RSUA

The Royal Society
of Ulster Architects

The Response of the Royal Society of Ulster Architects (RSUA) to the 'One Stop Shop' Implementation Plan Consultation

31 January 2023

Introduction

The Royal Society of Ulster Architects (RSUA) is the professional body for architects based in Northern Ireland. We have 870 chartered members and over 300 student members. RSUA strives to enhance the region's built environment for the benefit of all through the promotion of architecture.

RSUA welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the 'One Stop Shop' implementation plan.

Questions

1. Do you agree with the Energy One Stop Shop underpinning principles?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions below.

RSUA believes that an overriding issue with the 'one stop shop' is that there is no diagram/demonstration of where the 'one stop shop' will exist within or alongside existing organisations, and how it sits relative to the Climate Act. Examples of existing organisations are the Consumer Council and Utility Regulator and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive through its Energy Advice Service.

RSUA requests clarification on is 'one stop shop' a working title or the planned title to go ahead. As concerns have been raised that if the consultation is to be named 'one stop shop' it actually needs to be a 'one stop shop'. Otherwise, the consultations name needs to be changed to focus on what it plans to deliver.

RSUA believes that the 'One Stop Shop' should focus on providing a new service to users. For example, the 'One Stop Shop' could act as a source of where users can find relevant services or be an amalgamation of existing services already available through other organisations.

RSUA believes that the use of the Republic of Ireland example (2.3) referenced in the 'one stop shop' consultation was helpful.

2. Do you agree with the definitions for each of the proposed principles?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

3. Do you agree with the proposed strategic objectives for the Energy One Stop Shop?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

RSUA recognises that the areas the 'one stop shop' is targeting and planning to cover is positive (3.12). However, RSUA believes that the list of areas that the 'one-stop shop' is not covering is of concern. For example, handle complaints, act as a regulator, promote products, services or brands and so on. Since the 'one stop shop' is not covering these areas then who is, if anyone, taking care of those areas. RSUA believes if the 'One Stop Shop' is not covering certain areas it should instead provide links to those who do.

4. Do you agree that the Energy One Stop Shop should provide advice, information and support to domestic consumers, micro, small and medium businesses and community energy groups?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

While RSUA agrees with the above statement we ask for clarification that the services 'one stop shop' is aiming to cover is not a duplicate of already existing services. For example, one of the strategic objectives of the 'one stop shop' is to provide advice to the public. However, in section 3.13 it is recognised that the Consumer Council already does exactly this and advises consumers. Similarly, The Department for Communities currently funds the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to run the Energy Advice Service. RSUA believes efficiency is key and 'one stop shop' will need to either provide something new or an integrated system of all the services the government provides.

5. Do you agree that the Energy One Stop Shop should take account of the needs of vulnerable domestic consumers, in particular those with low incomes, of pensionable age, digitally excluded, living with chronic ailment or disability or in rural areas?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

RSUA agrees that the 'one stop shop' should take into account the needs of vulnerable domestic consumers.

RSUA believes that the 'one stop shop' should show a clear understanding and consideration on how the 'one stop shop' will link to all the already existing organisations available to these groups.

RSUA believes that the previously mentioned diagram in question 1 & 2 would need to further feed out or potentially create a further in depth diagram how each service 'one stop shop' provides feeds and links into organisations.

6. Do you agree with the types of services and support that the Energy One Stop Shop should deliver?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

7. Should the Energy One Stop Shop deliver any other services or activities?

Yes

No

If "yes", please rank your top 3 priorities for additional services from the list below from 1-3 (where 1 - Most Important, 3 - Least Important)

- **Lead in the production of national and sectoral statistics to meet reporting obligations, guide policy and inform investment decisions;**
- **Undertake a programme of energy and behavioural research;**
- **Deliver or administer financial support schemes, especially targeted to those who need it most; (1)**
- **Provide support to businesses and Public Authorities including grants, financial support, energy audits, training, toolkits and kitemark certification; (2)**
- **Provide support to Sustainable Energy Communities including financial support, support with applications to any Renewable Support Schemes, training and toolkits; (3)**
- **Support energy education in schools**
- **Monitor compliance and raise awareness of labelling and eco-design regulations**

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

RSUA believes that the 'one stop shop' should define better exactly what it will provide to the public as we believe currently it is still quite vague and a further detailed document would go into greater detail.

Again, RSUA believes that the 'one stop shop' would benefit from a diagram showing where the services the 'one stop shop' provides to the public exists within the existing bodies if it goes ahead or how the 'one stop shop' amalgamates with other existing organisations.

8. Do you agree with the proposed initial list of consumer engagement channels for the Energy One Stop Shop?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

RSUA requests clarification on if customer engagement is offered online, physical or both.

9. Do you agree with the proposed approach to refine and improve consumer engagement?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions

10. Do you agree with the proposal to commence the operation of the Energy One Stop Shop with a Pilot?

Yes

No

Do you agree that the Pilot should launch as soon as possible?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

RSUA believes that a pilot may build and regain public support especially in relation to grants. RSUA believes that if a pilot is to be well received by the public then the pilot needs to be well considered and thought out by building on existing service experiences which should not be rushed.

11. Do you agree with the proposed Energy One Stop Shop Implementation Roadmap?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

12. Do you agree with the proposed services that would be available in Year 1 of the Pilot?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

13. Do you agree with the proposed additional services that the One Stop Shop Pilot would introduce in Years 2 and 3?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

14. Do you agree with the proposed services that the One Stop Shop may consider introducing from Year 4 onwards?

Yes

No

Please provide evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

RSUA believes that in Year 4 is the 'one stop shop' trying to say it is now a regulator?

15. Do you agree with the proposal to create a new brand for the Energy One Stop Shop?

Yes

No

Please provide names for the service and evidence to support any additional comments or suggestions.

RSUA recognises that the 'one stop shop' would benefit from a possible rebrand of its product/services it is trying to offer the public. If not a completely new rebrand of 'one stop shop' but an enhancement on existing branding and organisations which exist could be another way forward.