Grid Liaison Group**

**Minutes of Meeting No 36**

| <b>Attendees</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Utility Regulator</b>  | Roisin McLaughlin (RML)<br>Kenny McPartland (KMP)<br>Jody O'Boyle (JO'B)<br>Tim Steele (TS)                   |
| <b>Renewable NI</b>   | Rory Mullan (RM)<br>Andy McCrea (AMcC)  |
| <b>NIE Networks</b>   | Sinead Ferris (SF)<br>David Hill (DH)<br>Lisa O'Neill (LO'N)<br>Chris Surgeoner (CS)<br>Rossita Maclean (RMC) |
| <b>SONI</b>   | Helen Gallagher (HG)<br>Ronan Kernan (RK)<br>Raymond Smyth (RS)   |
| <b>Department for the Economy – Energy Decarbonisation Division</b> | Paul Rose (PR)  |
| <b>NISTA</b>  | No attendee   |
| <b>Offshore Representative</b>                                      | No attendee   |
| <b>Ulster Farmers Union</b>   | Chris Osborne (CO)  |
| <b>Energy Storage Representative</b>                                | No attendee   |
| <b>DP Energy</b>  | No attendee   |
| <b>Energia</b>  | No attendee   |
| <b>Amber Green Energy</b>   | Neil O'Brien (NO'B)   |
| <b>Department for Economy</b>                                       | Paul Rose (PR)  |
| <b>Supplier</b>   | Kevin O'Kane – Budget Energy (KO'K)   |

| No | Item   | Action                      |  |                            |   |  |             |   |  |                     |   |  |                             |  |
|----|--|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|--|-------------|---|--|---------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|--|
| 1  | <p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Steven Agnew (SA) (Renewable NI)</p>  |                             |  |                            |   |  |             |   |  |                     |   |  |                             |  |
| 2  | <p><b>Minutes/Updates from last meeting</b></p> <p>Minutes approved</p> <p><b>Actions from previous meeting</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="280 656 1385 1081"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="280 656 344 723">1</td> <td data-bbox="344 656 1145 723">Investigate developing “Energy Dashboard” <i>Ongoing</i></td> <td data-bbox="1145 656 1385 723"><b>NIE Networks / SONI</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="280 723 344 842">2</td> <td data-bbox="344 723 1145 842">Develop Quarterly Reports <i>Ongoing</i></td> <td data-bbox="1145 723 1385 842"><b>SONI</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="280 842 344 960">3</td> <td data-bbox="344 842 1145 960">Members to feed back to RML and JO'B before Christmas in relation to potential topics/items for discussion to best utilise the RGLG meetings in 2021</td> <td data-bbox="1145 842 1385 960"><b>RGLG Members</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="280 960 344 1081">4</td> <td data-bbox="344 960 1145 1081">Dates of 2021 Meetings to be discussed and scheduled early in new year</td> <td data-bbox="1145 960 1385 1081"><b>UR/NIE Networks/SONI</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>1. HG commented that the work on an enduring connections policy and energy strategy is ongoing. This is a work in progress and aligns with the work on the “Energy Dashboard”.</p> <p>2. HG updated that Quarterly reports are in development and will be ready for publication once they have been signed off internally. Release is expectedly imminently - SONI are to publish before the next meeting.</p> <p>3. RML noted no comments were received before Christmas following on from the last meeting.</p> <p>4. No further meetings are currently scheduled. LO'N proposed the first Tuesday of every quarter 10:00am-12:00pm for subsequent meetings.</p> | 1                           | Investigate developing “Energy Dashboard” <i>Ongoing</i> | <b>NIE Networks / SONI</b> | 2 | Develop Quarterly Reports <i>Ongoing</i> | <b>SONI</b> | 3 | Members to feed back to RML and JO'B before Christmas in relation to potential topics/items for discussion to best utilise the RGLG meetings in 2021 | <b>RGLG Members</b> | 4 | Dates of 2021 Meetings to be discussed and scheduled early in new year | <b>UR/NIE Networks/SONI</b> |  |
| 1  | Investigate developing “Energy Dashboard” <i>Ongoing</i>   | <b>NIE Networks / SONI</b>  |  |                            |   |  |             |   |  |                     |   |  |                             |  |
| 2  | Develop Quarterly Reports <i>Ongoing</i>   | <b>SONI</b>                 |  |                            |   |  |             |   |  |                     |   |  |                             |  |
| 3  | Members to feed back to RML and JO'B before Christmas in relation to potential topics/items for discussion to best utilise the RGLG meetings in 2021   | <b>RGLG Members</b>         |  |                            |   |  |             |   |  |                     |   |  |                             |  |
| 4  | Dates of 2021 Meetings to be discussed and scheduled early in new year   | <b>UR/NIE Networks/SONI</b> |  |                            |   |  |             |   |  |                     |   |  |                             |  |
| 3  | <p><b>Renewables Status Update</b></p> <p>LO'N presented that the connected renewable generation has increased by 7 MW since the last update from a total of 1,684 MW connected to 1,691 MW connected. This growth from Q3 2020 to Q1 2021 has mostly been from the connection of biogas. In the same timeframe the amount of renewable generation committed has risen by 10 MW bringing the figure to 2037 MW. This has mostly been from committed PV and biogas.</p> <p>RM asked if the figures included renewable generation connected at transmission level and if battery storage data could be included in future updates.</p>   | <p><b>NIE Networks</b></p>  |  |                            |   |  |             |   |  |                     |   |  |                             |  |

