

Wesley Aston

From: Wesley Aston
Sent: 17 February 2017 16:28
To: Andrew Crawford
Subject: Fwd: Important media enquiry - UFU's RHI meetings
Attachments: RHianswers.doc; ATT00001.htm

As discussed.
 Wesley

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Deborah Cummings <dcummings@ufuhq.com>
Date: 17 February 2017 at 14:28:40 GMT
To: Wesley Aston <wesley@ufuhq.com>, Barclay Bell <BBell@ufuhq.com>
Subject: Fwd: Important media enquiry - UFU's RHI meetings

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Richard Wright <Richard.Wright@ufuhq.com>
Date: 17 February 2017 at 14:19:58 GMT
To: Deborah Cummings <dcummings@ufuhq.com>
Subject: Re: Fwd: Important media enquiry - UFU's RHI meetings

Personal information redacted by the
 RHI Inquiry

There you go...

On 17/02/2017 12:34, Deborah Cummings wrote:

Hi richard could you help with this for us ?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sam McBride
 <Sam.mcbride@newsletter.co.uk>
Date: 17 February 2017 at 12:21:43 GMT
To: Deborah Cummings
 <dcummings@ufuhq.com>, Taryn McHenry
 <taryn@ufuhq.com>
Subject: Important media enquiry - UFU's
 RHI meetings

Hi Deborah and Taryn,

This is a story for tomorrow's News Letter and I'm keen to get a UFU response. Can you please confirm receipt?

I have received leaked UFU emails as well as information released under the Environmental Information Regulations.

A leaked email from Tom Forgrave to DETI officials on 8 July 2015 said that the proposed date to end the lucrative uncapped non-domestic RHI scheme "does not give the poultry industry in NI time to adapt to a new tariff". He said that the poultry sector "has a particularly large heat requirement and the NIRHI has proven to be very effective..." He said that he and other farmers were in the planning process "to build new poultry shed for Moy Park" and their financial calculations were based on a NIRHI of 6.3p/kw; closing the lucrative part of the RHI scheme would "put in serious jeopardy the viability of many of these expansion plans".

A leaked email from Tom Forgrave to Christopher Osborne sent on 9 July 2015 asked "is there any chance UFU could throw a little weight behind the poultry sector to try and delay the proposed changes". Mr Osborne replied "of course I will support the delay".

Mr Forgrave had earlier said to Mr Osborne, in a 6 March 2015 email, that he was concerned that "some personal opinions were coming to the fore and conversations were being had with those in authority undermining the whole RHI scheme".

I have separately received from the department a note of the meeting which the UFU had with DETI on 22 July 2015. It shows that the UFU told DETI that poultry [presumably biomass conversions] were only "70% through to date" and said that the proposed cap was "too low for poultry"

I have three questions:

1) With hindsight, given the disastrous financial consequences for Northern Ireland of keeping the RHI scheme open, does the UFU regret pressing for this to happen?

2) Did the UFU discuss this issue with Moy Park?

3) It is alleged that Andrew Crawford played a role in keeping the uncapped RHI open longer than originally intended. Dr Crawford used to work for the UFU. Did anyone in the UFU have any contact with him about this issue?

Thanks,

Sam

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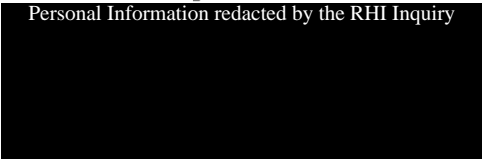
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Richard Wright

Personal Information redacted by the RHI Inquiry



Dear Sam,

Thanks you for your questions. The e-mails to which you refer have already been made public, and we have no concerns about their content. You are correct in saying that poultry producers are big users of energy, and need to minimise costs. Tom Forgrave is chair of our poultry committee and separately represented his fellow producers with Moy Park. Christopher Osborne a UFU policy officer, responsible for, amongst other things, renewable energy.

With regard to your specific questions....

1 The role of the UFU is to lobby on behalf of its members. We were concerned that members who had made major investments in boilers and associated work were in danger of losing out if the scheme was changed. That is why we sought a grace period to allow those with investments made time to complete those and benefit from the scheme as it existed when they began the work. We believe that reflects our role. The problems that have emerged since are a separate issue.

2 This was all some time ago, but we have no knowledge of specific meetings between the UFU and Moy Park with regard to the RHI scheme. We are aware that Moy Park encouraged its farmer suppliers to use the scheme to reduce costs and their carbon footprint.

3 It is a long time since Andrew Crawford worked as a UFU policy officer. He left the UFU to work in Brussels, before his career as a political adviser. We have the same relationship with him as with any political adviser, and we would not seek or expect special treatment because he worked for the UFU a long time ago. In any event we have made clear in the past that our discussions over the RHI were with officials at DETI and not with ministers, other politicians or political advisers.

Best wishes,