

Evaluative Performance Framework

Performance Report 2026-27

SONI Self-Assessment



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SONI are assessed by the Independent Panel using the UR’s Evaluative Performance Framework Guidance document (see Chapter 4, pages 17-23 of the UR’s Evaluative Performance Framework Guidance).

The Forward Work Plan will be assessed on the following:

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

01

SERVICE AMBITION
The degree of ambition for improvements over time included in the plan, in relation to the four SONI outcomes, relative to past performance and existing working practices and processes.

02

UR SERVICE ALIGNMENT
The extent to which the new initiatives and areas of focus presented in the plan are aligned with the Service Priorities set by us (which in turn would be informed by stakeholders) or otherwise supported by strong evidence

03

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
The quality of stakeholder engagement and participation in developing the plan and the responsiveness that the plan shows to the views and concerns of stakeholders (to the extent not captured under alignment).

04

SERVICE ACCOUNTABILITY
The degree of clarity on the SONI’s planned activities and initiatives and how the success or performance in relation to these would be assessed (e.g. detailed specification of deliverables and measures of success).

In this document, SONI have highlighted our views against how the plan meets the assessment criteria and what changes have been made since the previous assessment.

We have provided our self-assessment of SONI’s performance for the Forward Work Plan 2026-2027 in the table below.

SONI Self-Assessment Grading

	Role 1 - System Operations & Adequacy	Role 2- Independent Expert	Role 3 - System Planning	Role 4 - Commercial Interface
Weights	27.5	25	25	22.5
Criteria				
1. Service Ambition	1	1	1	1
2. UR Service Priority Alignment	1	1	1	0
3. Stakeholder Engagement	1	1	1	0
4. Service Accountability	1	1	1	1
Assessment Total (Criterion 1 score X2)	5	5	5	3
Assessment Grade	5	5	5	5
Overall Grade	5			

SONI Self-Assessment

Role 1 System Operations and Adequacy

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Service Ambition	The projects within Role 1 demonstrate our ambition to evolve how Northern Ireland’s electricity system is operated as renewable generation increases and the system becomes increasingly reliant on inverter-based technologies. Maintaining system security in this changing environment requires new operational capabilities, technical frameworks and market arrangements that can support a secure, resilient and increasingly renewable-led electricity system. Our ambition goes beyond maintaining existing performance or making incremental improvements. We are developing more targeted approaches to managing system stability, enabling renewable, storage and emerging technologies to provide services traditionally delivered by conventional generation, improving the use of existing network capacity and preparing operational and market arrangements for future system needs. This ambition is demonstrated across several Role 1 projects. System Strength is developing a more targeted approach to managing stability, while the Frequency Response from Wind Trial is progressing the capability for renewable generation to provide services historically delivered by conventional generation. Hybrid Connections further supports this shift by developing arrangements that enable renewable and storage technologies to share network capacity more efficiently. A key progression is the move from established operational approaches towards more flexible, evidence-based and technology-neutral arrangements. Practical trials, technical analysis and policy development are being used to explore and develop alternative solutions that can maintain system security while reducing unnecessary operational constraints and reliance on conventional technologies. This combines tangible near-term progress with the development of capabilities needed to respond to longer-term changes in the electricity system. This represents a material progression beyond established ways of working, creating new operational capabilities and arrangements that support greater renewable integration while maintaining system security and resilience. We therefore consider that Role 1 exceeds expectations. Benefits and Value Delivered • Increased integration and utilisation of renewable generation. • Enhanced system security and resilience as the generation mix changes. • Reduced reliance on conventional generation for essential system services. • More efficient use of existing network capacity. • Greater opportunities for renewable, storage and emerging technologies to participate.

