

Open Networks Challenge Group Meeting Minutes

The Open Networks (ON) Challenge Group meeting took place via Microsoft Teams on 12th November 2024. The [presentation materials](#) can be found on the ENA website.

The sections below capture feedback that was shared during the session. Alongside this, [a Challenge and Actions Log](#) captures key areas for Open Networks to consider and address.

Any further feedback outside of Challenge Group meetings can be sent to opennetworks@energynetworks.org.

Welcome and Apologies

Hussein Osman (Elexon, Challenge Group chair) welcomed all to the group and noted apologies.

The session was attended by those in green below. Attendees marked with * attended part of the meeting.

Company	Name
Elexon, Chair	Hussein Osman
Octopus	Vania Milkova
E.ON	Charlotte Goodman
Centrica	Helen Stack
Energy UK	Naomi Baker
Smarter Grid Solutions	Flo Silver
The Association for Renewable Energy and Clean Technology (REA)	Samuel Adekanle
The Association for Decentralised Energy (ADE)	Natasha Mills
Everoze Partners	Nithin Rajavelu
Joint Radio Company (JRC)	Peter Couch
Piclo	Matthew Bilson*
Regen	Alex Temple
Community Energy England	Philip Coventry
Electralink	Emma Carr*
	Atzin Madrid*
Energy Systems Catapult	Ben Leland
Imperial College London	Goran Strbac

Citizens Advice	Caroline Farquhar
Independent Networks Association (INA)	Gareth Haines
Energy Networks Association (ENA)	Avi Aithal
	Helen Jarva
	Reece Breen Begadon
	Autumn Davies
UKPN	Alex Howard

Recent Industry Developments

Hussein Osman (Elexon, Challenge Group Chair) invited the group to share any recent industry developments that the Open Networks Steering Group should be aware of.

Feedback	Response
The government have published their Clean Power (CP) 2030 report. It was flagged that the report did not go in depth on the role of distribution networks and distributed flexibility, and the impact and contribution it will make to CP 2030. The report recommends a combination of flexibility and network reinforcement to maximise whole system benefits.	Feedback noted.

Market Facilitator Update

Hussein Osman (Elexon, Challenge Group Chair) noted that the enabling code modification has been approved by Ofgem following it being raised in Sep-24, showing good pace.

Ofgem have completed their workshops discussing detailed design at a high level, and Elexon will be running working groups on various topics like change management, finance, to work on a more detailed level. Outputs of these workshops will be fed back into Ofgem for continued work on the detailed design.

Recruitment is ongoing for growing Elexon expertise across technical, project and stakeholder management. Multiple roles have been offered and accepted with new starters joining over the next few months.

Elexon have joined relevant ON technical working groups and are having additional knowledge sharing sessions, discussing what transition will look like and

Feedback	Response
It was enquired how feedback that misaligns with feedback received so far by Ofgem would be incorporated.	Ofgem will be present at the Elexon workshops and the teams are in regular contact to ensure their thinking is aligned.

Flexibility Products and Stackability

Alex Howard (Technical Working Group co-lead, UKPN) presented on what will be delivered by the working group by the end of 2024, including a new page on the ENA website offering information on service stacking including a stacking tool, a reduction from 12 to 9 standard flex product variants through a recommendation to retire 3 product variants, and an agreed set of design principles for improving future stacking. Feedback was sought on how to best communicate these outputs to stakeholders and for shaping 2025 priorities.

Feedback	Response
It was enquired whether the stacking tool will be user tested.	The tool has been made available for testing and sent to users who expressed interest in a previous focus group. The tool will also be shared with the Challenge Group following the session.
It was flagged that market platforms will have a role in communicating changes in stackability or product variants to service providers.	It is likely that products and stacking opportunities will continue to change. The networks aim to be transparent throughout and communicating with stakeholders is a high priority. Changes would not be made to any existing contracts. ON are working on an FSP-facing website that tells them what they need to know to participate in the DSO market, including which services can be stacked.
The group enquired what the long-term roadmap and end goal is for stacking, and whether anything changes with CP 2030.	Next steps are being identified and a discussion is ongoing with Elexon around which aspects of the work and how soon they will be able to pick up. This is a high priority so Elexon is expected to pick it up sooner rather than later. The official view on the impact of CP 2030 is still developing.
For under-delivery penalties could be based on projected network impact/cost.	Feedback noted and taken away for working group discussion.
Clarity was sought on thinking around payment when a service is delivering benefits to both NESO and DSO at the same time.	The working group are looking to settle on an overall principle this year, but more detailed discussions may be needed on what should be done in various more specific circumstances.
The importance of DSO-NESO coordination was flagged to keep down whole system costs.	This working group has been focused on the design of services and stacking and quick wins for stakeholders across 2024-2025. There is still a long way to go on general coordination, with more data than ever before being shared between NESO and DSOs that is an important enabler.
There may be a need for revisiting the business case for flex with some providers exiting the market due to low revenue.	Feedback noted.

Quick Working Group Updates

Reece Breen Begadon (ON Technical Advisor, ENA) shared quick updates from technical working groups not covered at the session. The Primacy group are working with Baringa on developing the next increment of rules and preliminary options for governing primacy with outcomes due to be published in Jan 2025. The CEM group have completed initial tool updates optimising functionalities, fixing minor bugs and updating the user guide. The Baselining group have kicked off work with TNEI to standardise baselining methodologies used across networks, a focus group is planned to understand stakeholder needs on 05 Dec. There is a tender ongoing for consultancy support on the dispatch API with work due to kick off in 2025.

AOB

No other business was raised.