

FLEXFORUM |

Steering Group meeting

When	Thursday 9 May 2024, 0930-1200
Where	Virtual
Who	Steve Batstone, Shay Brazier, John Campbell, Ryan Kuggeleijn, Terry Paddy, Matt Smith, Evie Trollove, Fiona Wiseman Secretariat: Lyndal Blatch, Craig Evans Observers: Brian FitzGerald (EECA), Mark Herring (EA), Sean McCready (CC)
Apologies	Briony Bennett (Ara Ake), Nicole Kirkman (MBIE)

Session notes

1: Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the session.

The SG:

- confirmed there was a quorum
- noted their individual obligations relating to the Commerce Act 1986 prohibiting anti-competitive conduct
- noted the reminder to review and update interests
- noted apologies
- confirmed the agenda.

Strategic items

2: How FlexForum responds to progress against the Flexibility Plan

The SG discussed the process for assessing progress against the Flexibility Plan and options for responding.

The SG endorsed the 3-step process to achieve a Member-driven progress report:

1. initial assessment and description of what is known to be happening or done for each step.
2. assessing the impact of progress with each step, ie, does it matter that there has been no or only a little progress?
3. deciding how FlexForum responds given the extent of progress and the associated impact on humans.

The SG discussed options for presenting the report on progress

- use case studies to make the type and extent of progress more tangible, particularly for activity where the outcomes are difficult to identify or link back to benefits to humans. Reference how activity that does not directly benefit humans translates into benefit for humans
- what is the human experience - what difference/better thing is available either now or soon?
- use a "situation, action, outcome, what next" format and list other initiatives in an appendix with a brief summary and any links available
- give visibility to things that are not as visible as they could/should be, eg, flexvis project. Catalogue things going on, even if not public. Describe why progress has been made on these things, and why these things mattered, and what things are important to unlock value to humans.
- focus on the process, whether progress is heading in the right direction, and whether resources are being directed effectively based on what we know now. The report should drive a virtuous monitoring/doing/reporting process by celebrating specific activity and calling for action where activity is needed
- Be clear about the value and purpose of the report - the SG agreed it is to provide decision makers with a reference point to determine the agenda and then drive action. The report should make people feel uncomfortable if necessary progress is not being made
- Identify the activities that are being delivered willingly by commercial actors and commercial interests versus the activities which are not being delivered because commercial interests are not interested and someone needs to step in to drive progress
- Highlight the key levers and ask if these are being pulled and help regulators understand if the necessary tools, systems and environments are in place to enable humans to realise the benefits of flexibility. Perhaps identify the 2 or 3 practical actions that could make a difference.

3: Amplifying FlexForum's core message

The SG discussed the core FlexForum message and agreed it was to continually ask 'what difference does it make to the human?'

The SG noted the commitment means:

- the current state/future state task is a key priority because it is attempting to describe the FlexForum perspective of how things can go from hard (current) to easy (future). All other tasks/work will need to connect to this hard to easy story
- the importance of connecting all other FlexForum tasks to the current state/future state
- the importance of an honest and accurate appraisal of progress against the Flexibility Plan 1.0
- drawing on the numerous pilots, trials and demonstrations already completed or underway to represent the human perspective
- communicating activities using practical experience and the voice of real humans - case studies of actual humans that have done stuff, eg, by including a call out box on page 1 of advice to ask/describe: What do you want to do? ('this is what is not happening'), Why is it hard? ('...this is what makes it hard'), How could it be easier? ('...this is what makes the difference').

4: AGM preparation and process

The SG discussed AGM preparation and process.

- confirmed 22 August 2024 as the AGM date
- agreed the SG would develop a budget for 2024-25
- agreed to revisit the role description for the independent chair to reflect experience
- approved the chair and secretariat making necessary arrangements to organise the AGM.

Standing items

5: Engagement

The SG noted the engagement report.

The SG agreed to engage Heft to assist with communications and engagement, including delivering the engagement plan. The draft engagement plan will be provided to the SG when it is ready.

6: Workplan

The SG noted the workplan report.

The workplan budget has been reforecast to:

- reflect actual timing of expenditure based on activity starting in April not March
- adjust assumptions about the amount of progress required to complete some tasks based on a better understanding of the tasks, including reallocating funding between tasks

The SG agreed that the Assessment of the urgency of each task, dated 23 August 2023 should be provided to Ara Ake to meet the requirement of the deliverable to develop and maintain a list of priorities, while also noting that the list will be updated through the progress report and future state tasks

7: Finance

The SG noted

- the status of payment of 2024 subscriptions
- the cashflow projections.

The SG discussed updating the subscription policies to clarify that the subscription year should be from the anniversary of payment.

The SG requested that the AGM paperwork outline expectations regarding voting at the AGM, Membership and being current with the annual subscription.

Procedural items

8: Membership requests

The SG agreed to ERANZ becoming a Member, noting that it had requested Membership and committed to paying the relevant subscription.

The SG noted several conversations are underway with prospective Members.

9: Actions

The SG noted the status of actions from previous sessions.

10: Next Steering Group meeting

The SG agreed the next meeting is 13 June.

11: Any other business

No other business.

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