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Incentive on Connections Engagement

ICE 2020/21 Plan

October Update

Introduction

Listening and responding to our stakeholders is central to our connections business and is crucial to the continuous improvement and development of our long-term operational strategy.

Welcome to our October update ICE Plan for 2020/21; our sixth annual ICE Plan since the introduction of the incentive in 2015. During this time, we have continually developed our engagement strategy, built lasting relationships and earned stakeholder trust.

Our simple philosophy is to listen to what our customers are saying and develop this feedback in to meaningful actions that we can deliver on, thus improving levels of service in the connections arena.

As a distribution network operator and distribution system operator, we will strive to develop innovative ways to deliver new connections in the light of Government targets to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions in the UK by 2050.

Connecting low carbon technologies such as electric vehicles, renewable energy sources and heat pumps will be integral to this. Our ICE Plan recognises this fact as we continue to focus on actions that will help toward the decarbonisation programme, for example through facilitating collaboration with local authorities and community energy groups to deliver local energy plans.

Our 2020/21 ICE Plan originally contained 28 actions, all created as a direct consequence of stakeholder feedback.

During this ICE year, our stakeholders have fed back on new priority areas and we are responding to this by creating 4 new initiatives to improve our services and increase information availability. These initiatives are detailed in this updated plan.

We believe that delivering on these actions will enhance our connections customers experience and ensure that we maintain momentum toward performance excellence. We will not stop there however; we will continue to engage with you throughout the year and introduce new actions based on your feedback.

I trust that you find our new ICE Plan suitably stretching and reflective of your needs. Your views are very important so please do not hesitate to contact us with regard to our ICE Plan by contacting us at wpdconnpolicysupport@westernpower.co.uk



Graham Halladay
Operations Director



Well established and effective

Western Power Distribution's stakeholder engagement strategy is firmly entrenched in our culture. Established in 2007, the strategy firmly underpins our connections improvement activity, driving how and why we engage.

It is fundamental to how we do business and drives a continual cyclical engagement programme. Its longevity has established a mature and effective approach, which has built long-term stakeholder relationships facilitating meaningful engagement with vital feedback and challenge.

The fundamentals of our approach are enduring and guided by steadfast principles providing its foundations. However, to maintain effectiveness, the strategy is evaluated and updated each year with sign-off from our CEO and Directors.

This ensures that our engagement approach continues to effectively deliver our initiatives, demonstrating we are adaptable to changes in the connections environment and in the wider areas thus ensuring our stakeholders' priorities and expectations are met.



Identify stakeholders

- Recognise emerging stakeholders
- Maintain stakeholder contacts



Understand their needs

- Identify the range of interest areas from unmetered to DER



Always engage with a purpose

- Avoid talking shops, demonstrate we have listened via the actions we undertake



Range of methods

- Use a variety of mechanisms e.g. expert panels, workshops, surveys etc.
- Tailor to suit the audience



Listen, act and measure benefits

- Engage on priorities ICE Plan identified
- Publish ICE 2020/21 Plan, KPIs and updates



Use feedback to improve service

- Short-term: policies, procedures, processes
- Long-term: shape our strategic priorities



