
From: Sean Cudmore [PFfNI] <SeanCudmore@policyforumforni.co.uk>
Sent: 04 November 2016 11:37
To: Johnston, Timothy
Subject: Conference on the future of energy policy in NI - keynote: Utility Regulator - Policy Forum for Northern Ireland - Morning, Tuesday, 6th December 2016

Policy Forum for Northern Ireland Keynote Seminar

Energy in Northern Ireland - the energy market, renewables and security of supply

with

Jenny Pyper, Chief Executive, Utility Regulator

and

Michael Doran, *Action Renewables*; **John French**, *Consumer Council Northern Ireland*; **Bob Hanna**, *Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Republic of Ireland*; **Iain Hoy**, *CBI NI*; **Dr Patrick Keatley**, *Ulster University*; **Stephen McCully**, *Power NI*; **Robin McCormick**, *System Operator Northern Ireland (SONI)*; **Richard Murphy**, *Pinsent Masons*; **Michael Scott**, *firmus energy*; **Maf Smith**, *Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group (NIRIG)*; **Marian Troy**, *SSE Ireland*; **Carla Tully**, *AES UK & Ireland* and **Ursula Walsh**, *Ulster University*

Chaired by:

Steve Aiken MLA, Deputy Chair, Committee for the Economy, Northern Ireland Assembly and **Conor Murphy MLA**, Chair, Committee for the Economy, Northern Ireland Assembly

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Morning, Tuesday, 6th December 2016
Stormont Hotel, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4 3LP

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Dear Mr Johnston

I am writing to remind you of your invitation to the above seminar. If you are not available, or you think it appropriate, do feel free to share this invitation with colleagues. Please note complimentary places are reserved for officials from the Northern Ireland Executive only.

Focus:

The future of energy policy in Northern Ireland, bringing out latest thinking on:

- Possible repercussions from 'Brexit';
- Increasing competition and improving consumer confidence;
- Potential developments for the renewables sector;
- Progress on infrastructure development; and
- Priorities for security of supply.

Keynote speakers:

- **Jenny Pyper**, Chief Executive, Utility Regulator

Context:

- Uncertainty following the UK's referendum on the EU;
- Timed to follow the Department for the Economy's mid-term review of the [2010 Strategic Energy Framework](#); and
- Comes as the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee conducts an inquiry into the [Electricity market in Northern Ireland](#).

Areas for discussion:

- Next steps for the energy market - competition; costs for businesses, domestic consumers and potential investors; and improving consumer confidence;
- The future of the renewable sector, as well as the future of the 2020 renewable objectives, especially in light of the closure of renewable incentives and Brexit;
- Security of supply and infrastructure - planning, costs and future opportunities; and
- Issues relating to infrastructure investment - including the future of the [Integrated Single Electricity Market](#) (I-SEM) and the North-South Interconnector - especially in light of Brexit.

The conference is bringing together senior officials from the Northern Ireland Assembly and legislative departments with key stakeholders from the energy market, including energy providers, manufacturing firms and consumer groups.

The draft agenda is copied below my signature, and a regularly updated version is available to download [here](#). The seminar is organised on the basis of strict impartiality by the Policy Forum for Northern Ireland. Follow us [@PolicyNI](#) for live updates.

Speakers

We are delighted that **Jenny Pyper**, Chief Executive, Utility Regulator has agreed to deliver a keynote address at the event.

Further speakers include: **Michael Doran**, Managing Director, Action Renewables; **John French**, Chief Executive, Consumer Council Northern Ireland; **Bob Hanna**, Chief Technical Advisor, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Republic of Ireland; **Iain Hoy**, Senior Policy Advisor, CBI NI; **Dr Patrick Keatley**, Research Fellow, Centre for Sustainable Technologies, Ulster University; **Stephen McCully**, Managing Director, Power NI; **Robin McCormick**, General Manager, System Operator Northern Ireland (SONI); **Richard Murphy**, Partner, Pinsent Masons; **Michael Scott**, Managing Director, firmus energy; **Maf Smith**, Deputy Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group (NIRIG); **Marian Troy**, Head of Corporate Affairs, SSE Ireland; **Carla Tully**, President, AES UK & Ireland and **Ursula Walsh**, Senior Lecturer, School of the Built Environment, Ulster University.

