

From: [Murray, John \(DETI\)](#)
To: [McManus, Jim](#)
Cc: [McCullough, Kate](#); [McVeigh, Nathan](#); [Hepper, Fiona](#); [Dolaghan, Paul](#); [McCune, David](#); [Robson, Rod](#); [Clarke, Rosie](#); [Neth, Energy](#)
Subject: ETI COMMITTEE QUERY: RENEWABLE ENERGY & THE STRATEGIC ENERGY FRAMEWORK
Date: 20 May 2013 17:08:14
Attachments: [SUB 226 submission.docx](#)
[Table of Recommendations - ETI Inquiry - Update April 2013.DOCX](#)
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Jim

Please see attached response to the above query.

This has been cleared by the Minister.

FOI Status: Some parts of this submission may be exempt under section 35 of the
FOI Act relating to the formulation of
government

policy.

Thanks

John

John Murray

Legislative Monitoring Unit
ext: 29637

Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this e-mail?



Jim McManus
Committee Clerk,
Enterprise Trade and Investment Committee
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 424, Parliament Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

20 May 2013

Dear Jim

**UPDATES ON THE REPORT ON THE INQUIRY INTO RENEWABLE ENERGY & THE
STRATEGIC ENERGY FRAMEWORK (SEF) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Inquiry into Renewable Energy

The Department responded to the Committee on the "Report on the Committee's Inquiry into Barriers to the Development of Renewable Energy Production and its Associated Contribution to the Northern Ireland Economy" on 27 June 2011, and supplied additional information following Committee consideration on 11 August 2011. Updates on progress towards implementation of the recommendations were provided on 21 November 2011, 23 May 2012 and 21 November 2012. I am now writing to advise you of progress since the last update.

The current position is attached and includes input from other departments with responsibility for a number of the recommendations. The information provided should be considered in conjunction with the update provided in November. You will note that a significant number of the actions are now complete.

Strategic Energy Framework

It was also agreed that updates on the SEF Implementation Plan would be provided every six months and the attached version reflects progress up to the end of March 2013.

Yours sincerely

signed

**FIONA HEPPER
Head of Energy Division**

Update on progress towards implementation of recommendations in the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment’s Inquiry into Renewable Energy – May 2013

Recommendation	DETI Update (November 2012)	DETI Update (May 2013)
<p>1. The Barnett review stated that the Executive must provide clear focus and leadership to the range of energy policy issues as a separate and distinct Government priority. The Committee supports this recommendation and calls on the Executive to provide appropriate leadership in delivering the overall energy agenda by bringing all responsibility for energy policy and strategy under a single Government department</p>	<p>Response provided by: OFMDFM & DETI</p> <p>The Sustainable Development Champions’ Group has considered the DETI paper and provided recommendations that have been circulated to Ministers. It is intended that the Executive consider the recommendations during May.</p> <p>OFMDFM put a paper detailing the Sustainable Development Champions’ Group recommendations to the Executive on 31 May 2012. The Executive agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there are no operational or policy gaps of sufficient size in energy vires to merit substantive change; - the consolidation of energy functions should be revisited at some time in the future, taking into account the operational and policy status of the SEIDWG and the Cross-Departmental Working Group on Climate Change; and, - the small scale tactical reorganisation of energy efficiency functions to improve efficiency of operation should be kept under continuous review. 	<p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>Work suspended pending Budget Review group outcome – no further update can be provided by DETI. -</p>

Recommendation	DETI Update (November 2012)	DETI Update (May 2013)
<p>2. The Executive must develop a long-term vision for renewable energy which includes both an energy perspective and an economic perspective and establishes long-term partnerships to the benefit of Northern Ireland with other devolved administrations in the UK and with the Republic of Ireland, and should, where appropriate, include an all-island dimension for renewable energy.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>The Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) was approved by the Executive on 5 April 2012 and was published on 4 May. The SEAP includes a commitment to undertake work to establish a long term vision, to 2050, for energy in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>It is envisaged that external consultants will be appointed late November/early December to carry out a study to establish a long term vision, to 2050, for energy in Northern Ireland. The work should be well advanced by March 2013.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>The contract to carry out a study to establish a long term vision, to 2050, for energy in Northern Ireland was awarded in November 2012. Work commenced in December and is well advanced. The study will be published by September.</p>
<p>3. The Executive must provide more resources and technical expertise to those responsible for developing energy policy and proactively drive the renewable energy agenda and enable the development of policies and strategies to help Northern Ireland progress in those renewable energy areas such as anaerobic digestion, energy from waste, geothermal energy and renewable heat which are underdeveloped in relation to other regions.</p>	<p>Action completed. No further update required.</p>	<p>Action complete. No further update required.</p>

