

RO/ NIRO Closure Order / grace periods

- Grace period & transition consultation issued 13 March.
- Energy Amendment Order cleared by OLC and DSO.
- NIRO Amendment order (for small scale PV) drafted and with DSO for final checking.
- SL1s for both small scale PV and energy amendment order both with committee on 24 March.
- Debates for both to be scheduled in due course – in April if allowed during purdah otherwise May.

Small Scale FIT

- DECC has agreed to NI being included in SS FIT review.
- Agreed text included in grace period consultation

Community Energy

- Drafting of DETI aspects of Action Plan complete – now being circulated to other Departments for completion before seeking comment from HoD.
- Community benefits register – fields agreed. IT work agreed in principle but to be actioned depending on IT branch / NI Direct workload – anticipate up and running March/April – official launch date to be agreed /aligned with Plan.

Other

- DFP Rating – DETI Minister has written to DFP counterpart requesting a meeting – no date has yet been arranged.
- Planning – SPPS Executive paper expected before purdah.
- Advance copy of SPPS provided by DOE to Minister end Feb – DOE are expected to target a March Executive date.
- Offshore decommissioning – need 30 minute meeting to agree way forward with HoD in next few weeks.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY(STUART)**RHI Phase 1**

- Carbon Trust loan issue now resolved – the 3 affected applicants have received letters from Ofgem advising of option to pay-back loan. Through the Domestic Regulations the Non-domestic RHI Regulations were amended to allow repayment of CT loans and any other public funding.
- Data sharing Protocol agreed with Ofgem – to agree reporting requirements
- Uptake under the scheme has increased over the last few months with NI application numbers at 5% of total GB figures in January. For budgetary control, consideration is now being given to including a tariff reduction in April 2017 for the biomass tariff as part of the Phase 2 proposals.

RHI Phase 2 (Domestic)

- Regulations were made on 8 Dec and Scheme went live on 9 Dec. To date over 120 applications have been received so picking up quickly after slow start.
- Work ongoing with Ofgem / NI Direct to update some of the Guidance documents.
- Issue has arisen over households wanting to apply for Domestic RHI Scheme who have received NISEP grant for Solar Thermal – legal advice confirmed that NISEP grants qualify as public funding and should be deducted from RHI payments.

- Business Case for additional RHI staff has been submitted to DETI Resourcing Group – approval received for RHI SO post. BIT have approved grading. Awaiting DTR approval to fill post.
- Work ongoing to develop effective administration procedures, develop IT systems and complete risk analysis for scheme.
- Trading Standards Case against Greenhouse Renewables. Letter received from Solicitor representing Greenhouse Renewables confirming receipt of funding for inspections. Inspections / Assessments for those installations affected by Case are ongoing by Action Renewables. No issues have arisen to date. Court Case resulted in £1,500 fine for Action Renewables

RHI Phase 2 (Non-Domestic)

- Work started to prepare State Aid Notification for additional technologies and tariffs being proposed under Phase 2,
- Work ongoing to review Phase 2 policy proposals – passed to Ofgem for comment.

Energy Efficiency Directive

- Heat Project - looks likely DETI will be delivery Department for HEAT. Chris Stewart briefed on the proposals on 6 March. Work ongoing to prepare draft OBC for briefing Project Board on 24 March. Minister / SPAD to be briefed following Board Meeting.
- Regulator has agreed to extend NISEP (if necessary) until HEAT is in place. Consideration to be given to using PSO to fund HEAT initiative & if legislation needed
- Work underway to identify existing and proposed schemes that could contribute energy savings for EED Article 7 purposes beyond 2016 when NISEP ends.
- Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) – Workshops held on 21 Nov to provide advice and training on ESOS requirements for business and industry and NIEA's enforcement role – DETI's role now limited to reporting to DECC as required.
- UK Project Board established to commission and oversee Article 14(1) Comprehensive Assessment – NI contribution to be £40k which can be paid this year (14/15). May be 2015/16 before invoices received so may need to accrue this funding to 2015/16. Submission with Business Case is with JM for approval.
- Article 18 energy labels work – work commissioned to RSM McClure Watters.
- UK Project Board established to take forward implementation of the The Heat Network (Metering and Billing) Regulations 2014 (Articles 9-11 EED). Communal/district heating suppliers must notify NMO by 30 April 2015 – DECC considering existing deadline to 31 Dec 2015 but legislative changes will be needed.

2015/16 Budgets

- DECC received budget of £430m for 2015/16, a DETI share of this would be the order of £10-12m, however, no confirmation has been forthcoming. Work ongoing to get clarity on future RHI budgets from DFP/HMT/DECC for 15/16 onwards and whether we can continue to spend out of the original £25M.

Communications

- Meeting held with Navigator Blue on 2013/14 research findings.
- RHI 'Energywise' campaign is now underway. 2014/15 Business Case – awaiting HoD approval. £1k of surplus budget used to produce RHI posters for public buildings – to be circulated over coming weeks
- £50K bid submitted for 2015/16.
- GAU contract with Navigator Blue ends in August 2015. Consideration is being given to incorporating future Energywise needs into HEAT initiative.