



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero



National Infrastructure
& Service Transformation
Authority

To: Alex Milward, Senior Responsible Owner for the ECC and HyNet Cluster of the Carbon Capture, Usage and Storage (CCUS) Programme

From: Clive Maxwell, Interim Permanent Secretary of Department for Energy Security and Net Zero; and Becky Wood, Chief Executive Officer of the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority.

15 December 2025

Dear Alex,

APPOINTMENT AS SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OWNER FOR THE EAST COAST CLUSTER AND THE HYNET CLUSTER OF THE CARBON CAPTURE, USAGE AND STORAGE PROGRAMME.

1. Role:

- a. We are writing to confirm your appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the East Coast Cluster (ECC) and HyNet North West (hereinafter referred to as ECC and HyNet) of the Carbon Capture, Usage, and Storage (CCUS) Programme from 26 March 2021 (refer to the footnote).¹ This letter sets out your responsibility, authority, and accountability in this role as well as the support that you can expect from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority (NISTA). The requirement to appoint an SRO is mandated in [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery \(GovS002\)](#), the DESNZ Governance Framework, and DESNZ Portfolio Management Framework.
- b. ECC and HyNet within the CCUS Programme form part of the Major Decarbonisation Projects Group (MDPG) Portfolio under the oversight of the MDPG Portfolio Board & the Net Zero Delivery Board. Business Cases relating to ECC and HyNet will report under the CCUS Programme on Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP).

2. Responsibilities:

- a. Your responsibility as SRO is defined in NISTA's guidance on [Project Delivery: The Role of the Senior Responsible Owner](#) and in the DESNZ Project Delivery Centre of Excellence's SRO Hub. You are to comply with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery \(GovS002\)](#) and [other functional standards](#) as required, are expected to follow all relevant NISTA Guidance on Project Delivery, including [The Teal Book](#), and requirements for project delivery as set by DESNZ Portfolio and Delivery Directorate.

¹ The 2 clusters in scope are the East Coast Cluster in Teesside and the Humber, and HyNet Northwest in the northwest of England and Wales. These clusters comprise a series of anchor projects and subsequent expansion activities, noting your original appointment as SRO for the CCUS Programme on 26 March 2021, and as joint SRO for CCUS and Hydrogen with designated responsibility for the CCUS Programme since 23 November 2022.

- b. You have personal responsibility for the delivery of ECC and HyNet within the agreed funding envelopes. You will be held accountable for the delivery of these clusters' objectives, outcomes, benefits, and delivering policy intent as outlined in respective Full Business Cases. You are responsible for ECC and HyNet and recommending the change, pause, or termination of either cluster if appropriate.
 - c. In addition, you should take reasonable steps to ensure that Ministers, the Accounting Officer and other senior leaders are fully informed of increasing risks or issues affecting delivery that might be considered capable of undermining the business case at the earliest opportunity, even if outside the normal governance or timings.
3. **Authority.** The department will grant you the authority you require to discharge your defined responsibilities as SRO and thus deliver ECC and HyNet effectively. You are authorised to:
 - a. Recommend business cases relating to ECC and HyNet (subject to additional approval as required by spending controls) to approving bodies.
 - b. Lead and champion the wider CCUS programme (including in public).
 - c. Deliver the scope of ECC and HyNet as outlined in the associated business cases.
 - d. Delegate responsibility and authority as required within the CCUS Delivery team noting that accountability cannot be delegated.
 - e. Exercise your authority to decide on the most appropriate course of action to resolve disputes beyond the boundary of CCUS Delivery governance.
 - f. Challenge all interfacing projects, programmes and the wider operating environment on matters relating to the effective delivery of the programme.
 - g. Engage directly with appropriate internal and external stakeholders on matters relating to the delivery of ECC and HyNet.
4. If you do not have the authority you need to discharge the role effectively, you are to inform us promptly.
5. **Accountability.** You are directly accountable to Paro Konar, Director General, MDPG, under the oversight of the Interim Permanent Secretary as Accounting Officer for DESNZ. As an SRO for GMPP projects and programmes, you are personally accountable for the implementation of ECC and HyNet to Parliament (through a select committee) via the Accounting Officer.
6. This means that you will be held personally accountable to, and could be called by, select committees to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver ECC and HyNet. It is important to be clear that your accountability relates only to implementation, within the agreed terms in this letter; it will remain for the Minister to account for the relevant policy decisions and development. More information on this is set out in [Giving Evidence to Select Committees - Guidance for Civil Servants](#), sometimes known as the Osmotherly Rules.
7. You remain accountable to Ministers, as set out in the [Civil Service Code](#), and should deliver the projects in accordance with the objectives and policy intent as set by Ministers.
8. **Time commitment and tenure.** This will be a full-time role to enable effective delivery of the role and execute your responsibilities in full.
9. You are expected to undertake this role until 24 months after the achievement of ECC and HyNet Commercial Operating Dates (COD), (CODs are currently scheduled for 2029). Any changes to the agreed time commitment or tenure of the role, as set out above, will require both departmental and NISTA consent.