Recommendation	DETI Update (November 2012)	DETI Update (May 2013)
<p>4. In relation to the Strategic Energy Framework, interim targets should be put in place in order to provide a clear indication of what is achievable and what has been achieved at interim stages and to assist in monitoring progress with the implementation of the Framework.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>Action completed. No further update required.</p> <p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>A further update on progress against the SEF Implementation Plan to end September 2012 is attached at Annex D to this report.</p>	<p>Now that a mechanism has been put in place for the provision to the Committee of updates on progress against the SEF, this action is now complete and no further update required.</p>
<p>6. The Sustainable Energy Interdepartmental working group should be supplemented by a group which includes representatives from the renewable energy sector, business, academia and NILGA to advise on the development of Government policy on renewable energy.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>Nothing to add to update provided in November 2011.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>Nothing to add to update provided in November 2011. Action complete.</p>

Recommendation	DETI Update (November 2012)	DETI Update (May 2013)
<p>10. It is important that DETI educate the financial sector and provide some level of assurances on the long term security of Renewable Energy Certificates so as reassure lenders and stimulate lending to renewable energy investors.</p>	<p>Update provided by: DETI</p> <p>An additional EMR seminar was held in June 2012 to provide information on the move from Renewable Obligation Certificates to a Fit CFd. Representatives from the financial sector were invited to the seminar, along with other stakeholders. In addition, the NIRO consultation response was published in August 2012, with a further supplementary consultation on banding levels for solar PV and biomass sustainability requirements being launched in the Autumn. The NIRO amendment order is scheduled for laying in the Assembly before the end of March 2013.</p> <p>Following the introduction of the DECC Energy Bill in late November 2012, DETI will again invite stakeholders, including representatives from the finance sector, to a briefing event which will provide further detail on the current and future changes to renewable electricity incentivisation.</p>	<p>Update provided by DETI</p> <p>In January 2013 the DETI Minister wrote to the main banks in Northern Ireland to highlight the various mechanisms in place to incentivise renewable energy generation such as the NIRO and RHI. The Minister also took the opportunity to encourage the banks to look favourably on approaches from businesses that are seeking finance to install renewable technologies. Since then, a number of meetings have been held between DETI officials and several of the banks to discuss the appetite for lending to renewables projects.</p> <p>It was clear to DETI officials from the meetings to date that the banks do have an understanding of the Executive's 40% target and how mechanisms like the NIRO work. A number of examples of projects supported were provided however it was clear to officials that any reluctance to invest was not due to an aversion or lack of understanding of renewable energy technologies but rather based on specific project collateral. DETI will continue to work with the banks to ensure they do understand the benefits of investing in renewables projects. This action should be regarded as complete.</p>
<p>11. DETI should undertake an analysis to determine the costs and benefits to the Northern Ireland economy, business and renewable energy developers of introducing a FIT for small-scale generation along the lines of what has been introduced in GB.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>The recent consultation on changes to the NIRO contained proposals for introduction of a small scale FIT. Responses to the consultation were overwhelmingly in favour of a small scale FIT and the forthcoming DETI Energy Bill which was subject to consultation during this period will take the enabling powers for a small scale FIT.</p> <p>DETI is in the process of commissioning analysis to evaluate the structure of a small scale FIT, tariff levels and associated small scale ROC banding levels for the period prior to the FIT being introduced. It is anticipated that this work will commence in December 2012 and complete by March 2013.</p>	<p>Update provided by DETI</p> <p>Analysis on suitability of a small scale FIT, including how the GB FIT can be adapted for Northern Ireland, was commissioned on 1 March 2013 and is due for completion at end May. The study will assess the various options for introducing a FIT which replicates or is similar to the GB FIT. These options will include costs and benefits. A separate report will be provided to the Committee on the report's conclusions and next steps once it has been assessed by DETI.</p>

