



SONI Forward Work Plan 2024-25

Appendix 2
Independent Expert

Northern Ireland
September 2024



SONI Deliverables 2024-25

Role 2 Independent Expert

The SONI Forward Work Plan provides details on the various projects and programmes of work that will be undertaken over the period from October 2024 to September 2025. This appendix document provides further detail on those deliverables associated with 'Role 2 - Independent Expert' and should be read in conjunction with the main document.



Economy Minister, Conor Murphy MLA, visits Castlereagh House, April 2024

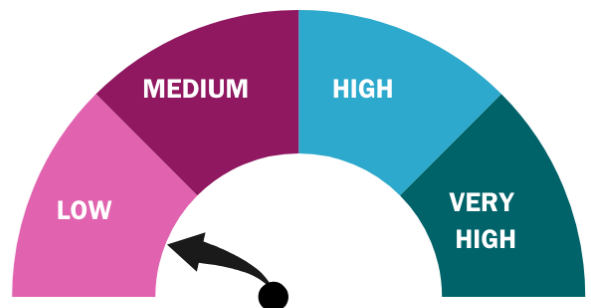
Cost Scale

SONI have created a Cost Scale in order to assist the audience in understanding the scale and/or importance of a project, and detailed where on this scale each project lies. The costs indicated are SONI related costs and do not cover any costs accrued by any stakeholder SONI may be collaborating with on said project.

This scale applied is detailed in the table below, the gauge icon will be used in the detailed project information for each deliverable.

LOW	£0-£500K
MEDIUM	£500K-£1M
HIGH	£1M-£5M
VERY HIGH	£5M+

Cost Scale Table



Cost Scale Gauge

Project Overview

The table below provides a holistic view of the projects being undertaken across Role 2 - Independent Expert. Additional detail is provided around these deliverables throughout this document.



Role 2 Projects

Project	Milestone	Timescale	Performance Measure	Project Carried forward
FWP25-02: SONI Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter rollout	1. Development of evidence-based Community Benefit proposal for Utility Regulator.	October 2024	Stakeholder feedback recorded and actioned.	No
	2. Development of new Community Forum model for future network projects with independent partner	June 2025		
	3. Programme of strategic engagement on new Public Engagement Model	September 2025		
	4. Programme of strategic engagement in new Landowner Charter	September 2025		
	5. Partnership with Rural support to develop Landowner Engagement Pack and outreach project	March 2025		
	6. Development and implementation of new Landowner compensation model	September 2025		
FWP25-03: SONI Price Control Engagement Programme	Delivery of extensive stakeholder engagement programme to support the development of the SONI Business Plan submission.	Ongoing October 2024 – September 2025	SONI Engagement Evaluation Framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-engagement satisfaction surveys • Delivery metrics • Social media metrics • Case studies • Testimonials • Feedback from Challenge and Advisory Group 	No

FWP23-08 TSO-DSO Future Operating Model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update model proposals following lessons learned from the Flex trial and Control Centre of the Future (CCOTF) Implementation Plan. 2. Update documents for operating model following Flex trial lessons learned 	<p>October 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p>	Development of a high-level enduring operating model implementation plan	Yes
FWP25-11 Future Energy System Shared Paper (FPS)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree modelling approach and carry out Power System Studies 2. Prepare Shared Future Energy paper 	<p>March 2025</p> <p>June 2025</p>	Preparation of the Shared Future Energy Paper	No
FWP25-12: Dispatch Down Action Plan (FPS)	Publish a Dispatch Down Action Plan	December 2024	Publication of the Action plan	No
FWP23-14 Support the NI Energy Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to support DfE via Annual action plan and established working groups 2. Review DfE Action plan for 2025 and identify areas where SONI can support 3. Support next stages of DfEs Smart Systems Flexibility Plan 	<p>Ongoing throughout the year.</p> <p>Early 2025</p> <p>Ongoing throughout the year.</p>	This programme of work will be monitored throughout the period.	Yes
FWP24-05 SONI Price Control (SRP26)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business plan submission to UR 2. Supporting query process after Business plan submission to UR 	<p>March 2025</p> <p>July 2025</p>	Business Plan submission to UR	Yes
FWP24-05: Tomorrows Energy Scenarios Northern Ireland (TESNI)	Publication of final TES System Needs Assessment (SNA) 2023 Report	November 2024 (subject to finalisation of TES 2023 Scenarios)	Publication of final TES SNA 2023 Report	Yes