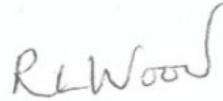
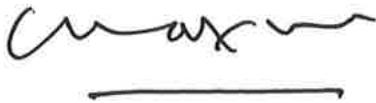
10. As additional projects progress through the business case lifecycle and join the GMPP as part of ECC and HyNet for expansion activities, this letter will be reviewed to assess whether the time commitment is still appropriate.
11. **Objectives and performance criteria.** You are accountable for delivering the policy intent, through delivery of the ECC and HyNet clusters, which provide a foundation towards the Programme's strategic direction and vision to foster a competitive CCUS Market in the 2030's, contributing to the Department's Carbon Budget Growth and Delivery Plan and HMG Net Zero obligations.
12. Any proposed changes to scope which impacts on this intent or the realisation of benefits must be authorised by **MDPG Portfolio Board** and may be subject to further levels of approval.
13. Your personal objectives and performance criteria are:
 - a. Ensure ongoing viability of business cases, obtaining approval for government investments required for potential build out users in line with the agreed schedule.
 - b. Implementing an effective working relationship between the DESNZ, clusters and relevant partner organisations.
 - c. Ensuring effective use of agreed development expenditure by the Transport and Storage Companies (T&SCos).
 - d. Delivery of the infrastructure, by their agreed target Commercial Operations Date, of the T&SCos, anchor users and any build-out users that have achieved government investment approval.
 - e. Ensuring a successful transition of the clusters to their operational phases by the end of 2029.
 - f. Evaluation of benefits outlined in FBCs over first 24 months of operation phase to include the following: (GW5)
 - i. Transport and Storage capacity of 8.5Mt of CO2 per annum across the ECC and HyNet clusters by 31 Dec 2030
 - ii. 6500 - 7000 CCUS Sector jobs associated with ECC and HyNet Clusters by 31 Dec 2030
 - iii. A power plant with 743MW low carbon dispatchable power capacity by 31 Dec 2030
14. **Finance and Controls.** HM Treasury spending controls will apply on the basis set out within the department's delegated authority letter. Where either cluster exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury, the Treasury approval processes will apply, and the details of each approval process must be agreed with your HM Treasury spending team. You should consult departmental finance colleagues on how to go about this.
15. You should note that where expenditure is considered novel, contentious, repercussive, or likely to result in costs to other parts of the public sector, HM Treasury approval will be required, regardless of whether the programme expenditure exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury. If in doubt about whether approval is required you should, in the first instance, consult departmental finance colleagues before raising with the relevant HM Treasury spending team.
16. The overall estimated budget, resourcing requirements and tolerances for ECC and HyNet will be agreed as part of the approval process. You will be expected to deliver within these tolerances and report quarterly on these as part of GMPP reporting.
17. You should operate at all times within the rules set out in [Managing Public Money](#). In addition, you must be mindful of, and act in accordance with, the specific HM Treasury delegated limits and Cabinet

Office controls relevant to the CCUS programme. Information on these controls can be found here: [Cabinet Office controls](#).

