

FLEXFORUM |

Steering Group meeting

When	Monday 12 May 2025, 0930-12
Where	Virtual
Who	Shay Brazier, Tim Calder, Terry Paddy, Toby Stevenson, Matt Smith, Rebecca Osborne Secretariat: Craig Evans, Lyndal Blatch Observers: Mark Herring (EA)
Apologies	John Campbell, Fiona Wiseman, Peter Bartlett (MBIE), Brian FitzGerald (EECA), Daniel Gnoth (Ara Ake), Sean McCready (CC).

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 apologies
- confirmed the agenda.

The SG discussed the Power Innovation Pathway Day hosted by the Electricity Authority on 7 May. It was an invite only event with updates from the 6 parties participating in the pathway, followed by an exploration of issues facing uptake of flexibility and community energy. The SG noted exploration highlighted topics covered in Flexibility Plan 2.0.

Strategic items

2: How can FlexForum support more effective coordination

The SG discussed how FlexForum can support more coordination and collaboration.

- there is a growing list of projects providing learning-by-doing relevant to Flexibility Plan 2.0, but siloes and low transparency remain a feature particularly in project design and set up phase. Coordination is not deliberate or comprehensive.

- Coordination of these projects would make the learning cheaper and faster and more robust. With coordination in this case meaning more transparency, regular sharing and opportunities for practical involvement.

The SG discussed two questions: ‘what is preventing routine regular sharing of information and experience, particularly before project launch?’ and ‘what is preventing routine involvement of parties who would be interested/able to help?’

- agreed more information sharing about projects is needed and useful. To avoid extra overhead it must be focused on mapping activities to the Flexibility Plan and sharing key project information.
- the EA agreed to provide more information about project innovation pathway projects
- useful project information includes objective, participants, method, biggest challenges and contact details. The SG discussed development of a template to gather specific information of what the projects are about and then sharing these on a collaborative site e.g. FlexForum website for everyone to see.
- Project information is often not shared because it involves extra, unrewarded effort.
- The SG agreed that FlexForum could have an impact here on helping groups to share more details about their projects. The SG agreed FF would advocate for more transparency with EECA, Ara Ake etc and Members.

3: Flex Day 2025

The SG agreed a Flex Day 2025 should be arranged so long as it gets the right balance between doing and talking.

- a focus on transparency and participation in learning-by-doing e.g. EECA projects that are currently happening within the flex space. Not just updates. The session should create two-way conversations to enable input and feedback about project design/delivery.
- Really probe progress with Flexibility Plan 2.0 to identify actions which would shift the dial, including new learning-by-doing
- Invite a guest speaker who can share a different perspective and practical experience.
- Hold it in September or October.

Standing items

4: Engagement

The SG discussed engagement activities.

The SG noted planning is underway to discuss Flexibility Plan 2.0 with decision-makers and partners.

- suggested adding SEANZ, electricians, Simply Energy, banking and media to the long list of people to talk with
- highlighted the importance of conveying a collaborative approach and to acknowledge the work of others in this space.
- make sure to have a high level overview of the Plan as it is a heavy-going document with lots to digest.

The SG noted MEUG and the Electricity Authority were given separate briefings on the Flexibility Plan 2.0 and the holes in the value stack work. A further session with the Electricity Authority is scheduled to discuss its decentralisation paper.

The SG noted an update website, newsletter and LinkedIn activity.

5: Workplan

The SG noted an update on progress with the workplan.

Supporting the EECA scaled DF pilot project:

- There are potentially six pilots underway. FlexForum's role is focused on coordination and assessment feedback. The assessment feedback includes quarterly, and annual updates based on the information from EECA and the distributors data sharing.
- A workshop with EECA in late May will confirm specific FF role and activities, plus the timing of deliverables.

Flexibility Plan 2.0 is being finalised for release.

- Work has started on the 2025 progress report. Members and parties identified in the Plan will be asked for input about progress once the Plan is public.
- The progress assessment is to be completed before the 2025 AGM.

Deep Dive into Digitalisation and Data:

- the Deep Dive hasn't started. Initial steps are to scope out existing information in the area first.

Advice to Regulators:

- Note advice was provided to the Commerce Commission about its WBOP draft decision.
- A session with the Electricity Authority is scheduled to discuss its decentralisation paper. The FF response to this paper
- We are speaking to EA people at the end of this month about the green issues paper. Any FF advice beyond the conversation can probably just point to Flexibility Plan 2.0 which describes the actions required to implement a decentralised power system.

6: Finance

The SG noted the financial update of the FlexForum.

The SG agreed the finance sub-committee should explore options to maximise the value of FF cash holdings.

Procedural items

7: 2025 AGM Arrangements

The SG confirmed the arrangements for the 2025 AGM. Business will include:

- receive a report from the chair on FF affairs for 2024-25
- decide appointments to the SG. Five current SG members have reached their two-year term limit and must stand down. They can re-nominate.
- review progress against the Flexibility Plan. This will involve discussing the 2025 progress report.
- review the workplan and approve the annual budget.
- approve amendments to the Constitution to align with the new Incorporated Societies Act.

The SG agreed that the meeting will be on the 28th August 2025.

8. Actions

The SG noted the status of actions from previous sessions. All actions are underway.

9. Next Steering Group meeting

The SG confirmed the next SG meeting will be Thursday 12 June.

10. AoB/Close

No other business.

Meeting finished at 11.22am.

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