| No | Item   | Action                         |
|----|--|--------------------------------|
|    | <p>LO'N confirmed that the figures include transmission connections. Asked if battery storage should be included in the Renewable Generation Status or presented separately. RM commented a second graphic for battery storage as a zero carbon service provider could be useful to record. LO'N stated that some of the battery storage being committed/connected is across Small Scale G99/NI Fast Track applications and will look at the possibility of presenting these figures for the next meeting.</p>   |                                |
| 4  | <p><b>Update on Transmission Applications</b></p> <p>HG presented slides on the status of current applications from the most recent update as of 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Active applications include Belfast Power CCGT and the Atlantic Hub Data centre. Important to note that Drumkee Battery and Mullavilly Battery have been connected and energised. Kilroot GT6 and GT7 applications are looking settled and coming in at around the same size of 350 MW.</p>   |                                |
| 5  | <p><b>CIWG – Consultation Update</b></p> <p>SF advised that the amendments to the Statement of Connection Charges have been submitted to the UR for approval. These changes will be implemented one month after the UR provides their approval. This will then be made available on NIE's website/generator mailing list. The next CIWG meeting is scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021.</p> <p>SF commented for the benefit of the RGLG that between SONI and NIE networks two consultations are out 'Networks for Net Zero' and 'Shaping Our Electricity Future'. SF emphasised the need for a new Enduring Connections Process as the current process as it stands will not be able to facilitate the goals for renewable generation by 2030 and 2050. SF mentioned the need for feedback and engagement throughout this process.</p>  | <p><b>NIE<br/>Networks</b></p> |
| 6  | <p><b>DfE – General Update/Energy Strategy Update</b></p> <p>PR shared that the Energy Strategy consultation was opened on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and will close on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021. To date 45 responses have been received via Citizen Space. So far the demographics are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 73% (33) of the responses are from respondents identifying as domestic consumers; 9% (4) from businesses with less than 50 employees; 11% (5) from Energy sector representatives. There are no responses as yet from business with more than 50 employees</li> <li>• 47% (21) responses originate from Co.Antrim; 35% (16) from Co.Down. There are no responses from Fermanagh as yet.</li> <li>• 40% of responses are from people located in rural areas; 38% located in urban area; and 22% located in semi-urban areas</li> <li>• 71% of respondents identify as male and 24% as female</li> </ul> |                                |

