

# ESO Technology Advisory Council

## TAC-10

<b>Date:</b> 03/03/2023	<b>Location:</b> Virtual
<b>Start:</b> 09:00	<b>End:</b> 12:30

All material from the meeting can be found on the ESO Technology Advisory Council website: <https://www.nationalgrideso.com/who-we-are/stakeholder-groups/technology-advisory-council>

## Participants

Attendee	Organisation
Vernon Everitt (Chair)	Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Chris Dent	University of Edinburgh
Jo-Jo Hubbard	Electron
Simon Pearson	Independent
Fred Drewitt	Limejump
Alvaro Sanchez Mirales	STEMY Energy
Alastair Martin	Flexitricity
Kate Garth	RWE Renewables
Melissa Stark	Accenture
Claudia Centazzo	Independent
Naomi Baker	Energy UK
James Houlton	Amazon Web Services
Peter Stanley	Elexon
Jim McOmish	Scottish Power Energy Networks
Natalia Kroutikova	BP
Shubhi Rajnish	ESO
Cameron Shade (Facilitator)	ESO

### For specific agenda items

Attendee	Organisation
Gary White	ESO

Mark Limpkin	ESO
John Walsh	ESO
Bernie Dolan	ESO
Sian Thornton	ESO
Mayank Jha	ESO
Divya Mahalingham	ESO
Joanna Webb	ESO

## Apologies

Attendee	Organisation
Teodora Kaneva	TechUK
Randolph Brazier	Energy Networks Association
Chris Kimmett	Reactive Technologies
Judith Ward	Sustainability First
Andy Hadland	Independent
David Sykes	Octopus Energy

## Agenda

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1. **Welcome & Apologies**
2. **Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**
3. **Feedback from the last meeting**
4. **Digital Strategy & Action Plan**
5. **2 years of the TAC**
6. **Updates since Draft determination & Ofgem reporting framework**
7. **Open Balancing Platform Update & Roadmap**
8. **Data Analytics Platform update**
9. **Subgroups update**
10. **Next meeting and discussion about the future**
11. **AOB**

## Discussion and details

# **Topics discussed**

## 1. Welcome and Apologies

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and welcomed Cameron formally taking over as tech sec from David Bowman.

The chair summarised the Agenda.

## 2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The minutes from the last meeting are out for circulation and will be uploaded to the website in the next couple of weeks.

## 3. Feedback from the last meeting

- The feedback received at the last meeting on Data, Balancing and the draft determination was summarised.

## 4. Digital Strategy & Action Plan

### Digital Strategy

- Gary White summarised the context around the update of the Digital strategy, where the ESO is on its timeline of BP1 / BP2, how the FSO changes the Digital strategy and where the ESO wants to be in the future.

### Discussion

- The timeline of the Digital strategy is too far in the future.
- While going on the journey to 2035 what is being introduced now needs to be taking the future into account effectively doing both options in parallel. It looks sequential but is actually parallel.
  - ESO intent is to execute in parallel but in refreshing the strategy is showing a more ambitious goal to be Digital by design.
- The strategy slides would be more powerful linked to business deliverables over the timeframe and which model enables those.
- ESO has a role of helping the industry change their ways of working and go on the same journey.
- ESO should embed this vision at all levels and roles. Procurement as an example doesn't seem to consider wider ambition and looks at short sighted goals.
  - ESO recognised this as great feedback as it isn't something everyone has visibility of.
- How will ESO integrate with other areas post FSO?
  - FSO cannot be ESO plus Gas it needs to be integrated to achieve its goals.
  - How will ESO integrate the FSO into the Digital strategy without slowing it down?
    - The Digital strategy is emerging and has to be refreshed every 6 months, the FSO role will change as expectations get wider and more established.
- Question for the TAC on what standards they measure themselves upon and what advice they would give the ESO.
  - The chair suggested for the members to reach out to the ESO.
- Proposal that as well as looking at other models ESO should consider how they can lead the market rather than being responsive.
  - Suggestion this could be part of a sub group, future subgroups to be considered as part of the survey.
- The ESO has done some transformational work in an exploratory way, there may be some false starts but the things that have gone through have been transformational. The results have been a better system and ESO should be bold.
  - Great to hear positive feedback on changes that have paid off.
- Opportunity raised to investigate working with Innovate, TAC are going to keep in contact with the ESO innovation team and see what is possible.

Cameron to consider future subgroups to focus on this topic

## 5. 2 years of the TAC

Cameron summarised some stats related to the last 2 years of the TAC. What topics have been covered, what advice has been given and what actions have been taken.

### *Discussion*

- This was a useful representation as the TAC sometimes stops and wonders whether the right things are being discussed and whether the observations were taken into account.
- The Chair suggests feeding back to Cameron or himself after the session.
- Question from the TAC regarding whether for some topics other members of their team would be more appropriate to attend.
  - ESO are going to send a survey to gauge interest in further subgroups or avenues to explore where the TAC feel they are not being utilised to their full potential.
- Suggestion members of the TAC could take agenda items and present back. Alternatively leading subgroup discussions and presenting back to the main TAC.
- Suggestion for an online communication method for the TAC to keep in touch between sessions and engage additional people as appropriate.
  - ESO will explore the best way of achieving this.
- Question as to whether telecoms or other industries such as OEM's could feed in to the TAC.
- Chair reiterates the survey is going out for feedback and thanks everyone for their contributions which the presentation demonstrates is making a difference in the way the ESO think and act.