Recommendation	DETI Update (November 2012)	DETI Update (May 2013)
<p>12. In the short-term, Government policy on biomass should concentrate on renewable heat to assist in meeting the Strategic Energy Framework target of 10% of heat from renewable sources by 2020. DETI should also give favourable consideration to the Treasury offer of £25 million for a Renewable Heat Incentive for Northern Ireland.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>The consultation on the Development of the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive closed in October 2011 and a summary of responses was provided to the ETI Committee. Following the consultation, further economic analysis was carried out to consider issues raised by stakeholders. This analysis informed the final policy position which has been approved by the EU Commission. The first Phase of the NI RHI will launch on 1 November 2012. Development of Phase 2 of the scheme is underway – this phase will extend the eligible technologies and incentivise domestic installations.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>Phase 1 of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) was launched on 1 November 2012. The first phase covers non domestic installations and a limited number of renewable Heat technologies.</p> <p>Phase 2 which is currently under development will extend the scheme to the domestic sector and will provide incentives for additional technologies. The details of this part of the scheme will be subject to a public consultation (Summer 2013) with a view to commencing at the end of 2013 subject to obtaining all the necessary approvals. Government policy on biomass does focus on heat and electricity and DETI has set up an NI RHI. Action complete.</p>
<p>13. DETI must explore the opportunities for enhancing the research funding system in Northern Ireland by benchmarking against leading European regions so as to ensure that Northern Ireland is in a position to take full advantage of opportunities for funding for research and development under EU Framework Programme 8.</p>	<p>Response provided by: Invest NI</p> <p>Nothing to add to update provided in November 2011</p>	<p>Response provided by: DETI</p> <p>DETI has appointed an NI Horizon 2020 Manager. Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing the Innovation Union, a Europe 2020 flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness. Running from 2014 to 2020, with a (currently) estimated €70 billion budget, the EU's new programme for research and innovation is part of the drive to create new growth in Europe. The new programme will bring together all EU Research and innovation funding into one single programme. DETI, along with DEL, are funding the NI Contact Point (NICP) roles of support for Horizon 2020. They are required under the agreed allocation of funds to perform a review into what other Member States/regions across the EU have proved successful in drawing down within their area. This will allow for targeting networking under Horizon 2020. Their role will also provide a closer direct support to applicants and timely information on upcoming calls and opportunities.</p>
<p>14. The nature of Invest NI support should be reviewed to realise the net benefits that indigenous SMEs can bring to the overall</p>	<p>Invest NI continually reviews the support it provides through both formal evaluations and best practice reviews. As with any other sector, and in line with its economic</p>	<p>Response provided by: Invest NI</p> <p>Nothing to add to update provided in November as final</p>

Recommendation

DETI Update (November 2012)

DETI Update (May 2013)

Northern Ireland economy.

development remit, Invest NI's focus is primarily geared towards growing the indigenous renewable energy sector. Through its mainstream support, Invest NI will continue to assist local renewables companies to explore and take up the significant development opportunities that exist. Applications for financial support from SME's, in any sector, are rigorously appraised to ensure value for money is achieved for the public purse and that the benefits to the local economy are maximised.

figures for 2012/13 will not be available until later this month.

Invest NI Support to the Sector is outlined below:

Financial Year	Offers Made	Total Assistance (£m)	Planned Investment (£m)
2008-09	103	7.93	54.03
2009-10	137	1.90	7.53
2010-11	112	0.71	2.37
2011-12	123	1.11	4.57
2012-13 (Apr – Sep)	74	0.74	2.37
Grand Total	549	12.39	70.88

The Renewable Energy sector is a wide and diverse sector. For the purposes of the above table Invest NI has defined Renewable Energy businesses as those client businesses engaged in the Renewable Energy Products sector, or Waste Products and Environmental Services sub sectors.

