

Energy Innovation Board: Terms of Reference

Remit

Context

Energy innovation has a critical role to play in our energy security, in the transformation to a low carbon energy system, supporting economic growth and our international development goals. Energy innovation is a central component of the Government's energy strategy in making sure consumers have secure, affordable and clean energy now and in the future, and in supporting our industrial strategy.

Government support for energy innovation is provided by multiple public bodies. To make the best use of the total resources available there needs to be a new coordinated approach aimed at meeting the Government's business, energy, climate change and overseas development objectives. This greater coherence will in turn encourage the private sector to invest and engage in innovation.

The Board

The Energy Innovation Board brings together director-level and senior responsible owners from UK central Government Departments, non-departmental public bodies and non-ministerial departments ('public bodies') with major energy innovation budgets or related policy remits. In addition, up to three independent members will be invited to join the Board to bring external commercial, technical and international expertise.

- *The key purpose of the Board is to ensure that all of the UK Government's energy innovation activity supports the Government's domestic and international policy priorities, provides value for money and helps to leverage private sector investment, resulting in the accelerated commercialisation of new energy technologies and systems.*

The Board's focus is UK-wide and applies across the whole energy system, including all fuels, technologies and energy demand.

The success of the Board will be measured by:

- the impact of the Board's discussions and advice on individual public body decisions;
- through knowledge-sharing; and
- in the external feedback of whether a consensus between the public and private sectors is developing towards an agreed single plan for energy innovation activity on a whole systems basis.

Recognising the independent decision-making structures of public bodies, the Board does not have authority to direct decisions on the use of individual funds or policies. The Board provides advice and challenge to inform individual public body decisions.

Membership

- Government Chief Scientific Adviser (GCSA) - Chair
- BEIS Energy Innovation Team
- BEIS Energy CSA

- DfID
- DfT
- BEIS Science and Research Team
- Research Councils
- Innovate UK
- Ofgem
- DCLG
- DEFRA
- Independent members (up to 3)
- HMT (Observer status)

The Devolved Administrations will also be invited to attend Board meetings on a regular basis, and other organisations may be invited to attend for specific topics.

Board's high-level role and reporting arrangements

The Board provides guidance and advice to public bodies and to Ministers.

The Board takes decisions on its engagement with external organisations that may act in an advisory capacity to provide advice and challenge. BEIS Energy Innovation team will meet the costs incurred by an external organisation where they undertake additional activities.

The Board sets the job descriptions and contract length for the recruitment of up to three independent board members. The Chair will decide where particular items will need to be limited to discussion by public bodies only. BEIS Energy Innovation team will fund the travel and subsistence expenses incurred in carrying out the roles.

The Chair may escalate issues to Department Senior Officials or Ministers where:

- (a) the Board's Terms of Reference do not empower it to take a decision or to act; and/or
- (b) the Chair and members of the Board agree that escalation is appropriate.

Individual public bodies will decide how best the work of the Board should fit within their existing governance structures.

Reserved matters

The Board has responsibility on the matters listed below. The Board will take advice from policy leads, and from external organisations, as appropriate. The Board may in turn commission advice from external organisations or policy leads (in agreement with the lead department as appropriate).

Board's Core Tasks:

- Advises on the direction of energy innovation activities and supports and advises public bodies across the energy innovation landscape:
 - Provides strategic oversight and coordination of energy innovation activity;
 - Carries out deep-dives on specific themes across all the Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) to review and challenge individual programmes and to identify gaps and overlaps;
 - Commissions specific activities to support the coordination of energy innovation activity, including on lessons learned, cross-cutting themes, and supporting evidence;

- Horizon-scans regularly for opportunities and risks that may have a bearing on maximising the impact of Government innovation funding. This will focus on influencing upcoming funding decisions;
- Ensures that whole systems considerations are included in public bodies' programmes.
- Reviews funding initiatives and activities as appropriate.

Communications

- Provides advice to Departments and Ministers on the work of the Board and its decisions/views;
- Ensures the development and implementation of a communications approach to reach both internal and external audiences covering the formation, focus and future activities of the Board, to support transparency and consensus building.

Wider governance arrangements and Board reporting

- Reports to Ministers to ensure they have sight of the work of the Board and that energy innovation activity is aligned with the Government's priorities
- Establishes an external advisory mechanism to support the work of the Board.
- Regularly reviews the value of the advisory inputs and challenge.
- Keeps the Board's composition under review, including the role of independent members ensuring the Board is effective and efficient.

Communications

The formation of the Board, its membership and remit will be announced on the Government website.

A summary note of the main discussion points will be published.

The Secretariat will be responsible for coordinating communications activity.

Attendance

Board members are expected to prioritise attendance at meetings wherever possible. A minimum of five members are required to be present at meetings. Nominated and agreed deputies are permitted. The meeting may be chaired by a BEIS Energy Innovation Director or BEIS Energy CSA in the absence of the GCSA.

In cases where a member or a deputy is unable to attend they are encouraged to provide views on papers in advance of the meeting to the Secretariat particularly where a decision is requested.

Frequency, timings and location of meetings

The Board will meet quarterly, although the Chair reserves the right to call additional meetings where necessary. Items may also be shared and agreed in correspondence where these need to be addressed ahead of the next Board.

Agendas

The Chair, with advice and support from the Secretariat, provides oversight of and direction for the Board's business. The forward look of agenda items and commissioning papers is led by the Secretariat.

Papers

Papers for Board meetings are usually commissioned at least two weeks in advance of a meeting.

Each paper will have a lead owner (usually the relevant Director). The owner briefly introduces the item at the meeting summarising the objective and key issues for discussion. Members hold each other to account on quality and timeliness of papers.

The Secretariat will ensure that Board papers are of the required quality and are issued at least three days prior to a meeting. Papers for the Board should include a summary of the issues and recommendation (including next steps); questions for the Board; and supporting background and arguments.

Minutes

The Secretariat will ensure high quality; accurate minutes are taken to record Board meeting proceedings and decisions, and will prepare draft minutes within 3 days of each meeting. Comments or amendments to minutes should be sent to the Secretariat. Minutes will be cleared with paper owners and endorsed by the Board at its next meeting.

Actions

The Secretariat will report progress on actions and raise any outstanding actions at the beginning of each meeting.

Secretariat

The BEIS Energy Innovation team will provide the Secretariat. The Secretariat will provide active and managed support to the Board, the Chair and its members, to enable the Board to conduct its business focussing on the right issues at the right time.

The Secretariat will liaise with Board members on suitable meeting arrangements and any other matter related to the Board. Apologies for absence should be notified to the Secretariat at the earliest opportunity. The Secretariat will inform the Chair of the views of any absent Board members submitted in advance.

The Secretariat provides quality control for papers and completion of actions. The Secretariat will review all papers before submission to a Board and can request improvements in quality, content and presentation if deemed necessary to enable Board members to have valuable and effective discussions.

The Secretariat will maintain a register of interests which all independent members are asked to update. This register will inform the Secretariat of any conflicts of interest that they need to take into account when commissioning or circulating papers for the Board, or in the Board's discussions.

Evaluation

The Board will perform reviews of its effectiveness on at least a yearly basis. It commits to acting on the findings.