



## Meeting Purpose

To provide comprehensive updates on the SME Data Taskforce's progress and finalise plans for the Net Zero Council presentation and public consultation launch scheduled for June.

## Key Takeaways

- A draft report will be shared with the working group during the week commencing 19th May, with feedback due by 29th May.
- The Net Zero Council presentation is scheduled for 14th May, aiming to secure endorsement of the taskforce's principles and approach.
- An extensive summer consultation period is planned to gather wider market feedback on the proposed data standard.
- The final version 1.0 of the SME data standard has been completed, with no further changes planned before the consultation phase begins.

## Topics

### Government Engagement Updates

- The taskforce continues to engage closely with DESNZ, who are providing robust statements of support for the initiative.
- Ongoing dialogue is maintained with the Cabinet Office, focusing on aligning the standard with current and future procurement policies.
- Efforts are underway to secure ministerial representation for the London Climate Action Week events in June, including outreach to the SME Minister and DBT representatives.
- Engagement with the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) is primarily facilitated through connections with Small Business Britain and those involved in the Willow Review. Introductions to be arranged.

### SME Data Standard Finalisation

- Version 1.0 of the standard has been completed, incorporating several refinements based on working group feedback:
  - Language has been clarified to explicitly recognise nuclear as a zero-carbon energy source.
  - The standard now includes 5 mandatory Scope 3 categories to align with current PPN requirements, language clarified so SMEs can select 'not currently recorded' if they do not have this information.
  - The list of sustainability actions has been refined and more directly linked to potential financial incentives to drive engagement.
- The finalised standard comprises 10 questions on emissions and 4 sign-off and contextual questions. 8 of the emission questions are mandatory.
- A comprehensive guidance document has been created, providing clear instructions for data providers and SMEs on how to answer each question and where to find relevant information. This will be published in the annex of the report but will also be subject to revision over the summer consultation period.



## **Data Quality Framework**

- The framework is primarily targeted at data collectors and consumers, rather than SMEs themselves.
- Its aim is to enable the confident allocation of finance and green incentives based on demonstrable data quality.
- The framework recognises the differential between live, verified data and manually submitted or estimated data.
- A robust discussion was held on the potential for "middle ground" verification levels between pure self-reporting and full independent audits.
- Consensus was reached to focus quality scoring primarily on Scope 1 & 2 data for the time being, given the complexities surrounding Scope 3 data for SMEs.

## **Report Development**

- The draft report will be shared with the working group on 19th May, with a feedback deadline of 29th May.
- The report will outline the problem statement, detail the task force's work to date, and propose the approach for wider adoption.
- It aims to secure wider market endorsement and explicit government backing for the initiative.
- A discussion was held on potential report titles, with a follow-up planned to gather votes from the working group.

## **Summer Consultation Plans**

- The consultation will officially launch following the parliamentary event on 23rd June.
- It will encompass an open feedback form, a series of technical roundtables, and practical testing with selected partners.
- The consultation aims to gather targeted feedback from three key groups: SMEs, corporates (focusing on supply chain reporting), and financial services providers.
- Two working group sessions are planned during the consultation period - one before the summer holidays and another in September to review findings.

## **Next Steps**

- Working group members are to review the draft report when shared during the week commencing 19th May.
- Feedback on the report should be provided by 29th May.
- Members should secure internal approvals for their organisation's logo to be included in the report.
- A final pre-launch meeting of approximately 40 minutes will be held in June, which all members should attend.
- Members are encouraged to support the amplification of social media and other communications for the launch.
- Participation in relevant summer consultation activities is strongly encouraged.