

# Shaping Our Electricity Future (SOEF)

## Advisory Council Meeting #11

### Minutes



**Date:** May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Time:** 10:00 - 16:00

**Venue:** SuperNode, Ballymount

**Chairs:** Liam Ryan (EirGrid) and Gerard Carlin (SONI)

**Impartial Moderator:** Colleen Savage (M-Co Ltd.)

#### Attendees:

Name of Member:	Representing:
Bobby Smith	Storage
Brendan Kelly (online)	Renewables
Brian Mongan	Demand Response
Cormac Nevin	Large Energy Users
Frank Burke	Storage
Graeme McWilliams	Large Energy Users
Jag Basi	Conv. Production
James Delahunt	Consultant
John Fitzgerald	New Technology
Kate Garth (online)	Renewables
Laura Mehigan	Renewables
Lisa Foley	Consultant
Margaret Nee (online)	Renewables
Mark Alexander (online)	TSO
Mark Fitch	New Technology
Neil Morris	Large Energy Users
Noel Cuniffe	Renewables
Paddy Fitzgerald	Conv. Production
Paul Blount	Storage
Paul Lennon	Gas Networks
Peter Harte	New Technology
Robin McCormick	Consultant
Seamus Howard (online)	Manufacturer
Stacy Feldmann (online)	Conv. Production
Thomas O'Sullivan	Large Energy Users
Name of Invited Guest:	
Brían Diskin (online)	DECC
Zoe Crowe (online)	DfE
Nigel Morris (online)	DfE

#### Apologies from:

Name of Member:	Representing:
David Graham	Renewables
David Lavery	Academia
Harry McCracken	Renewables
Jonathan Wisdom	TSO
Paddy Finn	Demand Response

Rory Mullan	Consultant
<b>Name of Invited Guest:</b>	
Colin Broomfield	UR
David Hill	NIE Networks (DSO)
Fergal McParland	DECC
John Melvin	CRU
Linzi Hyvart	DfE
Marie Therese Campbell	UR
Robert O'Rourke	CRU
Sarah Brady	DfE
Teresa Fallon	ESB Networks (DSO)
Tony Hearne	ESB Networks (DSO)
Trevor Harron	NIE Networks (DSO)

### Introduction, Agenda, Open Actions - Gerard Carlin, Liam Ryan, Colleen Savage

Gerard Carlin and Liam Ryan gave a warm welcome to all those present and thanked John Fitzgerald and his team at SuperNode for hosting Advisory Council #11. The key theme of innovation for this meeting was highlighted as well as the importance of the great work being done by SuperNode and everyone here present and beyond as we continue on our journey to decarbonisation.

Colleen Savage gave a preview of the day's agenda and a status of actions from AC#9 and AC#10.

### Q&A On pre-read

It was noted that over 70 questions were received, and it would not be possible at today's meeting to answer them individually. The questions were grouped into eight themes and the 30-minute slot was used for key updates across these themes, as follows: -

- Strategic Programmes status and overcoming delays – SDP, FASS, SMP – **Stephen Gannon**
- Grid Development/Network Infrastructure – **Jason Kenna**
- 80% SNSP Trial – status and development – **Eoin Kennedy**
- North South Interconnector progress – **Jason Kenna**
- General update on SOEF progress toward 2030 targets – **Liam Ryan**
- Dispatch Down – **Marc Senouci** (dedicated segment)
- LDES: procurement consultation split – **Bryan Murray**
- Iberian Blackout – **Liam Ryan**

### Dispatch Down Working Group Update - Marc Senouci

The Dispatch Down Working Group (DDWG) will sit under the governance of SOEF. The scope of the DDWG will be developed in the first DDWG meeting in June. It will cover Ireland only and industry representation will be nominated by WEI and ISEA, who will sit on the DDWG. In addition, EirGrid will be represented across Infrastructure, Operations, and Innovation & Planning departments. Its objective is to create a time-bound (6 months) collaborative forum for EirGrid and industry, to further understand the management of Dispatch Down and to work with industry to identify additional solutions that may help manage Dispatch Down in the medium to long term future.

Some feedback from AC members identified that there should be wider representation on the group. EirGrid stated that if the group gets too big it will not be possible to work effectively to identify and progress solutions within a time-

bound period. However, EirGrid did state that invitations to certain “solutioning” workshops may be extended beyond the core working group members.

DECC confirmed during the meeting that they recognise Dispatch Down and are considering the best approach to this issue as raised by industry. This is being considered across divisions and outside of the Accelerated Renewable Energy Taskforce (ARET). DECC welcomed the work that EirGrid is undertaking with the DDWG and will continue to engage with EirGrid to understand the potential solutions which this time-bound piece of work may provide.

### Collaboration & Engagement: What’s working/what’s not? - Colleen Savage

Some key feedback was provided in this session based on what’s working well, what is not working so well and possible suggestions to be considered for future Advisory Council meetings.

Positive feedback included an appreciation for bringing industry experts together with such a wide expanse of experience, the range of perspectives and potential solutions, the call for agenda items in advance, the quality of the material that is made available before and after the Advisory Council meetings, the provision of a safe place where honesty can be shown and the level of expertise in attendance.

Feedback on what is not working so well included greater buy in and representation from the Regulatory Authorities and Government, a call for metrics on planned vs. actual progress (e.g. RES-E targets, emission reduction targets), greater emphasis on electrification of heat and transport, look to beyond 2030, more focussed workshops /opportunities for discussion on the four workstreams, more time for discussion /challenge, more focus /visibility on the major risks associated with delivery of targets, clearer governance and identification of next steps.