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
UR Service Priority Alignment	Role 1 directly supports the Utility Regulator’s priorities for open and collaborative innovation, competitive market development and whole-system collaboration, reflecting the changes needed to operate a secure power system with increasing levels of renewable and inverter-based generation. Open and collaborative innovation is demonstrated through projects such as System Strength and the Frequency Response from Wind Trial. System Strength is developing a more targeted framework for managing stability as inverter-based generation increases, while the Frequency Response from Wind Trial is progressing the capability for wind generation to provide frequency response and reserve services traditionally associated with conventional generation. Both draw on technical assessment and industry collaboration to inform future operational arrangements. Market development is particularly evident through the Future Arrangements for System Services (FASS) programme, which is progressing future procurement arrangements designed to support participation from a broader range of technologies and service providers. This supports the UR priority of developing markets through competition while helping prepare system services for the requirements of a low-carbon electricity system. Whole-system collaboration underpins these developments. System Strength is being progressed jointly with EirGrid and through engagement with NIE Networks, generation owners, OEMs, regulatory authorities and industry experts, while FASS involves collaboration with EirGrid, the Regulatory Authorities and industry stakeholders. This helps ensure future arrangements consider operational requirements alongside wider market and system needs. Through practical innovation, competitive market development and coordinated working, Role 1 provides clear evidence of alignment with the UR’s priorities while supporting renewable integration and system security. We therefore consider that Role 1 exceeds expectations for UR Service Priority Alignment. Benefits and Value Delivered • Broader participation by renewable and emerging technologies. • Greater competition in future system services. • Stronger coordination in developing future arrangements. • Practical innovation informing operational change. • Increased renewable integration while maintaining system security.

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Stakeholder Engagement	Engagement within Role 1 is increasingly centred on the co-development and testing of operational solutions. Rather than engaging only once proposals have been developed, stakeholders are involved through technical assessment, practical trials and framework development, allowing industry expertise and operational experience to shape emerging arrangements. This is particularly evident through System Strength, where engagement with NIE Networks, EirGrid, generation owners, Original Equipment Manufacturers, regulatory authorities and industry experts will help validate technical studies, assess emerging practices and shape the developing policy framework. This provides a direct route for external expertise to influence how future system-strength arrangements develop. The Frequency Response from Wind Trial provides a further practical example. Delivery requires close collaboration with wind farm operators and other industry stakeholders to support technical modifications, validate operational performance and inform the development of enduring operational policy. Engagement with existing and potential participants will also support efforts to increase reserve capability from renewable generation. These examples demonstrate an approach that goes beyond consultation and information sharing. Stakeholders are contributing directly to testing, refining and developing solutions before enduring operational arrangements are established, helping ensure that future approaches are practical, scalable and informed by real-world experience. Role 1 exceeds expectations for Stakeholder Engagement. Benefits and Value Delivered - Operational solutions informed by industry expertise and experience. - Earlier identification of technical and implementation challenges. - More practical and scalable future arrangements. - Greater participation from renewable and emerging technologies. - Improved readiness for future operational changes.

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Service Accountability	Role 1 provides a clear basis for assessing both delivery against our commitments and progress towards the operational outcomes those commitments are intended to achieve. Defined deliverables, timescales and measures of success provide transparency over what we will deliver during 2026/27 and how performance can subsequently be assessed. This is demonstrated through specific project commitments. System Strength has a defined deliverable to develop a Draft System Strength Strategy, while Frequency Response from Wind combines a defined programme milestone with a measurable ambition to expand renewable reserve capability beyond the current baseline. These provide tangible measures against which progress can be assessed. Our Benefits Realisation Framework strengthens this approach by connecting annual delivery to intended outcomes. For example, Frequency Response from Wind measures the volume of frequency response and reserve available from renewable generation, while System Strength links delivery to reduced system-strength constraints and the development of new metrics and monitoring arrangements. The plan also makes dependencies more transparent. FASS, for example, remains dependent on regulatory and policy decisions on future programme direction, while clearly identifying our responsibility for technical expertise, analysis and stakeholder engagement. This allows performance to be assessed against the elements within our control even where wider implementation depends on others. Project-level commitments are complemented by wider Role 1 performance measures, including SNSP, system frequency, imperfections costs, timely delivery of publications and stakeholder satisfaction. Together, these provide visibility of both project delivery and wider operational performance. Overall, specific project commitments, measurable outcomes and transparent dependencies provide stakeholders and the Independent Panel with a clear basis for assessing both delivery and the value achieved. We therefore consider that Role 1 exceeds expectations for Service Accountability. Benefits and Value Delivered - Greater transparency over delivery commitments and progress. - Clearer links between project delivery and intended outcomes - Stronger monitoring through defined baselines and target benefits. - Clearer distinction between our responsibilities and external dependencies. - Better evidence of value for consumers and the wider electricity system.