Detailed Programme of Deliverables



Role 2

SONI Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter rollout

FWP25-01: SONI Communications and Engagement Strategy

Description of Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of evidence-based Community Benefit proposal for Utility Regulator 2. Development of new Community Forum model for future network projects with independent partner 3. Programme of strategic engagement on new Public Engagement Model 4. Programme of strategic engagement on new Landowner Charter 5. Partnership with Rural Support to develop Landowner Engagement Pack and outreach project. 6. Development and implementation of new Landowner compensation model.
Key Benefits	<p>The project will entail the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Increased awareness and understanding of SONI’s role: SONI consider that this engagement model will help raise awareness about the vital role that we play in maintaining and developing the electricity grid in Northern Ireland. SONI believe that by educating and informing the public and landowners about the importance of a reliable transmission system and the role it plays in integrating renewable energy, we can enhance public understanding and trust in our operations. ❑ Increased levels of engagement and stakeholder satisfaction: The engagement model will allow for more structured and meaningful interaction with stakeholders, including community groups, local authorities and landowners. SONI believe that by creating multiple channels for dialogue that we can better understand their concerns and expectations, fostering mutual respect and collaboration. SONI also believe that ongoing engagement will provide valuable feedback from stakeholders which will ensure continuous improvement in how we manage landowner relations and public communications.





	<p>❑ Improve public and landowner acceptance of network infrastructure: SONI believe having an established Landowner charter and a strong engagement framework that there is a reduced risk of conflict or legal disputes that can delay projects. Similarly by actively listening to and addressing concerns about infrastructure development, we can help improve acceptance of necessary network upgrades.</p>
<p>UR Strategic/ Service Priorities</p>	<p>A culture of effective engagement and collaboration A culture of organisational learning, accountability and planning that supports SONI agility and responsiveness in meeting policy, regulatory and market development.</p> <p>SONI’s project is designed to enhance stakeholder engagement by fostering more frequent and structured communication. By providing increased opportunities for involvement. SONI are aiming to create a sense of ownership among stakeholders, encouraging their active participation in decision-making processes. This collaborative approach not only strengthens relationships but will also lead to more positive outcomes, as satisfied stakeholders are more likely to participate constructively in future engagements.</p> <p>To achieve this, we will conduct more organised and targeted engagements sessions with local authorities, community groups, and landowners. This structured approach allows for more focused discussions on specific concerns and needs, enhancing the effectiveness of collaboration. By prioritising stakeholder input, SONI are demonstrating its commitment to accountability and transparency ensuring that stakeholder concerns are addressed. By actively seeking feedback and learning from stakeholder engagement, we can remain proactive and prepared for future developments, while maintaining strong relationships with the public and key stakeholders.</p>
<p>Engagement</p>	<p>Engagement with key stakeholders to raise awareness of new models and delivery of supporting information materials.</p>
<p>Performance Measure</p>	<p>The performance measures will include a variety of metrics from SONI’s Engagement Evaluation Framework, which includes digital engagement and stakeholder satisfaction.</p>

Timescale	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. October 2024 2. June 2025 3. September 2025 4. September 202 5. March 2025 6. September 2025
Cost Scale	
SONI Outcome	 <p>Stakeholder Satisfaction</p>

