

From: Johnston, Chris
To: [Walsh, Linda;](#)
Subject: FW: RHI Press release
Date: 11 February 2016 16:50:00

fyi

Chris Johnston
Tel:- 02892681540
email:- chris.johnston@afbini.gov.uk

From: Michael Hegarty [mailto:michaelhegarty@irbea.ie]
Sent: 11 February 2016 15:12
To: John Martin
Cc: Johnston, Chris; Michael Doran
Subject: Re: RHI Press release

All, a revised draft here from the info you sent me.

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

Press release issued on behalf of Biomass Energy – Northern Ireland (BENI):

Closure of Renewable Heat Incentive is severe blow to NI jobs

Up to 2000 jobs may be lost, with confidence in the renewables sector damaged

BENI calls on Minister to consult with sector on achieving 2020 heat target of 10%

Belfast, Thursday 11 February 2016: The announcement this week by Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) Minister Jonathan Bell on the intention to close the domestic and non domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) schemes in Northern Ireland is a savage and severe blow to the emerging renewable energy sector in Northern Ireland, according to suppliers group Biomass Energy NI. BENI chairman **John Martin** said this news was totally unexpected, and follows discussions with DETI on the RHI, as recently as January 8th, where there was no indication that the future of the NI scheme was in

doubt.

Commenting, **John Martin** said: "This RHI cut-off is like a guillotine to the renewable energy sector, and follows closely the changes in supports to wind and renewable obligations certificates. We are extremely disappointed that DETI has not managed the policy and applications in such a way that would provide longer term certainty to investors and developers in the market. Instead, we had positive changes to the RHI scheme announced in September 2015 which came into effect in November 2015. This resulted in a doubling of applications in a single month to 18 November compared to the previous three years."

Mr Martin continued: "DETI says that around 6% of NI's heating needs are now provided through renewable technologies, that the Executive's target to achieve 4% renewable heat (a Programme for Govt target) has been exceeded and that this increased demand means the available budget for new applications has been exhausted. DETI's analysis should have predicted this outcome. Instead, the Minister says 'significant levels of additional funding will have to be found from within the NI Executive's budget for the next five years to address the current deficit'. This is absolutely no comfort to the renewables sector, and in particular suppliers of wood chip and pellets, biogas producers and heating plant providers, investors and other developers who have been steadily building and investing in the renewable heat sector. Heat system installers have quotations out with customers, deposits for boilers in new dwellings and commercial properties which are not yet ready to install but have monies paid. Thousands of jobs are also at risk.

Mr Martin added: "Now today we have a further announcement from the Minister that the closure date will be extended by two weeks to 29th February. This extension is very little comfort to our members and other sector investors who have committed significant sums in the renewable heat sector. If no RHI is available on these systems the customers will probably not proceed with the installation. Basically the market for biomass systems in NI is dead."

Mr Martin concluded: "A further 4% heat from renewables is still required to reach NI's 2020 target. This won't be achieved if the RHI is closed. The UK Government's Spending Review and Autumn Statement announced on 25th November 2015 included an energy package with Increased funding for the Renewable Heat Incentive to £1.15 billion in

2021 to ensure the UK continues progress towards its climate goals. The NI Government's announcements this week contradict the wider UK policy. Therefore, BENI calls on the Minister and the Government to consult urgently with the heat sector to plan an appropriate way forward."

Ends

Michael Hegarty

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BIOENERGY - DELIVERING FOR THE IRISH ECONOMY



On 11 Feb 2016, at 14:35, John Martin <jcmfarms@aol.com> wrote:

Michael

Good starting point. I don't think we should be advocating 3 months as Michael says. Likely to generate another huge number of applications only exacerbating the situation.

My namesake responded to my email if Monday highlighting the problems for installers re deposits taken and boilers ordered. I'll forward for information after this. A short period as suggested is probably more realistic. I think we should be calling for a more strategic policy on renewables than the sudden stop as proposed. Invest NI use public funds to create employment yet on the other ending of RHI is removing 1000-2000 jobs from the sector. Similar numbers to those lost in ballymena. Would a flat rate of 1.5p/ KW have any merit without banding of boiler size?

I would also not mention farmers first in your list as the public may be tiring of hearing about us!

