

Assessment of EirGrid's Processes and Procedures for Public Consultation

Terms of Reference

Objective: *Review EirGrid's consultation process, including the Project Development and Consultation Roadmap, and propose any changes and improvements to enhance future consultation and engagement.*

Scope:

1. Review of feedback from recent public consultation undertaken in respect of EirGrid projects, insofar as it relates to EirGrid's public consultation process; this will occur in consultation with the relevant project teams and provide a summary of the key issues arising from consultation feedback in respect of EirGrid's public consultation process.
2. Conduct a review of compliance with the Project Development and Consultation Roadmap across the recent consultations, identifying what was done and any gaps and/or any potential improvements.
3. Identify essential elements and principles of a best practice approach for public consultation in respect of transmission infrastructure projects – primarily by review of methodologies employed by transmission infrastructure developers in Europe and internationally, as well as by review of other linear infrastructure projects in Ireland, and with reference to governing legislation and the Aarhus Convention.
4. Commission an external peer review, by an external expert with appropriate experience, to review the consultation process and identify potential areas for improvement along with suggested changes to enhance future consultation and engagement.
5. Based on activities 1-4 above, identify strengths and weaknesses of EirGrid's current approach to public consultation and engagement in project development.
6. In the context of best practice, identify improvements to EirGrid's approach to public consultation, consistent with the company's values, which would enhance future engagement – including how it can best be applied.
7. Identify any new/additional training required for EirGrid staff and consultants on best practice approach to public consultation and new techniques to be incorporated.

Timing and Reporting:

- The review is expected to take 3 months.
- A final report on the findings of the review and recommendations to enhance future engagement with stakeholders, interest groups and the wider public will be published.

Composition:

The review will be undertaken by a Working Group which will be chaired by the Chairperson of the EirGrid Board and will include two further Board members, the Chief Executive, the Director of Grid Development and two EirGrid staff.