18. **Delegated authority.** In your respective areas of accountability, you are authorised to:
 - a. Approve expenditure of £2.5m (with Finance SCS clearance above £1m) Administration £10m CDEL and £10m RDEL (programme) in line with the standard DESNZ Departmental Delegations Framework.
 - b. Set Level 1 milestone baseline delivery dates in accordance with agreed Baseline and Change Control processes.
19. These authority limits are subject to change and other conditions or tolerances may be set as part of the business case approval and ongoing monitoring processes which you should then operate within.
20. Where risks and issues arise which take you outside of your delegated authority limits which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these to the MDPG DG and the MDPG Portfolio Board. You should take reasonable steps to ensure that Ministers, the Accounting Officer and other senior leaders are fully informed of increasing risks or issues affecting delivery that might be considered capable of undermining the business case at the earliest opportunity, even if outside the normal governance or timings.
21. **Appointments.** You should appoint two full-time Project Directors, responsible for ECC and HyNet respectively, to support you in the management of the clusters and make other appointments as required for the control and delivery of ECC and HyNet Clusters within your delegated authority.
22. **Governance and assurance.** You should pay attention to ensuring robust governance, providing effective leadership to the CCUS Sponsor Function Board and CCUS Delivery Board, maintaining appropriate membership and clear terms of reference.
23. As primary owner, you must ensure that the expansion projects for ECC and HyNet secure business case approval from DESNZ Project and Investment Committee. You should also ensure that the clusters remain aligned to the strategic outcomes, costs, timescales, and benefits in line with the approved business case as well as monitoring the context within which the clusters are being delivered to ensure it remains valid.
24. Where a change impacts the scope, costs, benefits, or planned delivery milestones agreed as part of an approved business case, you are responsible for following the agreed change request approval process and setting a new, approved, business case baseline.
25. Although you are directly accountable for ECC and HyNet, you are also expected to support delivery of the department's overall strategic objectives. This means that you are expected to work collaboratively with other SROs and Directors in adjacent projects and programmes within the MDP portfolio as well as the wider Net Zero portfolio to manage dependencies, resources, schedules, and funding to support delivery of the overall change the department needs to achieve its strategic objectives.
26. You should ensure that appropriate and proportionate assurance is in place and agree on the level and frequency of assurance reviews through the maintenance of an integrated assurance and approvals plan. You should develop this plan and its maintenance in collaboration with the Departmental Assurance Coordinator and NISTA.

27. **Cluster status, reporting and transparency requirements.** The clusters' status at the date of your appointment is reflected in the most recent quarterly return to NISTA (Q2 FY25/26) and is the agreed position as you assume formal ownership of the clusters.
28. You are responsible for ensuring the honest and timely reporting on the position the business cases associated with ECC and HyNet to NISTA while they remain on the GMPP and for providing reports and information into the DESNZ Net Zero portfolio as required. Reporting should include carbon measurement, and other sustainable development goals demonstrating evidence that the project contributes to an overarching environmental strategy and is aligned with defined Net Zero pathways. Information on the CCUS Programme will be published annually by NISTA.
29. As the SRO for a project/programme that is within scope of the Clean Energy Superpower Mission (CESM), you are additionally required to report, via relevant Net Zero Portfolio / sector Boards and the Net Zero Directors governance forum, into the CESM governance structure as part of the Accelerating to Net Zero pillar of the Mission.
30. As part of the government's commitment to transparency on major infrastructure projects, you are responsible for ensuring the completion and publication of the following publishing on GOV.UK:
 - a. A summary of the accounting officer assessment completed in line with the approval of the Outline Business Case and summaries of any subsequent assessments should they be required owing to material changes to scope. [Guidance on completing accounting officer assessments](#) for major projects is available from HM Treasury.
 - b. A summary of the HM Treasury approved Full Business Case
 - c. A close out report after the Programme has been completed.
31. You are also responsible for registering all planned, live and completed evaluations on the Government Evaluation Registry. [Guidance on using the evaluation registry](#) is available on GOV.UK.
32. **Development and support.** As a graduate of the Major Projects Leadership Academy, you are expected to maintain your continuing professional development as a project leader, including your status as an accredited assurance reviewer. To maintain your accreditation, you will be required to participate in a review at least once every 12 months.
33. The department will assist you in securing the necessary resources to support the programme, and will set clear guidance, requirements and standards, which align to the [Government Functional Standard on Project Delivery](#), to enable good governance and effective delivery. You will be part of the department's cohort of major project leaders who will be expected to support each other, share good practice and lessons learned and to collectively develop solutions. You should liaise with the department's Head of Profession for project delivery to discuss the maintenance and development of your delivery and leadership skills.
34. NISTA will be available to you for support, advice, and assurance throughout the clusters' time on the GMPP.
35. Following approval of the business cases and entry onto the DESNZ portfolio, the MDP Portfolio Board and Net Zero Delivery Board will provide ongoing oversight and support and will take steps to help resolve and escalate risks, issues or constraints that are acting as a blocker to successful delivery.
36. We would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in your role as SRO.

Yours sincerely,



CLIVE MAXWELL

Interim Permanent Secretary, Department for
Energy Security and Net Zero

BECKY WOOD

Chief Executive Officer, National Infrastructure and
Service Transformation Authority

CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF APPOINTMENT

I confirm that I accept the appointment of Senior Responsible Owner for the ECC and HyNet Cluster including my personal accountability for implementation, as set out in the letter above.



ALEX MILWARD

15 DEC 2025