Additionally we should acknowledge the need pod boiler operators to comply with the spirit of the scheme, making effective use of heat.

Just thinking out loud.

Regards, John

John Martin

jcmfarms@aol.com

Personal information redacted by the RHI
Inquiry

Sent from my iPhone

On 11 Feb 2016, at 13:49, "Johnston, Chris" <Chris.Johnston@afbini.gov.uk> wrote:

Michael, Michael, John

Thank you for copying me in.

Just thinking aloud here. Is the press release not coming from BENI rather than AR or IrBea?

Also, is this the right strategy to call for 3 months extension? It still results in the same thing albeit some short term help. Should the sector not be looking for agreement for a meeting with DETI to discuss the plans to terminate at all? Especially in light of RHI commitment in GB and soon to be commitment in RoI? The NI target is 10% by 2020, the 6% is only a programme for govt mid way target – at least that was my understanding...

The next 4 % can be achieved at much less RHI cost than the previous 4%

Anyway just thinking aloud ... please forgive my political naivety !!

Regards

Chris

Chris Johnston

Tel:- 02892681540

email:- chris.johnston@afbini.gov.uk

From: Michael Hegarty [<mailto:michaelhegarty@irbea.ie>]

Sent: 11 February 2016 13:37

To: John Martin; Michael Doran

Cc: Orlaith McVeigh; Johnston, Chris; Ian Duff;
glendaletreeservices@gmail.com; Johnston, Chris
Subject: Re: RHI Press release

Dear all

Here's a draft press release from BENI responding to Monday's announcement about cessation of the RHI in NI, and today's announcement of 2 week extension. Comments on the content welcome, before being sent to media.

Kirstie, I spoke to John Martin about having an additional name in for possible media interview. It would be good. But if you are not comfortable with this, we can delete your details.

Orlaith, it's better if the press release is seen to come from you/A.R. rather than me/IrBEA in the south.

Michael

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

Press release issued on behalf of Biomass Energy – Northern Ireland (BENI):

Closure of Renewable Heat Incentive is severe blow to NI jobs

Up to 2000 jobs may be lost, with confidence in the renewables sector damaged

BENI calls on Minister to keep RHI scheme open for further 3 months

Belfast, Thursday 11 February 2016: The announcement this week by Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) Minister Jonathan Bell on the intention to close the domestic and non domestic Renewable Heat

Incentive (RHI) schemes in Northern Ireland is a savage and severe blow to the emerging renewable energy sector in Northern Ireland, according to suppliers group Biomass Energy NI. BENI chairman **John Martin** said this news was totally unexpected, and follows discussions with DETI on the RHI, as recently as January 8th, where there was no indication that the future of the NI scheme was in doubt.

Commenting, **John Martin** said: "This RHI cut-off is like a guillotine to the renewable energy sector, and follows closely the changes in supports to wind and renewable obligations certificates. We are extremely disappointed that DETI have not managed the policy and applications in such a way that would provide longer term certainty to investors and developers in the market. Instead, we had positive changes to the RHI scheme announced in September 2015 which came into effect in November 2015. This resulted in a doubling of applications in a single month to 18 November compared to the previous three years."

Mr Martin continued: "DETI says that around 6% of NI's heating needs are now provided through renewable technologies, that the Executive's target to achieve 4% renewable heat has been exceeded and that this increased demand means the available budget for new applications has been exhausted. DETI's analysis should have predicted this outcome. Instead, the Minister says 'significant levels of additional funding will have to be found from within the NI Executive's budget for the next five years to address the current deficit'. This is absolutely no comfort to the renewables sector, and in particular farmers and suppliers of wood chip and pellets, biogas producers and heating plant providers, investors and other developers who have been steadily building and investing in the renewable heat sector. Thousands of jobs are also at risk."

Mr Martin added: "Now today we have a further announcement from the Minister that the closure date will be extended by two weeks to 29th February. This extension is very little comfort to our members and other sector investors

who have committed significant sums in the renewable heat sector. Therefore, BENI calls on the Minister and the Government to reconsider the decision to close the RHI and to keep the scheme open for at least three more months so that equipment and other orders already made can be delivered.”

