Terms of Reference (ToR)

Ofgem Consumer Consent: Working Group's terms of reference

Background

Ofgem, in collaboration with industry, aim to direct RECCo to build a Consumer Consent Solution (CC Solution) that empowers consumers to control the value generated by their energy data.

Safe and trusted sharing of consumer data through consent will be integral to the building of a fully digitalised, decarbonised, and flexible energy system. Robust governance, a tested trust framework or similar mechanism, and the ability to withdraw consent in near real time will be key elements of any CC Solution design.

In August 2024, Ofgem published a Consultation Paper[1] outlining the results of our November 2023 Call For Input results and asking for views on the introduction of a standardised and system-wide CC Solution. We set out our vision for the CC Solution, including options for data models, design principles, and essential functions for the solution. We proposed three potential delivery bodies, Smart DCC, Electralink, and Retail Energy Code Company (RECCo) and evaluated their suitability for the role in an options assessment, with RECCo being our minded-to position to deliver the CC Solution. Finally, we detailed where this solution will sit in the digital landscape, and proposed obligations on supply licensees to record consent via the CC Solution.

We expect RECCO, when appointed on 29 April 2025, to produce a further consultation with industry finalising solution design, technical, security and accessibility standards, and how it will ensure an enduring solution works for the consumer and industry.

Ofgem aim to produce a consultation paper in Autumn 2025 on the Impact Assessment (IA) for the CC Solution. In Spring of 2026, Ofgem will then produce a consultation on the enduring governance of the CC Solution. Our final consultation and decision paper from Ofgem will be also published in Spring 2026 on changes to Supply Licence Conditions to oblige suppliers to record consent via the CC Solution.

Why do we need these Working Groups?

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[1] Consumer Consent Solution Consultation

Ahead of the deployment of the CC solution, Ofgem would like to seek input from industry and the wider sector on implementation and governance, consumer protections and technical options and wider design elements for the CC solution. Ofgem recognises the importance of collaboration and collective experience to deliver a successful CC solution. We are establishing 3 groups:

Implementation and Governance - This group will play a key advisory role in codifying governance roles and responsibilities; as well as advising the delivery body as to cost-effective implementation of the consumer consent solution at the pace required by the demands of CP2030 and beyond.

Consumer Protection and Accessibility - This group will play a key advisory role in ensuring a strong consumer focus as the solution is developed. The group's advice will help to safeguard consumer rights while ensuring the solution is inclusive, equitable, and user-friendly.

Technical, Design and Security - This group will play a key advisory role in supporting recommendations for the data model and technical design of the solution whilst ensuring data privacy protections and cyber security protections are upheld.

Having reviewed consultation responses, we are aware of the depth of feeling regarding the effective development and deployment of this solution.

We expect this group to work collectively to address and provide advice to Ofgem and RECCo, with the following aims;

- Sharing of knowledge and skills; particularly with regards to identity verifications, permissions management, data modelling and data science.

- Supportive and productive collaboration with the ability to increase engagement across potential participants.

- Timely recommendation-making process with an understanding of data holders, consent-seekers, and consumers.

- Advisory expertise both in energy data use and outside the energy sector, such as technical or data expertise.

- Cross sector view – allowing for future scalability across regulated industries and other sectors

- Constructively challenge and feedback through perspectives which can pinpoint drawbacks of proposed solutions at the earliest opportunity.

Terms of Reference (ToR)

The working group ToR will be reviewed at each stage gate to ensure relevance to the next stage of the programme. It is anticipated after dialogue with these WG, a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) of the CC Solution will be produced with an indicative delivery date of Autumn/Winter 2026. To reiterate, this is an advisory group not a decision-making group, however, we expect that RECCo's participation in this group and their commitment to maintaining this group throughout MVP delivery should ensure that the recommendations made by the group will be built into service design and delivery.

Ofgem, alongside RECCo, will produce an industry paper from each working group collating the recommendations made by members. This will be published on both Ofgem and RECCo's website for transparency in Autumn 2025.

To ensure optimum governance and oversight of these groups the DB proposes that the WG will feed into a Delivery Group who will oversee strategic alignment and recommendations to external stakeholders and end users factoring in tactical design decisions, risk, action and dependency management.

For further governance, before final decisions are reached, they will be considered and presented to an Assurance Committee, before RECCo will sign off on the final decisions reached.

Ofgem will chair these groups for a six-month period before handing full responsibility to RECCo. Eventually we expect these WG's may be absorbed into existing industry groups.

Specifics for each Working Group ToR

	Implementation & Governance	Consumer Protection & Accessibility	Technical, Design & Security
Objective	Provide advice & feedback to RECCo and Ofgem to help inform direction & decision making on	Provide advice & feedback to RECCo and Ofgem to help inform direction & decision making on	Provide advice & feedback to RECCo and Ofgem to help inform direction & decision making on

	implementation plans & regulatory governance changes.	protecting consumers, service accessibility & service usability.	security & technical design. Ensuring the CC solution is designed and developed with adherence to agreed fundamental design principles. Simple and low friction, interoperable, agile flexible and scalable, transparent and informative, inclusive by design, secure by design.
Key responsibilities	Assessing and communicating stakeholder impacts of regulatory changes, including code modifications due to licence changes, following established change control procedures. Sharing expertise in the development of the solution's design and socialise the design process with industry to align with existing initiatives. Assisting RECCo with the design and development of a trust	Identifying barriers disabilities and additional needs or for the Digitally Disadvantaged[2] or those with limited digital proficiency and identifying routes to remove those barriers. Consideration of standards for non - web-based solutions to ensure a solution is suitable for a diverse range of user. Liaise with the Technical, Design & Security working group to ensure	Sharing expertise in the development of the solution's design and socialise the design process with industry to align with existing initiatives. Advise the DB on the development of the solution so that's it is sufficiently open ended to consider future use cases and prevent siloed development. Make recommendations about equality of access considering user needs to prevent imbalance, or

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[2] Digital Disadvantage and Exclusion Report

5	framework, or other usage governance model, to be signed off by the DB. Ensuring timely and adaptive implementation and understanding of regulatory changes.	accessibility standards are included from design phase. Ensuring accessibility usability, and consumer protection through collaboration and testing. Ensuring accessibility, usability, and consumer protection through collaboration and testing.	perceived imbalance, between those using the service. Make recommendations that the development of the solution meets suitable cyber security standards, including quantum-safe encryption.
In scope	Governance roles & responsibilities. Programme delivery & implementation plans.	Usability Accessibility Consumer interests	Security & technical design options. Issues & risks
Out of Scope	Usability Technical solution design. This group is not intended to supersede RECCo's role in delivery,	Governance roles & responsibilities. Programme delivery & implementation plans. Technical solution design. Changes to existing consumer protection or privacy legislation. This group is not intended to supersede the RECCo's role in delivery.	Governance roles & responsibilities. Programme delivery & implementation plans. Usability. Accessibility. Consumer issues. This group is not intended to supersede RECCo's role in delivery.

Inputs	Proposed programme delivery & implementation plans.	Consumer journeys & prototypes. Use cases.	Options for solution design of technical capabilities.
	Proposed regulatory changes.	Proof of Concepts for user testing.	Options for delivery of technical capabilities.
	Planning issues and risks.	Consumer issues requiring guidance.	Solution design documents.
	Working group action log.	Working group action log.	Security & data protection issues & identified risks requiring advice & guidance.

Outputs	Advice on plans & proposed milestone dates.	Advice on protecting consumer rights.	Advice on GDPR issues.
	Advice on industry impact of regulatory changes.	Advice on existing provision and programmes that could support the Solution.	Advice on delivery options.
	Advice on industry impact of proposed milestone dates & programme planned activities.	Advice on language and cultural inclusion.	Advice on technology standards. Advice related to cyber security standards & risks.
	Recommendations for the implementation of a Trust Framework or other governance model to apply to users of the Solution.	Advice on protecting consumer data privacy and security.	Advice on technology choices and risk of technical debt.
		Advice on consumer support requirements i.e. guidance & grievances.	Advice on industry technology adoption.
	Advice on use cases & prioritisation.	Advice on consumer adoption.	Working group action log.

	Working group action log.	Working group action log.
		Recommendations for user testing usability and accessibility to be shared with the Technical, Design & Security group and RECCo.

Membership

The working groups shall consist of representatives from key industry stakeholders, including but not limited to those from the energy sector. Members have been selected on the basis of their experience and expertise in the relevant topic areas to be discussed in this working group. Members have been invited from other sectors to both draw upon alternative approaches to technical design and security protections that may guide the development of a CC solution.

The discussions will be inclusive and whilst the focus of the group is technical, it is expected that participants will avoid the use of jargon and will explain any technical terms or concepts that may be unfamiliar to members of the group.

Membership will be kept under review according to Ofgem priorities. Members might get access to information that is not yet in the public domain. Any information received via membership of this group should not be shared in the public domain without explicit permission from Ofgem.

Members should act within the 'Seven Principles of Public Life' [3] and adhere to Ofgem's core values.

1. Do the right thing - acting with honesty, integrity, and in the consumer interest.

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[3] The Seven Principles of Public Life - GOV.UK

2. Be bold to make an impact - deliver at pace and find innovative ways to transform energy whilst taking measured risks.

3. Make connections, join forces - collaborate with our stakeholder community on shared interests.

4. Be supportive, be you - support colleagues, valuing diversity, and acting inclusively.

5. Take pride in what we do - value expertise, great quality work, and development.

There will be no remuneration for time and expenses, participation in this group is entirely voluntary.

Operational details

The WG's will meet once a month, for 2 hours. Meetings will be held online, and recorded by the secretariat, appointed by RECCO, and operate under the Chatham House rules. [4]

Working group document management & communications will be via a collaboration space hosted by RECCo on the REC portal, with REC Professional Services providing secretariat support.

The agenda and pre-reading will be circulated by the chair no less than 3 working days in advance of the meeting, with minutes and actions being circulated no more than 5 working days after the meeting.

Timelines

Timeline	Implementation & Governance WG	Consumer Protection & Accessibility WG	Technical, Design & Security WG	RECCo	Ofgem
May 2025	Working Groups (WG) stood up and chaired by Ofgem/RECCo.	Working Groups (WG)stood up and chaired	Working Groups (WG) stood up and chaired by	RECCo appointed as the Delivery Body.	Commitment to and timelines for Ofgem's

[4] Chatham House Rule | Chatham House – International Affairs Think Tank

	by Ofgem/RECCo . .	Ofgem/RECCo .			Impact Assessment (IA).
Autumn 2025	Proposed programme delivery & implementation plans. Agree plans & proposed milestone dates. Advice on industry impact of regulatory changes. Advice on industry impact of proposed milestone dates & programme planned activities. Recommendations for the implementation of a Trust Framework or other governance model to apply to users of the Solution.	Advice on protecting consumer rights. Advice on existing provision and programmes that could support the Solution. Advice on Language and Cultural Inclusion. Advice on Protecting consumer data privacy and security. Advice and guidance on consumer support requirements i.e. guidance & grievances. Advice and guidance on	Advice on GDPR issues. Advice on delivery options. Advice on technology standards. Advice related to cyber security standards & risks. Advice on technology choices and risk of technical debt. Advice on industry technology adoption. Output paper published on Ofgem's and RECCo's respective websites.	REC change proposal as laid out in Schedule 5 of the REC raised for the REC to become the DB. Content and data for the IA for Ofgem to collate. Service design consultation and subsequent decision on Trust Framework, detailed digital design, user experience/accessibility and technical specifications. Planned user testing to commence in Spring 2026 Output paper published on Ofgem's and RECCo's respective websites.	Draft and publish the IA including publishing the Quality Assurance (QA) and methodology for full transparency. Output paper published on Ofgem's and RECCo's respective websites.

	Output paper published on Ofgem's and RECCo's respective websites.	consumer adoption. Output paper published on Ofgem's and RECCo's respective websites.		
Winter 2025/26	Ofgem to hand full chairing responsibility to RECCo from November 2025. Ofgem to continue to participate in WG's.	Ofgem to hand full chairing responsibility to RECCo from November 2025. Ofgem to continue to participate in WG's.	Ofgem to hand full chairing responsibility to RECCo from November 2025. Ofgem to continue to participate in WG's.	Decision on final service design - Trust Framework, detailed digital design, user experience/accessibility and technical specifications. REC Code modifications to add Consumer Consent Solution for funding, governance and function namely, the Performance Assurance Framework (PAF).	Consultation on governance structure, delivery/interim and enduring, likely to lean on the PAF in interim. Decide on IA. Once the IA decision is published, make a decision to approve, reject, or send back the REC Code modification to continue with RECCo as DB.

Spring 2026	Consideration of these WG's to be absorbed into other Industry WG's.	Consideration of these WG's to be absorbed into other Industry WG's.	Consideration of these WG's to be absorbed into other Industry WG's.	Design, testing (using consumer advocacy groups support for initial use cases), development of the MVP.	Statutory Consultation on modification of the Supply Licence to oblige suppliers to use the CC Solution for recording their consents.
Autumn 2026				Code modification to the REC to reflect the changes from statutory consultation to change Supply Licences, embed the working of the CC Solution in REC. .	Decision following Statutory Consultation on modification of the Supply Licence to oblige suppliers to use the CC Solution for recording their consents. Publish decision(s) on any REC-raised code modifications relating to the Supply

	Licence consultation.
Autumn/Wnter 2026	Deployment of MVP following comprehensive testing.