Chairs: **Steve Aiken MLA**, Deputy Chair, Committee for the Economy, Northern Ireland Assembly and **Conor Murphy MLA**, Chair, Committee for the Economy, Northern Ireland Assembly.

Additional senior participants are currently being approached.

Networking

Policy Forum for Northern Ireland seminars provide a timely opportunity to gain a balanced view of the key policy areas of the day and to engage with stakeholders from industry, citizens' groups and other interested parties, and are **CPD** certified ([more details](#)). Places have been reserved by a parliamentary pass-holder from the **House of Commons** and officials from the **Department for Communities; Department for the Economy; Executive Office NI; Northern Ireland Assembly; Northern Ireland Office** and the **Strategic Investment Board**. Also due to attend are **A&L Goodbody; Amber Infrastructure; Architectural Design Partnership; Arthur Cox; ASH Design + Assessment; Balcas; Balfour Beatty; Baringa Partners; Belfast City Council; Belfast Health & Social Care Trust; Carson McDowell; Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council; Centre for Advanced Sustainable Energy (CASE); Choice Housing Ireland; Consumer Council; Electric Ireland; Evermore Energy; Flogas Natural Gas; Gemserv; GSNI; iCON Infrastructure; Kore Energy; KPMG; Kudos; Lightsource Renewable Energy; McNicholas Construction; Mid and East Antrim Borough Council; Mid Ulster District Council; Mills Selig Solicitors; Natural World Products; Newry, Mourne and Down District Council; NI Water; Northern Ireland Housing Executive; O'Sullivan Engineering Services; Ove Arup & Partners; Poyry Management Consulting; Queen's University Belfast; RES; Saliis; Scottish Power; SGN Natural Gas; Simple Power; SONI; Tughans and Utility Regulator.**

Press passes have been reserved by representatives from **Argus; The Detail; The Irish News** and **Utility Week**.

Typically, attendees at our seminars are a senior and informed group numbering around 120, including Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly and senior officials from the Northern Ireland Executive, regulators and other agencies, representatives of the energy market, utilities companies, the renewable sector, the business sector, planning, law firms, and others interested in the issues being discussed, together with reporters from the national and trade press based in Northern Ireland and elsewhere.

Output and About Us

A key output of the seminar will be a transcript of the proceedings, sent out around 10 working days after the event to all attendees and a wider group of Ministers and officials in the Department for the Economy; as well as MLAs with a special interest in the subject. It will also be made available more widely. This document will include transcripts of all speeches and questions and answers sessions from the day, along with access to PowerPoint presentations, speakers' biographies, an attendee list, an agenda, sponsor information, as well as any subsequent press coverage of the day and any articles or comment pieces submitted by delegates. It is made available subject to strict restrictions on public use, and is intended to provide timely information for interested parties who are unable to attend on the day.

All delegates will receive complimentary PDF copies and are invited to contribute to the content.

The Policy Forum for Northern Ireland is strictly impartial and cross-party. The Forum has no policy agenda of its own.

Booking arrangements

To book places, please use our [online booking form](#).

Once submitted, this will be taken as a confirmed booking and will be subject to our terms and conditions.

For those who cannot attend:

- Copies of the [briefing document](#), including full transcripts of all speeches and the questions and comments sessions and further articles from interested parties, will be available approximately **10 days** after the event.

I do hope that you will be able to join us for what promises to be a most useful morning and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Sean

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Policy Forum for Northern Ireland Keynote Seminar: Energy in Northern Ireland - the energy market, renewables and security of supply