In addition a range of activities are being delivered within Invest NI's Sustainable Productivity Programme including an interest free energy efficiency loan scheme, a capital grant scheme for water and/or materials saving projects, industrial symbiosis services, free audits/surveys to identify resource efficiency projects, free technical consultancy to help businesses take resource efficiency

Recommendation**DETI Update (November 2012)****DETI Update (May 2013)**

projects forward and a range of one-to-many events and activities. Where appropriate the deployment of sustainable energy (renewable and energy efficiency) technologies are promoted within these activities. Invest NI also continues to support renewable energy R&D activity in Northern Ireland through Carbon Trust's Innovation programmes and has offered £746k to Carbon Trust for this activity in the period 2011/12 to 2012/13.

Recommendation	DETI Update (November 2012)	DETI Update (May 2013)
15. Invest NI should review the technical knowledge and skills available within the organisation so as to ensure that it has the appropriate resources available to support the indigenous renewable energy sector.	Response provided by: Invest NI Nothing to add to update provided in November 2011.	Response provided by: Invest NI Invest NI has an excellent technical resource within the organisation and encourages continuous improvement across the various disciplines through individual membership of professional bodies and engagement with trade associations active in the renewable energy sector. Action Complete
16. The Department of Finance & Personnel should review the costs and benefits of making certain renewable energy technologies mandatory for new builds with a view to bringing forward proposals if feasible.	Response provided by: DFP New building Regulations to improve the thermal performance of buildings came into operation on 31 October 2012. The new standards will provide an aggregate improvement of 25% over previous standards.	Response provided by: DFP Action complete
17. The Executive should, as a priority, consider the proposals for a Green New Deal Housing Fund with a view to agreeing how this can be taken forward including the nature and level on Government support required.	Response provided by: DSD A cross Departmental Group, Chaired by DSD developed a full economic appraisal to determine the most effective use of the £12 million available to deliver maximum domestic energy efficiency improvements. The preferred option, approved by DFP on 18 May 2012, is one put forward by the Housing Executive and in September 2012 the Social Development Minister launched the Departments Boiler Replacement Scheme.	Response provided by: DSD Action complete

Recommendation	DETI Update (November 2012)	DETI Update May 2013)
<p>18. A plan for infrastructure development must be prepared and implemented, with all key stakeholders having input into the plan. The timescales for infrastructure development must be included and must plan for the appropriate infrastructure to be in place in time to meet the 40% target for renewable electricity.</p>	<p>Response provided by: NIAUR</p> <p>NIAUR published the final determination for RP5 on 23 October 2012. Within the determination, NIAUR defined the approach to the approval of costs for investment in supporting renewable generation. An additional consultation on the details of the assessments that will be undertaken closed on 27 September. The responses to this will be reflected in the final determination.</p> <p>As many of the projects and costs are not known in detail at this time, NIAUR plan to assess and approve the appropriate costs on a project per project basis. NIAUR considers this to be in the consumer interests and a lower risk approach for NIE.</p> <p>NIAUR briefed the committee on RP5 in early May 2012. NIE has until 20 November to respond to the NIAUR final determination.</p>	<p>Response provided by: NIAUR</p> <p>NIE rejected the RP5 price control on 20 November 2012. The Utility Regulator plan to refer the matter to the Competition Commission (CC) shortly.</p> <p>The current RP4 price control remains in place until the CC make a final determination on RP5. Therefore any renewable investment can still be considered and approved by the UR to facilitate government targets.</p> <p>On 22 February 2013, the Utility Regulator approved an investment of over £30 million to facilitate renewable generation. The investment, which is part of NIE's Medium Term Plan, will increase the amount of renewable generation in the north and west of Northern Ireland that can access NIE's transmission network</p> <p>See link to decision paper: http://www.uregni.gov.uk/news/utility_regulator_approves_renewable_generation_investment</p>
<p>19. The Department of the Environment and the Planning Appeals Commission should prioritise the Public Inquiry process so as to ensure that high priority, key infrastructure projects such as the North-South Interconnector are dealt with as a top priority.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DoE</p> <p>Nothing to add to update provided in November 2011.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DOE</p> <p>The application for the North/South interconnector is currently with the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC)</p>

