DISTRIBUTION CODE REVIEW PANEL

Tuesday 24 March 2020

Meeting held by conference call

MINUTES OF MEETING

a. Attendees

Members	Non members
Carl Hashim (CH), NIE Networks (Secretary and acting Chair as alternate for Trevor Harron)	Neil MacDougall (NMcD), NIE Networks
David Hill (DH), NIE Networks	Andrew Cupples (AC), NIE Networks
Ian Bailie (IB), NIE Networks	Sam Matthews (SM), SONI
Karen O'Doherty (KOD), NIE Networks [*alternate for Sinead Ferris*]	Kenny McPartland (KMcP), Utility Regulator
Jody O'Boyle (JOB), Utility Regulator	
Joe Duddy (JD), RES	

b. Apologies

Apologies received from:
- Trevor Harron, NIE Networks
- Denis Kelly, NIE Networks
- Sam Alexander, Powerhouse Generation
- Fiona Hannon, SSE
- William Steel, Power NI
- Gemma Monaghan, Air Core NI
- Andrew McCorriston, SSE

Attendance unconfirmed from:
- Kevin Hannafin, Energia

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair noted that attendance constituted a quorum.

2. Update on Panel membership

The Secretary advised that Sinead Ferris from NIE Networks had replaced David McDonald as member of the Panel, with effect from 1 January 2020.

3. Review of minutes of previous meeting, including actions

Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed; there were no actions from the meeting. The Panel agreed the minutes.

4. RoCoF workstream update

DH presented an update to the Panel. (The presentation was circulated to the Panel.)

5. Update on EU network codes

DH gave a verbal update to the Panel. DH advised that G98/NI, G99/NI and the Distribution Code itself will require some amendments in the near future. Some amendments will be of a tidying / housekeeping nature, whilst others may be more substantive, the need for which arises from changes made to the equivalent documents in GB and with which we wish to keep aligned.

DH will have draft amendments ready soon, and these will be shared with the Panel for feedback prior to publishing a consultation on same.

6. SSG SCADA update

DH gave a verbal update to the Panel. DH advised that there are around 600 SSGs still to be made compliant. The plan is to write out to all of them, although this could be delayed in light of the pandemic.

7. TSO procurement of [12 out of 14] system services

DH gave a verbal update to the Panel. DH advised that at the recent 'gate opening' (which happens every 6 months), 10 service providers submitted new or updated tenders. NIE Networks provided DNO Consent Letters for all tenders to allow them to progress in the procurement process. Contracts from this round of procurement are due to be awarded by 1 April, and will run until April 2023.

8. Consultations updates

   a. Connections update
      KOD presented an update to the Panel. (The presentation was circulated to the Panel.)

   b. MIC Charging
      IB gave a verbal update to the Panel and noted that a consultation paper had been published in Q1 2020, and closed on 28 February. Five responses were received, all being generally positive of the proposals. NIE Networks is now developing a recommendations paper, which will be presented to the UR for discussion / agreement. The plan is to implement changes in a phased and gradual manner through to the 2022 tariff year. NIE Networks also plans to approach customers first to see if they wish to reduce their MIC before the charging arrangements change.

   c. Greater Access to the Distribution Network
      IB gave a verbal update to the Panel. A recommendations paper has been published on the NIE Networks website. IB gave a brief overview of the paper's content, including the future plans for the provision to industry of data held by the DSO. IB explained the issue is being looked at in GB where they are considering the development of a system wide resource database.

The situation in NI at the moment is that NIE Networks cannot pass on customer information without the consent of the customer. As part of this work, changes to licensing arrangements and/or contractual arrangements under the D Code are being considered, which could better facilitate the sharing of information.

Finally IB mentioned that NIE Networks is to engage with UR on the options around funding to take forward the proposals in the recommendations paper.

d. Standard P28/2
IB presented an update to the Panel. (The presentation was circulated to the Panel.) IB advised that a consultation paper would be published by end March. JD asked for clarity if the intention is for P28/2 to be adopted in NI exactly as it has been in GB, or if there would be any differences. IB confirmed the consultation is proposing to adopt the standard exactly as it is in GB.

e. Demand connections into clusters
IB gave a verbal update to the Panel. IB briefly explained the background to cluster substations, a concept originally conceived for connecting renewable generation. Now NIE Networks is considering if demand customers can/should connect, and/or how clusters might feed into any reinforcement planning in the vicinity of a cluster. NIE Networks is at an early stage of considering this option. NIE Network recognises that it will be important to involve industry in any decisions made, so a public consultation will be carried out. The consultation paper may be ready for publication in April.

9. AOB

IB raised the issue of Article 5 of the EU's Electricity Regulation as part of the Clean Energy Package. This article requires that any generator of size greater than or equal to 400kW must be responsible for its impact on the balancing market. IB explained this could cause some operational issues for NIE Networks. The DfE is looking to consult on the issue soon, and NIE Networks is planning to give DfE feedback first, to influence what is in the consultation. Eventually the implementation of whatever decisions DfE makes may require changes to the Distribution Code.

10. Date of next meeting

Late June 2020 was proposed for the next meeting.

Action:
i.   Secretary to send invite for next meeting. (CH)