Timing: Morning, Tuesday, 6th December 2016

Venue: Stormont Hotel, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4 3LP

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chair's opening remarks**
Steve Aiken MLA, Deputy Chair, Committee for the Economy, Northern Ireland Assembly
- 9.05 - 9.25 **Energy in Northern Ireland in the context of UK and European markets**
Dr Patrick Keatley, Research Fellow, Centre for Sustainable Technologies, Ulster University
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.25 - 9.45 **The Electricity sector in Northern Ireland - The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee's inquiry so far**
Senior speaker to be confirmed
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.45 - 10.20 **Next steps for the energy market - competition, costs and improving consumer confidence**
With high energy costs remaining a significant challenge for Large Energy Users (LEUs) - particularly energy intensive manufacturers - how far would the recommendations from the Ministerial Energy & Manufacturing Advisory Group help to ensure energy costs for businesses in Northern Ireland are competitive in an EU context? Will mechanisms such as the Consumer Council's price comparison tools make consumers more aware of the benefits of switching energy tariffs and providers, and can they encourage greater competition in the domestic energy market, and help drive down prices? To what extent can the extension of the gas network to the west of Northern Ireland reduce consumer reliance on energy sources such as oil heating, increase competition, and reduce energy prices? With 42% of the population in Northern Ireland suffering from fuel poverty, what has been the impact of the Fuel Poverty Strategy - along with measures such as the Warm Homes Scheme - in encouraging greater energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty for the most vulnerable consumers?
John French, Chief Executive, Consumer Council Northern Ireland
Iain Hoy, Senior Policy Advisor, CBI NI
Stephen McCully, Managing Director, Power NI
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.20 - 11.10 **The future for renewable energy in Northern Ireland - the 2020 target following the EU referendum**
What are the implications of the withdrawal of the Renewable Obligations and Renewable Heat Incentives for the renewables market in Northern Ireland, including for developers and consumers, and in terms of the potential impact on the environment? Should the renewable targets set by the Northern Ireland Executive for 2020 remain in place following the EU referendum? What options and opportunities are available to the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure those targets are met? To what extent can alternative renewable energy sources - such as solar, offshore wind, tidal and marine energy - contribute to the energy market in Northern Ireland? What impact have barriers to the development of renewables, - such as costs, the removal of Executive subsidy, concerns from communities, and delays in planning processes - had on investment in renewable technologies, and what can be done to address those barriers?
Maf Smith, Deputy Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group (NIRIG)
Michael Doran, Managing Director, Action Renewables

Ursula Walsh, Senior Lecturer, School of the Built Environment, Ulster University

Carla Tully, President, AES UK & Ireland

Marian Troy, Head of Corporate Affairs, SSE Ireland

Questions and comments from the floor

11.10 - 11.15 **Chair's closing remarks**

Steve Aiken MLA, Deputy Chair, Committee for the Economy, Northern Ireland Assembly

11.15 - 11.40 Coffee

11.40 - 11.45 **Chair's opening remarks**

Conor Murphy MLA, Chair, Committee for the Economy, Northern Ireland Assembly

11.45 - 12.10 **Evolving energy markets**

Jenny Pyper, Chief Executive, Utility Regulator

Questions and comments from the floor

12.10 - 12.55 **Security of supply and infrastructure - planning reform, the energy grid and investment post-Brexit**

What impact are delays in the development of the North-South Interconnector due to planning appeals in Northern Ireland, and the uncertainty over the Integrated Single Energy Market due to the EU referendum, having on the security of Northern Ireland's energy supply? To what extent will the completion of the North-South Interconnector and I-SEM help create a secure supply of energy, and how far can measures such as increased energy storage and a greater reliance on renewable contribute to further security of supply? How might the needs both for investment in energy grid infrastructure and to keep costs for consumers low be balanced in the pursuit of greater grid stability? What effect has planning reform in Northern Ireland had on the development of the energy grid and infrastructure investment, and what can the Executive do to promote further investment in energy infrastructure while retaining effective community engagement?

Richard Murphy, Partner, Pinsent Masons

Robin McCormick, General Manager, System Operator Northern Ireland (SONI)

Michael Scott, Managing Director, firmus energy

Bob Hanna, Chief Technical Advisor, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Republic of Ireland

Questions and comments from the floor

12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's and Policy Forum for Northern Ireland closing remarks**

Conor Murphy MLA, Chair, Committee for the Economy, Northern Ireland Assembly

Sean Cudmore, Deputy Editor, Policy Forum for Northern Ireland