Role 2 Independent Expert

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Service Ambition	As the electricity system evolves, our Independent Expert role is becoming increasingly important in helping anticipate change and inform the decisions that will shape Northern Ireland’s energy future. Role 2 strengthens this role through greater use of strategic foresight, evidence and stakeholder and consumer insight to support policy, regulatory and investment decision-making. A key area of ambition is the shift towards more forward-looking and evidence-led advice. Tomorrow’s Energy Scenarios 2027 will develop evidence-based future energy pathways to inform policy, network investment and long-term system planning, while Plan-Led Electricity System Development will consider the reforms and strategic transmission development required to support a more coordinated approach to future network development. Together, these activities strengthen our ability to contribute earlier to strategic decisions rather than responding only once requirements have been established. Role 2 also broadens the evidence informing our work. Alongside technical analysis and industry expertise, greater emphasis is being placed on stakeholder, consumer, public and community perspectives. The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2027-2032 will introduce a more structured and measurable approach to capturing and applying stakeholder insight, supported by clearer governance, relationship measures and evaluation. Innovation and organisational learning provide a further dimension to this ambition. Our first Annual Innovation Report will provide greater visibility of innovation activity, outcomes, lessons learned and future opportunities, supporting knowledge sharing and helping demonstrate how innovation contributes to the future electricity system. Together, these initiatives demonstrate a significant progression in our Independent Expert role, combining strategic foresight, evidence, wider participation and organisational learning to strengthen our contribution to future policy, investment and system development. Role 2 exceeds expectations for Service Ambition. Benefits and Value Delivered • Better-informed policy, regulatory and investment decisions. • Stronger evidence to support long-term energy planning. • Greater stakeholder and consumer influence on future decisions. • Improved use of foresight, insight and organisational learning. • Greater transparency around innovation and its outcomes. • Better long-term outcomes for consumers and the electricity system.

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
UR Service Priority Alignment	Role 2 aligns strongly with the Utility Regulator’s priorities by strengthening the evidence, insight and collaboration that inform future policy, regulatory and investment decisions. Through stakeholder and consumer insight, future energy scenarios, innovation learning and evidence-based advice, the projects support a more informed and coordinated approach to Northern Ireland’s energy transition. This alignment is demonstrated through Tomorrow’s Energy Scenarios 2027, which strengthens the evidence available to anticipate longer-term generation, demand and system requirements, and the Renewable Electricity Price Guarantee, through which we provide technical and operational expertise to support emerging renewable policy and market arrangements. These activities respond to the UR’s priorities for organisational learning, planning and coordinated decision-making while supporting the frameworks required to facilitate renewable investment. The role also responds to the UR’s priorities for effective engagement and open, collaborative innovation. The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy strengthens how stakeholder insight is captured, evaluated and applied across the organisation, while the Annual Innovation Report will provide greater visibility of innovation activity, outcomes and learning. Together, these initiatives strengthen the connection between external insight, organisational learning and future decision-making. Across Role 2, these activities support greater coordination between government, regulators, industry, consumers and the wider energy sector, helping ensure that future policy, market and system development is informed by a broader and more transparent evidence base. Role 2 therefore demonstrates the UR’s priorities through practical activity, particularly stronger evidence-led planning, organisational learning, collaborative innovation and stakeholder-informed decision-making. We consider that Role 2 exceeds expectations for UR Service Priority Alignment. Benefits and Value Delivered • Better-informed policy, regulatory and investment decisions. • Stronger use of stakeholder and consumer insight. • Greater use of evidence and organisational learning in future planning. • Improved coordination across government, regulators, industry and consumers. • Better planning for renewable integration and future system requirements. • Improved long-term outcomes for consumers through more informed and coordinated decisions.

