

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ynni, Cynllunio a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref LG/01560/18

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions committee.
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

6 September 2018

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 15 August, regarding the Petition P-05-837 Green Energy for the Wellbeing of Future Generations in Wales.

As a Government we are committed to delivering at least an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050. The energy we use and generate is a key part of our decarbonisation pathway. Renewable energy has an important role to play in achieving our decarbonisation target and given my responsibility for energy I want to do all I can to encourage the deployment of low carbon technologies.

Last year I set ambitious targets for renewable energy generation in Wales. The targets are stretching yet realistic. We are putting in place a strong policy and decision making framework to support delivery of these targets, within the market mechanisms operated by the UK Government.

Investment in renewable energy technologies is an opportunity for businesses to take control of their energy costs and become more sustainable for the longer term. The Economic Action Plan sets out our expectation of businesses in support of decarbonisation and energy targets.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Support for local energy will be delivered through the Welsh Government Energy Service. This brings together our work to support communities and our support for decarbonisation of the public sector. The new service will continue to support the delivery of local energy projects which benefit the communities they are based in, providing the technical and commercial advice needed to make local renewable energy a reality. Increasing the amount of energy generation owned by Welsh people and organisations will retain funds previously used to pay fuel bills within the local economy, contributing to prosperity and local resilience.

However, increased renewable generation alone will not deliver our decarbonisation targets. We must also reduce the levels of generation from fossil fuels. In December 2016 I set out my commitment to reduce our reliance on energy generated from fossil fuels, even though UK Government will still be responsible for consenting such generation above 350MW.

The new oil & gas licencing powers we acquired in October have provided an opportunity to consider what our approach should be for the future extraction of fossil fuels in Wales. I launched a 12 week consultation in July where I have set out a proposal to not allow any new licencing of oil & gas extraction in future, as I believe the development of new petroleum sources runs counter to our commitment to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.

<https://beta.gov.wales/petroleum-extraction-policy-wales>

<https://beta.llyw.cymru/polisi-echdynnu-petrolewm-yng-nghymru>

Improving and ensuring the security of energy supplies demands the better utilisation of resources whilst increasing the levels of secure low carbon and renewable generation at an affordable cost.

The Wylfa Newydd project is a UK Government sponsored low carbon development. We see this project as presenting a once in a lifetime opportunity for the North Wales Region, having real economic transformation potential by utilising our existing nuclear capability and skilled workforce to deliver high value jobs now and for future generations.

Nuclear projects, including new build, operation & maintenance and decommissioning, will bring a boost to the economy, in terms of direct and indirect employment, and contracted jobs in the wider supply chain. The nuclear industry in Wales has, and will continue to invest heavily in training, through collaboration and partnerships with educational establishments, as it looks to grow its future generations of operational workforce.

Radioactive waste is currently stored safely and securely on site under licence from the UK Government's Office for Nuclear Regulation. The storage and disposal of radioactive waste from Wales' nuclear installations is subject to rigorous regulatory control. The Welsh Government has adopted a policy of geological disposal for the long-term, safe and secure management of higher activity radioactive waste.

The UK Government's geological disposal programme seeks to find one site to dispose of the higher activity radioactive waste arising from Wales, England and Northern Ireland. A geological disposal facility (GDF) would only be deliverable in Wales on a voluntary basis. This means a local community would have to express a willingness to enter into discussions about potentially hosting a GDF and, later on, a test of public support would have to succeed. Any GDF would have to meet rigorous environmental, safety, security and planning requirements.

To meet our obligations to future generations we must ensure the move to a low carbon economy results in a wealthier, more resilient and sustainable Wales. This will require a mix of reliable and affordable energy as well as a skilled workforce employed within an indigenous low carbon energy sector.

Regards
Lesley

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ynni, Cynllunio a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs