

Minutes of RIIO-GD1 Customer and Social Issues Working Group (CSIWG)

Minutes of RIIO-ED1 CSIWG teleconference on Friday 14 th December 2012	From Date and time of Meeting Location	Stephen Perry 14th December 2012 11:00 to 13:00 Teleconference	17th December 2012
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1. Present

Ofgem

James Veaney
Stephen Perry
Lia Santis
Phil Sumner
Claire Tyler

GDNs

Kirsten Jameson (NGN)
Steve Mills (SGN)
Nigel Winans (WWU)

DNOs

Alison Sleightholm (WPD)
John Barnett (Northern Powergrid)
Brian Hoy (ENWL)
Julia Dawson (SSE)
Jenny Smith (SSE)
Jeremy Blackford (Scottish Power)
Kendal Adams (Scottish Power)
Paul Measday (UKPN)

2. Introduction

2.1. James Veaney (JV) welcomed everyone to the latest RIIO-ED1 CSIWG.

3. Update from the Off-Grid Forum

3.1. Phil Sumner (PS) thanked everyone that attended our recent Off-Grid Forum. PS asked the network companies to provide an update on their activities since the Off-Grid Forum.

3.2. Nigel Winans (NS) stated that WWU has been working with the Welsh Government to identify fuel poor consumers that are off the gas network. NS state that they are holding a stakeholder event to discuss potential data sources and raise awareness of the Fuel Poor Network Extensions scheme.

3.3. John Barnett (JBa) noted that Northern Powergrid have been working with Northern Gas to find a solution for fuel poor households that live in tower blocks. JBa stated that they have also been working with local national parks to help find cheaper energy solutions for customers that are not connected to the gas or electricity network.

3.4. Steve Mills (SM) stated that Scotia has been working with local authorities and housing associations to help identify fuel poor consumers that are off the gas network. They note that wider stakeholders (eg local authorities) in Scotland have been more receptive to this topic than stakeholders in the South of England.

3.5. Jenny Smith (JS) stated that SSE is working as part of their NINES project to identify smarter energy solutions for customers (eg storage heaters). JS noted that SSE are learning from WWU's experience to develop fuel poor maps.

3.6. Kendal Adams (KA) and Brian Hoy (BH) stated that their respective DNOs (SP and ENWL) are conducting a lot of stakeholder engagement but they are still in the planning stage.

3.7. PS stated that he would be interested in knowing how receptive stakeholders have been about getting involved (eg sharing data, knowledge of topic, enthusiasm).

3.8. NW stated that many stakeholders are supportive of fuel poor network extensions but less supportive of socialising the cost.

3.9. PS noted that the October Off-Grid Forum raised a number of potential issues/barriers, including who should coordinate industry activities. PS was keen to organise a meeting, potentially in the first quarter of 2013 to discuss the coordination of these activities.

3.10. BH asked Ofgem to develop their thinking in conjunction with RIIO-ED1, to ensure that the DNOs can take this into account during business plan development.

4. RIIO-ED1 Strategy Consultation

4.1. SP provided an overview of responses to the customer service and social obligations chapters of our RIIO-ED1 Strategy Consultation (slides attached).

4.2. JV stated that we would use this meeting to discuss some revisions to our ED1 proposals.

5. Social Issues

5.1. JV noted that several ED1 consultation responses suggested that innovation funding could be used to address social issues. JV noted that innovation funding could be used to fund innovative social activities providing that, first and foremost, they meet the agreed innovation criteria (eg deliver wider network benefits, shared learning and could be rolled out as business-as-usual). However innovation funding should not be used to fund one-off social projects with wider network benefits.

5.2. BH questioned how the DNOs would carry out these activities as part of their business-as-usual if there was an associated cost. JV stated that this would depend upon the benefits revealed during the trial for consumers.

Action: Stakeholders to provide feedback on challenges to including social activities in the innovation funding allowance.

6. Customer Satisfaction Survey – unsuccessful calls

6.1. JV stated that he was keen to factor in unsuccessful call performance into the interruptions customer satisfaction survey score (due to the large number of interruption-related calls received and the criticality of this service).

6.2. JV did not want the inclusion of unsuccessful calls to penalise the DNOs from providing alternative options to customers that may cause them to abandon the call (eg callback services). The DNOs suggested that this could be achieved through a relatively simple change to the RIGs.

Action: Paul Measday to collate feedback on potential RIGs modifications to ensure that DNOs are not penalised under the unsuccessful call metric for offering alternative interruption services.

7. Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) – additional methods of contact.

7.1. JV stated that he was keen to include interruptions customers that have had meaningful contact with their DNO, regardless of the communication method. JV confirmed that inclusion in the CSS would be dependent upon certain criteria:

- Customer has opted into information service (linked to MPAN).
- DNO has necessary contact details.

7.2. JV also stated that additional filter questions would be attached to the customer satisfaction survey (eg was the information you received relevant to you?).

Action: Stakeholders to provide feedback on our proposals at the next CSI meeting.

8. Major Connection Customers

8.1. JV provided an overview of our revised approach for major connection customers (see slides).

8.2. Alison Sleightholm (AS) stated that many connection customers do not have enough resources to engage with all the DNOs. JV stated this approach should encourage the DNOs to respond to customers' needs, this may include working collaboratively with other DNOs or industry bodies to find a solution.

Action: Stakeholders to provide feedback on our proposals at the next CSI meeting

9. Next meeting

9.1. SP to confirm dates for the next meeting.