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Stakeholder Engagement	Stakeholder engagement is central to Role 2, reflecting our responsibility to provide an independent, evidence-based voice while ensuring that stakeholder and consumer perspectives meaningfully inform our work. Engagement extends beyond established industry and regulatory stakeholders to consumers, communities, public bodies, academia and the wider energy sector. Our approach places greater emphasis on participation and influence rather than one-way communication. The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2027–2032 strengthens how stakeholder insight is captured, evaluated and applied. This provides a stronger basis for demonstrating not simply that engagement has taken place, but how it has influenced our work. The Consumer Council Consumer Engagement work broadens participation further by bringing consumer evidence and insight into the energy transition. Through the Consumer Engagement Working Group, we will contribute to coordinated engagement and evidence sharing, helping ensure consumer perspectives are better understood and reflected in future activities and decisions. The SRP27 Stakeholder Engagement Programme provides a further example of stakeholders influencing an important regulatory process. Engagement has included consumer research, strategic workshops, bilateral meetings, formal consultation and scrutiny through the Stakeholder Advisory and Challenge Group, with further engagement planned around the Utility Regulator’s draft determination consultation. Collectively, these activities demonstrate a shift towards broader participation, earlier influence and clearer evidence of how stakeholder and consumer insight is used. This represents a significant progression in our approach and supports an exceeds expectations assessment for Stakeholder Engagement. Benefits and Value Delivered • Greater stakeholder and consumer influence on activities and decisions. • Broader participation across consumers, communities and industry. • Better-informed policy, regulatory and strategic decisions. • Greater transparency around how stakeholder feedback is considered and acted upon. • Earlier understanding of stakeholder and consumer needs. • More meaningful and responsive engagement

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Service Accountability	Accountability within Role 2 reflects the nature of our Independent Expert role, where success is measured not only through delivery of commitments, but also through the influence, insight and engagement those activities generate. Defined deliverables, timescales and measures of success provide a clear basis for assessing what we will deliver during 2026/27. The Benefits Realisation Framework strengthens this by linking activities to intended outcomes and measurable indicators. Tomorrow’s Energy Scenarios 2027, for example, links delivery of future energy scenarios to their use in major planning, policy and investment activities, while the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2027-2032 introduces a Stakeholder Relationship KPI and annual evaluation to assess the effectiveness and impact of engagement. The Strategy also strengthens accountability for how stakeholder insight is managed, through defined governance, named lead owners, central tracking and reporting arrangements. This provides a clearer basis for assessing not simply whether engagement has taken place, but how stakeholder insight has informed our activities. Clear accountability is equally important where the final outcome is not within our control. REPG provides a good example: responsibility for progressing and approving the required legislation sits outside SONI, while our commitments are focused on technical and operational expertise, consultation responses, implementation planning and readiness activity. This provides a transparent basis for assessing our contribution independently of wider policy and legislative decisions. This combination of defined commitments, measurable indicators and clear delineation of responsibility provides a proportionate basis for assessing the Independent Expert role and holding us accountable for the areas within our control. Role 2 exceeds expectations for Service Accountability. Benefits and Value Delivered • Greater transparency over Role 2 commitments and outcomes. • More measurable evidence of stakeholder and consumer impact. • Clearer visibility of how stakeholder insight informs our activities. • Clearer distinction between our responsibilities and external dependencies. • Stronger evidence of the benefits arising from Independent Expert activities

Role 3 System Planning

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Service Ambition	Role 3 reflects a significant shift in how we plan and develop Northern Ireland’s transmission system for future needs. Increasing renewable generation, electrification and changing demand require a more strategic approach that looks ahead to where network capacity and infrastructure will be needed, rather than responding only as individual requirements emerge. Central to this ambition is a move towards more anticipatory and coordinated transmission development. The Transmission Cluster Policy and Roe Cluster demonstrate this approach by supporting more coordinated renewable connections and transmission investment, with the Roe Cluster intended to deliver shared transmission infrastructure capable of enabling significant additional renewable generation connections. Planning methodologies and information are also being strengthened to provide greater visibility of future network needs. The Ten-Year Transmission Forecast Statement (TYTFS) provides a longer-term view of transmission opportunities and constraints to support informed investment and connection decisions, while the Firm Access Quantity Methodology modernises existing access arrangements to reflect future system needs and improve transparency. This is complemented by progression of significant network infrastructure. The Kells, Castlereagh and Magherafelt 275kV redevelopment projects address network resilience, ageing infrastructure and future system requirements, demonstrating how longer-term planning is being translated into development of the transmission network itself. The ambition within Role 3 therefore extends beyond individual network projects. By combining more coordinated development, modernised planning and connection approaches, improved visibility of future network needs and progression of strategic infrastructure, we are creating a stronger basis for anticipating and delivering Northern Ireland’s future transmission requirements. Role 3 exceeds expectations for Service Ambition. Benefits and Value Delivered • Increased capacity to accommodate renewable generation and future demand. • Improved network resilience and long-term security of supply. • More strategic and coordinated transmission investment. • Greater visibility of future network needs and connection opportunities.. • More efficient network and connection development. • Greater investment certainty for developers and stakeholders. • Long-term consumer value through better-targeted infrastructure investment.

