

Note of meeting with SHE-T

Scottish Government: Paul Wheelhouse, Fergus Ewing, Dermot Rhatigan, Marian McSeveney

SHE-T: Dave Gardner, Greg Clarke

Islands connections

- SHET are encouraged that they have obtained the consents for the switching station at Stornoway but the supply chain are now essentially on a go slow due to uncertainty around whether the project will proceed.
- REDACTED - Section 30(b)(ii).
- Ofgem are reviewing charging including TNUOS. This process may take a number of years and produce uncertainty about costs for the projects. Mr Ewing asked if developers could improve project outputs by deploying larger turbines
- We told SHET-T that BEIS have indicated that an Scottish Island Renewables Delivery Forum (SIRDF) may go ahead when UK Secretary of State, Greg Clark, is due to be in Scotland (10/11 April).

Grid Investment / ITPR

- Onshore Competition – SSE would prefer to develop and build the island links however they have been identified as projects that might be put out to tender; in the late ITPR model they would still undertake the development and be able to recover the costs from Ofgem.
- REDACTED - Section 33(1)(b).

Lochaber Grid Connections

- The Fort William – Fort Augustus line is more than 50 years old and is running at full capacity.
- REDACTED - Section 33(1)(b).

Forestry

- Mr Ewing highlighted that there was a focus on compensatory planting and he would like to ensure that network companies and wind farm developers have fulfilled conditions relating to replanting of trees.

Action(s):

1. **SSE to report back on whether they have fulfilled their own obligations in relation to this (Marian to follow-up)**
2. **Forestry officials (Jo O'Hara) to liaise with all developers and grid companies to confirm whether compensatory planting obligations have been met (Marian to follow-up with FCS)**

Beaully-Blackhillock

- SHET said they have learned some lessons in terms of early communication of the story around grid reinforcements.
- If this line does reappear on the NOA in future years it may be completely different in size and purpose.
- SSE stressed that undergrounding is expensive (six times more expensive – cost borne by households and business) and had its own environmental costs .
- PW highlighted that pylons are often removed too and that this story also needed to be told.

East Coast Bootstrap

- This is on Ofgem list for onshore competition and would probably mean they would develop part of the cable and NG would develop the other half but this process has not begun. It remains to be seen who would build it.

Caithness Moray

- On track for completion by the end of next year. Mr Wheelhouse may want to arrange a site visit.

Ministerial visit/ AOB

- SHET said they were having a ceremony to remove the last tower from Cairngorms National Park on Friday 28 April near Aviemore. They invited Mr Wheelhouse to attend if he was available. Lord Smith will attend. Mr Wheelhouse indicated this was an important part of the story to highlight but didn't commit to attending.
- PW said he was happy to take forward any process issues with SG and its agencies regarding the networks and that SHET should feel free to raise matters with him in future should the arise.

Action

3. To ensure SSE contact the Minister's office about the tower removal ceremony – good potential for comms around electricity networks (Marian)