



## Senedd Cross Party Group on Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

12.15 – 13.15 on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 – Pierhead Building Seminar Rooms

### Minutes

#### Members of the Senedd

Delyth Jewell MS

John Griffiths MS

Janet Finch-Saunders MS

Edward Evans (on behalf of Samuel Kurtz MS)

Angharad Davies (on behalf of Rhys ab Owen MS)

#### Attendees

Abbey Smith	Christine Boston	Maxine Tarrant
Abigail Beck	Daniel Taylor	Mike Thomas
Aled Rowlands	David Jones	Nel Richards
Alex Atkinson	Ffion Davies	Rhyann Milne
Alexander Magee	James Leung	Sam Tickle
Andrew Donald	Jasmine Sharp	Sarah Jones
Andy Billcliff	Jena Quilter	Simon Morgan
Angharad Davies	Jennifer Pride	Tanya Davies
Ben Hitchings	Jeremy Smith	Victoria Plageman
Ben Lewis-Hayes	Lewis Smith	Zuzanna Komosinska
Cathy Owens	Marine Furet	
Chris Botwood	Math Williams	

#### Agenda item 1: Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed attendees and introduced the session.

#### Agenda item 2: AGM

Delyth Jewell MS was re-elected as Chair.

Jane Dodds MS and John Griffiths MS were re-elected as Vice Chairs.

Cadno Communications was re-elected as Secretariat.

The Annual Report and Financial Statement will be published on the Senedd website within six weeks of the AGM.



### Agenda item 3: Abi Beck, RenewableUK Cymru

Abi Beck, Head of Strategic Communications at RenewableUK Cymru, delivered information about the Welsh renewable energy context. She explained the huge projected increase in demand for more power and explained the need for a mix of renewable energy technologies underpinned by a modern, fit-for-purpose Welsh grid to meet this. Abi highlighted that in the last ten years, only 2% of Contracts for Difference (CfD) funding has been awarded to Welsh projects. She identified grid as one of the major blockers. Abi highlighted the significant potential of renewable energy in Wales, with a strong pipeline of projects and significant economic prize at stake.

### Agenda item 4: NESO

Aled Rowlands, Head of Strategic Energy Planning Engagement and Wales at NESO, delivered an overview of NESO's ongoing work in Wales and across Great Britain. He explained that the connections reform process is ongoing and therefore there would not be new information on the subject during this session. Aled explained that the proportion of people who struggle to pay for energy bills is higher in Wales than anywhere else in the UK. He described NESO's core functions to coordinate electricity networks, conduct strategic planning, and act as an independent advisor to government and Ofgem. He explained the demand increase for energy and electricity in Wales.

Sam Tickle, RESP Manager at NESO, shared details of a new NESO consultation regarding its transitional Regional Energy Strategic Plan (tRESP), ahead of the final tRESP publication due in January 2026. Sam explained that the consultation sets out the nations and regions context, pathways in terms of technologies and drivers of demand, and strategic investment needs. The consultation is open for six weeks until 3 November 2025.

Aled Rowlands highlighted the ongoing work relating to NESO's Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP), co-commissioned by the UK, Welsh and Scottish governments and working closely with statutory organisations in Wales including Natural Resources Wales and Cadw, as well as industry stakeholders. Aled explained that connections reform will be critical to how the grid is developed.

Responding to the contribution from NESO, Abi Beck praised NESO for its strategic planning function, indicating its utility in providing a comprehensive, strategic investment case for the first time. She highlighted the ongoing work with the Welsh Government to establish a renewable energy sector deal and urged for cross party support.

### Agenda item 5: Q&A

Delyth Jewell invited questions from attendees and chaired the subsequent Q&A.

*Q1: Can you tell us when the Connections Reform announcement will be?*

Aled explained that work is ongoing and there is currently no date scheduled for announcement.

*Q2: What are the challenges regarding the different views from people and political parties in relation to how we think about energy infrastructure?*

Abi shared the challenges in trying to secure a sector deal near the upcoming election. She emphasised the importance of delivery and accountability for any party in government. Aled explained NESO's responsibility to respond to what society and democracy is asking.

*Q3: How will NESO deal with challenges to the outcomes of the Connections Reform process?*



Aled recognised that Connections Reform will be very significant and challenging. It will be prioritising and deprioritising projects to help delivery, which overall is necessary and helpful, but NESO understands that this will be difficult for some customers.

*Q4: What is the timeline for delivery of the Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP)?*

Aled confirmed the SSEP is set to be delivered by the end of 2026, with the outcome of the related networks plan due in 2027.

### Agenda item 5: Close

The Chair offered closing remarks.