TSO-DSO Future Operating Model

FWP23-23: SONI TSO – DSO Operating Model

<p>Description of Activities</p>	<p>Implementation plan for TSO/DSO operating model.</p> <p>The aim of the project is to ensure that SONI and NIE Networks are working together in a collaborative and effective manner to jointly address electricity system and customer needs, and to deliver whole-of-system solutions to deliver on the Government’s policy ambitions. SONI and NIE Networks are working together and have developed a TSO-DSO joint programme of work. Development of the enduring TSO-DSO Operating Model is a key focus.</p> <p>The key deliverable over the 2024/2025 period will be to agree an implementation plan for TSO-DSO Future Operating Model for Northern Ireland. As part of that plan, activities over 2024/2025 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Develop documents to summarise the model proposals and outline protocols in more detail. ❑ Develop a document to summarise the Flex trial intentions and communicate with participants. ❑ Update model proposals following lessons learned from the Flex trial and Control Centre of the Future (CCOTF) Implementation Plan.
<p>Key Benefits</p>	<p>The key benefits associated with this deliverable are detailed below:</p> <p>Initial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Establishment of a minimum viable operating model: This will facilitate the deployment of NIE Networks Flex product by winter 2025, this is crucial for managing peak demand periods. ❑ Clear coordination and roles: This ensures effective coordination, information sharing and defined operational roles. <p>Enduring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Enhanced consumer participation: This will provide consumers with more opportunities to engage in local and systemwide markets, fostering greater market competition. ❑ Increased system efficiency and security: This will maximise distribution system flexibility, boost efficiency and ensure system security. ❑ Innovative Operation with renewables: This will enable SONI and NIE Networks to manage systems with high levels of variable renewable generation and low carbon technology, optimising both local and system-wide markets.

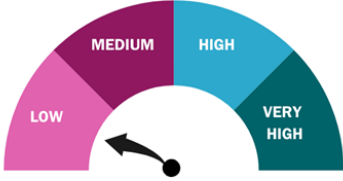



<p>UR Strategic/ Service Priorities</p>	<p>A culture of effective engagement and collaboration</p> <p>Whole system collaboration and coordination with 3rd parties, and NIE Networks across its various roles as a TO, DNO and DSO</p> <p>Successful implementation of a TSO/DSO operating model requires effective engagement and collaboration among all stakeholders. SONI believe that by promoting open communication, building trust and encouraging shared decision-making that we can create an environment where the TO, DNO and DSO all work together effectively to address the challenges and opportunities within the electricity sector. This collaborative approach will ensure that the needs of both the electricity system and customers are met and the whole system solutions can be delivered to support the government policy ambitions. In order to develop and agree a TSO/DSO operating model vision and principles, SONI will be working in partnership with NIE Networks in order to bring about a positive change.</p>
<p>Engagement</p>	<p>SONI is engaging with NIE Networks and together have developed a joint TSO – DSO programme of works, including a number of in-depth workshops, and over the period will be developing and agreeing the TSO – DSO operating model vision and principles.</p>
<p>Performance Measure</p>	<p>Our performance will be measured against the achievement of a high-level enduring operating model implementation plan, developing the required documents, implementing the operational changes and data exchanges processes. A further measure is enabling a minimum viable operating model to enable the introduction of the NIEN flex product for use in winter 2025 to manage peak demand periods..</p>
<p>Timescale</p>	<p>1. Update operating model proposal following lessons learned from Flex trial - October 2024 (dependent on the conclusion of NIE Networks’ Flex trial)</p> <p>2. Update documents for operating model following Flex trial lessons learned - December 2024.</p>
<p>Cost Scale</p>	
<p>SONI Outcome</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Decarbonisation</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>System Wide Costs</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Stakeholder Satisfaction</p> </div> </div>

Future Energy System Shared Paper (FPS)

FWP25-11: Future Energy System Shared Paper (FPS)

