

Connection Customer Steering Group

Notes from the meeting held 26th February 2020 at Hilton Puckrup Hall, Tewkesbury

Present:

Alex Spreadbury	B&Q	Nikki Pillinger	British Renewables
Helen Ewing	Severn Trent	Olly Frankland	Regen SW
Hugh Taylor	Roadnight Taylor	Steve Gist	TUSC Ltd
Mark Boyce	UCSM	Gareth Jones	Leep Utilities
Mark Tanner	Power Systems UK	Simon Roberts	Low Carbon
Nick Cooke	UCML		

Graham Halliday	WPD Operations Director
Tim Hughes	WPD Connections Policy Manager
Peter Aston	WPD Primary System Design Manager
Penny Carolan	WPD Connections Policy ICE Co-ordinator
Kate Sheehan	WPD Connections Policy Co-ordinator

1. Introduction

Tim Hughes introduced the agenda for the day.

2. Director's Update

Graham Halliday gave an overview of progress to date regarding development of WPD's RIIO-ED2 Business Plan.

The key areas covered:

- RIIO-ED2 WPD Business Plan Timetable
- RIIO-ED2 Ofgem Workstreams
- RIIO-ED2 Customer Engagement Group (CEG) update
- Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities

GH highlighted the fact that WPD's Business Plan would go through a number of drafts culminating in a final submission to Ofgem and the RIIO-ED2 Challenge Group in December 2021. CCSG members were encouraged to feed in to the engagement process.

3. ICE Update

Penny Carolan presented an ICE update and detailed progress against our 42 initiatives for 2019-20.

- ICE Overview
- Ofgem Outcome ICE 2018-19 – Looking Back Report
- Committed Initiatives within 2019-2020 ICE Workplan

PC explained that whilst Ofgem was generally pleased with DNO's performance against their ICE plans, external stakeholders were suggesting there were still some areas that DNO's could improve upon, for example, notifying stakeholders of the ICE Workplan and having difficulties signing up for mailing lists.

CCSG members commented that they felt WPD were generally strong in this area but should consider more innovative ways of raising awareness of our ICE Workplan.

PC also highlighted a number of completed actions that were of particular interest to CCSG members.

4. ICE Workplan 2020/21

PC invited comment on WPDs ICE Workplan for 2020/21 and asked CCSG members to identify specific actions or improvement areas we should consider for inclusion.

Stakeholder query – Do WPD offer a beginners guide for new entrants to the market? Newcomers are unlikely to have heard of the ICE plan.

WPD-TH – We have undertaken work to improve navigation and layout on our website as part of our current ICE plan. Potentially we could provide a newcomers guide to the ICE plan on the website.

Stakeholder query – Other teams within WPD use social media as a communication tool, is this something that can be utilised to communicate further with stakeholders?

WPD-TH – yes, this is something for us to consider and we will look at how other teams utilise social media to see if there is anything we can learn.

After discussion, webinars proved to be a popular choice for the communication of information.

Further areas for potential actions were discussed these included;

- Queue Management
- Milestones
- Availability of ANM information on the website

ACTION – WPD to take comments away and consider how these might be worked up as specific actions.

4. Connections Offer Cost Transparency

Peter Aston presented an update on Connections Offer Cost Transparency with focus on the proposed external guidance 'My Connection Charge – Design Assumptions and Managing Cost Variations'.

Peter talked over the proposed contents of the document;

Overview of design process

There were no comments on this proposed content

Description of Design Elements

Proposed design elements to be included within document.

It was discussed if Tower Works should be included as a design element.

PA advised tower works fall under 'Circuits – Overhead Lines'.

Assumptions made at initial design phase

Detail of assumptions made at the initial design phase

Stakeholder comment – Would be nice to see some value in costs in way of site visits.

General feedback was that Customers were happy for WPD to take longer to issue a Connection Offer (within the bounds of Guaranteed Standards of Performance) if this meant that less assumptions were made. It was highlighted that we were somewhat conflicted here because of the internal pressures to issue Connection Offers within tighter timescales.

Potential variations at detailed design phase

The group were shown some of the design elements and potential variations in cost between initial design phase and detailed design.

Stakeholder Comment – These will be beneficial and valuable for newcomers

Potential variations at construction phase

The group were shown some of the design elements and potential variations in cost between detailed design and construction

There were no comments.

PA detailed WPDs proposed internal guidance on design assumptions.

Comments received on the consistency of approach across WPD depots.

PA acknowledged that there are legacy issues in the design of schemes. WPD now provide a full training programme to the new generation of planners coming through to ensure a consistency of approach. The proposed internal guidance will improve consistency.

5. Accelerated Loss of Mains Change Programme (ALOMCP)

PA presented on ALOMCP including an overview of the programme and the current uptake numbers.

Stakeholder comment – There seems to be a low uptake at present, why do you think this is?

PA acknowledged that smaller customers might not be aware of the scheme. WPD intend to widen the communication of the scheme. At present, there is a sense that some customers might be holding back to gauge the scheme.

Stakeholder comment – What happens if a Customer doesn't comply?

PA – Financial incentives are in place to encourage compliance. Customers who fail to comply increase their risk of causing frequent trips. In rare circumstances we would disconnect a customer.

PA confirmed that inverters would also require an update to LOM protection.

There is no requirement to change to G99 as part of the ALOMCP.

<http://www.energynetworks.org/electricity/engineering/accelerated-loss-of-mains-change-programme.html>

6. Capacity allocation and reservation update

TH presented an update on WPD's development of Capacity Allocation and Reservation (CA&R) processes.

Stakeholder Comment – How will WPD manage CA&R with IDNOs?

TH – We have to ensure that all our customers are treated fairly. Understanding the take up of reserved capacity becomes more difficult as DNOs have less visibility of an IDNO network. We agree a ramp-up facility with the IDNO at the outset and it requires ongoing liaison between the parties in terms of understanding the actual take-up of capacity and whether or not it is still required.

Stakeholder comment – In most cases the landowner and developer are different entities. Other DNOs regard each appointee as a Customer. Will WPD require authority from both the Customer and landowner?

TH – WPD will not require authority from both entities. WPD will not seek to place an over burdensome process in place.

TH confirmed that work was continuing to ensure that systems could support the revised process and that interested stakeholders will be notified of the changes in due course. There will be a further webinar on the subject and associated guidance documentation produced. Advisory material will be made available on our website.

7. Summary, Feedback & Next Steps

TH thanked the CCSG members for attending and summarised the potential topics for the next meeting;

- Queue Management
- ANM – triggers for reinforcement

Future CCSG meetings:

Dates	Topics
June 30 th 2020	Present a review of progress against the finalised ICE Workplan 2020/21. Venue - WPD Gloucester Office.
October 21 st 2020	TBC
February 2021	TBC