



Forward Work Programme 2021-2022

Our draft business plan for the third year of our
Corporate Strategy 2019-2024



About the Utility Regulator

The Utility Regulator is the independent non-ministerial government department responsible for regulating Northern Ireland's electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries to promote the short and long-term interests of consumers.

We are not a policy-making department of government but we make sure that the energy and water utility industries in Northern Ireland are regulated and developed within ministerial policy as set out in our statutory duties.

We are governed by a Board of Directors and are accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly through financial and annual reporting obligations.

We are based at Queens House in the centre of Belfast. The Chief Executive leads a management team of directors representing each of the key functional areas in the organisation: Corporate Affairs, Markets and Networks. The staff team includes economists, engineers, accountants, utility specialists, legal advisors and administration professionals.



Our mission

To protect the short- and long-term interests of consumers of electricity, gas and water.



Our vision

To ensure value and sustainability in energy and water.



Our values

- Be a best practice regulator: transparent, consistent, proportionate, accountable and targeted.
- Be professional – listening, explaining and acting with integrity.
- Be a collaborative, co-operative and learning team.
- Be motivated and empowered to make a difference.



Abstract

This document sets out the planned non-routine projects that we plan to undertake during 2021-22. The projects are organised under the three corporate strategy objectives from our Corporate Strategy 2019-24.

Audience

Given that the document is our corporate business plan with an extended range of projects it is likely that it will be of interest to a variety of audiences – such as industry, other regulators, government bodies and consumer representative organisations.

Consumer impact

While the consumer impact of our business plan is difficult to directly assess in numerical terms, it is likely that the range of projects will contribute to our overarching corporate strategy purpose of protecting and empowering consumers.



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Foreword

I am delighted to write this foreword to our Forward Work Programme (FWP) 2021-22, which will be my first as Chief Executive.

The last 12 months have been unprecedented.

The UK's departure from the EU was completed when the transition period expired at the end of 2020. We have seen a global pandemic which has not only cost so many lives and damaged societies and economies but has had an impact on how we operate as a regulator. The restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly in early 2020 has provided increased local accountability. The Economy and Infrastructure Departments have been progressing their respective energy and water strategies which will impact on our work priorities. We will work with both Departments, and play our part, in the delivery of strategic outcomes. All of this with the backdrop of climate change and the UK Government's commitment to a net-zero target for carbon emissions by 2050.

In that context, it is remarkable that we have continued to deliver on our regulatory commitments. Covid-19 related public health restrictions have meant that our staff have been out of the office, and working remotely, since 22 March 2020. We have also had to adapt to how we operate in a remote working environment as well as undertaking unanticipated work associated with the pandemic (such as monitoring supplier debt). It is a measure of our resilience that we have managed to accommodate unplanned urgent work, while also continuing to make progress across our work programme.

As we enter the third year of our corporate strategy, our focus remains on enabling successful regulated utility companies in Northern Ireland, to provide enhanced levels of service at the lowest possible cost. There is no doubt that efficient investment in utility networks, that delivers benefits for businesses and households across Northern Ireland, will be of heightened importance in the post Covid-19 world.

We look forward to working with our stakeholders to deliver on our strategic objective of enabling 21st Century networks. As a facilitator and an enabler, we believe we can support the kind of change by utility networks that business and household consumers can benefit from.

Putting consumers at the centre is vital to our work. In a year, when the pandemic has impacted on the most vulnerable, regulation has a role in standing up for all consumers. With a less positive outlook on energy prices, consumers expect us to do all we can to protect them.

Overall, we cannot achieve our strategic objectives without the support of government, regulators, industry, consumer and business representative bodies, as well as the voluntary and community sectors, consumers and others.

In my first year as Chief Executive, I wish to thank Jenny Pyper, who stepped down in November, and wish her well for the future. I am also grateful for the support of our Board members since I joined the Utility Regulator.

Most of all I wish to thank our team who have made me so welcome and have performed with dedication and professionalism during a tumultuous year. The award of Silver accreditation under Investors for People at the start of 2021 is a great example of the commitment of the team. I look forward to working with the team as we look to deliver our new work programme.

John French
Chief Executive

1. About this Document

The Energy (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and the Water and Sewerage Service (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 requires the Utility Regulator to publish a Forward Work Programme (FWP) (or business plan) each year. The plan should 'contain a general description of the projects, other than those routine activities in the exercise of its functions, which it plans to undertake during the year'.

This FWP lists the projects that we are planning to do during 2021/22. The majority of the projects are major pieces of work which will span the business planning year (and in some cases will take more than one year to complete).