## 6. Updates since Draft determination & Ofgem reporting framework.

- Mayank Jha summarised where the ESO is regarding the Draft determination and talked through a framework on how ESO can show Ofgem how we govern delivery.
- ESO is working with Ofgem to agree this framework on a weekly basis up until the first iteration is complete.

### *Discussion*

- What level in Ofgem is engaged in the discussions?
  - The Digitalisation team of Ofgem understand the journey and the complexity.
  - There are integrated discussions across multiple topics and if one of those elements is not understood conversations can become difficult.
    - A different view of the portfolio is achieved based on which lens you are looking at it from.
    - Ofgem have recognised the need to consider how they will have those conversations in a positive way.
  - Ofgem and ESO are meeting at senior level and both parties recognise the more transparency there is the better.
- Challenge that half of the framework refers to technology delivery not delivering customer value.
  - The framework itself is quite old and Waterfall. The ESO should be giving trust that people do the right things.
    - ESO recognise this is an interim governance framework which is required to assure we're managing our delivery appropriately, however where some teams are shifting we're reviewing and assessing the framework iteratively
    - A higher level of Agile maturity is required for the ESO to achieve the level of reporting Ofgem require.
    - In the future these ways of working will come to the TAC.
  - Concern that governance like this can be difficult to turn off once contracts are in place.
    - The ESO agree and doesn't have contracts in place in relation to this.
- Challenge that the focus of the framework should not just be on cost.

- Ofgem are not focusing on restricting spending it is more about helping them understand if we can deliver value, how we came to that decision and what is changing.
- This is just one of the initiatives with Ofgem. Others include ways of working and cloud, a combination of things, this is just one of the more formal topics in discussion.

Question from ESO on how regulators or investors react if Agile delivery is perceived to invest money in something that doesn't achieve its goals and has to stop, what have the TAC done in the past?

- Recognise the waste spend would not be on an Epic level it would potentially be 1/3 of the features in that epic. Explain the bigger picture and the parts that didn't work out.
  - Examples of this happen on a daily basis from half-baked software releases, phones, computer updates and software patches.
- Agile is about recognising uncertainty, do it by representing risk in a cost range. The further you get out the wider that cost window gets.
  - Initial reactions will be difficult but it can be explained and overtime it hides any surprises.
  - ESO agrees it's a journey moving away from these fixed governance structures but the push is to accelerate that journey by looking at the problem in different ways.
- Request to come back to TAC as the discussion continues.

## 7. Open Balancing Platform Update & Roadmap

- Bernie Dolan talked through the latest progress of the Open Balancing Platform PI 7. Gave a demo of functionality and discussed aspirations to create new groups to discuss particular balancing topics including additional regular industry events.

### *Discussion*

- TAC happy to see real things are happening, products are rolling out after seeing the demonstration.
- Question does this now achieve the multi dispatch tool, is it going live the end of the year, does this effect the skip rate and does it go across zones.
  - It covers one reason that contributes to a skip but there are more in future iterations to remove.
  - It does not deal with zonal management that is in additive 2 – 2024.
- Concerns raised by TAC that certain experts are not included in all initiatives.
  - A wider issue to consider is how we get feedback on minor but important technical interests.
  - Algorithms are not a silver bullet and there will always been a need for human oversight to identify why something isn't behaving the way it should do and look at the solution as a whole.

## 8. Data Analytics Platform update

- Mark Limpkin recapped what was covered by DAP in the last TAC. Their aspiration to drive a data driven ESO. He summarised DAP progress in the last year and explained current priorities.
- Acting on advice of the TAC Mark also explained a new engagement framework DAP are using to manage future demand coming into the platform.

### *Discussion*

- Chair congratulates the team on the pace it has quickly achieved and the great progress.
- Question are the detailed analytics self-serve?
  - There is a hybrid - some will be provided by the DAP Devops team if capability is not available elsewhere. However other teams have use cases they can deliver themselves and just require an environment.
- Is load forecasting a priority?
  - The current use cases are foundational and in the future priority will switch to business value.
  - Forecasting is tied to PEF as a deliverable.

- Advice that due to the success of demand response that load forecasting would be well received even if delivered in small parts such as weather forecasting.

Suggestion to create an internal portal for people to register interest in the platform and so give them a method of reaching out to people when new functionality is available.

Request to come back to TAC in 2 or 3 sessions time.

### 9. Subgroups

- There have been no sub-group meetings since the last TAC.

### 10. Next meeting

- The chair thanked all members for their input over the last 2 years and asked for some feedback via the survey to come out how we can ensure this works for everyone.
- The chair referred to a suggestion previously regarding further subgroups to cover topics in more detail.
- 2nd June 2023, 09:00 – 12:30.

### 11. AOB

- The chair commented on the fantastic progress on the presentation from the data analytics platform.
- The TAC passed on their thanks to everybody who prepared the papers as they were excellent and gave real insight into the progress. Today demonstrated the openness of the ESO to take on feedback and act upon it.