| No | Item  | Action |
|----|---|--------|
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 51% (23) of respondents fall into the 25-44 age range; there are no responses thus far from the under 18s and 11% (5) from 65+ age range</li> </ul> <p>Detailed analysis of the responses to the consultation are underway by the various policy leads/working groups. With each working group analysing responses relevant to their area of interest.</p> <p>The Department is hosting 5 online stakeholder engagement events in June – one for each of the key principles in the consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15<sup>th</sup> June (10.00am) – Placing you at the Heart of our Energy Future;</li> <li>- 16<sup>th</sup> June (10.00am) – Grow a Green Economy</li> <li>- 16<sup>th</sup> June (2.00pm) – Do more with Less</li> <li>- 17<sup>th</sup> June (10.00am) – Create a flexible and integrated</li> <li>- 18<sup>th</sup> June (10.00am) – Replace fossil fuels with indigenous renewables</li> </ul> <p>The events are scheduled for 1hr 30mins and will consist of opening presentations and facilitated breakout groups to consider the consultation questions.</p> <p>A consumer event is also being organised by CCNI on behalf of the Department. A facilitator is being tendered at present with the aim of holding the event at the end of June.</p> <p>PR explained that the goal is to have the strategy document drafted by the end of October 2021 so that it is ready to present at COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021.</p> <p>RML asked if sign up for the five stakeholder engagement events is open yet. PR responded that registration will be open this week once details of the event are published on the DfE website.</p> |        |
| 7  | <p><b>Renewable NI– Dispatch Down WG Update</b></p> <p>RM presented slides summarising the work of the Dispatch Down working group which has been active since Q1 2019. Of the controllable wind farms across the island of Ireland 93% are members of the group. All-island curtailment was identified as a problem with constraint a more localized issue across Northern Ireland. RM reported that figures for curtailment have been relatively stable at 4% across recent years. Curtailment was slightly higher in Q1 2020 due to a decrease in demand alongside high winds.</p> <p>RM acknowledged that curtailment will be a growing issue which needs to be addressed in order to meet the goals set out for 2030 and 2050. RM provided figures that on average 10% of renewable generation across the island is curtailed, amounting to roughly 1TWh.</p> <p>RM reported that good progress had been made to increase the SNSP limit by SONI and Eirgrid. More work needs to be done to bring down min gen, the amount of conventional continuous generation that is needed to be kept on. Batteries were suggested to bring down the</p>  |        |

| No | Item  | Action                         |
|----|---|--------------------------------|
|    | <p>levels of min gen. The min gen level has been brought down some already but needs to be brought down further.</p> <p>RM also noted that there is a general trend of exporting on interconnectors but that there is a scope for greater use of interconnectors. Also emphasised the need for a North-South interconnector. Presented graphics that showed when renewables are being curtailed there is a net import across the interconnectors. RM mentioned that exporting to Scotland cannot be relied upon as they have their own renewable projects.</p> <p>RM said there is a need to carry out transmission reinforcements to accommodate renewable connections in the North West and transport this energy to the East. As well as the need to minimise outages as this cause more renewables to be switched off.</p> <p>SF asked if this analysis will be used to feed into the response for the the Energy Strategy. RM stated that the data is drawn from SONI and is in the public domain. Renewable NI focus their analysis more on the market and use this data to predict the needs for interconnectors and reinforcement. RS commented on the usefulness of the presentation and that it can be used as part of the justification for future network reinforcements. RM highlighted the need for an energy dashboard along with data to be available in the public domain as well as continued engagement with SONI.</p> <p>JO'B asked about the impact of batteries on constraints and whether these will be able to react to the market. RM commented that batteries currently provide DS3 system services and it is up for consideration how batteries can be best utilised. At present they aren't storing constrained energy and there are questions about how long they will be able to store energy for. There is the potential for different technologies such as hydrogen and Electric Vehicles to play a part, through the electrification of heat and transport. RM noted that batteries are already doing more than anticipated so they could continue to surpass future predictions.</p> <p>RM stated that an update may not be required in the next meeting but will be ready for the following group in Q4. RM also suggested that representatives from Energy Storage Ireland may be able to contribute to the RGLG in future meetings. SF asked if Renewables NI also represented battery owners. RM established that it would be a sister organization as there is some overlap between members involved in wind farms and battery storage so there is some shared membership.</p> <p>RS mentioned that some wind farms are also applying for planning permission for battery storage installations on site and asked if this was for DS3 system services. RM replied that there is a business case for these types of sites and that more discussion is needed on hybrid grid connections. Suggested a working group could be established to review a hybrid connection policy and identify barriers to hybrid connections. LO'N mentioned one of the barriers is currently the 20% over install limit and that this limit was currently being looked at by the</p> | <p><b>Renewable<br/>NI</b></p> |