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
UR Service Priority Alignment	Role 3 aligns strongly with the Utility Regulator’s priorities for whole-system coordination, effective planning and collaborative innovation. These priorities are reflected in how transmission development is increasingly coordinated across organisations and supported by clearer planning information and evolving approaches to network development. Whole-system coordination is reflected in the Transmission Development Plan, which provides a coordinated plan for future transmission development, and the Transmission Cluster Policy and Roe Cluster, which support a more joined-up approach to renewable connections and transmission investment. Together, these activities strengthen consideration of network requirements, connection needs and infrastructure development across the wider electricity system. The UR’s focus on effective planning is also reflected through the Transmission Development Plan and enhanced Ten-Year Transmission Forecast Statement (TYTFS). These provide greater visibility of future network needs, constraints, development requirements and connection opportunities, supporting more informed investment and connection decisions. Collaborative innovation is demonstrated through the Transmission Cluster Policy and Roe Cluster, which introduce a more coordinated approach to renewable connection and associated infrastructure development. The Firm Access Quantity Methodology further supports this by modernising firm-access arrangements to better reflect future system needs, improve transparency and support efficient investment in low-carbon technologies. Through these initiatives, Role 3 translates the UR’s priorities into more coordinated network development, greater transparency of future requirements and evolving approaches to connections and investment. Role 3 exceeds expectations for UR Service Priority Alignment. Benefits and Value Delivered • More coordinated transmission planning and network development.. • Greater transparency around network requirements and investment. • Improved information and certainty for developers and stakeholders. • More efficient integration of renewable generation. • Reduced risk of inefficient or duplicative network investment. • Better long-term value from transmission development.

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Stakeholder Engagement	Stakeholder involvement throughout Role 3 reflects the different decisions and perspectives involved in planning and developing the transmission system. Engagement is therefore tailored to the stage and nature of the activity bringing regulatory, network, industry and wider stakeholder input into the process as approaches and proposals develop. A key strength is that engagement takes place throughout development rather than being confined to formal consultation. The redesigned Ten-Year Transmission Forecast Statement provides a practical example, responding to stakeholder requests for clearer investment signals, greater visibility of connection opportunities and constraints, and a more user-focused publication. Stakeholders will also continue to inform the assumptions, methodologies and network considerations underpinning the statement. Stakeholder feedback has also shaped the Transmission Cluster Policy, with consultation informing the published position and evolving policy design. The associated Roe Cluster shows how engagement develops as policy moves into infrastructure delivery, involving regulators, government, NIE Networks, developers, local authorities, elected representatives, landowners and communities as the project progresses. Collaboration with NIE Networks remains particularly important given the interaction between transmission planning, asset ownership and infrastructure delivery. Role 3 also involves engagement with developers, regulators, government, communities and landowners as activities move through different stages of planning and development. Together, these activities demonstrate an engagement approach that supports informed participation throughout transmission planning and development, bringing relevant perspectives into planning, connection and infrastructure decisions. This provides a strong basis for assessing Role 3 as exceeding expectations for Stakeholder Engagement Benefits and Value Delivered • Greater stakeholder influence on transmission development. • Better-informed planning, connection and investment decisions. • Earlier consideration of relevant issues and perspectives. • Stronger coordination with delivery partners. • Greater understanding of network development and connection opportunities. • More informed infrastructure development supporting long-term consumer value.

