

POL-00928

**RE: Information from PAC gives clear vindication of Arlene Foster's role-
Dodds**

DUP Press Office

Sent: 23 January 2017 16:26

To: Robert Smith [coarmagh@Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry]

Yes indeed Robert.

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91 Dundela Avenue
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From: Robert Smith [coarmagh@Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry]

Sent: 23 January 2017 15:41

To: DUP Press Office

Subject: Re: Information from PAC gives clear vindication of Arlene Foster's role- Dodds

Hi

Can I put this statement up on my Cllr FB page.

Robert Smith

02838332234

From: DUP Press Office <pressoffice@dup.org.uk>

Sent: 20 January 2017 15:17

Subject: Information from PAC gives clear vindication of Arlene Foster's role- Dodds

Information from PAC gives clear vindication of Arlene Foster's role- Dodds

DUP Deputy Leader Nigel Dodds MP said, "Thanks to Dr Andrew McCormick's evidence to the PAC this week, the picture is now much clearer. And it raises serious questions about why the Opposition parties and sections of the media sought to blame Arlene Foster for the RHI debacle. That campaign of vilification has had no basis in fact.

During the Public Accounts Meeting meeting Dr McCormick made clear there is no evidence of wrongdoing by Arlene Foster, and that the failings in the design and operation of the RHI scheme were the responsibility of the civil service. Arlene Foster has made those points repeatedly and they have now been vindicated.

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It is clear that only a public inquiry can establish the full facts behind the RHI debacle. Arlene Foster has been pushing for an inquiry since mid-December. Those efforts were repeatedly frustrated with others preferring to engage in mud slinging and collapsing the institutions to getting to the truth. Unfortunately the cost of this collapse will be felt in our health service and other vital public services for months and years to come. At last we now have an inquiry set up which is positive news.

It is important that the public hear all the facts in relation to this matter. The focus now also shifts to the officials in the Department. The disclosure that officials in the Department may have tipped off the industry that RHI cost controls were planned in 2015 is of the utmost seriousness and needs rigorous investigation. If true, this will undoubtedly have been a major contributory factor behind the spike in applications.

Furthermore, Dr McCormick has rebutted details of the account given to the media by Jonathan Bell. This comes on top of the rebuttals issued by the Department and given to the Assembly last month. We look forward to a detailed BBC 'fact check' on the Bell allegations that it reported so prominently.

It is timely, to further point out that Arlene Foster stands over what she told the Assembly last month when she then said, 'The former Enterprise Minister claims that he made a decision to amend the RHI scheme but was overruled by special advisers. Since last week, I have specifically investigated this claim. The evidence is clear. The only decision taken by the Minister was in early September to amend the scheme in November. The Minister was not subsequently overruled by special advisers, and I am clear that whatever representations may have been made by anyone on this issue, it was not being done with the authority of the party.'

The facts are there and it shows that Arlene Foster has been honest and acted with great integrity. The public want the truth rather than cheap political point scoring and media frenzy based on a distortion of the facts. I look forward to the truth being displayed fully in the public inquiry."

ENDS

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Re: Comment on claims in Assembly chamber

Ronan McSherry(2) [r.mcsherry@ulsterherald.com]

Sent: 23 January 2017 17:04

To: DUP Press Office

Categories: Yellow Category

lol!!

On 23 Jan 2017, at 16:57, DUP Press Office wrote:

A DUP Spokesperson said,

"For the avoidance of doubt, Timothy Johnston's brother does not, nor never has installed boilers, does not work in this sector and has not been involved in any RHI issues whatsoever.

We challenge Mr Bell to produce a shred of evidence outside the chamber."

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Re: Statement from Democratic Unionist Party

gfennelly@^{Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry} on behalf of Gary Fennelly [g.fennelly@belfasttelegraph.co.uk]

Sent: 23 January 2017 21:59

To: DUP Press Office

>her sister-in-law 'a husband

Hello,

There appears to be typo in the press release. Can we clarify?

Thanks,
Gary

On 23 January 2017 at 21:37, DUP Press Office <pressoffice@dup.org.uk> wrote:

>
> Statement from Democratic Unionist Party
>
>
> "Following an audit of all our MLAs in order to achieve transparency and to
> help build public confidence we asked every DUP MLAs to indicate whether any
> of their family members are beneficiaries in the RHI scheme.
>
> Carla Lockhart has indicated that her sister-in-law 'a husband is a farmer
> and is in the scheme. Carla has only recently become aware of this.
>
> William Irwin has a son-in-law who is a farmer and is in the scheme.
>
> Neither MLA was involved in lobbying for these individuals and neither has
> any financial or other interests in the farms concerned.
>
> We would again want to point out that in the main those in the non domestic
> RHI scheme applied absolutely legitimately to what was a government approved
> scheme and should be viewed as such."
>
>
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press statement dated 23rd jan re. rhi

Napier, Michelle [michelle.napier@itv.com]

Sent: 24 January 2017 08:46

To: DUP Press Office

Categories: Yellow Category

Dear sir/madam

We received your press statement below into the UTV newsroom. Can you confirm please that the person you refer to as Carla Lockhart's 'sister-in-law's husband' is in fact Carla Lockhart's brother-in-law or is he her brother?