| No              | Item  | Action |
|-----------------|---|--------|
|                 | <p>Flextech working group. LO'N also noted a difference between the North and South of Ireland wherein Connection Agreements in Northern Ireland are in the name of one party and do not permit that party having a private arrangement with a third party. This is not the case elsewhere. RM agreed the barriers to hybrid connections are different across the island of Ireland and this could be discussed at the next meeting.</p>  |        |
| <p><b>8</b></p> | <p><b>Network Development/ATR Update</b></p> <p>RK cited past success in delivering on renewable generation targets a year early and mentioned need to almost double current renewable connections to meet goals for 2030 and facilitate the decarbonisation of heat and transport. RK discussed the four draft approaches being used by SONI to reach the goal of 70% renewable generation by 2030. These approaches were identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generation-led</li> <li>• Developer-led</li> <li>• Technology-led</li> <li>• Demand-led</li> </ul> <p>RK noted that none of these act as a stand alone solution and that elements from all four approaches are required to tackle the complexity of the ten year transition.</p> <p>The 'Shaping Our Electricity Future' consultation is currently open and will close on 14<sup>th</sup> June. This is the biggest consultation undertaken by SONI to date and will be followed by an industry focussed 'round up' webinar on 2<sup>nd</sup> June at 2pm which is due to last for one hour.</p> <p>The Transmission Development Plan Northern Ireland (TDPNI) 2020-2029 was published in March and available to view on SONI's website. TDPNI 2021-2030 to go out to consultation in late Summer and will include outcome of Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios Needs Assessment (to be published shortly). RK also noted that the TDPNI mostly draws from a 'business as usual' approach similar to the developer-led draft approach being used as part of the consultation. 'Shaping Our Electricity Future' will set out approaches beyond the 'business as usual' perspective.</p> <p>RK outlined the main renewables focussed update as the Mid Antrim upgrade. RK updated the group on the projects progress as being at stakeholder engagement with planned completion by 2027. With TNPP submission later this year and Part 2 being started next year involving pre-application community consultations across the three council areas – Causeway Coast and Glens, Mid Ulster and Antrim and Newtownabbey. RK also briefed the group on the planned route for a 2<sup>nd</sup> 110kV circuit from Rasharkin Main to a new switching substation at Terrygowan. This will provide greater capacity in Rasharkin – Kells corridor.</p> |        |

| No | Item  | Action |
|----|---|--------|
|    | <p>RM enquired about the pace of development and asked how many years the project has been at stage 1 for. RS noted that the project has been at stage 1 for a few years. This time period has included engaging with consultants and exploring different routes as there are multiple options. RS stressed that it is worth putting in the initial work so as to present a strong case for an acceptable route. RM acknowledged the proposed solution and the work that has gone into it and asked if any lessons could be learned for faster development ahead of 2030. RS stated that an internal exercise to identify improvements has been completed. RS shared that future design work will be completed internally to improve flexibility and efficiency. RK also noted the working group with NIE with the aim of rationalising outage times to come up with a deliverable program.</p> <p>AMcC asked if there was an opportunity for the UR to engage and follow up on timescales for large projects. RML stated that there are regular touchpoints between SONI and the UR at all levels of the business.</p>   |        |
| 9  | <p><b>Tomorrow Energy Scenarios Update</b></p> <p>No update provided</p>  |        |
| 10 | <p><b>Operational Update</b></p> <p><b>a. SSG SCADA Update</b></p> <p>CS advised on the progress of the project which was in initial stages at the time of the last meeting. CS provided an overview of what SCADA involves, the requirements set out by Distribution Code Issue 1 (2010) and its importance in forecasting and controlling voltage levels. CS presented slides on the process so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initial Notification Letter &amp; Guidance Document issued 5<sup>th</sup> Dec 2020</li> <li>- 1<sup>st</sup> Reminder Letter issued 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2021</li> <li>- 2<sup>nd</sup> Reminder Letter Issued 19<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021</li> <li>- SSGs appointed a verified SCADA Installer and completed an Acknowledgement Return Form by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021</li> <li>- 96% of Generators have returned acknowledgment and appointed a SCADA installer</li> </ul> <p>CS outlined the next steps where acknowledgement has been received. SCADA Hardware will be installed by a SCADA Installer at the generator. Followed by completion of a SCADA Site Acceptance Test (SAT) with the SAT Certificate issued to generator. Expected completion is within ~2 years dependent on SCADA Installer availability. Where customers have not engaged a Warning Letter is to be issued in June 2021. The generator will be given 6 months to install and commission SCADA, including Reactive Power Control. Where this is not completed the Generator is at risk of de-energisation and</p> |        |



