

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

ASSEMBLY QUESTIONS WRITTEN (AQW)

Due for answer on: Friday 5 February 2016

AQW No: 53731/11-16

Put Down By: Mr S Agnew

Political Party: Green Party

Constituency: North Down


Question:

To ask the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the rationale for the proposed closure of the Renewable Heat Incentive; and whether the RHI was funded by the UK government and its closure means a loss of investment in Northern Ireland.

Answer:

As I set out in the plenary debate on The Renewable Heat Incentive Schemes (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016, the reason for closing the schemes is to prevent additional pressure on the Executive's budget from 2016/17. This arises from increased uptake of the schemes and confirmation that HM Treasury require all Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive expenditure above 3% of the reduced GB Renewable Heat Incentive budget to be met from Northern Ireland Departmental Expenditure Limits. Until 2016/17 all costs have been funded by the UK government from Annual Managed Expenditure.

The closure of the scheme does not represent a loss of investment in Northern Ireland. On the contrary, continuing payments under the scheme for existing participants will bring around an additional £130 million into Northern Ireland over the next five years to add to the £50 million already supplied under the schemes.


Jonathan Bell MLA
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Date: 19/2/16