

From: Edgar, Leona
Sent: 06 July 2016 10:38
To: Timothy Johnston; Johnston, Timothy; Richard Bullick; Bullick, Richard; Stephen Brimstone; Brimstone, Stephen; John Robinson; Weir, Philip, TEO SpAd; Clive McFarland
Cc: Gardner, Jeremy; Wallwin, Judith; Parkhill, Laura
Subject: FW: Renewable energy scheme - BBC Newsline 5.7.16

Leona Edgar

Senior Information Officer

The Executive Office
 Stormont Castle
 Stormont Estate
 Belfast BT4 3TT

Email: leona.edgar@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
 Tel: 028 9037 8119
 Mobile: Personal information redacted by the [REDACTED]

From: EIS Typists [mailto:EISTypists@justice-ni.x.gsi.gov.uk]
Sent: 06 July 2016 10:35
Subject: Renewable energy scheme - BBC Newsline 5.7.16

Programme	BBC Newsline - Various
Date & Time	5.7.16 – 18.31
Subject	Renewable energy scheme
Prepared By	Typist: Debbie Arthurs MMU: GI

DONNA TRAYNOR

The Audit Office has uncovered potential fraud in a £1billion scheme of subsidies for renewable energy. The Economy Minister has ordered spot checks of projects to discover the scale of the abuse. The scheme has now closed but will continue to pay out for 20 more years. The Audit Office says the scheme had serious systemic weakness from its launch in 2012.

JULIAN O'NEILL

It's a scheme found out to be burning money, abuse in a generous system of financial support offered to businesses and people switching to renewable heating. A tariff is paid per kilowatt of heat burned for 20 years, but unlike in Britain there is no payment cap, energy can be burned for the sake of claiming, with the Audit Office citing the case of a farmer who with no need for a biomass boiler installed one simply to heat an empty shed to line up payments of £1million. The Economy Minister shocked by the audit findings is promising action.

SIMON HAMILTON

I'm trying to take action in terms of getting external consultants in to look at the allegations around fraud and also to look at options that there are around cost controls, making sure that anything that can be done to keep the cost under control and to reduce them over time can be taken and that's an important step that we have to take to ensure that we do give confidence back to the public, that not only we're learning the lessons from this but we're taking corrective action as well.

JULIAN O'NEILL

The Audit Office says the Stormont scheme was run differently to one in Britain, had they been the same it would have helped prevent improper payments. As it is Stormont has gone beyond the maximum the Treasury is prepared to fund.

STEVE AIKEN

I can't believe the Comptroller and Auditor General has actually looked at the Northern Ireland accounts and he's qualified them, qualified them to the tune of £41million with the possibility of over £140million coming out of the block grant going forward and to me if you just read the report it's a litany of maladministration, it's a litany of not effectively managing the budget.

JULIAN O'NEILL

Simon Hamilton says his DUP predecessors in what was the Department of Enterprise are not to blame and that civil servants have accepted responsibility. The scheme has now closed but cleaning up the financial mess is only just beginning with inspectors having to sift the good applications from the bad in the hope of getting on top of costs.

This e-mail message has been scanned for Viruses and Content and cleared