Make feedback available

- Publish finding and WPD's response
- Clear line of sight to ICE 2020/21 Plan

	Action Number & Subject	Initiative Stakeholder Feedback	Initiative Outcome	Measure	Target Date (Q2;Q3;Q4;Q1)	Connections Area			
						MD	UMS	DER	ICP
Policy Guidance	1 Heat Pump Strategy	Understand WPD's heat pump strategy.	To support the up-take of heat pumps we will issue a Heat Pump Strategy. The document will explain the options for connection and detail the actions we are taking to support roll out.	Positive stakeholder feedback on Heat Pump strategy.	Q2 June 2020	•			
	2 Statement of Works (SoW)	Statement of Works (SoW) Provide guidance relating to how the SoW process will develop following codification.	To update external guidance document, information on WPD's website and template letters following the outcome of CMP298, which is designed to formally codify the Appendix G process into CUSC and is expected to conclude at the end of 2020.	Updated document issued to stakeholders. Positive feedback from stakeholders through a questionnaire in relation to the updated document.	Q4 Dec 2020			•	•
	3 Connections Interactivity	Improve transparency with regard to how WPD facilitates its connections interactivity process.	Identify and implement any improvements to existing guidance to improve consistency, transparency and fair application of interactivity principles. Have regard to concurrent work being undertaken by the ENA following Open Network consultation on the policy mechanisms and implement any changes as necessary.	Provide clear and concise information to our stakeholders via various means including the website.	Q4 Dec 2020	•		•	•
	4 Connections Queue Management	Improve transparency with regard to how WPD facilitates its connections queue management process.	Identify and implement any improvements to existing guidance to improve consistency, transparency and fair application of queue management principles. Have regard to concurrent work being undertaken by the ENA following Open Network consultation on the policy mechanisms and implement any changes as necessary.	Provide clear and concise information to stakeholders via various means including the website.	Q3 Sept 2020	•		•	•
	5 LV, HV & EHV Post Acceptance Guidance	Expand the Post-acceptance Guidance Document delivered in 2019 to include pre-application considerations.	Further improve the information available to stakeholders by: i) separating out guidance on LV/HV connections from guidance on EHV ii) providing more information relating to pre-application considerations for LV, HV & EHV connections.	Positive feedback on documentation including the website hits.	Q4 Dec 2020	•	•	•	•
	6 Guidance for Smaller Developments	Develop guidance for small developers and house builders giving a practical guide on connections information.	Providing health and safety, technical and practical information to a non-technical customer on requirements to proceed. Review and improve the existing guidance on pre and post-acceptance requirements. Investigate the feasibility of providing more visual guides using social media and develop an implementation strategy.	Number of hits on improved guidance. Completion of social media strategy.	Q4 Dec 2020	•			•
	7 Capacity, Allocation & Reservation Continuing 2019/20 Initiative: 1.4	Continue to develop processes and procedures for capacity allocation and reservation.	Following the publication of our final decision document in March 2019 we will implement revised processes, agreements, terms and conditions relating to how network capacity is offered on new connection and infrastructure schemes, as well as the management of capacity in ongoing schemes following acceptance of a connection or infrastructure offer.	100% training completed. Positive feedback on external publication on website.	Q3 Sept 2020	•			•

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Customer Support	8 Network Capacity Map for ANM	Continue to improve the network capacity map - Transmission ANM and curtailment levels for the different DG technologies.	Continue to improve the Network Capacity Map to provide better information for Transmission ANM (TANM) and explore options for providing indicative curtailment information.	CCSG presentation and feedback/survey on the improvements completed.	Q4 Dec 2020	•		•	•
	9 EHV Tower Connections	Improve consistency across all four of WPD's licence areas regarding EHV tower connection design.	Undertake a review of design philosophy in relation to connections to towers across the four licensed areas to establish best practice where there is an inconsistency of approach.	Undertake review of Connection Offers issued to compare against finalised design guidance.	Q4 Dec 2020	•		•	•
	10 Opening ANM Zones	Provide easier access for customers who use ANM zones.	Improve the way ANM zones are opened by using a more flexible and responsive method, rather than on a specific programme. This will include changed external and internal guidance.	Positive feedback from stakeholders on changes to ANM zones method and usefulness of guidance.	Q3 Sept 2020	•		•	•
	11 DSO Information for Local/Rural Stakeholders	Raise awareness regarding how rural areas might be impacted as we move to a DSO.	Further improve the information available on DSO webpages setting out local/rural DSO information and how this might help them understand our investment plans. Improve awareness of this information by writing to rural areas within WPDs regions, updating them on the information WPD make available as well as the WPD contacts for discussing both long term plans.	Completion of improvement on DSO web pages. Positive stakeholder feedback on improved webpages.	Q1 March 2021	•	•	•	
	12 Distributed Generation KPI Pack Continuing 2019/20 Initiative 3.11	Develop a quarterly KPI pack incorporating measures on outage activity, timeliness and accuracy of notifications. Work with Distributed Generation Owner Operator (DGOO) stakeholders to identify and develop KPIs aligned with their requirements.	Develop a quarterly KPI pack incorporating measures on outage activity, timeliness and accuracy of notifications. Work with DGOO stakeholders to identify and develop KPIs aligned with their requirements.	Stakeholder feedback and web hits on DGOO webpage.	Q3 Sept 2020			•	•
	13 Unmetered Infrastructure Notification Continuing 2019/20 Initiative: 3.14	Seek the inclusion of activity to support notification of planned or unplanned outages affecting unmetered telecoms infrastructure.	Develop a trial with a telecoms infrastructure provider to test the feasibility of accurately notifying a customer of planned outages of the unmetered connections to their critical broadband telecoms infrastructure.	Positive feedback on updates to changed planned work.	Q3 Sept 2020		•		