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Service Accountability	Accountability within Role 3 reflects the long-term nature of transmission planning and development, where progress often spans multiple years and can be influenced by regulatory approvals, planning processes, land requirements and coordination with other organisations. The Forward Work Plan therefore identifies the specific commitments and milestones for 2026/27 while providing visibility of the wider journey towards delivery. Defined deliverables and delivery dates provide a clear basis for assessing annual progress. For longer-term activities, the Multi-Year Project Overview strengthens this by showing where projects started, progress to date, their current stage, key dependencies, next milestone and ultimate end goal. This is particularly relevant to projects such as Roe Cluster, where progression is dependent on regulatory approvals, planning and land acquisition, and Kells 275kV Redevelopment, where funding approvals and planning and development processes are identified as dependencies. In each case, the plan identifies the next milestone alongside the longer-term outcome, providing greater transparency over what progress looks like before final delivery is achieved. The Benefits Realisation Framework complements this by connecting annual delivery to longer-term outcomes, including renewable connection capability, network resilience, improved planning information and greater investment certainty. This recognises that the full value of transmission development may emerge over several stages rather than within a single Forward Work Plan year. Clear identification of dependencies further strengthens accountability by distinguishing the commitments within our control from external approvals and wider delivery factors. Progress can therefore be assessed against what we have committed to deliver during 2026/27 while retaining visibility of how this contributes to the longer-term project outcome. This approach provides a transparent basis for assessing delivery across both annual and multi-year projects. Clear commitments, milestones, dependencies and longer-term outcomes allow progress to be assessed against what we are accountable for delivering during 2026/27, while maintaining visibility of the wider journey towards delivery. On this basis, we consider Role 3 exceeds expectations for Service Accountability. Benefits and Value Delivered • Clearer visibility of annual and longer-term milestones. • Greater transparency over progress across multi-year projects. • Stronger links between delivery milestones and long-term benefits. • Clearer distinction between our responsibilities and external dependencies. • Better evidence of progress towards renewable integration, network resilience and consumer value.

Role 4 Commercial Interface

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Service Ambition	Role 4 demonstrates our ambition to develop the commercial and procurement arrangements needed to secure the stability and flexibility capabilities of a more renewable electricity system. As the generation mix changes, the challenge is not only to identify the capabilities the system will require, but to create practical and competitive routes through which low-carbon and emerging technologies can provide them. This progression is demonstrated through the LCIS programme. LCIS Phase 1 – Dynamic Stability Assessment is assessing how low-carbon stability technologies can support system security and potentially enable changes to existing operational constraints. Building on this, LCIS Phase II – Procurement Process Tender Stage moves into competitive procurement, with tender evaluation and contract award intended to secure additional low-carbon stability services required for operation towards 2030. The Flexibility Procurement Framework extends this approach to future flexibility and storage services. By supporting the development of the policy, regulatory and procurement arrangements required for future procurement, the project is helping create the conditions for investment in storage, demand-side and other flexibility resources while establishing potential routes for these technologies to meet future system needs. Together, these activities show a progression from technical assessment to competitive procurement and future commercial frameworks, translating emerging technological capability into practical routes for participation. This broadens the range of solutions capable of supporting system stability and flexibility while reducing reliance on conventional generation. Our ambition also extends to improving understanding of the value these activities are intended to create. The Forward Work Plan includes dedicated visual explanations for LCIS and Storage Procurement, helping stakeholders see more clearly how these technically complex interventions connect to renewable integration, system security, reduced fossil-fuel reliance, system costs and consumer value. Role 4 therefore represents a clear progression beyond established commercial arrangements, creating new routes through which low-carbon stability, storage and flexibility technologies can contribute to future system needs. This represents a material progression beyond BAU and supports an exceeds expectations assessment for Service Ambition.

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
	Benefits and Value Delivered • Greater renewable integration through new stability and flexibility solutions. • Reduced reliance on conventional generation for system stability. • Enhanced system security and operational flexibility. • Increased opportunities for low-carbon, storage and flexibility technologies. • Greater competition and innovation in the provision of future system services. • Improved understanding and transparency of how technically complex projects deliver system and consumer benefits. • Long-term consumer value through efficient procurement, greater renewable utilisation and reduced exposure to fossil-fuel generation
UR Service Priority Alignment	Role 4 has a particularly direct relationship with the Utility Regulator’s priority to develop markets through competition, stakeholder engagement and collaboration. The projects are creating routes for low-carbon technologies, storage and other flexibility providers to meet future system needs, while developing competitive and transparent arrangements intended to deliver value for consumers. This is demonstrated through Low Carbon Inertia Services (LCIS), where competitive procurement is being used to secure low-carbon sources of system stability and broaden participation beyond conventional providers. Work on storage and future flexibility arrangements similarly supports the development of routes through which a wider range of technologies can contribute to future system requirements. These projects also demonstrate the UR’s priority for open and collaborative innovation. Technical assessment, procurement learning and engagement with regulators, government, network operators, technology providers and market participants are helping to develop arrangements that are practical and capable of responding to changing system needs. Whole-system coordination is equally important, recognising that future stability and flexibility arrangements interact with operational requirements, transmission and distribution, energy policy and regulatory frameworks. Collaboration across these areas helps ensure that new commercial arrangements are developed in the context of wider system requirements. Through competitive procurement, wider technology participation and the development of new commercial arrangements, Role 4 translates the UR’s priorities for competition, innovation and collaboration into practical activity. We therefore consider that Role 4 meets expectations for UR Service Priority Alignment.