Regards

Michelle Napier

Statement from Democratic Unionist Party

"Following an audit of all our MLAs in order to achieve transparency and to help build public confidence we asked every DUP MLAs to indicate whether any of their family members are beneficiaries in the RHI scheme.

Carla Lockhart has indicated that her sister-in-law 'a husband is a farmer and is in the scheme. Carla has only recently become aware of this.

William Irwin has a son-in-law who is a farmer and is in the scheme.

Neither MLA was involved in lobbying for these individuals and neither has any financial or other interests in the farms concerned.

We would again want to point out that in the main those in the non domestic RHI scheme applied absolutely legitimately to what was a government approved scheme and should be viewed as such."

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POL-00933

POL-00934**Irish News**

Gareth McKeown [g.mckeown@irishnews.com]

Sent: 24 January 2017 10:42

To: DUP Press Office

Categories: Yellow Category

Hi Gareth McKeown here from the Irish News.

Hoping to get a response from the party to claims former special advisor Stephen Brimstone has been heating his home under the non-domestic RHI scheme.

As you are aware Jim Allister alleged yesterday Mr Brimstone took out a wood pellet boiler and replaced with a new one to avail of RHI subsidies.

I have tried to contact Mr Brimstone, but have so far been unsuccessful.

Can the party please confirm or deny these allegations?

Can the party outline the nature of Mr Brimstone's involvement in the scheme? (When boiler installed, how many, how much subsidy has been received, domestic/non-domestic)

Please confirm receipt and come back to me.

Regards

Gareth

Gareth McKeown
Reporter
The Irish News
113-117 Donegall Street
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@GarethMcKeownIN

Irish News

Gareth McKeown [g.mckeown@irishnews.com]

Sent: 25 January 2017 10:48

To: DUP Press Office

Categories:Yellow Category

Hi Gareth McKeown here from the Irish News.

I just had another query regarding the former party Spad Stephen Brimstone.

Can you please tell me the name and nature of the business Mr Brimstone used to apply for the RHI scheme.

The application was lodged when Mr Brimstone was a special advisor and member of the party so is of relevance.

Any help you can provide on the nature of the application, even off the record would be most appreciated.

Please first confirm receipt of this email!

Regards

Gareth

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POL-00936

News Letter - Brimstone

Mark Rainey [Mark.rainey@newsletter.co.uk]

Sent: 26 January 2017 12:18

To: Clive McFarland; DUP Press Office

Categories:Yellow Category

Hi Clive

I have been asked to check this out so I'm assuming it hasn't been clarified already but do you know if Stephen Brimstone has rejected the allegations made by Jim Allister regarding heating his house using RHI scheme boilers in an adjacent shed?

Also, has the party been able to confirm whether Stephen is still a member?

Any response before 3.30pm would be appreciated.

Kind regards

Mark

--

Mark Rainey

Journalist

028 9089 7735

Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry

@Mark_RaineyNL

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DARD RHI seminars highlight that election has nothing to do with renewable heat scheme

DUP Press Office

Sent: 27 January 2017 17:07

Categories: Yellow Category

DARD RHI seminars highlight that election has nothing to do with renewable heat scheme

DUP MLA Christopher Stalford has said news that the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development held events promoting the RHI scheme whilst Michelle O'Neill was Minister have highlighted that the upcoming election has nothing to do with RHI, but instead has been called to allow Sinn Fein to advance their own agenda.

He said, "Despite attempts to portray otherwise, it is now clear that more than one Government Department was promoting the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme, including the financial incentives available.

Michelle O'Neill has said within the last few that she only became aware of how "generous" the RHI scheme was in February 2016. However, throughout the entire life of the RHI scheme she was the Minister at the head of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. That Department ran events throughout Northern Ireland to promote the RHI scheme, including the financial returns from the scheme.

The failure within DETI to identify the fundamental financial flaw within the scheme for many years was replicated within DARD. Do the accusations from Sinn Fein that Arlene Foster bears responsibility for the departmental failure to identify those problems now also apply to their own leader too?

These facts once again highlight that this election has nothing to do with the RHI scheme. Sinn Fein used RHI as a cover to collapse the institutions at Stormont and that is why the focus over the last few weeks has been on the Irish Language Act, dealing with the past and a shopping-list being put forward by Gerry Adams to advance their own agenda.

It is vital the public inquiry can get to the bottom of the RHI scheme, but as time passes the true motivation behind political events of the last few weeks is becoming abundantly clear."

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