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Communication	14 Connection Surgeries	Implement voluntary 5 day standard process for pre-quotation connections surgeries.	<p>Produce and consult with stakeholders on the questionnaire and get approval.</p> <p>Issue questionnaire and collate feedback.</p> <p>Review and investigate the connection surgeries process on how we provide and deliver our connections surgeries and make improvements if necessary following questionnaire feedback.</p> <p>Each surgery customer to be asked to complete approved satisfaction feedback/survey.</p> <p>Trial "virtual" surgeries for customers who find it difficult to attend our offices.</p>	<p>Produce questionnaire - end June 2020.</p> <p>Issue questionnaire - end July 2020.</p> <p>Trial virtual connection surgeries - end Aug 2020.</p> <p>Review connection surgeries - end Nov 2020.</p>	Q4 Dec 2020				
	15 Internal Communication on Connection Policy	Develop consistency of response relating to connections service across all four of WPD's distribution areas.	<p>Review and improve the existing process for disseminating connection policy.</p> <p>Develop a central on-line Policy Dissemination hub for our Planners to allow easier navigation to WPD policies and processes.</p>	<p>Ensure delivery and all Planners are familiar with the new hub and how to use it.</p> <p>Positive stakeholder feedback.</p>	Q3 Sept 2020				
	16 Unmetered Connection Offers	Create simplified Connection Offers for unmetered connections.	Undertake a survey to ask for feedback on the unmetered connections offer process. We will document and publish the survey in order to identify any improvements which can be made and develop further actions for implementation in Q4 2020.	Publish survey results and further actions for implementation in December 2020.	Q2 June 2020				
	17 ICP & IDNO Web based Application Service	Develop the on-line application process for ICP's and IDNO's.	To further develop our website based application service for connections for our ICP's and IDNOS, with the facility to track the schemes progress from initial application through to connection.	Increase in number of stakeholders using the on-line application process.	Q1 March 2021				
	18 - Community Energy Strategy & Action Plan	Requirement to understand WPD's strategy for community energy engagement and commitment to actions.	<p>To publish a community energy strategy and action plan providing information on the definition of community energy.</p> <p>To communicate to the stakeholders using this and the WPD website.</p>	Completion of strategy and action plan.	Q2 June 2020				

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Communication	19 Community Energy and Innovation Jargon Buster	Help understanding of terms commonly used in community energy and innovation. To quantify the acronyms and dialogue used.	To simplify the jargon world of acronyms within innovation and community energy. To give a clear and concise understanding of both worlds, giving the outcome on a podcast and simple web page.	Completion of jargon buster for community energy. Positive stakeholder feedback on podcast and web page.	Q2 June 2020				
	20 Promote Collaborative Partnership Protocol Process	Update customers on the legal collaborative partnership protocol process.	To encourage customers to use the legal collaborative partnership protocol process initiated in 2019 we will produce a clear and concise guidance document that may be viewed via the WPD website. The guide will navigate the customer through the legal process, ensuring the guidance helps streamline the process for the customer.	To gain a positive uptake of the legal collaborative partnership process. Positive stakeholder feedback.	Q3 Sept 2020				
	21 The New Targeted Charging Review (TCR) Information on Prices	Update stakeholders on Ofgem Targeted Charging Review (TCR) and Significant Code Review (SCR) regarding changes to the connection charging boundary.	Following the outcome of the TCR Distribution Connection and Use of System Agreement (DCUSA) process expected to be in Q2 2020 we will engage and inform our stakeholders via a podcast of the TCR prices that will be set in December 2020. We will also discuss any movement in the Ofgem access and forward looking charges SCR.	Number of counts on TCR podcast.	Q1 March 2021				
	22 Distributed Generation Owner Operator Portal Continuing 2019/20 initiative: 3.13	Enhance DGGO portal to be able to record and communicate reasons for changes to planned outages.	Enhance DGGO portal to be able to record and communicate reasons for changes to planned outages.	Stakeholder feedback on KPI pack published on website.	Q3 Sept 2020				