Description of Activities	<p>The Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 sets a rapid pace for decarbonisation in Northern Ireland, creating a significant need for SONI to enhance the modelling and analytical support that we provide to policymakers, regulators, industry and academic partners. This has led to the establishment of specialised future energy modelling studies focused specifically on Northern Ireland’s energy system in the context of delivering a net-zero power system. The formation of the Future Energy Modelling Group (FEMG) by industry (DfE, UR and SONI) drives this need, aiming to coordinate and critically assess the development of energy scenarios across the respective organisations.</p> <p>The FEMG will oversee the development of best practices for energy modelling, with the objective of providing guidance and direction to support a proactive approach in delivering strategic models that inform decision related to the Northern Ireland Energy Strategy and Climate Action Plan. Over the next six months, the FEMG will produce a collaborative paper assessing the impacts of electricity modelling up to 2030 to guide policymakers. The Modelling Steering Group will then evaluate the future phases of the modelling group to explore energy models beyond the electricity system and the 2030 timeline. The FEMG will actively seek input and collaboration from industry stakeholders and government departments. As part of the FEMG it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Ensure quality assurance checks are in place to align each organisation’s modelling with government policies and plans.❑ Facilitate collaboration to enhance the accuracy of modelling across all three organisations.❑ Communicate and review future modelling plans effectively before implementation.❑ Ensure modelling frameworks meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Energy Strategy and Climate Action Plan. <p>It is important to note that the work required to achieve these tasks falls outside of SONI’s current modelling scope. Going forward, this work will need to be repeated annually, particularly as further plans are developed to transition the energy system to net-zero.</p>
----------------------------------	---

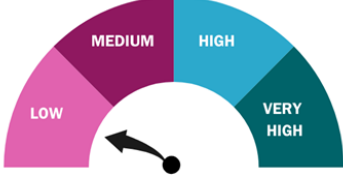

<p>Key Benefits</p>	<p>Key benefits for this deliverable are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced collaboration. The shared paper will foster stronger partnerships among key stakeholders. This approach will ensure a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the electricity sector. • Greater Transparency – SONI hope that by being more transparent it will make the decision-making process more open and accessible, ultimately building trust among stakeholders. • Improved information sharing – SONI believe encouraging the exchange of data and best practices among industry will allow for more robust analysis, ensure that industry expertise is used and avoid any duplication of work. Ultimately this will produce more accurate and reliable models. • Informed Policy Decision – SONI believe this paper will serve as a foundation for policy decisions for relevant organisations, providing policymakers with a well-supported basis for their choices. The incorporation of best practices will ensure that policy recommendations are based on thorough evidence-based analysis. • Identification of “No Regret” Options: The paper aims to identify “no regret” options for the future energy system, options that offer benefits regardless of future uncertainties or scenarios. This ultimately minimises risks and will ensure that the actions taken are beneficial in multiple contexts, aligning with long-term decarbonisation goals.
<p>UR Strategic/ Service Priorities</p>	<p>A culture of effective engagement and collaboration.</p> <p>A culture of open and collaborative innovation.</p> <p>A culture of organisational learning, accountability and planning that support SONI agility and responsiveness in meeting policy, regulatory and market development.</p> <p>Whole system collaboration and coordination with 3rd parties</p> <p>SONI consider that we are encouraging strong partnerships with this project. The development of the Future Energy System Shared Paper promotes collaboration among key stakeholders, leading to a more comprehensive understanding on the electricity sector. This paper will also provide a foundation for policy decision, ensuring that recommendations are based on evidence-based analysis.</p>
	<p>As part of its Terms of Reference, the FEMG is required to engage, as appropriate, with relevant organisations throughout each phase of it’s work. This includes, but is not limited to:</p>

	<p>This includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> DAERA <input type="checkbox"/> Gas TSOs <input type="checkbox"/> NIE Networks <p>The FEMG may also identify and nominate additional stakeholders to participate in its activities as needed.</p>
Performance Measure	Publication of the Shared Future Energy Paper
Timescale	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree modelling approach & carry out Power System Studies – March 2025 2. Publish Shared Future Energy Paper–June 2025
Cost Scale	
SONI Outcome	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Decarbonisation</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>System Wide Costs</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Stakeholder Satisfaction</p> </div> </div>

