



Steering Group meeting

When	Thursday 13 November 2025, 0900-11.00
Where	Virtual
Who	Terry Paddy, Toby Stevenson, Malcolm Cleland Matt Smith, Tim Calder, Fiona Wiseman, Nicole Kirkham, Sam Elder Secretariat: Craig Evans, Lyndal Blatch
Apologies	Matt Botswick, Brian Fitzgerald (EECA), Daniel Gnoth (Ara Ake)

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
- reminded members to keep their register of interests up to date
- confirmed the agenda.

Strategic items

2: How can flex practically contribute to security and affordability?

The SG discussed how flex can practically contribute to enhanced security of supply and affordability.

The initial discussion covered the following points

- The sector talks about how flex will reduce system costs in the future and power prices will not go up by as much. This is meaningless to people worried about their power bills now. The sector needs to provide people with practical options to use their flexible resources to reduce power costs today. The financial benefits need to be real and immediate. The system benefits are a consequence.

- This highlights the need for clear language about what the sector is saying to people, ie, technology (eg, DER) versus activity (flexibility) and the benefits of an activity (eg, reducing power bills, and/or reducing system costs)
- There is a distinction between system benefits and individual benefits, though they are connected. However, there is no real incentive for an individual to do anything that does not benefit them, even if there are wider benefits
- The challenge is a gap between flex theory and practice. People are experiencing their power bills going up, but do not have/know about retail product options which provide opportunities to reduce their power bills by flexing while maintaining their lifestyle/productivity.
 - Recognise that the sector is playing at the fringes of what is possible with flexibility. Not much practically happening that enhances affordability. It appears no sector participant wants to be first to invest to access small scale flexibility.
 - Propositions are developed based on the underlying value available to the retailer and the customer. There has been a shift from EV charging focused products to hot water-focused products because more people could access benefits sooner.
 - Underlying pricing mechanisms which signal opportunities to lower system costs are under-developed. This is the cause of a mis-match in value propositions and the individual and system benefits.
- There are two groups of actors - people/customers and the decision makers able to effect changes needed for people/customers to benefit from flex. Right now, the decision makers are the key FF audience.

The second part of the discussion covered what practical actions the sector could take in the near term to practically reduce power costs for people.

- The Energy Transition Framework is shortly launching a media campaign on Powering Change. This may provide a channel to communicate the opportunities of flex for people and the sector.
- However, people may not be interested in the power system, instead being more concerned about the value/benefits accruing to them. A focus on the complexity the sector faces in realising flex-related value is unlikely to be fruitful.
- There is a system narrative. And a separate human narrative. People will act in the interests of their wallet, while the system needs to align their interests and system interests. How can the 2 narratives be joined? For people to get benefits, the system needs to change...which includes the sector getting behind initiatives to fill holes in the value stack/create signals
- What are the barriers to key industry players not doing flex? For example, is there a negative commercial impact on someone who needs to act? Or regulator barriers? The sector does not have the settings required to underpin the value of flex for people.

Standing items

3: Engagement

The SG noted engagement activity and interactions with FF via the website, newsletter and LinkedIn.

The conversations indicate FF is viewed as a source of independent advice on flexibility.

The SG noted a second article in the series on Understanding the role of flex for the system and people will shortly be shared with members for comment.

4: Workplan

The SG noted progress with workplan tasks and activities.

- Deep Dive into Digitalisation and Data: some progress since the workshop on 15 October. A review of material from the United Kingdom should provide a reference point for exploring/responding to member input at the workshop
- Deep Dive on pricing and orchestration mechanisms: no practical progress on this task.
- Advice to Regulators: FF provided [advice to EECA on its residential demand flex green paper](#).
 - No written responses are planned to consultations currently underway on EIEPs, the emergency reserve scheme or requiring HHR data for reconciliation.
- Structured knowledge sharing to support effective learning-by-doing. The recent focus has been:
 - The test version of the upgraded Knowledge Hub was shown to the SG. The webpage was endorsed, with a request to include a brief summary of each document in the hub. The KH should be live in November completing Flex Day 2025 action #6.
 - A flexibility project progress update will be delivered in December. The approach is being finalised. The initial focus will be projects which are in development or underway involving practical applications of flex but could extend to enabling activities/projects. Information will be collected via short phone calls. This will deliver Flex Day 2025 action #7.
 - There is work underway to Flex Day 2026 actions #3 and #4 to support/facilitate regular distributor interaction/co-design sessions for flex-y projects and support/facilitate identification of common flex-y project elements, and assist with standardisation.
 - There is work underway to deliver a FF workshop/masterclass on HEMS to build common understanding of the role of HEMS to enable flexibility and flexible propositions. Further sessions are expected based on the issues being raised through project development.

5: Finance

The SG noted the financial update of the FlexForum. The financial position is sound with expenses and subscription income aligned with budgeted expectations.

Procedural items

6: Memberships

The SG noted the 1 new member joined in October. FF has 47 members.

The SG approved waiving the membership subscription for a member who would otherwise be unable to remain a member and contribute their unique perspective to FF activities.

7: Actions

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

8: Next Steering Group meeting

The SG noted a FlexForum meeting is scheduled for Thursday 11 December 9am-11am.

9: AoB/Close

SG members discussed an idea that flexibility explainer information (or a course) would be useful to improve the sector's understanding of the role of flex.

The meeting closed at 10.35am.

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