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Stakeholder Engagement	23 Net Zero Surgeries	Stakeholders will be able to request bi-lateral meetings with a local multi-disciplinary team to help facilitate progress towards decarbonisation.	Net Zero Surgeries – Stakeholders will be able to request bi-lateral meetings with a local multi-disciplinary team to support delivery of small-scale energy projects. The availability of these will be publicised on our website, where a request can be made directly.	Following a request for a meeting they will be arranged within 3 days and carried out within 3 weeks. Meetings delivered within the timescales agreed.	Q1 March 2021	•	•	•	•
	24 Local Authorities Engagement	Pro-actively engage with all local authorities to share our Distribution Future Energy Scenario (DFES) data.	Pro-actively engage with all local authorities operating within WPD's licence areas to share our DFES data and discuss energy strategies. Engagement will be undertaken by WPD Distribution Managers and team members.	80% of LA's attend engagement meetings.	Q1 March 2021	•	•	•	
	25 Community Energy Surgeries	Hold Community Energy Surgeries so that stakeholders can request bi-lateral meetings.	Community Energy Surgeries – Stakeholders will be able to request bi-lateral meetings with a local multi-disciplinary team to support delivery of small-scale energy projects. The availability of these will be publicised in our Community Energy Strategy and on our website, where a request can be made directly.	Following a request for a meeting they will be arranged within 3 days and carried out within 3 weeks. Meetings delivered within the timescales agreed.	Q1 March 2021	•	•	•	•
	26 Major Customer Engagement Event	Hold a second connections networking event, providing useful face-to-face engagement with a networking opportunity for WPD connection stakeholders.	Hold an event in Autumn 2020 to brief with a wide spectrum of stakeholders on WPD's connection strategies and actions we have taken or about to take in 2020 and the future. Encourage round table discussion to generate feedback and potentially develop further initiatives.	85% positive feedback from major customer event.	Q4 Dec 2020	•	•	•	
	27 Heat Pump Trial	Understand the impact of higher levels of heat pumps on the distribution system.	To understand the network impact of Heat Pumps, and to assess the practicalities of installation we are working with a partner to develop new houses with LCT heating systems. The learning from this project will inform a revision to our Heat Pump Strategy document in 2021.	Completion of Trial.	Q1 March 2021	•			
	28 Motorway Services EV Charging	Requirement to work with partners to develop quicker and more efficient connections to EV charge-points in motorway service areas.	To understand motorway services operators in their plans to develop EV charging at their sites. To develop with them a suitable innovative connection arrangement for the capacity they need. To work with OLEV Project RAPID to develop solutions.	Identify a suitable site and design a proposal to completion.	Q4 Dec 2020	•			•

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Customer Support	29 NEW Common Information Models	Understand any system improvements, to ensure the accuracy of the underlying network information.	<p>We will share our network asset and connectivity information in an recognised standard format that will facilitate the wider use of our network data to inform customers' new connection and operation decisions</p> <p>This will enable customers improved access to our network asset and connectivity information that can be used to understand in greater detail our network to inform their network connection and utilisation decisions.</p>	CIM files (asset & network information) available for download of the 132kV to 11kV network	Q1 March 2021	•		•	•
	30 NEW Real-Time Power Flow Data Access	Improve Real-time data access for each of WPD licence areas.	To provide and enable our customers to understand real-time power flow data on our network. Enabling generator and community energy groups to make informed decisions, from planning the connection of new load and generation on the network to operational decisions.	Demand, import and generation information available for our four licence areas; historic views of data and extract facility available	Q1 March 2021	•		•	•
Communication	31 NEW Unmetered Connection Offers Enhanced 2020/21 Action 16	<p>The respondents from the UMS survey highlighted areas in the unmetered connection offer process that they felt required improvement.</p> <p>Respondents requested simplified unmetered connection offers and some found it difficult to navigate the website and complete the online application.</p>	<p>We will develop a simplified Unmetered Connection Offer.</p> <p>Improve navigation to the Unmetered Connections web page.</p> <p>Review content of the Unmetered Connections web page and provide additional guidance/clarity where necessary.</p>	<p>To undertake a further survey, to quantify if the improvements have met the respondents needs.</p> <p>Compare webpage hits between the old and new pages.</p>	Q1 March 2021		•		•
Stakeholder Engagement	32 NEW Digitalisation Programme Updates	Stakeholders fed back to say they would like to see improvements to data quality, including the heat map information.	<p>To inform customers on the latest data available and digitalisation developments.</p> <p>Provide customers access to the latest available data and help them understand, how the data can assist planned developments to support their activities.</p>	Releasing new data sets via social media posts and news articles	Q2 June 2021	•		•	•

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Serving the Midlands, South West and Wales

If you would like to share your thoughts and feedback throughout the year, please contact our Connections Policy Team at wpdconnpolicysupport@westernpower.co.uk

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