Dispatch Down Action Plan

FWP25-12: Dispatch Down Action Plan

<p>Description of Activities</p>	<p>Northern Ireland Dispatch Down costs have increased significantly in recent years. SONI have been challenged by various stakeholders to explain how this issue will be addressed.</p> <p>To address these concerns, we have formed a project team to develop a comprehensive action plan outlining the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Identify possible causes of increase in dispatch down costs ❑ Propose a range of credible options to manage operations constraints in an interim and long-term basis. ❑ Collaboratively engage with industry, government and Regulatory Authorities ❑ Conduct studies, where appropriate to assess high-level options to advance. ❑ Develop an action plan that may include additional steps required beyond the phase to work to ensure the plan’s successful implementation.
<p>Key Benefits</p>	<p>Key benefits of developing the Dispatch Down Action Plan will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Industry recommendations: SONI believe this plan will offer clear recommendations to industry, government and Regulatory Authorities to address Dispatch Down challenges. ❑ Interim solutions: SONI will assess a range of credible interim solutions (to be implemented within 1-6 months) and review the existing network and processes to identify how to reduce Dispatch Down costs. ❑ Long-term solutions: SONI will assess potential long-term infrastructure or market changes and consolidate ongoing and planned efforts across the business to reduce Dispatch Down costs. ❑ Structured multi-year plan: SONI will deliver a comprehensive multi-year action plan with well-defined deliverables and timelines for feasible solutions. <p>This process will provide clarity on actions that can be taken forward or excluded to address the Dispatch Down Challenges observed within the Northern Ireland Power</p>

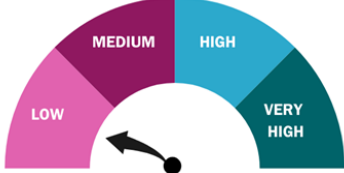



<p>UR Strategic/Service Priorities</p>	<p>A culture of effective engagement and collaboration. A culture of open and collaborative innovation. A culture of organisational learning, accountability and planning that support SONI agility and responsiveness in meeting policy, regulatory and market development.</p> <p>The Dispatch Down action plan is designed to foster a collaborative and inclusive environment. By actively engaging stakeholders and promoting open communication, this plan will ensure that diverse perspectives are considered and valued. The plan encourages a collaborative environment where stakeholders work together to address the root causes of increased dispatch down. This will ensure that SONI successfully implements strategies aimed at reducing Dispatch Down costs and enhancing the efficiency of the Northern Ireland power system.</p>
<p>Engagement</p>	<p>Engagement at an early stage is important to ensure this issue is addressed promptly and efficiently. Engagement will include but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Department for the Economy <input type="checkbox"/> Utility Regulator <input type="checkbox"/> Renewables NI <input type="checkbox"/> National Grid ESO <input type="checkbox"/> Industry Stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> Interconnector Owners <input type="checkbox"/> EirGrid <input type="checkbox"/> NIE Networks
<p>Performance Measure</p>	<p>Delivery of the Dispatch Down Action Plan</p>
<p>Timescale</p>	<p>December 2024 .</p>
<p>Cost Scale</p>	
<p>SONI Outcome</p>	 <p>System Wide Costs Stakeholder Satisfaction</p>

