

ESO Technology Advisory Council

TAC-12

Date: 01/09/2023	Location: Wokingham / Virtual
Start: 09:00	End: 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
Andy Hadland	Independent
Alastair Martin	Flexitricity
Melissa Stark	Accenture
Shubhi Rajnish	ESO
Cameron Shade (Facilitator)	ESO
Gary White	ESO
Naomi Baker	Energy UK
Jim McOmish	Scottish Power Energy Networks
Simon Pearson	Independent
Jo-Jo Hubbard	Electron
David Sykes	Octopus Energy

For specific agenda items

Attendee	Organisation
Liesel Botha	ESO
Bernie Dolan	ESO
Dozie Nnabuife	ESO
Daniel Arrowsmith	ESO
Sian Bexton	ESO

Attendee	Organisation
Teodora Kaneva	TechUK
Randolph Brazier	Energy Networks Association
Natalia Kroutikova	BP
Kate Garth	RWE Renewables
James Houlton	Amazon Web Services
Peter Stanley	Elexon
Alvaro Sanchez Mirales	STEMY Energy
Fred Drewitt	Limejump

Agenda

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1. Arrival
2. Tour of the control room gallery
3. Welcome & Apologies
4. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising
5. Feedback from the last meeting
6. Crowdflex
7. Customer Centric ESO
8. Open Balancing Platform Update & Roadmap
9. Subgroups update
10. Next meeting
11. AOB

Discussion and details

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Topics discussed

1. **Arrival**
 - Multiple rounds of introductions and a breakfast prior to the tour.
2. **Tour of the control room gallery**
 - TAC members had a tour of the control room gallery from Daniel Arrowsmith bringing context to a lot of the work the TAC is advising the ESO on.
3. **Welcome & Apologies**
 - The chair welcomed the virtual attendees to the meeting.
 - The chair summarised the Agenda.

4. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The minutes from the last meeting have been published on the ESO website.

5. Feedback from the last meeting

The Secretary played back a brief feedback from the previous session as well as an ask for anyone else who would be interested in joining TAC subgroups to let him know.

6. Crowdflex

- Dozie Nnabuike gave a run through of the Crowdflex programme, its challenges and opportunities, the models, trials and plans for the future.

Discussion

- Crowdflex is about looking at how we handle flexibility day to day in comparison to DFS which is looking at system stress events.
- Domestic consumers offer a potentially large amount of untapped flexibility in balancing the network and this programme plans to understand what is available and whether it could work.
 - Could enable lower costs and lower carbon system operation while reducing investment costs.
- Completed Alpha phase now in Beta with 8 Partners.
- A question from the TAC regarding real trials and how it will be dispatched
 - This will be part of the live service handled via scheduling
- Followed by a lot of interest and excitement from the TAC understanding whether this compliments or conflicts with other in-flight programmes, which customers it impacts, is the ESO considering take up by different demographics and how to manage conflict.
- Challenge on how the control room can be given confidence on the energy this can provide
 - One of the TAC members is part of this trial and confirmed a forecasting model is being delivered to aid the control room.
- There was interest in how we understand all of the assets, how the information is aggregated and what common interface will be used to do that.
 - The Whole Virtual Energy System can come to TAC to discuss at a later date
- A discussion was had on timescales, when this begins and which use cases will be used initially.
- Feedback from TAC that one of the reasons DFS was so successful was the media coverage and we should learn from and leverage that in the future
 - Further TAC feedback that the ESO should work to keep Crowdflex as close to DFS as possible to build on its success, not add a second complicated concept for people to understand or become confused by.

7. Customer Centric ESO

- Liezel Botha presented the plans for ESO to become more customer centric by handling our incoming customer queries more efficiently.

Discussion

- The reason for the change is driving satisfaction scores up for the ESO and its customers.
 - Going forward the FSO will be expected to do more and must move to the Digital space (chatbot's, AI etc). This change is needed before that.
- The way to do this is by collecting and utilising data to drive the change.
- TAC asked to add specifics to aid the conversation, who are the customers, how do they come in and how many are there.
 - Further questions on any hidden channels

- Hidden channels have been found and work is being done to ensure these are logged and recorded in CRM.

To aid this transformation it needs a cultural shift of putting data first.

- Every justification for development work is being backed up by data points such as how many queries we have had and what the customer view is.

Liezel explained the model and talked through timescales

- Plans to start small with a centralised team and various trials across the business.
- Phased additions based on the learnings of the previous trials.
- The TAC questioned why the ESO doesn't hire someone to resolve this based on 3408 hours a year instead of going Digital first.
- Also mentioned to be careful utilising Salesforce as it is so flexible it's easily to overcomplicate.
- The chair stated this was a similar model to what he used in the past and had fantastic evidence and data to explain what it's going to resolve.
- Advice to avoid utilising a chatbot until cultural problems are resolved.
- Customers use chatbots for information they cannot find on the website, specific things about their accounts or their bills. If this is not available there is no point in creating one.

8. Open Balancing Platform Update & Roadmap

- Bernie Dolan presented the quarterly update on the Open Balancing Platform.

Discussion

- PI8 has just completed and the team is on track for their production release in December.
- There has been a lot of discussion regarding managing batteries and a decision has been made to go live with 2 zones of the country rather than 1 which seems small but is a big change due to how different users behave.
- The second zone was originally due March 2024
- There was a discussion with the TAC regarding limited duration assets, the information that is available and how the ESO could collect it.
- The TAC response was the inverse in that the ESO should tell everyone what they require rather than accepting any information that is available.
- Further feedback from TAC was the ESO would not want all the information and then have to do the calculations they should be accepting the results.
 - A TAC member offered to provide information from other parts of the world and setup a discussion with a team in Australia.
- Plans for removing the fax machines from the control room were discussed with many people looking forward to it.

9. Subgroups

- There have been no sub-group meetings since the last TAC but there are plans to run the control room of the future in the near future.
- There was a brief reminder to let the secretary know of any interest in joining these subgroups.

10. Next meeting

- 1st December 2023, 09:00 – 12:30.

11. AOB

- A member of the TAC suggested sharing a trust framework on data governance and data sharing they have created.
 - The chair thanked the ESO for hosting in person today and announced his stepping down of the role. The ESO will advertise the role and thank Vernon for his time and effort in the position.
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