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Gordon Lindhurst MSP
Convenor – Economy, Energy and Fair Work
Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

5 February 2019

Dear Convenor,

Response to Economy, Energy and Fair Work Committee – Budget Scrutiny – 15 January 2019

Following my attendance at the recent draft Budget Scrutiny session on the 15 January 2019, responses to the points raised in relation to the ‘Community and locally owned renewable energy in Scotland at June 2018’ (colo) report produced by the Energy Saving Trust on the Scottish Government’s behalf are provided below.

Establishing ownership of organisations within the Colo report

In 2011, the Scottish Government asked the Energy Saving Trust to produce a database of all community and locally owned renewable energy installations in Scotland, not just those supported through the Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES), and to produce a short report (colo) annually based on the information it contained.

With regard to establishing ownership of organisations within the colo report, the first step is to look at the planning application, if ownership is not directly clear from this, online research is conducted to establish the locality of the estate, business or individual. Useful sources also utilised can include the organisation’s website, the register of Scottish businesses, and other energy sector or community related websites include news publications.

It is already acknowledged that some of the figures provided within the Colo report cannot be calculated and are given as estimates. Similarly we could make clearer that categories of ownership and projects within it are also “estimates” and subject to revision if new data/sources become available.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

Establishing locality of applicants and assessing independent wealth when providing CARES support

CARES is open to range of applicants including communities, local authorities, housing associations and faith groups. The scheme is also open to rural businesses (i.e. landowner, agricultural business, croft, grazing committee, college or social enterprise) and these need to meet rural and SME definitions. Eligibility checks are completed as part of the application process, and our eligibility guidance clearly states that both applicants and projects must be based in Scotland to be eligible for CARES funding.

Local Energy Scotland who deliver CARES has a team of development officers located across Scotland who work closely with local applicants to support the development of their funding applications. This is usually done through face to face meeting and through helping the applicant directly to support the submission of their application to the independent CARES panel. Prior to CARES funding being awarded company house checks are undertaken for all applications. Where the a loan or grant in excess of £25k is approved credit checks are also completed which help to confirm whether an applicant is based in Scotland. The relationship between Local Energy Scotland and the project continues as it goes through the development process.

There is also a requirement through CARES to demonstrate additionality for example establishing why funding is required. This is reviewed by Local Energy Scotland and an independent CARES panel.

I have enclosed a link to the '*Community and locally owned renewable energy in Scotland at June 2018*' report which was published on the 20 December 2018 which you may find useful: <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/Community%20and%20locally%20owned%20renewable%20energy%20report%202018.PDF>

I hope this information is helpful.

Paul Wheelhouse

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Kindest regards



Paul Wheelhouse

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