

ETI COMMITTEE CHAIR FIRST DAY BRIEF – (JUNE 2012)

Division/NDPB: Energy Division

Subject: Renewable Heat

Current Position:

The Renewable Heat Premium Payment scheme launched on Thursday, 24 May and provides grant assistance for domestic customers wishing to install renewable heating technologies such as biomass boilers, ground source or air source heat pumps and solar thermal panels.

The scheme is a forerunner to the longer term Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI). The RHI is a DETI scheme that will provide financial support to renewable heat generators over the lifetime of the technology. The level of support is dependent on the size and type of technology and payments based on the actual heat output of the application.

Energy Division is currently awaiting formal notification from the EU Commission to finalise the implementation of the RHI. The RHI scheme will be implemented in two phases with the first phase dealing with established technologies in the non-domestic sector.

Way Forward:

Once formal approval from the EU Commission is granted DETI will seek to finalise subordinate legislation so it can be tabled in the Assembly following Summer recess. DETI will also be finalising administration arrangements so the scheme can launch once legislation is in place.

Work will also begin on phase 2 of the RHI that will consider the extension of the scheme to the non-domestic sector and the potential introduction of additional technologies.

Key Stakeholders Other Than DETI (including other Depts):

A cross-departmental group on renewable heat has been established including representatives from OFMDFM; DOE; DSD; DARD; DEL; DFP; Invest NI and the Geological Survey NI.

The renewable heat sector has been consulted on proposals through a public consultation process held in July 2011.

Need for Primary/Subordinate Legislation:

Primary: No – primary powers exist within the 2011 Energy Act (GB)
Subordinate: Yes – subordinate legislation will be required in regard to the administrative arrangements for the scheme (eligibility requirements, making payments etc.)

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No – the RHI is a DETI policy, it is not deemed to be cross-cutting or controversial.

FoI Status:

This note is fully disclosable.

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