

Meeting	Independent Stakeholder Group	
Date	7 October 2025	
Location	Microsoft Teams	
Attendees – Panel Members		
Sharon Darcy (SD) (Chair)	Fayza Benlamkaden (FB) (Partial Attendee)	
Chris Watts (CW)	Tamar Bourne (TB)	
Andrew McMunnigall (AM)	Claire Whyley (CWh)	
Attendees – SSEN, Distribution		
Hollie Wilson (HW), Stakeholder Engagement Manager, SSEN Distribution	Emma Merritt (EM), Senior Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Lyndsey Stainton (LS), Head of Stakeholder Engagement, SSEN Distribution	Troy Fisher (TF), Senior Manager, 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)	
Sam Roberts (SR), ED3 Project Manager, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	Andrew Scott (AS), Director of Customer Service, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)	
Eliane Algaard (EA), Director of Services, SSEN Distribution (Partial Attendee)		
Apologies		
Barry Coughlan (BC)		

Minutes

Item No.	Agenda Item
1.	Welcome and Introductions – Sharon Darcy and Lyndsey Stainton Minutes from the September session were approved without amendment. The group discussed upcoming focus group research, with summary outputs expected in mid-November. Members reflected on younger audiences' limited awareness of energy issues, noting challenges in discussing climate change, net zero and affordability. It was agreed that cross-panel collaboration opportunities would be explored, particularly between the ISG, Inclusive Service Panel (ISP) and DSO Advisory Group.
2.	ED3 Strategy and Regulation Update – Clothilde Cantegreil Discussion centred around affordability, inclusivity, resilience and long-term value. Members emphasised the need to make affordability more visible across all ED3 themes.

	CC confirmed affordability would be reflected through a whole-system bill approach, linking it to broader economic and social benefits. The ISG recommended clearer reference to digital enablement, inclusivity, resilience, and reliability, drawing on consumer feedback from focus groups. The discussion also covered spatial and demographic change, with members encouraging consideration of population movement and low-carbon technology adoption in future modelling.
3.	ED3 Programme Update – Sam Roberts SR outlined the overall delivery approach and planning for the ED3 business plan, including the timeline for strategies, justification papers, and draft submission milestones. The ISG discussed the SSMC review and sign-off process, including visibility of key messages through the cover letter. CC and LS highlighted the importance of senior leadership engagement, confirming that Managing Directors and senior sponsors will join relevant deep dives.
4.	ED3 Workstream 4: Customer and Vulnerability (Part 1) – Troy Fisher and Emma Merritt TF and EM introduced Customer Service and Vulnerability as core “golden threads” of the ED3 business plan. The team outlined a strengthened focus on rural engagement, collaboration with Citizens Advice, and community partnerships, including 540 Warm Water Hubs across the network. Members discussed engagement with local authorities, NHS, and community energy groups, recommending tailored local approaches to support vulnerable consumers and avoid duplication. The group discussed shared learnings from Storm Erwyn and improved resilience coordination across DNOs, local authorities, and emergency services. ISG members emphasised the value of cross-sector collaboration and innovation links, particularly with the water sector.
5.	ED3 Workstream 4: Customer and Vulnerability (Part 2) – Troy Fisher and Emma Merritt Discussion continued on developing a Customer Service and Vulnerability Strategy that is adaptable and future focused. EM and TF highlighted the need to support customers’ storm resilience and just transition to net zero, while reviewing ongoing programmes such as the Powering Communities Fund. The ISG discussed AI use, with SD raising potential risks of misinformation. TF confirmed SSEN is managing this through responsible use of Co-Pilot and staff training. The team presented a SWOT analysis, identifying strong service design and partnerships but noting challenges around digital exclusion, data sharing, and partner funding pressures. Members encouraged the use of deliberative and immersive research methods, localised data integration, and a universal set of customer personas across all workstreams.

6.	AOB, Reflections and look forward - All The ISG discussed refining the Challenge Log, focusing on a smaller number of strategic challenges with clearer ownership and progress tracking. Members supported a structured process for assessing and escalating challenges before inclusion in final reports.
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