

**O'Neill, Lynne**

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**From:** O'Neill, Lynne  
**Sent:** 30 January 2017 16:14  
**To:** McKendry, Martin; Ellis, Cathal  
**Subject:** FW: BBC Nolan Show Questions

Martin/ Cathal,

I tried to call you both, unfortunately unsuccessfully.

Regarding question 10 below – we have trawled our records here and have no record of any other correspondence which highlights specific cost/budget concerns, other than Minister Bell's correspondence. You mentioned in conversation with Peter that CAFRE included information on tariff changes in relation to the October 2015 POFRE event. Can you advise if DETI noted any budgetary concerns in correspondence about the tariffs?

Thanks  
 Lynne

Lynne O'Neill  
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 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs  
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**From:** [Peter.Scott@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.Scott@daera-ni.gov.uk)  
**Sent:** Monday, 30 January 2017 15:13  
**To:** Henry, Ronan; Henry, Ronan; McKendry, Martin; Long, Eric; Mathers, George; Ellis, Cathal; Foster, Dave; O'Neill, Lynne  
**Cc:** G\_DARD PressOffice.Group, DARD; Lavery, Noel (DAERA); Patton, Terence  
**Subject:** Re: BBC Nolan Show Questions

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

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**From:** Henry, Ronan  
**Sent:** Monday, 30 January 2017 13:28  
**To:** Henry, Ronan; McKendry, Martin; Scott, Peter (DAERA); Long, Eric; Mathers, George; Ellis, Cathal; Foster, Dave  
**Cc:** G\_DARD PressOffice.Group, DARD; Lavery, Noel (DAERA); Patton, Terence  
**Subject:** RE: BBC Nolan Show Questions

Colleagues

See below draft answers to Nolan query about timings. (question 10)

Ronan

1. When did the Department of Agriculture open its workshops to advise farmers and others about the RHI scheme?
2. When and why did these workshops cease?
3. How many attended these workshops?
4. Where and when were these workshops held?
5. Did any companies or other organisations outside the departmental officials attend these workshops to promote the scheme?
6. What publicity was there to promote the workshops?
7. What figures does the Department have for the success or otherwise of the workshops in driving uptake for the non-domestic RHI scheme?
8. At this time, was the Department of Agriculture aware that recipients of the scheme could make larger profits from RHI the more fuel they burned?
9. Did the Department promote the scheme on this basis? Or was it aware of any other organisations doing this during the workshops?
10. When was the Department first informed by about concerns about the costs of the non-domestic RHI scheme, and by whom?

**The then DETI Minister Jonathan Bell wrote to all Ministerial colleagues on the 9th November 2015 to inform them he was making changes to the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) primarily to provide for new tariffs for the combined heat and power installations and to introduce cost control measures for the biomass including a two tier structure and an annual cap on heat payments. On the 5th February 2016 Mr Bell wrote to First and deputy First Minister, copied to all his Ministerial colleagues, seeking agreement to take an urgent decision on the closure of the RHI scheme. In this correspondence, Mr Bell mentions affordability and budgetary pressures.**

11. Did the then Agriculture Minister Michelle O'Neill sign off on these workshops?

Ronan Henry  
Principal Information Officer  
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)  
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**From:** Henry, Ronan  
**Sent:** 30 January 2017 11:04  
**To:** McKendry, Martin; Scott, Peter (DAERA); Long, Eric; Mathers, George; Ellis, Cathal; Foster, Dave  
**Cc:** G\_DARD PressOffice.Group, DARD; Lavery, Noel (DAERA)  
**Subject:** FW: BBC Nolan Show Questions

Colleagues

See queries from Nolan Show below. Grateful if you could provide responses. They have asked for responses by 9am tomorrow.

Ronan

When did the Department of Agriculture open its workshops to advise farmers and others about the RHI scheme?

When and why did these workshops cease?

How many attended these workshops?

Where and when were these workshops held?

Did any companies or other organisations outside the departmental officials attend these workshops to promote the scheme?

What publicity was there to promote the workshops?

What figures does the Department have for the success or otherwise of the workshops in driving uptake for the non-domestic RHI scheme?

At this time, was the Department of Agriculture aware that recipients of the scheme could make larger profits from RHI the more fuel they burned?

Did the Department promote the scheme on this basis? Or was it aware of any other organisations doing this during the workshops?

When was the Department first informed by about concerns about the costs of the non-domestic RHI scheme, and by whom?

**Minister Bell wrote to all Ministerial colleagues on the 9th November 2015 to inform them he was making changes to the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) primarily to provide for new tariffs for the combined heat and power installations and to introduce cost control measures for the biomass including a two tier structure and an annual cap on heat payments. On the 5th February 2016 Mr Bell wrote to First and deputy First Minister, copied to all his Ministerial colleagues, seeking agreement to take an urgent decision on the closure of the RHI scheme. In this correspondence Mr Bell mentions affordability and budgetary pressures.**

Did the then Agriculture Minister Michelle O'Neill sign off on these workshops?

Ronan

Ronan Henry  
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**From:** David Thompson - Current Affairs, NI [Personal Information redacted by the RHI Inquiry]  
**Sent:** 30 January 2017 11:00  
**To:** G\_DARD PressOffice.Group, DARD  
**Subject:** BBC Nolan Show Questions

As discussed with Jonathan, here are some questions from the Nolan Show re the Department of Agriculture's role in the RHI scheme.

Deadline, 9am tomorrow. You can contact me at any time on [Personal Information redacted by the RHI Inquiry]

When did the Department of Agriculture open its workshops to advise farmers and others about the RHI scheme?

When and why did these workshops cease?

How many attended these workshops?

Where and when were these workshops held?

Did any companies or other organisations outside the departmental officials attend these workshops to promote the scheme?

What publicity was there to promote the workshops?

What figures does the Department have for the success or otherwise of the workshops in driving uptake for the non-domestic RHI scheme?

At this time, was the Department of Agriculture aware that recipients of the scheme could make larger profits from RHI the more fuel they burned?

Did the Department promote the scheme on this basis? Or was it aware of any other organisations doing this during the workshops?

When was the Department first informed by about concerns about the costs of the non-domestic RHI scheme, and by whom?

Did the then Agriculture Minister Michelle O'Neill sign off on these workshops?

Best,

David Thompson

Producer

BBC Nolan Show

Mob: Personal Information redacted by the RHI Inquiry