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
	Benefits and Value Delivered - Increased participation from low-carbon, storage and emerging technologies. - More efficient procurement of future system capability. - Stronger collaboration in developing workable commercial arrangements. - Improved renewable integration while maintaining system security. - Better value for consumers through competitive procurement.
Stakeholder Engagement	Stakeholder engagement within Role 4 is focused on ensuring that future stability and flexibility arrangements are technically workable, commercially deliverable and accessible to a broader range of providers. This requires engagement with regulators, government, network operators, established market participants and emerging technology and service providers. This is particularly evident through LCIS Phase II, where engagement with EirGrid, NIE Networks, the Utility Regulator, government, technology providers and market participants informs service requirements and procurement arrangements. Engagement with qualified tender participants also supports a transparent and competitive procurement process while providing greater clarity on opportunities to provide low-carbon stability services. The Flexibility Procurement Framework provides a further example of stakeholder participation shaping future arrangements. Engagement with the Department for the Economy, Utility Regulator, EirGrid, flexibility providers and storage developers will inform policy development, regulatory considerations and procurement design, helping ensure emerging arrangements reflect practical delivery and market considerations. Importantly, stakeholder input is being incorporated as these arrangements develop, rather than only once solutions have been established. This creates opportunities for existing and prospective providers to contribute their experience and help develop approaches that are practical, transparent and capable of supporting wider participation. By bringing market and provider insight directly into procurement and framework development, Role 4 supports future arrangements that are better informed and more capable of facilitating participation from low-carbon, storage and flexibility technologies. On this basis, Role 4 is assessed as meeting expectations for Stakeholder Engagement. Benefits and Value Delivered - Broader participation from emerging technologies and service providers. - Better-informed procurement and service design. - Earlier identification of participation and delivery considerations. - More practical and transparent future arrangements. - Greater clarity for prospective market participants. - Improved industry readiness for future stability and flexibility needs

Assessment Criteria	SONI Actions
Service Accountability	Accountability within Role 4 reflects the nature of developing new stability, flexibility and procurement arrangements, where progress can be shaped by policy, regulatory and market developments as well as our own delivery. The Forward Work Plan therefore distinguishes between the commitments for which we are directly responsible and the external decisions that can influence wider implementation. This is demonstrated through LCIS Phase II, where accountability is linked to clear procurement milestones, including commencement of the tender process, evaluation of bids and contract award for additional low-carbon stability services. These provide tangible points against which progress and delivery can be assessed during 2026/27. The Flexibility Procurement Framework illustrates a different aspect of accountability. Our responsibility is to provide the technical, operational and market expertise required to support policy, regulatory and procurement development, while decisions on policy, funding and regulatory approval rest with the Department for the Economy and Utility Regulator. Making this distinction explicit provides a clearer basis for assessing our performance against the activity within our control. The Benefits Realisation Framework strengthens this further by linking delivery to intended outcomes. For Role 4, this includes demonstrating a pathway to 50–100 MW of additional renewable headroom through LCIS, procuring 4,000 MVA.s of low-carbon inertia services, and progressing a framework capable of enabling future flexibility and storage procurement. These arrangements provide clear accountability for what we will deliver, how progress will be measured and where delivery depends on wider policy or regulatory decisions. This provides a proportionate and transparent basis for assessment and supports an exceeds expectations assessment for Service Accountability Benefits and Value Delivered - Greater transparency over delivery and procurement commitments. - Clearer distinction between our responsibilities and external dependencies. - Stronger links between project delivery and measurable outcomes. - Better visibility of progress towards future stability and flexibility arrangements. - Clearer evidence of the value enabled through low-carbon technologies and competitive procurement



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