Recommendation	DETI Update (November 2012)	DETI Update (May 2013)
<p>20. The Utility Regulator should review the process for grid connection to ensure that it is fully transparent and costs are fully explained. Connections for installations should be made in a timely fashion, with both parties aware of how long the process is going to take.</p>	<p>Response provided by: NIAUR</p> <p>Following extensive stakeholder engagement on connections during the three month consultation period, NIAUR published the final determination for RP5 on 23 October 2012.</p> <p>Following a request by NIAUR, NIE has submitted a new format of connection charging documentation. The new format includes additional information required by connectees and will increase the transparency of costs included. This was approved by NIAUR prior to it taking effect on 1 October 2012.</p>	<p>Response provided by: NIAUR</p> <p>The UR is planning to review the NIE Statement of Charges for connections. This is an annual process and any updates required will be in place for October 2013.</p> <p>In addition, the Utility Regulator has been working closely with NIE in developing the Statement of Charges for Wind farm cluster connections. It is expected that this will be approved and published in May 2013.</p>
<p>21. The Department of the Environment and the Planning Service should ensure that planning policy for renewable energy (PPS 18) is implemented and applied in a consistent manner.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DoE</p> <p>For wind turbine developments, the Department of the Environment has rolled out a training programme which included issues such as siting, visual impact and other policy considerations. Whilst this was to ensure consistency in application of the policy across Northern Ireland, each application remains to be considered on its merits. Renewable energy applications are a standing item on the monthly Principals' working group where discussions take place to ensure consistency of approach across the area office network. A Performance Action Plan is now in place and includes the monitoring of wind turbine applications. Furthermore, to improve processing times for AD applications, the majority of the small scale AD applications have recently been transferred to the local planning offices for assessment.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DoE</p> <p>For wind turbine developments, the Department of the Environment has rolled out a training programme which included issues such as siting, visual impact and other policy considerations. Progress has been made with regard to the consistency in decision making across area offices. There has been a significant increase in the number of decisions issued in 12/13 (over 800 applications at end of February 2013) more than the total of those issued in over the preceding 2 business years. .</p>

Recommendation	DETI Update (November 2012)	DETI Update (May 2013)
<p>22. In order to inform planning decisions relating to emerging technologies, DETI, DoE and DARD should work with the Planning Service to fully inform Planners and to provide clear guidance and advice on the impact of these technologies.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DoE</p> <p>To assist those involved with the development of anaerobic digesters, the DOE is currently devising bespoke guidance to complement the policy provisions of PPS 18 and its Best Practice Guidance. This new guidance is being drawn up in conjunction with the renewable energy industry representatives and trade organisations, and it is anticipated that this will be published for public consultation in early 2013.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DoE</p> <p>To assist those involved with the development of anaerobic digesters, the DOE is currently devising bespoke guidance to complement the policy provisions of PPS 18 and its Best Practice Guidance. This new guidance is being drawn up in conjunction with the renewable energy industry representatives and trade organisations, and it is anticipated that this will be published for public consultation in early Summer 2013.</p>
<p>23. The Department of the Environment should publish the results of its consultation on permitted development for domestic installations at the earliest opportunity and bring forward proposals as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DoE</p> <p>Nothing to add to update provided in November 2011.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DOE</p> <p>Nothing to add to update provided in November 2011. Action now complete</p>
<p>24. The Department of the Environment should commence a consultation exercise on permitted development for business and agricultural installations with a view to bringing forward proposals for permitted development in these sectors.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DoE</p> <p>Further to its consultation on small scale renewable technology permitted development which ended in January 2010, the Department intends to bring forward legislative proposals for a range of non-domestic renewable permitted development rights later this year. These will include solar panels, ground and water source heat pumps, biomass stores and boiler housing. In addition the Department intends to consult on the provision of permitted development rights for anaerobic digesters on agricultural units as part of its consultation on agricultural buildings permitted development. It is anticipated that the consultation will run between October 2012 and January 2013.</p>	<p>Response provided by: DoE</p> <p>Further to its consultation on small scale renewable technology permitted development the Department has introduced permitted development rights for a range of micro-generation renewable technologies which will apply to all non-domestic buildings including business and agriculture. The permitted development rights came in to operation on 30th April 2013 (S.R. 2013 No. 96) and include solar panels, ground and water source heat pumps, biomass fuel stores and boiler housing. In addition the Department consulted on the provision of permitted development rights for anaerobic digesters on agricultural units as part of its consultation on agricultural buildings permitted development. The consultation closed on 18th January 2013. The Environment Committee considered the Department's initial synopsis of responses to the consultation on 14 March 2013 and the Department is presently working on finalising proposals on the way forward.</p>
<p>25. The Executive must bring forward a programme to develop the renewable energy potential of public buildings. This should include targets and time-scales for</p>	<p>Response provided by: OFMDFM</p> <p>Nothing to add to update provided in November 2011.</p>	<p>Response provided by: OFMDFM</p> <p>OFMDFM supports the deployment of renewable energy</p>