Support the NI Energy Strategy

FWP23-14 Support the NI Energy Strategy

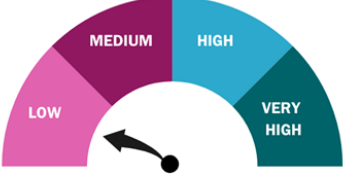




<p>Description of Activities</p>	<p>SONI are actively engaged with the Department for the Economy (DfE) and other key industry stakeholders to support the delivery of the 2024 and 2025 Energy Strategy Action Plans. This includes participation in various working groups and regular interactions with departments leads and teams. SONI's engagement extends to ongoing collaboration with the Utility Regulator, NIE Networks and industry stakeholders. Additionally we plan to assist DAERA with the implementation of the Climate Change Act. As active participants in the Green Growth Forum, SONI will continue to support the department as it advances its plans.</p> <p>The key activities SONI plans to progress in 2024/25 include::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Maintain regular meetings with relevant government departments to stay updated on developments. ❑ Organising briefings for stakeholders on key outputs ❑ Ensuring representation in relevant working groups and aligning our efforts with planned workstreams for consistency and efficiency. ❑ Partnering with NIE Networks through joint working arrangements to support shared deliverables. <p>SONI will also continue to support the DfE in its considerations around RES and flexible energy solutions.</p>
<p>Key Benefits</p>	<p>The key benefits associated with SONI supporting the NI Energy Strategy are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Expert Guidance: SONI believe that we can bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to inform and advise policymakers, ultimately contributing to more informed and effective policy decisions. We consider that our extensive knowledge and experience is significant in providing valuable insights during engagement with the Utility Regulator DfE and government. ❑ Achievement of Climate Targets: SONI play a crucial role in helping the government meet its climate change targets by providing strategic input and technical expertise.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Enhanced collaboration: Our involvement in the NI Energy Strategy fosters stronger cooperation between industry stakeholders and government bodies and builds upon existing relationships to help achieve the collective goal of delivering net zero for consumers in Northern Ireland.
<p>UR Strategic/ Service Priorities</p>	<p>Whole system collaboration and coordination with 3rd parties, and NIE Networks across its various roles as a TO, DNO and DSO</p> <p>A culture of open and collaborative innovation</p> <p>The key theme of this workstream is collaboration with key stakeholders. The NI Energy Strategy Path to Net Zero outlines ambitious objectives for Northern Ireland, objectives that can only be realized by embracing necessary changes and fostering strong partnerships. SONI have joined several working groups focus on critical activities related to Transmission System Operation, these are also aligned with NIE Networks TO/DNO/DSO priorities.</p> <p>SONI’s work on this pathway is well underway and we are actively collaborating with partners across these working groups to develop a comprehensive program of activities. These efforts are focused on driving the changes needed to meet the energy strategy targets. SONI’s participation in these groups ensure that we align our deliverables with broader regulatory priorities which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Grid Modernisation and resilience ❑ Facilitating renewable integration ❑ Network innovation. <p>Through collaboration with the Utility Regulator and other key stakeholders, SONI aim to establish deliverables that align with these service priorities while ensuring Northern Irelands successful journey towards net zero.</p>
<p>Engagement</p>	<p>Over the 2024-25 Forward Work Plan period, SONI will continue to participate in various engagement activities to contribute to our knowledge and expertise. SONI are actively involved in several working groups organised by the Department for Economy, where we provide insights on achieving renewable energy targets.</p> <p>A key area of SONI’s involvement is the progression on offshore wind, where we will play a pivotal role through out Connection Offer Process. SONI will engage in discussion on the proactive steps we need to take to facilitate the progression of these connections. Additionally, SONI anticipate increased collaboration with DAERA regarding the implementation of the Climate Change Act.</p>

Performance Measure	<p>As the DfE’s action plan is continuing to evolve this programme of work will be monitored throughout the period to ensure we are progressing and achieving the deliverables set out in the DfE action plans and DAERA plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Continue to support DfE via Annual action plan and established working groups – Ongoing throughout the year. ❑ Review DfE Action plan for 2024 and identify areas where SONI can support - Expected early 2025 ❑ Support next stages of DfEs Smart Systems Flexibility Plan— Ongoing throughout the year.
Timescale	<p>Ongoing throughout 2024-2025</p>
Cost Scale	
SONI Outcome	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Decarbonisation</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>System Wide Costs</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Stakeholder Satisfaction</p> </div> </div>

