

# FlexForum session XVI 01-09-22 notes

---

<b>When</b>	0900 – 1200, Thursday 1 September 2022
<b>Where</b>	Virtual
<b>Who</b>	<p><del>Glen Baxter (Ara Ake)</del>, Shay Brazier (ReVolve Energy), John Campbell (Our Energy), Jason Christini-Crawford (Ecotricity), Glenn Coates (Aurora), Jenny Van der Merwe (Kāinga Ora), Tom Rose (evnex), Terry Paddy (Cortexo), Eric Pyle (solarZero), Buddhika Rajapakse (Mercury), Scott Scrimgeour (Wellington Electricity), James Tipping (Vector), Evie Trolove, (Orion), Mike Ullrich (Influx), Richard Steer (Wellington Electricity), Fiona Wiseman (Manawa Energy).</p> <p>Observers: Nicole Kirkham, MBIE, Nathan Spence, Electricity Authority, Clare Penno, EECA</p> <p>Facilitator: Geoff Sharples</p> <p>Secretariat: Craig Evans, Matt Smith</p>

---

## Session notes

### Agenda overview

The group agreed the agenda subject to:

- being flexible about the duration of the session, and the potential to extend discussion to midday
- adding a reflection session prior to the administration item.

### Item 1: Next steps – activities, approach and resourcing for next phase

The group discussed the activities, approach and resourcing for the next phase of activity by the FlexForum.

The group agreed these actions:

1. develop a proposed budget for ongoing FlexForum programme management function based on the activities, approach and estimated cost outlined in the pre-reading materials, and share this with the group by 9 September 2022. Ensure the proposed budget clearly links approach and activities.

2. confirm with MBIE the criteria for matching industry contributions
  - a) how would in-kind contributions be recognised?
  - b) how would delivery of demonstration projects be recognised?
  - c) how would existing FlexForum funds available be recognised?
3. FlexForum members advise what contribution they can make toward ongoing programme management costs by 16 September 2022
4. confirm the contribution available from stakeholders who have indicated they are prepared to support the FlexForum process
5. develop a draft workplan to identify deliverables from the next phase based on the list of activities and setting out options for extra collaborative work
6. liaise with MBIE to schedule the Delivery model workshop.

Perspectives shared in discussion were:

### **Approach and activities**

The next phase follows on from finalising the Flexibility Plan 1.0. The focus of the FlexForum during the next phase should align with the approach, which in turn guides the activities and outputs.

The group agreed to proceed according to the proposed approach and the associated activities. The key aspects of the approach (see page 6 of the pre-reading material) for the next phase are:

- Engage with stakeholders to build consensus for coordinated and collaborative action, including identifying more partners, and develop an enduring delivery model
- Work on Flexibility Plan 2.0
- Begin demonstration projects

The key activities (see page 7 of the prereading material) associated with this approach are:

- Stakeholder engagement
- Coordinating delivery of the Flexibility Plan
- Reporting on progress
- Updating the Flexibility Plan

The group noted that the FlexForum is attempting to move things at a pace which it wouldn't otherwise, but engagement is critical to bring people along. The FlexForum can continue to contribute value because the scope of engagement and perspective of actions is wide and inclusive of all parties that are required to enable choices which maximise the value of DER and flexibility.

The group discussed how it could maximise the tangible outputs from the next phase. The conclusion was to develop a draft workplan setting out:

- programme management activities, including tasks relating to stakeholder engagement, development of a delivery model, supporting collaboration and reporting
- opportunities to share insights gained through phase 1 which have not yet been shared widely. An example is the insights from the discussion on network access, connection requirements and dynamic operating envelopes
- opportunities for FlexForum members (and partners) to undertake discrete tasks which take specific steps in the Flexibility Plan which address known gaps and strike a balance between delivering a task and providing thought leadership.

The purpose of the draft workplan is to identify the type and range of deliverables from the next phase and identify the tasks the FlexForum can deliver versus those which can be delivered by others. The workplan should be made transparent.

However, no-one should wait for the workplan to begin work on a demonstration project or task.

The group noted the functions required to deliver the various activities included programme management, technical advice, communications and engagement support, and facilitation. Options for delivering the activities include via the FlexForum, by individual members, or outsourced.

There are regulatory and technical challenges which need to be better understood, and the diversity of interests across the group provided an opportunity to advance regulatory/technical frontiers and test technical delivery.

The group noted there is demand for the Flexibility Plan and for action.

### **Resourcing of programme management**

The group discussed resourcing of programme management and other activities of the FlexForum.

Members agreed to advise their contribution to the ongoing programme management function, noting the importance of this function to the effective operation of the FlexForum and the considerable effort required. Points discussed included:

- treatment of in-kind contributions. The opportunity cost of attending and contributing to the FlexForum process is material for all members, but proportionally more significant for smaller members.
- whether funding of demonstration projects meets the criteria to be counted as an industry contribution, and whether new contributions are required

- the potential for investment in the process by policy and regulatory bodies given the contribution to regulatory decision-making processes.
- The opportunity to obtain support from other participants, industry associations and other funding agencies. The group recognised that partners could become members during the next phase, but that partners should not be discouraged and disenfranchised if they chose to not make a financial contribution.
- The scope of programme management activities, noting activities to date have included secretariat, communications and technical advice.

The group requested a repackaging of the material in the pre-reading into a proposed budget but agreed to right-size the proposal.

## Item 2: Documenting demonstration projects

The group discussed the options and approach for documenting demonstration projects.

The group agreed to:

1. develop a template for documenting the key details of demonstration projects
2. each member to complete the template
3. arrange to publish the list of demonstration projects to both demonstrate the group is walking the talk and to provide a focus point for collaboration. (Publication would be ongoing.)

Points made in discussion included:

- documenting and publishing a living list of demonstration projects will provide a basis for coordination and collaboration, and to flag issues, barriers and experience.
- ensure the template includes information relating to the explicit objective or research question, partners (needed or actual), and a clear description of the step(s) from the Flexibility Plan
- enable parties not in the FlexForum to input projects to the list
- ensure the list of projects connects to the Flexibility Plan rather than being a list of solutions looking for a problem. This can be achieved by clearly highlighting which steps a project is addressing. However, at the outset the list should be open to be inclusive and support collaboration.

### Item 3: Workplan, engagement and communications

The group discussed the proposed engagement schedule.

The group agreed:

- the people nominated to lead a specific stakeholder discussion would be responsible for organising the session (or should advise if they are not available)
- the approach to determining attendance at sessions with the policy/regulatory bodies
- the secretariat will prepare a template presentation including the expected outcomes from the session. The focus of the sessions is the process and next steps, taking account of the audience
- the FlexForum should approach the ENA then individual distributors.

### 4: Reflection session

The group completed a reflection session documenting perspectives of the process from February to August via mural. Perspectives were:



## 5: Administration – governance, budget, and funding

The group heard an update on the FlexForum budget.

End 1153

DRAFT