On 18 December 2020, we published a draft of this plan for consultation. It set out the projects we proposed to undertake during 2021/22. During this consultation, we asked for feedback on whether we had identified the right projects or had not included certain projects. It also encouraged people to give us general comments on our draft document.

The consultation closed on 19 February 2021, and we received 17 responses. We have published these responses on our website at www.uregni.gov.uk/publications/ (except for those respondents that have asked us not to publish their response). On 19 January 2021, we also held a briefing. This was attended by 67 people from a range of organisations. They had the opportunity to question our senior management team on the draft programme.

As with previous consultations on the FWP, the comments we received frequently referred to wider issues rather than being specifically about our business plan. We nevertheless welcome this feedback and have noted the comments on those broader issues.

The feedback also noted the comprehensive nature of our proposed work programme. Clearly our work sits within a wider context. We are keeping under review our resourcing to enable us to not only meet our work programme but also play our part in other strategic workstreams. In this regard we acknowledge several comments relating to the need to have sufficient resources to address the challenge of delivering the Department for the Economy's (DfE) forthcoming energy strategy. We will therefore be giving further consideration to the resourcing requirements for energy strategy as the implications become clearer during the course of this year.

There were no specific suggestions around new projects and no one stated that we should remove any of our proposed projects. There was a general comment made around providing more information on certain projects and we have taken the opportunity, where appropriate, to clarify the wording of some projects. Several of those who responded to our consultation welcomed our identification of proposed projects. These projects are included in this final plan. We will also take the opportunity to provide specific responses direct to those who gave us feedback.

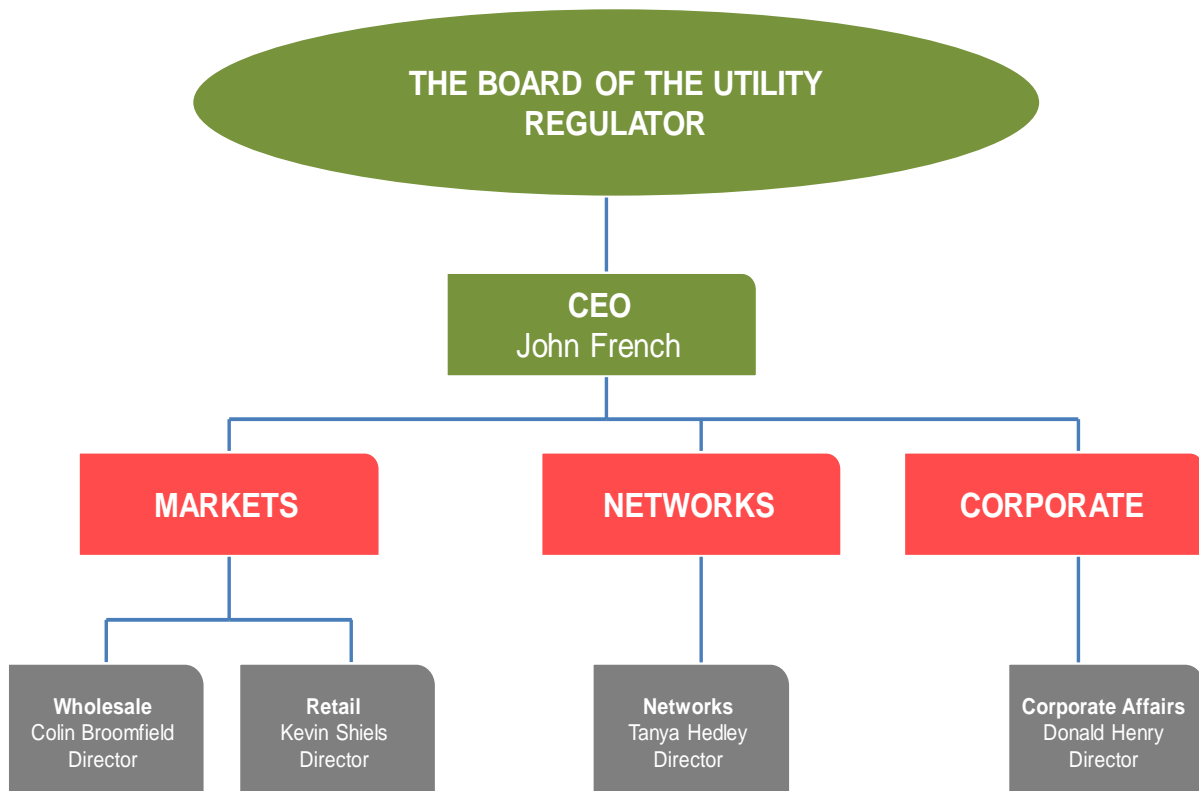
Overall, following the consultation, we intend to advance all of our listed FWP projects (Annex 1). Key terms used in the plan are highlighted in **purple** and explained in a glossary on Page 24.