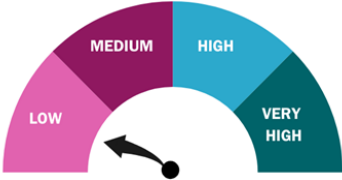

SONI Price Control SRP26

FWP24-04: SONI Price Control SRP26	
Description of Activities	<p>Regulatory Authorities such as the Utility Regulator use price controls to determine the amount of revenue that companies, such as SONI, are allowed over a specified period – typically spanning 5 years. SONI’s price control for 2026-2031 is essential in ensuring that SONI operates efficiently while delivering the services and outputs that key stakeholders and consumers rely on. One of the primary objectives of SONI’s price control is to establish an efficient revenue allowance that balances the financial needs of the business with the regulatory and consumer expectations for affordability and quality. By setting this revenue cap, the Utility Regulator ensures that SONI are incentivised to manage our resources effectively, invest in necessary infrastructure and maintain high service standards, all while keeping costs reasonable for consumers in Northern Ireland. Given the scope and importance of price controls, they are a fundamental project for any regulated entity.</p> <p>SONI plan to progress the following activities in relation to SONI’s price control for 2026-2031:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business plan submission to UR 2. Supporting query process after business plan submission
Key Benefits	<p>The key benefits associated with this project are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Clear prioritisation beyond 2030: SONI believe that by having a clear plan in place it will help shape SONI’s operations and objectives well beyond 2030, ensuring stability and forward-thinking strategies. This will also ensure that SONI remain aligned with future regulatory, policy and market changes in the evolving energy landscape ❑ Secured funding arrangements: Ensuring that funding arrangements are in place is key to guaranteeing that SONI has the necessary resources to run the business efficiently, this will allow SONI to plan its activities and will enable investment in new technologies and infrastructure improvements, benefiting both SONI and consumers. ❑ Efficient and effective business operation: Being suitably funded with a clear business plan will ensure that SONI can continue to provide reliable, high-quality services for all stakeholders and consumers in Northern Ireland.

<p>UR Strategic/ Service Priorities</p>	<p>UR Service Priorities A culture of effective engagement and collaboration A culture of open and collaborative innovation</p> <p>SONI’s upcoming price control period will be crucial in driving progress towards decarbonisation. This phase coincides with significant shifts in the energy landscape, as the need to reduce carbon emissions becomes increasingly urgent as we approach 2030. To navigate this transition successfully, SONI consider that extensive engagement and collaboration with stakeholders is essential This will include working closely with key stakeholders, regulatory authorities, consumers and government bodies.</p> <p>Given the scale of the challenge SONI have adopted an innovative approach to meet our regulatory obligations while supporting the government in achieving its energy and climate policies</p>
<p>Engagement</p>	<p>Work on engagement with industry and key stakeholders is already underway. SONI have established the Stakeholder Advisory Challenge Group comprising key stakeholders, which has met twice since it’s formation in early 2024 and will continue to meet quarterly. This groups primary focus is to engage with industry and gather feedback to advance the drafting of SONI’s business plan for the next price control period. Additionally, SONI will maintain ongoing engagements through various channels, including bilateral meetings and industry forums, throughout the year.</p>
<p>Performance Measure</p>	<p>Submission of SONI’s Business Plan for Price Control period 2026-2031 to the UR</p>
<p>Timescale</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business Plan to be submitted to UR – March 2025 2. Supporting query process after business plan submission – Expected to be ongoing from July 2025.
<p>Cost Scale</p>	
<p>SONI Outcome</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Decarbonisation</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Grid Security</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>System Wide Costs</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Stakeholder Satisfaction</p> </div> </div>

