

Meeting	Independent Stakeholder Group	
Date	14 May 2026	
Location	Online	
Attendees – Panel Members		
Sharon Darcy (SD) (Chair)	Tamar Bourne (TB)	
Claire Whyley (CWh) (Vice Chair)	Fayza Benlamkaden (FB) (Partial Attendee)	
Chris Watts (CW)	Andrew McMunnigall (AM) (Partial Attendee)	
Barbara Whiting (BW)	Keith Gardner (KG)	
Apologies		
Barry Coughlan (BC)		
Attendees – SSEN, Distribution		
Hollie Wilson (HW), Stakeholder Engagement Manager, SSEN Distribution	Chris Burchell (CB), Managing Director, SSEN Distribution	
Lyndsey Stainton (LS), Head of Stakeholder Engagement, SSEN Distribution	Jack Ambler (JA), Regulation Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Daniel Mellis (DM), Senior Connections Strategy Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Nigel Bessant (NB), Head of Network Operations, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Clothilde Cantegreil (CC), Head of Strategy, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Graeme Keddie (GK), Director of Corporate Affairs, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Georgina Spence (GS), Strategy Analyst, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Andrew Wainwright (AW), Whole Systems Senior Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Kevin Stewart (KS), Innovation Project Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	James Flanagan (JF) Director of Procurement, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Patrick Erwin (PE), Director of Commercial, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Monisha Gower (MG), Director of Large Capital Delivery (Partial Attendee)	
Hollie Escott (HE), Procurement and Commercial Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Kasia Brown (KB), Regulation Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Catherine Winning (CW), Head of Future Networks, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Andrew Roper (AR), Director of DSO, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Susannah Carter (SC), Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Harry Britton (HB), Strategic Development Engineer, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Lesley McClusky (LM), Customer Service Designer, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Ross Bibby (RB), Innovation Project Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Mark Askew (MA), Head of Connections Policy and Performance, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Andrew Scott (AS), Director of Customer Service, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Vanessa Head (VH), Connections Strategy Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Michael Downey (MD), Connections Stakeholder Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Gareth Miller (GM), Chair of the DSO Advisory Board (Partial Attendee)		

Minutes

Item No.	Agenda Item
1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions – Sharon Darcy</p> <p>The ISG reviewed progress against previous actions and noted the importance of ensuring updates are provided in a timely and transparent manner. Members emphasised that ISG challenge should be clearly reflected within workstream development and supporting materials, alongside the importance of articulating trade-offs and decision-making throughout the business plan. The introduction of subgroup sessions to support more detailed discussion was welcomed.</p>
2.	<p>10-Year Delivery Strategy: Supply Chain - James Flanagan and Hollie Escott</p> <p>SSEN presented its developing supply chain strategy, setting out its approach to strengthening resilience, deliverability and coordination over ED3. The ISG discussed the importance of demonstrating credible delivery, including providing visibility of future demand and strengthening long-term relationships with suppliers.</p> <p>Members emphasised the need to clearly articulate trade-offs between resilience, affordability and competition, and highlighted the importance of making innovation, efficiency and quality more explicit within the strategy. The need to clearly evidence impacts on customers, including potential bill implications, was also noted as key to supporting stakeholder and regulatory confidence.</p>
3.	<p>Stakeholder Engagement Update – Lyndsey Stainton, Charlie Thompson and Graeme Keddie</p> <p>SSEN provided an update on recent stakeholder engagement activity and how this continues to inform ED3 strategy development. Members noted the breadth of engagement underway, including deliberative research on fairness and customer priorities, and welcomed the continued use of a triangulated evidence approach.</p> <p>The ISG highlighted the importance of ensuring a clear link between stakeholder insight and decision-making, and of aligning engagement activities with wider regulatory and sector outputs where possible.</p> <p>Proposals to strengthen engagement with business customers were supported, with members emphasising the need for a proportionate approach that ensures diversity and representativeness. The role of independent assurance in demonstrating the “golden thread” from insight to decision-making was also discussed.</p>
4.	<p>ED3 Workstream 11: LV Strategy – Andrew Wainwright, Harry Britton and Lesley McClusky</p> <p>SSEN presented its developing LV Strategy, including its approach to identifying investment needs and managing uncertainty through a combination of modelling, flexibility and targeted intervention. The ISG discussed the importance of ensuring that prioritisation approaches reflect the needs of all customers, including those in vulnerable or underserved communities.</p> <p>The ISG highlighted the need for greater transparency in how investment decisions are made, alongside the importance of balancing short-term affordability with long-term deliverability and risk. The role of customer experience, including communication and minimising disruption, was</p>

	also emphasised, as well as the opportunity to better coordinate network interventions with wider local and infrastructure activity.
5.	<p>ED3 Workstream 2: DSO – Nigel Bessant and Georgina Spence</p> <p>SSEN outlined its emerging DSO strategy, including how stakeholder insight is shaping priorities and the role of flexibility within the system. The ISG emphasised the importance of clearly communicating the trade-offs between investment, flexibility and affordability, and noted that perceived fairness is as important as technical fairness for customers.</p> <p>Members discussed the need to further develop the benefits framework to better reflect impacts across customers, communities and the wider system, including vulnerability and environmental considerations. The importance of transparency in relation to system operation, including the management of constraints, was also highlighted.</p>
6.	<p>ED3 Workstream 3: Connections – Andrew Scott, Vanessa Head and Michael Downey</p> <p>SSEN provided an update on its Connections strategy, including how it is responding to ongoing regulatory developments. The ISG noted the strength of the underlying evidence base but highlighted the need for clearer and more measurable commitments, particularly in relation to customer outcomes.</p> <p>Members emphasised the importance of transparency and ongoing engagement, including maintaining a clear and up-to-date understanding of stakeholder needs. Given the evolving regulatory landscape, the ISG encouraged a flexible and adaptive approach to both strategy development and engagement activity.</p>
7.	<p>ED3 Strategy, Regulation, and Programme Update – Clothilde Cantegreil</p> <p>SSEN provided an update on the evolving regulatory context, including Ofgem’s developing approach to balancing investment and flexibility. The ISG discussed the challenges associated with regulatory uncertainty and the need to maintain credible, evidence-based plans while remaining adaptable to further guidance.</p> <p>Members highlighted the importance of clearly articulating key risks, trade-offs and delivery considerations, ensuring that the business plan remains transparent and robust in the context of ongoing regulatory development.</p>
8.	<p>Playback from Sub-group Sessions - All</p> <p>The ISG reflected on discussions across the subgroup sessions, noting a consistent need for greater clarity and depth across workstream materials. Members highlighted the importance of moving beyond high-level narratives to provide clearer evidence of how strategies will be delivered, measured and experienced by customers.</p> <p>The importance of fairness remained a central theme, particularly in ensuring that investment decisions and service improvements reflect the needs of all customers. The ISG also emphasised the need to clearly communicate trade-offs, including how decisions balance affordability with long-term value.</p> <p>Innovation was recognised as becoming more embedded across workstreams, with members encouraging a clearer articulation of the specific challenges innovation is intended to address and the outcomes it will deliver.</p>
9.	<p>A.O.B – All</p> <p>-The Chair summarised the key themes from the session, including the importance of clarity, transparency and consistency across workstreams. The ISG welcomed the continued</p>

	integration of stakeholder insight within strategy development and noted the importance of maintaining a clear narrative as the ED3 business plan progresses.
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