Ends

John Martin (BENI Chairman) Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry and Kirstie Cameron (BENI Management Committee) Personal information redacted by the RHI Personal information redacted by the RHI are available for interview.

For reference, issued by

Orlaith McVeigh | Action Renewables (BENI Member)

e. Orlaith.McVeigh@actionrenewables.co.uk; m. 028 9590 1197

About Biomass Energy – Northern Ireland

Biomass Energy – Northern Ireland (B.E.N.I.) <http://biomassenergyni.com/> is a self funded organisation whose members are actively engaged in all aspects of the production, marketing and use of biomass energy in Northern Ireland, with a strong emphasis on Biomass Renewable Heat. Members of B.E.N.I stem from across Northern Ireland. The organisation presents a wealth of knowledge to its members and the public, linking industry expertise at every level, from energy crop production to marketing. Members include users, suppliers, boiler installation companies, equipment suppliers and researchers and developers. BENI is also affiliated to the Irish Bioenergy Association (IrBEA www.irbea.ie) and through this to the European Biomass Association (AEBIOM www.aebiom.org) and the European Biogas Association (EBA www.european-biogas.eu)

Michael Hegarty

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<image001.jpg>

On 11 Feb 2016, at 11:35, Michael Hegarty

<michaelhegarty@irbea.ie> wrote:

I just spoke to John, I'll draft a short press release now and circulate for review.

Michael

Michael Hegarty

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<image001.jpg>

On 11 Feb 2016, at 10:57, John Martin <jcmfarms@aol.com> wrote:

?..... were received in the last week. I don't know whether the decision was approved at ministerial level or by Seamus Hughes etc?

We are now hearing of the RHI closure in media headlines with reference that up to 2000 jobs may be at risk in the sector.

We need to put a statement on the beni website. The other John Martin responded to my Monday email saying how he was exposed given he has taken deposits from customers and ordered boilers for installation on the strength of RHI. He doesn't yet know the financial impact on his business directly or in the medium to longer term. I suspect others are in a similar situation.

Other views welcome!

Regards, John

John Martin

jcmfarms@aol.com

Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry

Sent from my iPhone

On 11 Feb 2016, at 10:38, Michael Hegarty <michaelhegarty@irbea.ie> wrote:

John

Any subsequent update of info on this announcement? My reading of the press release is the Minister can't close it immediately, legislation needs to be enacted to do this. But I might be wrong.

I'd like to have info to circulate to all IrBEA members tomorrow for the Weekly Noticeboard.

Michael

p.s. Was in Brussels Mon-Wed this week with Biogas3 project, so just getting to this now.

Michael Hegarty

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<image001.jpg>

On 8 Feb 2016, at 10:28, jcmfarms@aol.com wrote:

Dear Member

Please see below a link to a statement made by DETI Minister Jonathan Bell on Friday.

I regret to inform you that he has announced the closure of the Domestic and Non domestic RHI schemes for new applications. It is not yet clear the details behind this but it appears to be with immediate effect.

This is disappointing given the recent meeting with DETI staff who provided no indication, even when questioned directly about future changes to the scheme.

At the IrBea conference last week a lot of focus was on the introduction of an RHI scheme towards the end of 2016 / early 2017.

Action Renewables are co-ordinating an event for MLAs at Stormont on 22nd February at 2.00pm, which was planned before this announcement. This is an all party event which sought to raise awareness of the renewables sector. I suspect the focus may now change somewhat to question the logic of removing support for renewable heat etc. Contact Orlaith

McVeigh if you are interested in attending.
You should be aware that there is also a proposal to audit installations to ensure there is no fraudulent taking place and they are being operated within the spirit of the scheme.
I would welcome any suggestions you may have around this announcement.
Regards, John

John Martin
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T: Personal information redacted by
the RHI Inquiry
E: jcmfarms@aol.com

-----Original Message-----
From: NI RHI <NI.RHI@detini.gov.uk>
To: NI RHI <NI.RHI@detini.gov.uk>
Sent: Mon, 8 Feb 2016 9:53
Subject: RHI Press release

Please find attached a link to a press release regarding the future of the Renewable Heat Incentive.

<https://www.detini.gov.uk/news/proposals-close-northern-ireland-renewable-heat-incentive-announced>

Energy Efficiency Branch
DETI

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