


Carl Sargeant AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol  
Minister for Natural Resources



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our

Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM  
Assembly Member for Meirionnydd  
7 Bank Place  
Porthmadog  
Gwynedd  
LL49 9AA

 October 2015

Dear Dafydd,

I write as promised further to your supplementary question during my Oral Assembly Question session on 7 October.

You asked about legislation currently being taken forward through the UK Parliament following the consultation announced by the UK Government in June, and specifically what consultation there had been with Welsh Government Ministers; what discussion took place between policy officials before the policy was published in June; and the change that ensues from the policy change. From the detail in your intervention, I have taken your question to refer to the announcement by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) on 18 June to close the Renewables Obligation to new onshore wind generating stations from 1 April 2016. If I have misinterpreted the basis for your question I would be happy to provide further information.

We were of course aware of manifesto commitments to remove subsidies for wind generation, so in that respect were awaiting UK Government proposals of this type. I had an introductory phone conversation with Amber Rudd, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change on 9 June to discuss energy matters. Our first formal indication of proposed changes came in a letter from her on 11 June, setting out the intention to close the Renewables Obligation to onshore wind projects and asking for Welsh Government views by 16 June.

Officials sought further information from DECC officials, and held a teleconference on 15 June and I had a further conversation with the Secretary of State on 16 June.

The Minister for Economy, Science and Transport and I responded jointly on 17 June. We expressed concerns around the impact for investment and jobs for projects already in planning or pre-construction, the uncertainty created for possible future developments given the lack of clarity at the time around plans for Contracts for Difference and Feed in Tariffs and the lack of clarity around any grace period arrangements for projects well into development. We highlighted concerns around the impact of proposals on climate change

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commitments and in particular voiced concern on the question of support for smaller and community scale developments.

As you will be aware, the Secretary of State announced on 18 June the intention to close the Renewables Obligation to onshore wind generation from April 2016. Officials were made aware of the additional change to return wind developments to the Town and Country Planning regime when they were in a meeting in DECC on the day that the change was published. Officials have maintained contact with their DECC counterparts since then, though it is something of a one way conversation, and are monitoring the progress of the legislation through Parliament.

I continue to represent the interests of Wales, and to demand full and timely engagement with Welsh Ministers where there are impacts on devolved matters.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a vertical line.

**Carl Sargeant AC / AM**  
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