SUBMISSION FROM ARCHIE MCOUSTRA

Targets:

It would appear to have been decided that tax payers and consumers will pay, not only for more expensive electricity but also to subsidise land owners and speculative developers some of whom seem to exist only to chase grant and subsidy money.

Supply Chain and Infrastructure:

The supply chain is clearly not in place and there are significant challenges to the landscape in providing pylon routes to connect wind farm factories to the grid.

The idea that excess electricity could be exported to the rest of the UK and Europe is fanciful. Provision of electricity by wind farm factories is erratic and unreliable and as such is unlikely to be attractive to customers. England and Wales will have some of their own wind farm factories nearer to population densities and nearer to grid connections. Also with the France/England partnership and renewed commitment to reliable and carbon friendly Nuclear energy a reliable supply will be in place. Both France and England will be better placed to sell on excess energy on a regular (rather than random) basis and are closer to European population and industrial centres.

Planning and Consents:

No, the planning system is not adequately resourced and fit for purpose. Local Authorities are busy drafting new planning policies for wind power development which may be inconsistent, there are gaps in clear rules and guidance and the willingness of the Government to overrule their decisions only adds to confusion, misunderstanding and lack of clarity. Here in Dumfries & Galloway, Planning and Environment are identified as areas for major financial savings and significant job reductions and the regional Planning office in Castle Douglas is being discontinued. I do not know if this is typical across other Local Authorities but with the cuts in budgets it would seem probable that it is.

In a democracy one would have hoped that national priorities were shaped by local interest. The only form of reconciliation which seems to be going on is that vested commercial interests attempt to buy off local objections by offering money to community councils, money which comes from the grants and subsidies they receive and the increased bills to all general consumers.

Access to Finance:

Unless the Government forces this to be either a nationalised industry or a properly, honestly commercial venture without the fudge of grants and subsidies the impact on consumers will be punitively increased bills. This should not be allowed to happen. We will end up watching England, France and much of Europe having affordable, reliable
and carbon clean power while we pay a fortune and still have to keep fossil fuel power plants active with the knowledge that their reduced usage actually increases their carbon pollution minimising much of the carbon benefit claimed by wind power proponents.

**Skills and Workforce Development:**

Dont know about skills development but seems unlikely that commercial investors would choose to invest in a country where an essential base cost (for energy) would be so high, unless they also are going to be subsidised by Scottish tax payers.

**Energy Market Reform and the Subsidy Regime:**

*Are the reforms of the energy markets and subsidy regimes at both UK and EU level sufficient to meet the challenge of the Scottish Government’s renewable targets?*

The answer is "No". Also, subsidies are not a progressively sustainable way of running a business, their existence means that as well as paying bills all customers are also paying a hidden tax, they muddy the waters, are morally dishonest and should have no place in a democratic society.

I hope that you will take the above points into consideration as part of your inquiry.

Archie McOustra  
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