2. About Us

Who we are

We are the independent non-ministerial government department responsible for regulating Northern Ireland's electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries. We are governed by a board whose members are appointed by the Minister for Finance. We are ultimately accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly and our work contributes to the overall Programme for Government (PfG) in Northern Ireland.

Our organisation is structured to help us deliver our corporate strategy and work better with stakeholders (the wide range of people and organisations we work with). We are organised under three groupings: Markets, Networks and Corporate (see below).



What we do

Our work is based on the duties we have by law (our statutory duties), which include the following:

Energy electricity and gas	Water and sewerage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protecting the interests of electricity consumers in relation to price and quality of service, by promoting effective competition where appropriate.• Promoting the development and maintenance of an efficient, economic and co-ordinated gas industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protecting the interests of consumers by promoting an efficient industry delivering high-quality services.

We have wide-ranging statutory duties relating to regulation and competition. We share our duties relating to competition with the UK's Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

Our work includes the following:

- Granting licences that allow gas, electricity and water companies to operate in Northern Ireland.
- Making sure licensed companies meet relevant laws and licence obligations.
- Setting the minimum standards of service which regulated companies must provide to consumers in Northern Ireland.
- Making sure that consumers only pay what is necessary for the services they receive now and into the future.
- Challenging companies to make sure they operate efficiently and provide good value for consumers as well as shareholders.
- Working to provide more choice and encourage effective competition in the gas and electricity markets.
- Making sure that regulated companies can fund their activities and are open to new technologies and ways of working effectively.
- Acting as an adjudicator on individual complaints, disputes and appeals.

Who we work with

We work with a wide range of stakeholders across several areas to help us protect the interests of consumers.

In carrying out our duties relating to gas and electricity, we work within a policy framework set by the DfE. Our statutory duties are the same as DfE's. In carrying out our duties relating to water and sewerage services, we work within a policy framework set by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI).

The SEM Committee (SEMC) regulates the all-island single electricity market (SEM). We work with the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities (CRU), the energy regulator for the Republic of Ireland, on the SEMC. SEMC's role is to protect the interests of electricity consumers on the island of Ireland by promoting effective competition.

We also work closely with the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland (CCNI), the organisation set up by the Government to represent consumers and other groups across Northern Ireland.

Our work sits within a broader setting and we work closely with other regulators. These include the energy and water regulators for Great Britain (Ofgem, Ofwat and the Water Industry Commission for Scotland).

We also work with CMA and with other regulators across the UK through the United Kingdom Competition Network (UKCN). This provides a co-ordinated approach to identifying and responding to competition issues and promoting best practice.

Finally, we are active members of the United Kingdom Regulators Network (UKRN), which includes representatives from economic regulators across the UK. The network seeks to ensure the effective co-operation between sectors and has produced a range of publications.

The structure of this document

The rest of the document is structured as follows:

- Section 3 - sets out the context for developing the business plan;
- Section 4 - outlines how we decide on our business plan projects, our core business and the resourcing of our work; and
- Section 5 - provides a list of our business plan projects

3. The context for our business plan

In this section we briefly outline the key areas influencing the development of our business plan.

Brexit

Brexit continues to be the most significant external context for our work. The UK has left the EU and the transition period came to an end on 31 December 2020. We have worked extensively with DfE and the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) in particular to advance Brexit preparations. Energy markets are one of the most important aspects of our work and we have focused our work on the implications of Brexit for the SEM.

Covid 19

The implications of the Covid-19 pandemic will continue to have an impact both externally and internally for us. Externally the need to monitor the impact on suppliers and consumers of the pandemic is critical. We continue to proactively engage with Government and industry to address any Covid-19 related issues for energy and water consumers. Public Health restrictions have meant that all of our staff are working remotely and we will continue to review this in line with Government advice.

Delivering net zero

The UK government has set a **net-zero target** for carbon emissions by 2050. Delivering net-zero is central to the energy transition. The transition to a low carbon future, with the net-zero commitment at its core, will transform how consumers engage with and use energy. For regulators there are governance challenges associated with profound change. Adapting to change (such as through innovation) will also be a key issue. Supporting consumer empowerment will be a priority. Technological and social change will drive consumer choices about utility services. Locally, the Economy Minister has indicated that generation from renewables should not be below 70% by 2030.

Future policy and strategy

In energy, the DfE is developing a new energy strategy. We are committed to supporting DfE in developing and implementing this strategy and the need for us to be flexible in reflecting the evolving strategic landscape in our regulation. The new strategy will likely provide direction on areas such as renewables (particularly in the context of the EU's Clean Energy Package), electricity and gas network infrastructure planning and the facilitation of new technologies (e.g. energy storage). In water, the DfI has set out a Long-Term Strategy for water which covers areas such as leakage and water quality. Constraints in public sector expenditure continue to impact on our regulatory responsibilities.

Competitive markets

While part of the debate on utility markets is framed by consumer outcomes, there is the parallel question of promoting effective competition. While the enhanced SEM went live on 1 October 2018, it remains an evolving market and we continue with work to enhance its operation. Our stewardship of retail energy markets has seen their ongoing development and we continue to keep under review the effectiveness of these markets.

Markets and consumer outcomes

Our focus on promoting fair outcomes for consumers remains. The level of consumer prices is critical and our regulation ensures that Northern Ireland energy prices are transparent and reflect costs. Overall, for most consumers, regulated prices are lower than other comparative markets. Putting consumers at the centre means we will assess consumer views to inform our regulation of these markets. We are also committed to protecting the needs of the most vulnerable through a dedicated Consumer Protection Programme and we are mindful of the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on consumers.

Supporting renewables

The EU's **Clean Energy Package** and the UK government's **Clean Growth Strategy** all set a strategic direction for energy and renewables. The main focus areas for the Clean Energy Package include a drive to support energy efficiency initiatives and utilising innovative technologies to support the growth of renewables. Going forward the key policy questions relate to renewables targets in Northern Ireland beyond 2020, how additional renewable generation can be accommodated on the system and the challenge of funding renewables in the least cost way while providing opportunities to support new technologies.

Security of supply

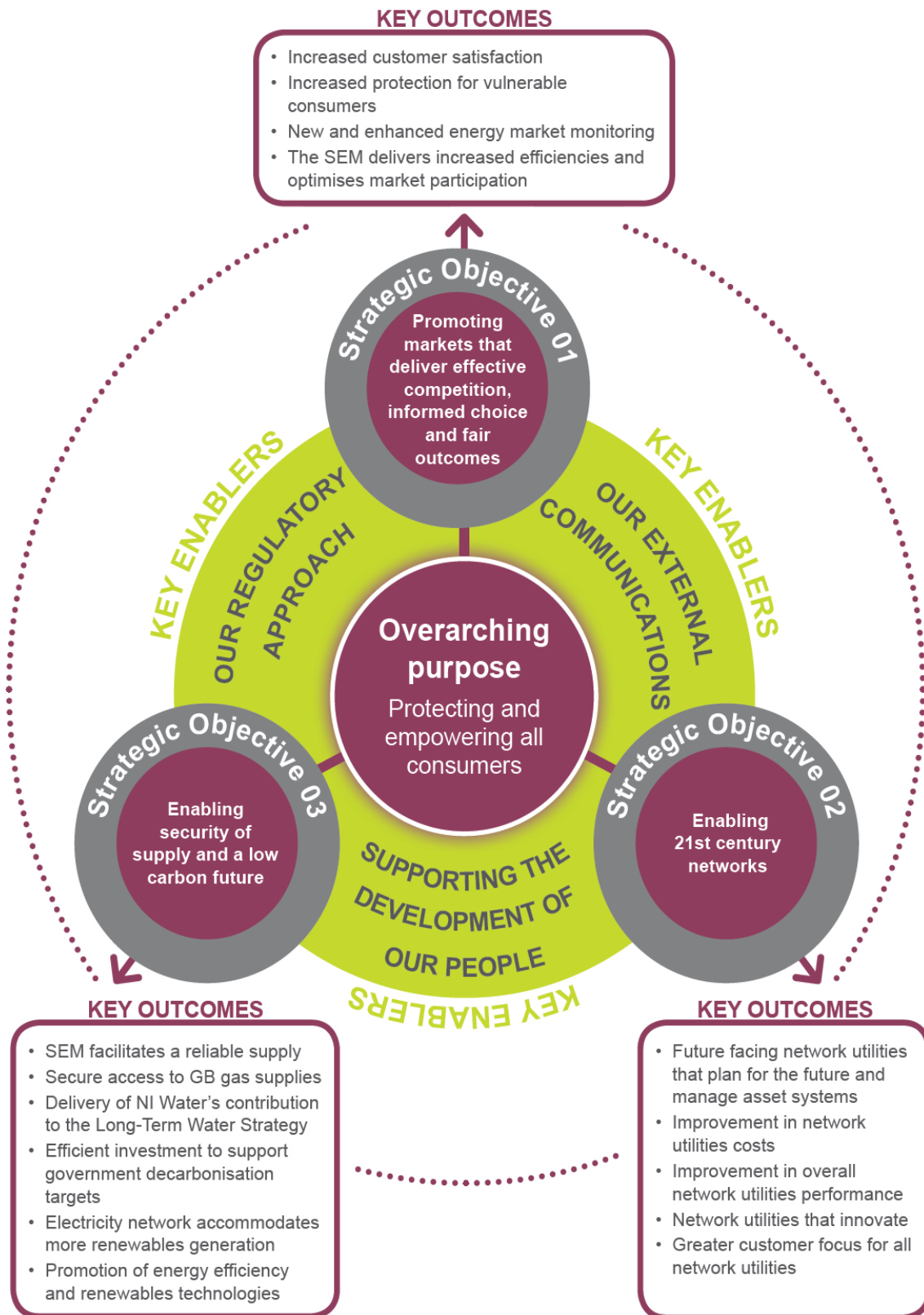
A secure, long-term and reliable supply remains a priority. In electricity, SEM capacity arrangements provide a basis for managing long-term security of supply risks. The granting of planning permission for the construction of a second north-south electricity interconnector is a significant development. In gas, finalising a transportation agreement to facilitate a reliable supply with GB remains a focus for us. In water, the challenge remains of ensuring a reliable supply. DfI's Long-Term Water Strategy is focused on security of supply.

Regulatory approach

Given the change that is coming, particularly in energy, continued uncertainties and increasing expectations from stakeholders, there clearly are future challenges for regulators. There is every prospect that societal change, technological developments and a more empowered consumer will prompt regulators to adjust their approach. The challenge for regulators is about staying ahead of consumer expectations and anticipating the changes that are required. In practice this may mean that regulators are less prescriptive, more pragmatic, focussed more on principles and outcomes, adopt new approaches to accommodate innovation and a more diverse stakeholder environment. This approach positions regulators more as enablers (e.g. to facilitate major infrastructural projects) with a greater emphasis on making connections between stakeholders.

Our Corporate Strategy

We developed a new Corporate Strategy for the period 2019-2024. Our strategy was published in April 2019 and is summarised below.



4. Our business plan and resources

In this Business Plan we have set out the most significant projects that will help us to meet our strategic objectives. Most of these projects take more than one year to deliver. Our Business Plan projects are set out in Section 5.

This is the second year of our corporate strategy period, and we have undertaken a detailed process to identify our list of business plan projects. Our progress against our Corporate Strategy has been reviewed and this has also contributed to the choice of our projects for 2021-22. We have also considered projects that commenced during 2020/21 (or earlier), new workstreams that have emerged. Our assessment process has also considered the scope of our core business and those necessary activities which are undertaken every year to support our regulatory role.

In assessing the priority projects we have identified those that should be included in the business plan because they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- (1) legislative or statutory requirements;
- (2) government policy requirements;
- (3) regulatory requirements; and
- (4) contribute to the delivery of our corporate strategy objectives.

We previously estimated that just over half of our resources (in terms of staff time across the organisation), will be involved in delivering projects that are in this Business Plan. This will vary, with some parts of the organisation having a greater balance of work towards business plan projects and others having a greater focus on core business.

Supporting the development of DfE's next Energy Strategy for Northern Ireland and subsequently facilitating its implementation will require increasing levels of resource inputs over the next few years given the task of planning and facilitating delivery of net-zero. We are already prioritising Energy Strategy requirements and the adequacy of our overall staffing and resourcing will need further consideration in that regard in the context of producing our final FWP for 2021/22.

Our core business

This FWP provides a list of the main non-routine projects that we intend to undertake, but these are only part of our overall activities. Work to deliver our core business is described briefly below.

In terms of monopolies, an ongoing part of our work is reviewing the regulated electricity and gas tariffs and water charges which affect consumers' bills. We also make sure compliance obligations regarding electricity, gas or water networks (infrastructure) are met. Our work to develop this infrastructure includes, approving changes to network

codes and extensions to the gas network. Our monitoring and cost reporting activities relating to regulated companies are also significant commitments.

To achieve our targets on network company performance we have established cost and performance monitoring frameworks. We also encourage regulated utilities, as part of our network price controls, to enhance their approach to asset management so that they compare favourably with their peers.

An important part of our day-to-day work on energy markets relates to the wholesale electricity market. In respect of SEM there is the core business associated with the ongoing governance, market operations and monitoring arrangements. SEM's market monitoring unit (MMU) is based at our offices. There is more information on this work on the website at www.semcommittee.com. We also regulate the **transmission system operator** for NI (SONI) and the Single Electricity Market Operator (SEMO) and support SEM Committee.

More generally, across our Markets group, we monitor the way the wholesale electricity market and the retail electricity market work. Our monitoring of energy markets has evolved, to provide us with a greater range of information to aid effective market operation and better detect the incidence of market abuse or non-compliance.

Our ongoing work to protect consumers includes issuing, and monitoring compliance with, licences that allow gas, electricity and water companies to operate in Northern Ireland. We have also put in place codes of practice relating to consumer protection. Over recent times, we have seen a significant increase in the number of regulatory appeals, complaints and disputes which require us to allocate a significant amount of staff time to address.

NI Water continues to improve its relative efficiency and builds on the improvements that have been made and we will conclude our price control review for NI Water. However, public funding for NI Water that does not meet identified investment need may negatively impact on the delivery of services and outputs going forward.

As we work within policy frameworks, established by DfE (for energy) and DfI (for water), we help these departments by providing regulatory support and carrying out analysis. We also have previously supported, where necessary, the Northern Ireland Assembly's Economy and Infrastructure committees and frequently provided evidence to meetings of these committees. Finally, we also operate the Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme (NISEP).

As a non-ministerial government department, we also are focused on communicating with and involving industry, voluntary organisations and the public. This includes regular meetings, and hosting forums (for example, the Renewables Grid Liaison Group). We try to promote the use of clear and upfront communications. We also comply with a range of finance, HR, accountability and communications related reporting requirements.

Finally, we regularly respond to correspondence and requests for information from people and organisations (including those relating to Freedom of Information).

Delivering our business plan – resources

Due to the scope and scale of our core business, and the projects set out in this business plan (as listed in Section 5), we often have to make choices about how to use our resources. This includes prioritising our resources to make sure we target critical projects (for example, in respect of price controls) which affect the timing of other work that contributes to our strategic objectives. Uncertainties around Brexit, the impact of Covid-19 and the evolving strategic landscape in both energy and water may also force us to make choices about the timing and scope of some of our FWP projects.

Supporting our staff is essential, if we are to successfully carry out the projects, and meet the objectives set out in our corporate strategy and this business plan. We are committed to supporting the development of our staff, promoting the benefits of working for us and recruiting and keeping competent staff. In doing this, we must make sure we have the skills, experience, processes and culture needed for this challenging business plan. We have been implementing a programme of staff development activities, (UR People Programme) to support our aspiration.

As a non-ministerial government department we keep to relevant policies, processes and controls. To support our aim to follow best practice, we will continue to take steps to further improve our regulatory processes and our communications with stakeholders.

Our focus is on making sure that we apply our resources efficiently, and this business plan will be challenging to fund and deliver. If new priorities emerge during the year, we will take steps to make sure we have the resources for these. However, doing this may mean we have to delay or reduce our commitment to other business plan projects. In these situations we will, as far as possible, let relevant stakeholders know.

There remains some exceptional and significant pressures on our budget, such as the adequacy of resourcing for energy strategy requirements and some other projects. However, in order to deliver on our final FWP and existing business as usual requirements it will be necessary to provide for a small increase in our initial budget for 2021/22. The opening budget for 2021/22 therefore is £9.1 million which is just marginally higher than our opening budget for 2020/21. We will also be looking further at additional resourcing requirements during the course of the year as the requirements and implications of energy strategy evolve. Our budget is agreed by our Board.

This business plan is based on the equivalent of 91 full-time equivalent staff (which includes several temporary staff) currently organised across three organisational groupings – Networks, Markets and Corporate Affairs.

Except for the costs associated with some environmental responsibilities, we receive all

our funding through licence fees. Corporate and shared costs (such as finance, HR, accommodation and IT) are, along with the Chief Executive's office, charged to the gas, electricity and water companies via their licence fees.

5. Our business plan projects

Strategic objective 1: Promoting markets that deliver effective competition, informed choice and fair outcomes

Ref	Project description	Scope and anticipated outcome/s	Link to Corporate Strategy success measures	Lead team	Timing
1	Deliver our Consumer Protection Programme (CPP)	Delivering our revised Consumer Protection Programme projects will provide safeguards for customers, particularly vulnerable customers.	KSM 7 Objective 2, KSM 6	Retail	Full Year
2	Deliver a Second Domestic Consumer Insight Tracker	Completing and publishing the second Domestic Consumer Tracker report will help inform our interventions to support domestic consumers in the retail energy market.	KSM 1, 4	Retail	Q3
3	Complete Retail Regulatory Framework Review	We will issue a position paper before the end of Q1 which will determine if our retail and consumer regulatory regime is fit for purpose and that the interests of consumers are protected.	KSM 4	Retail	Q1
4	Facilitate innovation in energy markets by reviewing licences	Examine options, and implement changes to licence requirements to assist innovation in line with our Statutory duties and Corporate Strategy	All KSMs	All	Full Year
5	Commence energy supply price control reviews	Begin the three Supply Price control projects in electricity and gas sectors. Ensures that the price regulated suppliers produce quality outputs at lowest cost to consumers and have sufficient revenues to run their business efficiently.	KSM 3	Retail	Q3

Ref	Project description	Scope and anticipated outcome/s	Link to Corporate Strategy success measures	Lead team	Timing
6	Commence review of gas exit capacity arrangements	Consider how the gas exit capacity arrangements and SEM work effectively together and identify if any changes are required to continue to protect the interests of customers.	KSM 4	Networks	Q4
7	Develop more competitive future arrangements for system services	Consult on options and develop approach to ensure that there are competitive procurement arrangements in place after 2023.	Objective 1, Objective 3, KSM 1	Wholesale	Full year
8	Work to enhance SEM-GB Trading Arrangements	Work with stakeholders following EU Exit to develop measures that improve the efficiency of trading between SEM and GB and protect the interests of NI energy consumers	Objective 1, KSM 5	Wholesale	Full year
9	Complete SEMO price control review	Consult and decide upon SEMO 2021 price control proposals to ensure that the company produce quality outputs at reasonable cost to consumers and has sufficient revenues to run its business.	Objective 1 KSM 6	Wholesale	Full year

Strategic objective 2: Enabling 21st century networks

Ref	Project description	Scope and anticipated outcome/s	Link to Corporate Strategy success measures	Lead team	Timing/ Key milestone/s
1	Review the Moyle Interconnector regulatory framework	Review the Moyle regulatory framework in light of new legislative requirements.	Objective 2	Wholesale	Full year
2	Put in place a customer focused framework to deliver enhanced performance and transparency (including new licence obligations on Digitalisation)	Will facilitate delivery of net zero by putting in place a Digitalisation Strategy for Northern Ireland which delivers access to information on Network operation from NIE Networks and SONI.	Objective 2 KSM 1, 2	Networks	Q4
3	Complete PC21 water price control	Our price control determination will ensure that the company produces quality outputs at lowest cost to consumers and has sufficient revenues to run its business.	KSM 1, 2, 3	Networks	Q1
4	Scope a review for the effective treatment of NI Water depreciation	The review will ensure water company has a sustainable model with costs appropriately apportioned between short-and long-term.	Objective 2	Networks	Q3
5	Commence NIE Network RP7 price control review	Ensures that the electricity distribution company produce quality outputs at lowest cost to consumers and has sufficient revenues to run its business while facilitating the energy transition.	Objective 2 KSMs 1, 2, 3, 6	Networks	Full year
6	Commence assessment of NI Water's Living With Water programme	Will ensure that the water company produce quality outputs in a collaborative way giving overall lowest costs for Northern Ireland.	Objective 2 KSMs 2, 3	Networks	Full year
7	Scope a review of electricity network tariff structures	Ensures the structure of tariffs remain appropriate for network industries and customers in light of the energy transition and new DfE Energy Strategy.	SO 2 KSM 4	Networks	Full year

Ref	Project description	Scope and anticipated outcome/s	Link to Corporate Strategy success measures	Lead team	Timing/ Key milestone/s
8	Continue GD23 price control review	The review will ensure that the gas distribution network companies produce quality outputs at lowest cost to consumers and have sufficient revenues to run their businesses.	Objective 2 KSMs 1, 2, 3, 5	Networks	Full year
9	Deliver effective licence obligations to reflect the outcome of the SONI Governance review	Updated licence obligations will ensure that SONI operates effectively in the interests of Northern Ireland consumers.	Objective 2 KSMs 2 and 3	Networks	Q4
10	Continue GT22 price control review	Ensures that the gas transmission network companies produce quality outputs at lowest cost to consumers and have sufficient revenues to run their businesses.	Objective 2 KSMs 1, 2, 3, 5	Networks	Full year

Strategic objective 3: Ensuring security of supply and a low carbon future

Ref	Project description	Anticipated outcome/s	Link to Corporate Strategy success measures	Lead team	Timing/ Key milestone/s
1	Deliver SEM capacity auctions in line with programme	Preparations for T-4 2025/26, T-3 2024/25 and T-1 2022/23 capacity auctions will be completed. Ensures the appropriate volume of capacity is secured through the capacity market considering constraints and other factors while optimising security of supply with cost to consumers.	Objective 3 KSM 5	Wholesale	Full year
2	Implement the Electricity Regulation in SEM	Continues progress on implementing key aspects of the Electricity Regulation in relation to SEM energy and capacity markets.	Objective 3 KSM 4	Wholesale	Full year
3	Support DfE to progress the implementation of the Clean Energy Package (CEP)	Ensures Northern Ireland is compliant with the aspects of CEP which have been transposed in advance of exit day.	KSM 4	All	Full year
4	Support DfE in the development of a consumer-centric energy strategy to help deliver net-zero (including the future of energy efficiency)	Will assist DfE in developing a revised long-term framework for energy in Northern Ireland that will focus on the needs of consumers and help deliver net-zero.	All KSMS	All	Full Year
5	Complete arrangements to continue to provide access to GB Gas markets after 2021	Ensures the continued efficient operation of the gas transmission system.	KSM 3	Networks	Q2
6	Advance work on reviewing the gas regulatory framework to facilitate	Scope and implement changes to existing framework to facilitate injection of biomethane onto the gas grid. Liaison on with Regulated	SO 2 KSM 1, 2	Networks	Full year

Ref	Project description	Anticipated outcome/s	Link to Corporate Strategy success measures	Lead team	Timing/ Key milestone/s
	possible biomethane injection	companies, DfE and interested stakeholders to ensure policy alignment.			
7	Support DfE to further enhance NIRO and implement the NI Audit Office recommendations	Statutory duties in respect of NIRO are demonstrated. Building the foundation for the next stage of energy transition to decarbonised electricity supplies.	Objective 3 KSM 1	Corporate Affairs	Full Year
8	Support DfE to design a pilot energy efficiency home retrofit scheme and develop quality standards and an appropriate quality assurance approach for Energy Services providers within NISEP	Consumers who receive and/or invest in energy services products can be confident of a high quality service and outcome.	Objective 3 KSM 1	Corporate Affairs	Full Year

Organisational Projects

Ref	Project description	Anticipated outcome/s	Link to Corporate Strategy success measures	Lead team	Timing
1	Review the adequacy of our legislative remit in the context of emerging industry requirements and change	Review of existing legislative framework to determine future requirements. Liaison with DfE to ensure policy alignment and progression of legislative amendments.	All KSMs	Corporate Affairs	Full year
2	Review and implement appropriate licensing regime to reflect the terms of EU Exit	Ensure all our licences and codes align with the terms of EU Exit.	All KSMs	Corporate Affairs	Full year
3	Develop and implement a new UR People plan (working in a post Covid world)	New URP plan to focus on the aim of being a best practice employer by benchmarking with the best and delivering new initiatives to promote diversity and learning and development.	All KSMs	Corporate Affairs	Full year

Glossary

Clean Energy Package (CEP)	The European Commission's proposals designed to increase energy efficiency, boost renewable energy usage, reform the European energy market, introduce new governance measures for the Energy Union and support clean energy innovation.
Clean Growth strategy	The UK government strategy setting out a set of policies and proposals that aim to accelerate the pace of 'clean growth' (i.e. increased growth and decreased emissions) in the context of the UK's legal requirements under the Climate Change Act.
Codes of practice	Documents that provide information on the standards of a range of services.
Disruptive energy technologies	Disruptive technology significantly alters the way businesses or entire industries operate. It often forces companies to change the way they approach their business for fear of losing market share or becoming irrelevant. In energy a good example is relates to the development of, and growth in the numbers of, electric vehicles.
Energy transition	The <i>energy transition</i> is a pathway toward transformation of the global <i>energy</i> sector from fossil-based to zero-carbon by the second half of this century.
Network codes	Contractual arrangements between the network system operator and network users to make sure the network runs efficiently.
Net-zero	Refers to the balance between the amount of greenhouse gas produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere. Net-zZero is reached when the amount we add is no more than the amount taken away.
Price control	Price controls are one of the main tools we use to protect consumers. This involves the regulator studying the business plans of utility companies and calculating the revenue they need to finance their activities while providing incentives to invest in the business.
Retail energy market	The activities of electricity and gas suppliers and their interactions with consumers.
Single electricity market (SEM)	SEM was originally set up in November 2007. It is the single wholesale market for electricity which operates in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. It aims to improve the reliability of supplies and the range of suppliers, encourage market efficiencies and economies, and promote greater competition. An enhanced SEM market came into operation on 1 October 2018.
Transmission system operator (TSO)	The organisation that makes sure the energy networks run efficiently.
Wholesale market	The wholesale market is where generators sell their electricity to suppliers.