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05 March 2018

Dear Fintan,

Re: Consultation on the Electricity System Operator forward plan 2018-19

On behalf of Electricity North West Limited, we appreciate the opportunity to engage with you and the team through the consultation event held last month and the chance to review the detail provided in the consultation documents.

We recognise the work being undertaken by National Grid to separate out its System Operation activities and believe this will increase the understanding of parties throughout the sector as to the specific challenges faced by the System Operator, as distinct from some of the wider activities within the National Grid group. The workplan you and the team have developed is clear and accessible by a wide range of interested parties, with the delivery schedule and technical annexe providing more detail to those who require it. Providing named leads for the areas of work within the Delivery Schedule, in particular, is a sensible and useful step.

As fellow members of the ENA Open Networks project, the proposed work to increase our respective understanding of the challenges that we each face at the transmission : distribution interface and developing constructive solutions to ensure we can all deliver for our customers is an area of mutual focus for the next year as set out in your plans under Principles 5, 6 and 7. We look forward to continuing our work in this area. A better understanding of the challenges that you face operating the transmission system will enable us to continue to develop solutions that deliver whole system benefits.

We will also continue to develop our CLASS offering this year. We are keen to ensure that this innovative solution starts to deliver value for both organisations and our respective customers within 2018-19 and appreciate that some of your proposed work under Principles 1, 2 and 3 that will support this.

We recognise the challenges around charging that continue to face the sector as set out in Principle 4. Whilst not a simple issue that can be resolved quickly, we look forward to making progress of some of the underlying challenges through the Forward Looking Charges Task Force this year with yourselves and other industry players.

We recognise that 2018-19 will be a year of significant change for National Grid as you fully separate out your System Operator function. As we continue our transition to being a Distribution System Operator, we look forward to working more closely together to ensure that appropriate solutions are delivered by the most appropriate party to meet the needs of our customers and stakeholders in an efficient and effective manner. Please do not hesitate to contact me on any of the above points or if there are further areas that it would be useful for us to address together.

Yours sincerely

pp Steve Cox
Engineering and Technical Director