



**CUMBRIA
LOCAL
ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP**

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Ofgem Consultation Team
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Canary Wharf
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Via Email

10 February 2022

Dear Consultation Team,

**CALL FOR INPUT - CONSULTATION ON ENERGY COMPANIES'
BUSINESS PLANS – ENW**

Thank you for inviting views from stakeholders on DNO's Business Plans.

I am a member of the Electricity North West (ENW) CEO Panel and also work directly with ENW on a range of connectivity issues and as such would like to provide a contribution to your consultation.

In terms of the key themes, I would offer the following contribution:

Involvement and Support

In my role as Chief Executive of Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (CLEP), I have been invited to contribute to a number of consultation exercises on the content of the Business Plan, which have been both on-line and in person. The CEO Panel, Chaired by the ENW Chief Executive, has also been involved in the development of ENW's plan and has had the opportunity to help shape it. The focus of the plan and the commitments within it are fully supported, particularly the issues of resilience and reliability, which are particularly important for a geography such as Cumbria. Clearly, as net



zero is one of our three organisational strategic touchstones, CLEP fully endorses this commitment in the plan.

CLEP is an organisation focused on the economy and businesses and as such is focused on business issues, but is fully supportive of the commitment to support vulnerable customers.

Decarbonisation, Net Zero and Support for Local Targets

CLEP has worked directly with ENW to progress our plans to support clean energy generation in Cumbria, including how to facilitate ground breaking technologies such as nuclear fusion and the connectivity required to deliver Cumbria's application for siting of the Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP), should this be successful. The development of a STEP fusion power plant would make a significant contribution to Net Zero, locally, nationally and globally. More broadly, CLEP has had regular and detailed conversations on the implications for the grid of progressing clean energy generation opportunities, including Round 4 offshore wind, Small Modular Reactors and a large scale fission plant. CLEP has also worked with ENW to create a proposal to deliver ECV charging points in underserved rural geographies.

I have also Chaired a number of ENW's "Powering Up" sessions, which have been developed to secure the buy-in of a wide range of stakeholders to ENW's decarbonisation plans, recognising the individual 'commitments' of the different geographies that make up the ENW operating area. This has been an issue that has also been actively explored and discussed at the CEO Panel.

Need for Resilience

In recent years Cumbria has been affected by some of the most severe weather events, which means that ensuring the resilience of the network is critical. The Director of ENW recently attended a meeting with a range of Cumbria's businesses to review and reflect on the impact and handling of Storm Arwen. A clear and strong message from businesses and wider partners was that the resilience of the network was really important and that we needed to look beyond 'like for like' replacements. However, in order to do this it would seem that the costs are prohibitive. Therefore, in considering business plans it would be helpful if funding could reflect the specific challenges of certain geographies to avoid constant repairs and reduced effectiveness of the network.



There was also concern that far greater resilience will be required in the future given the increased reliance on electric vehicles, Wi-Fi and mobile phones. Therefore, investment in more resilient infrastructure, other than overhead lines, is essential to protect the functionality of the economy and society. In geographies such as Cumbria back-up plans (generators etc.) are also required as Storm Arwen resulted in some areas being without power for over a week. Investment in enhanced infrastructure is therefore essential.

Collaboration with Trusted Networks

CLEP very much welcomes ENW's partnership approach and commitment to collaborative working and fully recognises the value of this and would strongly advocate for this approach. Working together helps us to agree collective solutions to key issues.

I hope that this response is helpful and should you wish to discuss further please do get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jo Lappin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Jo Lappin
Chief Executive, Cumbria LEP