

Solar Council – Terms of Reference

Context

The UK Government has committed to delivering clean power by 2030. Solar PV will play a critical role in achieving this. The Clean Power 2030 Action Plan sets out a deployment range for solar of between 45 – 47GW by 2030, with scope to exceed the 47GW upper limit, subject to system need, noting the potential of rooftop solar to further boost deployment¹.

The Solar Taskforce brought together government, industry, regulatory and other key players to understand the challenges facing the sector and to agree on the action necessary to unlock barriers and drive forward the solar deployment at the pace and scale necessary. These actions were set out in the Solar Roadmap published in June 2025.

Scope and Purpose

The Solar Council continues the work of the Solar Taskforce but with a focus on implementation of the actions contained in the roadmap and the deployment of solar capacity in all its forms.

The Council is a senior government/industry forum, and can make recommendations to DESNZ and wider government, which, as appropriate, will be handled through existing policy and governance processes within DESNZ and across Government. Solar Council recommendations do not create binding obligations for the Government.

The Council is multi-territorial in scope and will consider matters that affect deployment and communities across the UK, and a representative from each Devolved Administration will be invited to each meeting.

The Council will not consider issues related to individual solar projects other than as far as they relate to or demonstrate wider strategic application.

Objectives

The Solar Council will:

¹ NESO engagement with the DNOs indicates that an additional 9-10GW of rooftop solar projects, (which are not subject to the Transmission Impact Assessments), could deploy before 2030. It is therefore possible that the Clean Power Action Plan solar capacity range of 45-47GW could yield 54-57GW (subject to the PV pipeline of solar rooftop projects)”

- Act as the primary forum for engagement between the Minister for Energy and industry on sectoral priorities.
- Monitor and assess progress against delivering the actions set out in the 2025 Solar Roadmap and evaluate deployment progress against Clean Power targets.
- Work together to overcome challenges to implementing the Roadmap actions, and potentially make recommendations to refocus or re-prioritise actions where a different approach would deliver a better solution.
- Discuss key, emerging barriers, which were not captured within the actions of the Solar Roadmap publication, and provide advice to Government on how to overcome barriers identified.
- Seek to ensure that, as the solar sector continues to grow, the benefits are captured to help capitalise on economic opportunities such as investment in the UK, including boosting supply chains, supporting growth, creating jobs and cultivating skills and innovation.

Chair Membership

The Council is co-chaired by Michael Shanks MP, Minister for Energy and Chris Hewett, Chief Executive, Solar Energy UK.

Membership

Membership is comprised of representatives from UK Government and Devolved Administrations, Industry, Supply Chain companies, Trade Bodies, Trade Union representation and other relevant parties. Membership is on a standing or meeting specific basis. Members are set out in Annex A.

Members can nominate deputies and should inform the Secretariat where a deputy is being provided prior to each meeting. Deputies must be appointed to cover the member's role on the Council.

Frequency and Conduct

The Council will meet in person a minimum of three times a year with the first meeting to be held on 9th September 2025.

The frequency of meetings and Terms of Reference will be reviewed after the first full year.

The Council firmly commits to reflecting the diverse needs and experiences of the communities it serves and adheres to statutory obligations, in compliance with the UK's public sector equality duty. To this end, the Council will be responsible for ensuring that the effects of any outputs on groups or individuals with protected characteristics under the UK's Equality Act are thoroughly considered and addressed. By embedding

equalities best practices within the governance structure and ensuring compliance with the public sector equality duty, the Council will foster an equitable and inclusive environment that promotes fairness and respects the diverse perspectives and contributions of all its members and stakeholders.

Secretariat

The Council will be run jointly by officials in the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, and staff from Solar Energy UK.

The Secretariat's role is to ensure the Solar Council fulfils its purpose, functions and objectives, and to ensure that meetings run smoothly and effectively. The Secretariat will support the Council to monitor progress against delivering actions set out in the Roadmap. It will ensure that actions are completed by the given deadlines and convene discussion with action owners as necessary.

The Secretariat will circulate papers for the Council at least three working days prior to the meeting. The Secretariat will take minutes of meetings and will circulate to attendees within five working days.

Working Groups

There are no formal plans to convene sub-groups. However, at the discretion of the chairs, sub-groups can be convened on an issue-specific basis.

Chapter Sponsors, and Solar Energy UK Forums and Steering Groups

Solar Energy UK have existing forums that meet regularly across a range of themes. These forums are to be used as consultative forums, which, when possible, will meet ahead of Council meetings to discuss and agree a common position on agenda items ahead of the Council. The views put forward in these forums will often be represented by nominated representatives from the forums, who will act as 'chapter sponsors' on the Solar Council. Chapter sponsors will be nominated after the first Solar Council meeting. The SEUK steering groups through which chapter sponsors will be nominated include: Natural Capital, Planning & Land-use, Grid, Responsible Sourcing, Skills, Standards + Certification, Economics & Markets and UK Supply Chain.

Conflicts of interest

All members of the Solar Council agree to adhere to the highest standards of integrity and transparency.

Each party to this Terms of Reference (i.e. each Council member) agrees to disclose any situation that may create a potential, perceived, or actual conflict of interest related to the objectives and activities of the Solar Council. This includes, but is not limited to,

any personal, financial, or professional interests that could reasonably be seen to influence a member's judgment or actions in relation to the Council's work, including recommendations made to DESNZ and wider government.

The disclosure must be made in writing to the Secretariat as soon as the potential conflict is identified, and in advance of any meeting where such a conflict might arise.

Upon disclosure, the Council members and Secretariat will work together to resolve the conflict in a manner that is fair, transparent, and upholds the integrity of the Council's work. This may involve, but is not limited to:

- Recusing the member from discussions or decisions on specific agenda items.
- Documenting the nature of the conflict in the meeting minutes.
- Implementing other agreed-upon measures to mitigate the conflict.

The overarching principle is to ensure that the Council's deliberations and recommendations are impartial and serve the collective goals of solar deployment and the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan.

Annex A: Solar Council Membership

	Attendee	Organisation
To attend every meeting		
1	Michael Shanks MP (Chair)	DESNZ
2	Chris Hewett, CEO (Chair)	SEUK
3	Sarah Redwood (Deputy Chair) (+ supporting officials)	DESNZ
4	Gemma Grimes (Deputy Chair)	SEUK
5	Chris Stark	DESNZ
6	Liz Cammack	Segen
7	Jonathan Bates	Photon Energy
8	Alex De Souza	Lightsource BP
9	Matt Black	IG Renewables
10	Catherine Williams	Scottish Government
11	Ed Sheriff	Welsh Government
12	Zoe Crowe	Northern Ireland Executive
13	Union (Rotating Basis)	
To attend meetings on an ad-hoc basis, i.e. when the agenda is relevant		
15	NESO	
16	Great British Energy	
17	National Wealth Fund	
18	Trade Associations.	
19	Community energy representative(s)	
20	Consumer representative(s)	
21	Relevant industry representatives, to be determined based on the agenda.	
22	Relevant Government and Ofgem officials to be determined based on the agenda.	
23	Chapter Sponsors, to attend meetings when the agenda is relevant. Chapter Sponsors will be nominated after the first Solar Council meeting.	