

**26<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

**Renewables Grid Liaison Group**

**Minutes of Meeting**

Attendees	
<b>Utility Regulator</b>	Tanya Hedley (TH), Sarah Friedel (SF), Kevin O'Neill (KON),
<b>NIRIG</b>	Michael Harper (MH), Meabh Cormacain (MC), Donogh O'Brien (DOB), Mervyn Adams (MAd),
<b>NIE</b>	Robert Wasson (RW), Gerry Hodgkinson (GH), Michael Atkinson (MA), David de Casseres (DdC), Aidan Bradley (AB), Lisa McClean (LMC)
<b>SONI</b>	Dick Lewis (DL)
<b>UFU</b>	Gary Hawkes (GHs), Chris Osborne (CO)
<b>Apologies</b>	

No	Item	Action
1	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>No apologies.</p> <p>TH welcomed the two members of the UFU to the RGLG meeting.</p>	
2	<p><b>Minutes from meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> May</b></p> <p>The minutes were found to be in order.</p> <p><b>Actions from meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> May</b></p> <p>All actions were reviewed and a number were discussed further during the meeting. Any actions still ongoing were kept on the action list.</p>	
3	<p><b>Renewables Integration Status Report</b></p> <p>GH explained that NIE had taken on board all suggested changes in the latest version of the report. In the Gantt Chart however NIE have decided to only populate projects which are approved as otherwise there is too much uncertainty around timelines. The group agreed to this.</p> <p>GH to carry out final "proof read" of the report and submit to UR for publication.</p> <p>UR to publish the updated report on their website.</p>	<p><b>NIE</b></p> <p><b>UR</b></p>
4	<p><b>Cluster Charging and Re-Quotes</b></p> <p>NIE have now a mechanism in place to deal with the re-quotes and plan to meet with each of the developers involved within the next few weeks. NIE hope to have the re-quotes out by the end of August.</p> <p>As all the generators due to be re-quoted will be made firm by the MTP projects, NIE and SONI feel that they could provide enough FAQ information with their connection offers to allow the generators to get financial backing. NIE plan to discuss whether such information will be acceptable to the developers at the individual developers meetings.</p> <p>Developers suggested that NIE should not wait until all offers are ready, instead offer should be issued in batches of clusters.</p>	<p><b>NIE</b></p>

No	Item	Action
5	<p><b>Generation Connection – FAQ process</b></p> <p>SONI and NIE presented their report on consultation responses to the SEM in their June board meeting. SEM board have endorsed the process</p> <p>SONI and NIE now to work through the process to get FAQ information implemented into connection offers and make any necessary changes to the TIA.</p> <p>SONI, in parallel, will re-calculate FAQ information and hope to have it ready for the re-quotes. SONI are also planning to publish the FAQ process and information on how the FAQ information is calculated.</p>	<p><b>NIE/SONI</b></p> <p><b>SONI</b></p>
6	<p><b>Offshore Consultation</b></p> <p>Offshore consultation closed on the 30th of May and the UR is currently reviewing responses. UR plans to update the executive board in September before going to the SEM committee. A decision will then be made at the UR executive board in December.</p> <p>MH asked if the UR plan to take up the offers of companies to meet with them. At present the UR are not sure.</p> <p>MOB asked if it was likely that there would be any further consultations. At the minute the UR is not sure but any request to go out to any further consultation would need to be approved by the SEM committee.</p> <p>DL asked if the Ofgem offshore consultation could cause any impact on NI offshore consultation. The UR believed not but this should be considered by the group.</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>
7	<p><b>Small Scale Generation – 11kV Network Access</b></p> <p>AB explained that small scale generators were increasingly experiencing high cost connections at 11kV due to the large volume of applications being received and the rising level of committed and connected generation. Last year a typical connection cost would have been £75 - £100k, whereas now we are seeing costs of up to £600k for a similar sized generator.</p> <p>As advised at previous meetings, with the amount of generation already connected or committed NIE have identified significant constraints arising at 33kV, the costs of which are not directly chargeable to the applicants. As a result a significant number of conditional offers have now been issued.</p> <p>Following a number of interactions from the early part of 2013, NIE has put forward further proposals to the UR this week identifying typical 33kV investments required to overcome these constraints.</p> <p>CO expressed that previously the main concern of the farmers was the connection cost but a further concern now is in making an application without any knowledge of capacity availability. UFU feels that NIE need to get the message out that a bottleneck has been reached in certain areas as the general public don't seem to be aware of these constraints.</p>	

No	Item	Action
	<p>The UFU believes that part of the problem is poor advice being provided to farmers by renewables developers.</p> <p>It was also agreed by the group that network constraint implications need to be considered, when setting renewable incentives.</p> <p>MA explained that NIE are currently sharing information with many organisations including DARD, DETI and UFU to try to get this message out, and referred to the recent presentation made to a forum comprising the above organisations and the UR on 9<sup>th</sup> May. Heat maps reflecting levels of congestion are being developed to indicate the areas which have reached or are approaching saturation and consequently will have high connection cost and/or will be conditional on 33kV reinforcement works being carried out. NIE will continue to support getting this message out.</p> <p>NIRIG have scheduled a seminar with the planning service on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December, where they will be discussing this matter.</p> <p>NIRIG stated that for a new machine, a connection cost of above £150k is not feasible while a connection cost of above £200k for a second hand machine is not feasible.</p> <p>UFU explained their concerns that there seem to be a lot of investments for large scale renewable whilst the associated profits do not go into the local economy. SONI stated that last year large scale accounted for 13% while small scale only accounted for 2%. NIRIG also commented that they invest considerable effort in assessing a projects financial viability; suggesting that small scale developers may need to do more research before they commit.</p> <p>Following some discussion around the benefits of small scale generation and the requirements for 33kV investment to enable further connections, the UR raised a question around whether the general body of customers should pay for something which may bring them no benefit.</p>	NIE
8	<p><b>Rebate policy extending beyond domestic customers</b></p> <p>UR reported that DETI intend to look into this and respond in due course.</p> <p>It was confirmed that if a change to the legalisation was necessary for this to happen, rebates would only be offered from that date.</p> <p>It was agreed that this should be taken off the agenda and only brought back when the UR had an update.</p>	NIE
9	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p><u>DETI's response to invitation to attend RGLG Meeting</u></p> <p>UR indicated that DETI feel that since this is an operational meeting, an Observer role would be more appropriate for them. If the meeting could be moved to a 10 O'Clock slot, they would be happy to attend from September. All members agreed. UR to invite DETI to attend in September and reschedule meetings.</p> <p><u>FAQ &amp; Connection processes Consultation</u></p> <p>Consultation closed 12 April 2012. SONI / NIE presentation to SEM</p>	UR

No	Item	Action
	<p>Committee 25<sup>th</sup> June outlining recommended changes that included; generator application list established, FAQ for all connections over 5MW, details of transmission reinforcements to make FAQ – MEC to be advised, SONI to publish all relevant information.</p> <p><u>N-S Interconnector Update</u></p> <p>DdC updated the group that NIE have resubmitted the proposal to the planning service. If the application is acceptable to the planning service they will put it out for consultation before sending it to the PAC.</p>	
10	<p><b>Dates for next meetings</b></p> <p>Dates agreed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 10<sup>th</sup> Sept 2013</li> <li>▪ 12 Nov 2013</li> </ul>	

<b>No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	Submit the Renewable Status Report to UR	<b>NIE</b>
2.	Publish updated Renewable Status Report on website	<b>UR</b>
3.	Arrange meetings with developers regarding re-quotes.	<b>NIE</b>
4.	<p>FAQ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work through the process to get FAQ information implemented into connection offers</li> <li>• Make any necessary changes to the TIA.</li> <li>• Begin calculate FAQ information</li> <li>• Publish FAQ process and</li> <li>• How the FAQ information is calculated</li> </ul>	<p><b>SONI/NIE</b></p> <p><b>SONI/NIE</b></p> <p><b>SONI</b></p> <p><b>SONI</b></p> <p><b>SONI</b></p>
5.	Consider the Ofgem offshore consultation to see if it will have any affects on the NI offshore consultation.	<b>ALL</b>
6	Further information to be made available to Small Scale Generation applicants to support decision making e.g. Heat Map showing levels of congestion	<b>NIE</b>
7.	Take the rebate policy extending beyond domestic customers off the agenda.	<b>NIE</b>
8.	UR to invite DETI to the meeting in September and re-schedule meetings for 10 O'Clock.	<b>UR</b>