

MINUTES

Meeting number: 29

Venue: Electricity Authority Boardroom

Time and date: 10am, Thursday, 17 June 2021

Attendees

- Tony Baldwin (Chair)
- Stu Innes
- Dr Andrew Kerr
- Tony Oosten
- Rebecca Osborne
- Ann Whitfield
- Al Yates
- Paul Baker
- Murray Henderson (Observer, Transpower)

Apologies

- Fiona Wiseman
- Andrew Doube (General Manager, Market Policy, Electricity Authority)

In attendance

- Dr Nicki Crauford (Electricity Authority Board Chair)
- Dr James Tipping (Chief Strategy Officer, Electricity Authority)
- Alistair Dixon (Principal Advisor, Market Policy, Electricity Authority)
- Chris Otton (Senior Advisor, Market Policy, Electricity Authority)
- Kelsey Little (Programme Coordinator, Market Policy, Electricity Authority)

The meeting opened at 10.00am

MDAG Discussion with EA Chair Nicki

Tony opened the meeting with a roundtable of introductions; EA staff and MDAG members each introduced themselves.

Nicki expressed her interest and appreciation in joining the MDAG meeting to meet the group, and noted she thinks this new project proposal – price discovery under 100% renewables – is exciting. The conversation then opened for feedback from Tony and the group on how the Authority can better support the group to ensure they can deliver the project.

Tony asked members to do a round table on their views on MDAG – past and future view. There were also discussions around the new project proposal. The group noted that it will be critical to ensure that our proposal is delivered within a timeframe that enables it to be properly considered in the context of broader work on transitioning to a 100% renewables system. Nicki noted it was important to keep in mind what's happening overseas and how New Zealand can learn from it as the Authority and MDAG move forward with this piece of work.

Rebecca Osborn joined at 10.25am

The overall feedback from the group was the new project is a big piece of work and the group reiterated the importance of getting it right. Members also noted that 100% renewable doesn't mean zero emissions, e.g. geothermal power.

Looking at the execution of the project, the group discussed potential consultants, and the potential overlap with using the Authority's regular consultants. The group noted the importance of gaining sufficient challenge to existing thinking, and bringing in fresh perspectives and ideas. Tony B proposed the idea of having consultants pitch to the group their views on the problem. Tony noted that not only would it help MDAG develop its knowledge and see different perspectives, but it could also give an idea of who is best placed to help the group with this work. An independent writer was discussed as an option.

The group also discussed the idea of having other observers join for the duration of this project. The group discussed a suggested alternative to additional observers of setting up a "technical group", potentially with some overseas participants, that the group could do workshops with, and engage with as necessary.

Action: EA/MDAG to draft a scope of work for problem definition steps needed before we start the project. The Chair and Secretariat would then call for interest in participating in the project so MDAG can receive presentations from selected consultants.

Action: JT/Alistair to liaise with MBIE regarding timeframes for the public announcement of the start of this project.

The meeting ended at 11.30am.