Recommendation	DETI Update (November 2012)	DETI Update (May 2013)
substantially increasing the deployment of renewable energy right across the public sector.		<p>on the public sector estate, where appropriate economic appraisal, taking full account of sustainable development considerations, supports the proposed investment.</p> <p>DFP reports that, following a pilot project assessing the applicability of renewable technologies to the office estate, it has concluded that “investment in energy efficiency rather than renewables remains the most cost effective means of deploying its constrained capital budget”.</p> <p>These findings support the general view of OFMDFM that, investment in energy efficiency measures is capable of delivering cost and carbon savings in a similar way to renewable energy investment, and that individual investment decisions should be made on the basis of the merits of the individual case.</p> <p>Action complete</p>

2013 05 20 07.08 SEF Implementation Plan - March 2013 - updates required (annex c) – saved as a separate spreadsheet

ADDITIONAL REPORT ON AMBER RATED ACTIONS**SEF Action No. 5****SEF Objective**

Put in place legislation to establish arrangements for efficient cross border regulation and management of transmission and trading of gas.

2012/13 Milestones

Agree Memorandum of Understanding and draft legislation with Department of Communication, Energy and Natural Resources, Dublin.

Purpose

To provide for single operation and regulation of the two wholesale gas transmission networks in Northern Ireland (NI) and the Republic of Ireland (RoI), set in context of EU Internal Market in Gas. It is proposed that parallel NI and RoI Bills will be put in place to include for common duties and responsibilities for Departments, Regulators and a joint regulatory oversight committee. This will be a small enabling Bill and its contents are devolved matters but will require formal NSMC clearance due to its extra-territorial nature. This has been discussed with, and will be arranged through, OFMDFM and NSMC Secretariat.

Progress

80% of the Northern Ireland Bill was drafted in September 2011. Work has paused in both jurisdictions to facilitate the two regulators in considering the costs associated with a single balancing point, and the Republic of Ireland regulator to review its cost benefit analysis. This work is now expected to be complete by the end of June 2013. The Regulators were also directed to give priority to complete urgent IME2 related compliance work before the summer of 2012, which was not finalised until February 2013.

New work on the target model for the European Union Internal Market by 2014 will also affect the timetable for a Bill, and the work needed to be compliant may shape the approach to Common Arrangements for Gas.

SEF Action No 33**SEF Objective**

Publish a Renewable Heat Route Map by March 2011 setting out key actions to achieve a 10% contribution from renewable heat by 2020.

2012-13 Milestones

Working with the Renewable Heat Strategy Group to further develop a Renewable Heat Route Map.

Progress

The Renewable Heat Route Map will identify all the additional actions required in support of the RHI to maximise the potential of Renewable Heat. The development of the map is to be taken forward by the Renewable Heat Strategy Group and was discussed at the last two meetings of the group. However, while members of the group had a number of suggestions it became clear that the bulk of the work was going to fall on Renewable Heat Branch.

It is not possible, at this stage, to take this work forward at the same time as developing the RHI. Therefore the work has been postponed, with agreement of the Minister, until the significant work required to develop the RHI is completed. However, the group continues to meet so that all departments are kept aware of progress on the RHI development and to ensure that the final RHI policy addresses cross departmental issues. The next meeting is scheduled for May 2013.