Possible suggestions for consideration included making the Advisory Council meetings a 1.5-day event with an overnight once a year somewhere outside of Dublin to facilitate more debate and discussion, a dedicated half day at each Advisory Council meeting for workstream discussions in order to solution for advancement, more opportunity for trouble shooting and greater potential for the provision of feedback /support to assist progress.

All suggestions and comments were taken by the SOEF programme team for consideration.

### Technology and Innovation at SuperNode - John Fitzgerald

John Fitzgerald provided an overview of SuperNode Ltd., achievements to date, the problem that SuperNode solves, benefits of the product, superconductivity and recent applicable projects, SuperNode technology innovations, scale manufacturing, product offering, technology deployment to market and possible use cases.

John Fitzgerald proceeded to give a safety briefing before the first group took part on a tour of the facility. While the first group did the tour, the second group participated in a workshop on the recently published Operational Policy Roadmap (2025-2035) and vice versa.

### Operational Policy Roadmap Workshop - Simon Tweed, Eoin Kennedy, David McGowan

Simon Tweed delivered a presentation on the Operational Policy Roadmap (OPR). Advisory Council members and invited guests were invited to share their view on the risks and the potential for overcoming them in relation to execution of the OPR.

Feedback was gathered under the headings of performance, network & system, security, operational capability, operational studies, wild card and project management.

Some key risks and considerations raised by members included timings, definition of system strength, options for inverter-based resources to lower min gens, synthetic inertia, dependence on the Regulatory Authorities and Government, dependence on supply chain and resource availability across industry, standards for Distributed Energy

Resources, the requirement for sufficient notice of new standards to design into new projects, the need for adequate tools, political alignment, support from industry, incentives in markets, affordability, broader policy considerations, emerging phenomena, storage "missing money" problem, effect of interconnectors on Dispatch Down, potential for Connection Agreements with Data Centres requiring DCs to provide Flexibility Services to the network as a condition of being connected, data availability, articulation of current status within the OPR, and the need for a plain English version of the OPR.

Members suggested that the approach to implementation needs to reflect the unique nature of what is trying to be achieved, and business as usual processes are not going to work.

### Members Insights: Storage Innovation - Bobby Smith, Paul Blount, Peter Harte

Bobby Smith delivered a presentation showing the All-Island Energy storage development pipeline, total storage duration by storage duration hours / technologies and investment barriers. It was noted that deployment beyond 2026 is uncertain. There are 1257.5MW currently operational with 9970MW in varying stages of development.

Paul Blount gave a presentation on long duration storage focusing on system benefits and key enablers. It started with a piece on the benefits of storage for the system. Clarity was sought on the objectives of LDES procurement. The dispatch down challenge was highlighted and how LDES can complement renewables. Key enablers for investment in battery storage were listed noting that the challenge for policy makers is how to design competitive long-term auctions for complex grid systems, with a wide array of technology solutions and projects with different costs and technical characteristics.

Members raised the point that de-rating factors for batteries in the CRM should be reviewed. David McGowan said that the TSOs work within the SEMC approved methodology and any changes to the current marginal de-rating methodology would require consultation. Marc Senouci also mentioned that the TSOs have worked with the Regulatory Authorities and will continue to do so to provide any necessary data that can help inform SEMC in relation to this.

Peter Harte delivered a presentation on 100% Energy Self Sufficiency for Ireland's Electricity System and Data Centres. According to the message delivered by Peter, Ireland can achieve 100% energy independence in its electricity system, 100% RES-E, 100% decarbonisation and minor dispatch down solely by adding Long Duration Energy Storage (LDES) and green peakers.

There was good feedback from those present in the room and online who agreed that LDES had a part of play in delivering a net zero system. Regarding market procurement mechanisms it was agreed that it is worth putting a lot of thought into what is intended to be procured and how it can be efficiently procured. Some information was presented on the gas network which was challenged by Paul Lennon (GNI) who stated that he and GNI strongly disagreed with some key assumptions in particular pertaining to costs, leakages and loss assumptions. In general, it was felt that the presentation seemed hard on the gas network. Member believed that we will likely be relying on the gas network for security of supply for foreseeable future, not least given the substantial recent investment in gas peaking generation. Member noted it might be worthwhile looking at larger scale central salt cavern storage in NI (as a potential all-island solution) for hydrogen storage and repurposing of at least part of the gas (transmission) network for hydrogen given the significant historic investment and the fact there are existing multiple connections to power generation sites across the country.

Members also questioned the investment numbers and the ultimate cost to the consumer. It was also believed that interconnectors will continue to play their part in providing security of supply and allowing us to reach our decarbonisation targets. Members also queried Peter's modelling and foresight assumptions.

### Members Insight: Tackling DC Fault Ridethrough - Graeme McWilliams, Cormac Nevin

Graeme McWilliams gave an update on the projects in place and in development in Dublin and Arklow by Echelon Data Centres (DC).

Cormac Nevin discussed the draft Demand Facility Fault Ride-through Grid Code Modification. It was agreed that further discussion and engagement on the proposed modification is required.

#### Reflection, Next Steps and Closing Messages - Liam Ryan and Gerard Carlin

Gerard and Liam closed off the day by thanking all present and online and to John Fitzgerald for hosting the event. The valuable contribution of all members and invited guests was noted and members were encouraged to continue to engage proactively to ensure the Advisory Council can do everything possible to enable the island of Ireland to reach its decarbonisation targets.

#### Meeting Actions

#	Topic	Action	Owner	Due
1	Workstream Sessions	EirGrid and SONI to consider focussed workstream sessions at or before future AC meetings.	TSOs	
2	'Hackathon' Event	EirGrid and SONI to consider 'hackathon' event to accelerate progress for SOEF.	TSOs	