

Flexforum: session I 03-02-22 notes

When	900 – 1600, Thursday 3 February 2022
Where	Virtual
Who	Shay Brazier (ReVolve Energy), John Campbell (Our Energy), Jason Christini-Crawford (Ecotricity), Glenn Coates (Aurora), Sam Elder (Orion), Ray Hardy (Wellington Electricity), Jenny Van der Merwe (Kāinga Ora), Terry Paddy (Cortexo), Eric Pyle (solarZero), Buddhika Rajapakse (Mercury), Tom Rose, (EVNex), James Tipping/Mark Toner (Vector), Fiona Wiseman (Trustpower/Manawa) Scott Scrimgeour, Wellington Electricity, Evie Trulove, Orion, Pam Walklin, Jonathan Young – Ara Ake Geoff Sharples, Aparna Narang - facilitators Craig Evans, Matt Smith - secretariat

Session notes

Four topics were discussed:

1. Ground rules
2. Flexforum goal, outcome and purpose
3. Logistics
4. Governance

The group agreed to defer two topics in the draft agenda to the next session. These were: topic 2 - discussion roadmap; and topic 3 – engagement approach and plan.

Ground rules

The group agreed the ground rules shared with the pre-reading, with the qualification that the participation of an extra person from an organisation was reasonable, subject to that organisation having one voice / similar airtime as other members.

Flexforum goal, outcome and purpose

The group discussed the goal of the Flexforum

The group agreed the goal is: A set of actions to integrate DER into the electricity system and markets to maximise the benefits for Aotearoa New Zealand.

The group wanted a concise statement with further elaboration on the key points to provide clarifying context.

- the goal is to identify a starting point not a solution
- the goal is to build a broad consensus across decision-makers for the set of actions
- the benefits of integrating DER include supporting electrification, decarbonisation and resilience and will accrue across a range of parties, including the community, households and businesses individually and in aggregate, network operators and other participants in the electricity supply chain
- note that the electricity system refers to the distribution network and transmission system and that markets refers to the ranges of markets for electricity services, eg, energy, ancillary services
- recognising the interaction between the electricity system and the wider energy system.

The group discussed the purpose of the Flexforum

The group agreed its purpose is to:

- deliver three objectives (described in next section below)
- build a broad consensus across the electricity sector and other interests for the set of actions to integrate DER
- build capacity and capability to implement the set of actions to integrate DER.

The group requested further elaboration on the key points to provide clarifying context.

The group agreed three objectives – the things it will do – to integrate and maximise the value of DER

1. identify the minimum specifications of the services that DER can provide, to who, when, where, how and for how much
2. identify the practical, scalable, and no regrets steps required to use the services that DER can provide

3. support ongoing learning and collaboration across the electricity sector on real world deployment of solutions to realise the benefits of DER, including identifying and resolving barriers

The group requested further elaboration on the key points to provide clarifying context.

Logistics

The group agreed to schedule 10 fortnightly 3-hour virtual sessions, on Thursdays from 0900 – 1200, starting 17-02-22.

The group agreed sessions would be virtual while the red setting of the covid-19 protection framework is in place across the country.

The group agreed the next session (17-02-22) would cover the engagement approach and plan and proposed discussion topics.

Flexforum governance (post-session)

A post-session discussion of funding and governance of the Flexforum started immediately following the close of the session. All members of the group were welcome to join the discussion.

Involved in the discussion were: John Campbell (Our Energy), Sam Elder (Orion), Ray Hardy (Wellington Electricity), Terry Paddy (Cortexo), Buddhika Rajapakse (Mercury), James Tipping/Mark Toner (Vector), Fiona Wiseman (Trustpower/Manawa), Pam Walklin/Jonathan Young (Ara Ake).

The sub-group requested:

- terms of reference for the Flexforum outlining who is involved, decision-making, scope, objectives, expectations of members (ie ground-rules), budget and contributions, and noting level of financial contribution does not mean more/less influence over the process
- a budget for operation of the Flexforum, including secretariat support, facilitation and identifying other potential expenses.

The group agreed to consider requirements for governance and (operational/financial) management after receiving draft terms of reference and budget.