SONI Price Control Engagement Programme

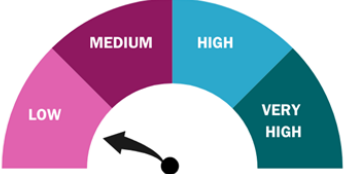

FWP25-03: SONI Price Control Engagement Programme	
Description of Activities	Delivery of an extensive stakeholder engagement programme to support the development of the SONI Business Plan submission for SONI's next Price Control 2026-2031.
Key Benefits	<p>The key benefits associated with this project are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Improved outcomes for stakeholders and consumers by ensuring their inputs and views shape our plans: This will ensure that plans address specific concerns, ultimately leading to solutions that are better suited to specific areas or industries. ❑ Improved trust and confidence in SONI's plans as Northern Ireland's Transmission System Operator: By engaging extensively and consistently with stakeholders at the earliest possible stage, SONI hope to instil the trust and confidence of consumers that their investment in SONI is an investment in a world class Transmission System Operator working for everyone in Northern Ireland. ❑ Improved collaboration in delivery of SONI's core remit through stakeholder buy-in for planned activity: SONI believe involving stakeholders early and consistently will result in there being less opposition and more co-operative action ultimately
UR Strategic/ Service Priorities	<p>A culture of effective engagement and collaboration</p> <p>A culture of organisational learning, accountability and planning that supports SONI agility and responsiveness in meeting policy, regulatory and market Development.</p> <p>SONI's price control engagement programme is designed to foster open and comprehensive dialogue with a diverse range of stakeholders, including consumers, industry representatives and the Utility Regulator. By actively seeking input from these groups, SONI will ensure that the business plan reflects a variety of perspectives and addresses the evolving needs of all stakeholders. Through regular and ongoing engagement, SONI aims to cultivate meaningful relationships and build trust with its stakeholders. This collaborative approach enables SONI to gain a deeper understanding of stakeholder expectations and priorities, ultimately leading to more informed and responsive decision-making. The programmes structured process incorporates stakeholder feedback into the business plan development process, enabling SONI to anticipate and adapt to changes in policy, regulation and market conditions. This will ensure that the business plan remains relevant and response to</p>

Engagement	<p>SONI anticipate engagement with all Stakeholders on the development SONI's business plan submission for the next price control period. We expect this engagement to include the various forms listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consumer insights research – quantitative and qualitative 2. Sectoral Workshops 3. Challenge and Advisory Group formation 4. Bi-lateral engagements with key partners 5. Formal consultation periods
Performance Measure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Post-engagement satisfaction surveys 2. Delivery metrics 3. Social media metrics 4. Case studies 5. Testimonials 6. Feedback from Challenge and Advisory Group
Timescale	Throughout October 24 – Sept 25
Cost Scale	
SONI Outcome	 <p>Stakeholder Satisfaction</p>

TESNI System Needs Assessment (SNA)

FWP24-05: Tomorrows Energy Scenarios Northern Ireland (TESNI)

<p>Description of Activities</p>	<p>SONI is responsible for a safe, secure and reliable electricity transmission system, now and in the future – we must accommodate existing and future energy demands. Shaping Our Electricity Future included extensive stakeholder engagement to understand the electricity system investments required to address decarbonisation and energy security needs up to 2030. Looking out beyond 2030, Tomorrow’s Energy Scenarios 2023 outlined a range of credible pathways for Northern Ireland’s clean energy transition. The System Needs Assessment (SNA) focuses on what this means for the electricity transmission system from 2030 to 2050.</p> <p>Following the publication of TES 2023, SONI will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Model the detailed scenario data <input type="checkbox"/> Assess impact on the network <input type="checkbox"/> Publish the needs assessment report
<p>Key Benefits</p>	<p>Key benefits for this deliverable are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Inform Future plannings: The findings of the TES System Needs assessment will guide future electricity system planning, ensuring a strategic approach to Infrastructure development <input type="checkbox"/> Support for renewable transition: The System Needs Assessment report will help the transition towards more renewable generation, promoting a cleaner and more sustainable energy mix. <input type="checkbox"/> Optimised System Development: The System Needs Assessment report will help SONI understand how to best develop and maintain the electricity system to meet future demands. .
<p>UR Strategic/ Service Priorities</p>	<p>A culture of open and collaborative innovation A culture of effective engagement and collaboration A culture of organisational learning, accountability and planning that supports SONI agility and responsiveness in meeting policy, regulatory and market development.</p> <p>This is an important strategic project that SONI envisages will assist government departments and policy makers in the collective effort to meet the targets set for decarbonisation. It enables SONI to assess the impact of achieving the net zero target on the transmission system and begin the process of identifying areas of the network requiring reinforcement.</p>

Engagement	SONI has ongoing engagement with NIE Networks who have provided location information on small scale technologies.
Performance Measure	Publication of final TES System Needs Assessment 2023
Timescale	Publication of final TES System Needs Assessment 2023 Report- November 2024 (subject to finalisation of TES 2023 scenarios)
Cost Scale	
SONI Outcome	 <p>Decarbonisation Grid Security Stakeholder Satisfaction</p>