| No | Item  | Action                         |
|----|---|--------------------------------|
|    | <p>loss of capacity as per “Non-Compliant LV Generator” Policy. CS stressed that this is not expected to occur.</p> <p>FAQs were presented by CS. Including the fact that Generators are able to change SCADA installer as long as this is communicated in writing to NIE. Also in cases where repowering applications have been made to the connections department in NIE the requirements for SCADA will be paused until this application is completed. Where no repowering application is received there will be no pause to the requirements.</p> <p>RML asked if this the Warning Letter is the final letter to be issued in June. CS responded it is the final warning letter and the “Non-Compliant LV Generator” policy will be triggered after 12 months. CS is confident that the remaining generators will engage and complete within the timeframe.</p> <p>NO’B asked if the 4% of non-responsive Generators could be broken down by technology type. CS replied that the majority of these were single owners and 95% were wind. Attempts are being made to engage with customers over the phone so as not to go down the non-compliance route.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>b. LV Generation Non-Compliance Policy</b></p> <p>DH provided a verbal update on the new LV non-compliance policy which outlines the steps to be taken where non-compliant Generators are identified. The policy has come about as a result of work around repowering particularly in small scale wind generation. Around 300 applications have been identified applying for planning permission for repowering and some work is being carried out without contacting NIE networks. Work has been completed to heighten awareness within the industry of the need to contact NIE in cases of repowering.</p> <p>The LV non-compliant policy can be triggered in cases where the original terms of connection are broken or for non-compliance with the Distribution Code. The policy includes a number of steps which are designed to ensure the Generator makes the necessary changes. In cases where Generators do not engage or enact these changes further steps can be taken. The policy is a means by which all Generators will be treated impartially and fairly.</p> <p>RML asked whether this policy is internal or available externally. DH confirmed that the policy is currently internal but that there is a review to decide if it can be made available externally at some point. SF highlighted that the repowering process is available on NIE’s website and that these processes must be followed by customers.</p> <p>RM asked for clarification on the progress on the non-firm policy. LO’N responded that work is continuing with JO’B and team and there were</p> | <p><b>NIE<br/>NETWORKS</b></p> |

| No | Item  | Action |
|----|---|--------|
|    | <p>some remaining queries. JO'B outlined that the UR is currently reviewing the SOCC and any queries regarding this will be sent to NIE. It will be published online the following month once approval is given to NIE. There are some remaining meetings but it is towards the end of the process.</p> <p>SF drew attention to the Networks for Net Zero consultation which is currently open to responses and closes on 11<sup>th</sup> June. SF requested any feedback and said the link to the consultation should be shared after the meeting.</p> |        |
| 11 | <p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>No AOBs</p>  | N/A    |

### Summary of New Actions

| Action No. | Action Description   | To be Actioned by |
|------------|--|-------------------|
| 1          | NIE Networks to consider creating a quarterly battery stats graph to go along the quarterly renewable stats graphs   | NIE Networks      |
| 2          | NIE Networks to publish the 'go live' date of the process which will allow applicants to get distribution generation offers in areas where there is no capacity. | NIE Networks      |
| 3          | Renewables NI to provide a further update on the Dispatch Down Working Group in the Q4 RGLG meeting  | Renewables NI     |
| 4          | Renewables NI to ask Energy Storage Ireland to present at the next RGLG  | Renewables NI     |
| 3          | NIE Networks to consider making the LV non-compliant policy external   | NIE Networks      |

### Summary of Carried Actions

| <b>Action No.</b> | <b>Action Description</b>   | <b>To be Actioned by</b>    |
|-------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | Investigate developing “Energy Dashboard” (ongoing)                 | <b>NIE Networks / SONI</b>  |
| <b>2</b>          | Develop Quarterly Reports, SONI to publish before the next meeting. | <b>SONI</b>                 |
| <b>3</b>          | Date of next meeting to be circulated                               | <b>UR/NIE Networks/SONI</b> |