


Contestability Working Group - Conf Call		 Utility Regulator ELECTRICITY GAS WATER	
Subject: Contestability Working Group – kick off meeting		Date: 27/03/2020	Time: 2:00pm
Attendees:	Title	Representing	
Aidan Gunning	AG	EW	
John Gunning	JG	EW	
Joseph Cosgrove	JC	EW	
Owen McGuckin	OMG	EW	
Roisin McLaughlin	RML	UR	
Kenny McPartland	KMP	UR	
Jody O’Boyle	JOB	UR	
Cathal Martin	CN	SSE/NIRIG	
Sinead Ferris	SF	NIEN	
Nigel Crawford	NC	NIEN	
Alan Campbell	AC	SONI	
Nicola McMahon	NM	SONI	
Sarah Friedel	SFD	SONI	
Conan Hodgkinson	CoH	SONI	
Apologies: Andrew Prinsloo @ telestructure-int			
Circulation: External			

Item	Main discussion points
1	<p><u>Agenda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Presentation from UR • Review of Contestability Working Group ToR • Presentation from ICP's • Presentation from NIE Networks • Update from SONI • Open discussion on the issues • Next steps • Date of Next Meeting • AOB <p>Presentations can be found at - https://www.uregni.gov.uk/contestability-working-group</p> <p><u>Main issues</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RML thanked and welcomed the attendees to the meeting. She noted that the Contestability Working Group (CWG) was being reconvened to ensure that the contestability market functions well and to look at non contestable areas in connections to electricity networks that can potentially be made contestable, as well as the processes and timelines associated with potential contestable work. 2. JOB presented slides prepared by the Utility Regulator, which consisted of a timeline of the contestability of connections in Northern Ireland. JOB highlighted the current terms of reference of the CWG and demonstrated that

Item	Main discussion points
	<p>these terms of reference were drawn up with the introduction of contestability into the Northern Ireland market in mind.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. RML put forward to the group that these should be amended to include the monitoring of the effectiveness of contestability and discussion of areas of non contestability that could be considered contestable. JOB questioned what success would look like for the group and suggested moving towards adopting Great Britain's approach to contestability activities. 4. SFD states that she felt it would be important to take best practices from both Republic of Ireland and Great Britain. RML agreed with this approach of taking learnings from various sources. JOB suggested an action on the UR to provide a red lined version of the Terms of Reference to demonstrate how these could evolve and provide these to the rest of the group for feedback. 5. It was agreed to discuss the minute taking between the UR and NIEN/ SONI, UR to produce the first set of minutes and discuss further with NIEN and SONI. 6. AG presented slides prepared by Electricity Worx, he identified that 730 connections were quoted to date, 142 connections were completed and adopted by NIE Networks and currently 77 connections were being worked on, at various stages of their lifecycle. AG illustrated that in excess of 400 customers had been turned away as current procedures were not financially viable for Electricity Worx 7. AG highlighted that Electricity Worx cannot continue to work in this way as it is not financially viable due to the current additional cost, in line with SoCC set by NIE Networks in relation to final LV connections. The presentation highlights that Electricity Worx feel that as they have live connection accreditations with NIEN they are suitable candidates to carry out the final connections on the LV systems. 8. SF presented slides prepared by NIEN which included a summary of key statistics of contestability to date in connections greater than 5MW and less than 5MW. SF identified that there were 12 offers accepted for contestability connections greater than 5MW, 4 of these offers are being provided by the nominated ICP and 1 of which is in the design phase. It was noted that no jobs >5MW ,where customers have chosen to proceed with an ICP, have reached construction stages. For connections less than 5MW there have been 7012 dual offers issued to customers providing them with choice, of these over 100 connections have been constructed by an ICP and energised and adopted by NIE Networks and there are currently 49 jobs active with the nominated ICP. SF notes there are 36 ICPs accredited to operate in NI with 3 active. 9. SF noted the significant training program, within NIEN that followed the UR decision paper on Contestability. JOB highlighted the great job carried out by NIEN from the introduction of contestability in NI, including the work done on the ICP Portal, this is echoed by AG who tells the group the portal is working well. 10. SF highlights her views that contestability is in its infancy in NI and demonstrates that not many projects have been completed through the end to end process, especially with connections greater than 5MW. AG states that 95% of NI market is for connections lower than 5MW, and states that they hope to progress the projects for connections greater than 5MW in the coming weeks. 11. JOB stated that the final connection at low voltage in Great Britain as contestable work was accelerated by the DNO and questions if NIEN have a timeline to achieve something similar. SF states NIEN do not have a timeline and

Item	Main discussion points
	<p>expect this working group to discuss matters like this. SF highlights that although this has been achieved in GB, it did not occur in ROI and this working group should look at both cases. RML asks if NIEN were aware of the process that occurred in ROI to reach this decision. SF stated that from her understanding there was no appetite in ROI to bring forward final connection at low voltage as contestable work.</p> <p>12. AG states that in the current market ICPs cannot compete, which is why there are only 3 active currently. NC indicated that NIEN are extremely competitive and that maybe the reason for ElectricWorx being unable to compete AG agrees there should be a level playing field for ICPs and NIEN, but highlights that currently ICPs cannot compete.</p> <p>13. RML states that a lot of effort went into developing contestability and now there is only a few ICPs active and we are at risk of losing contestability altogether. RML suggests we need to look at the best way of taking this forward and to understand the appetite for Contestability in NI. RML states that we want a level of ambition for this group to know what is feasible and doable for contestability within Northern Ireland.</p> <p>14. SF asks the question if any other ICPs have any views and if they were invited to the forum. JOB states that the active ICPs have been invited but states that the other ICPs could be contacted about joining the group.</p> <p>15. JOB suggests in order to take things forward Electricity Worx should forward a list of all their current issues to the group. This is agreed with the rest of the group.</p> <p>16. RML asked in there was any AOB. No responses were received and she scheduled the next meeting for 24th April 2020 at 2.30pm.</p> <p>17. Meeting was adjourned at 3pm.</p>
2	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UR and NIE Networks and SONI to confirm minute taking. - UR to provide a redlined version of the current Terms of Reference of the CWG to demonstrate how these could evolve going forward and circulate amongst the group - Electricity Worx to provide a list of their current issues in relation to contestability