



T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Mr Dean Lockhart
Convener, Net Zero, Energy and Transport
Committee

(netzero.committee@parliament.scot)

6 May 2022

Dear Convener,

I am writing to update the Committee on progress with establishing a National Public Energy Agency. This follows a commitment from the Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel and Tenants' Rights, who appeared before the Committee on 26 April, where the National Public Energy Agency was raised.

You will recall that I attended the Committee last September and provided an overview of our plans for the Energy Agency. I indicated that the pace and scale required to decarbonise our buildings over the next decade and beyond requires a shift change in how we support delivery partners, local stakeholders, individuals and businesses in the transition to net zero.

And in recognition of the urgency and need for action now, we would establish a virtual Agency in-house within the Scottish Government from September 2022. The virtual Agency was also raised briefly during my appearance in February this year. I reiterated that day to day operational responsibility of existing Scottish Government funded programmes will remain under our control until a constituted body has been established, but would operate under the virtual Agency banner and within existing budgets.

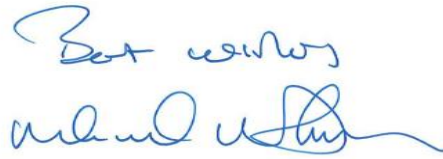
You raised an issue in the most recent Committee about staffing of the Agency. I would wish to advise that this will be considered as the shape of the Agency is progressed over the coming months. I am keen to ensure the Agency's role and remit is informed by a wide range of stakeholders, is developed in a collaborative and transparent manner, and adds value to the heat decarbonisation landscape. In that respect, a Call for Evidence was published in December last year, which closed on 8 February, to gather views to help inform the development of a broader evidence base. Over 50 responses were received and overall respondents appear to support the principle of a new delivery Agency to drive forwards heat decarbonisation in Scotland. Many perceived the role of the new body as being in establishing the strategic oversight and leadership that will be needed to build on and promote strong collaboration, partnership working and coordination across sectors. The independent analysis report will shortly be published, and I would be happy to inform the Committee when it is available. Building on the Call for Evidence work is ongoing with stakeholders to further refine the functions of the new Agency.

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



Alongside that work, I am establishing an independent Strategic Board to work in partnership with us and key delivery stakeholders to consider how to build on, improve and co-ordinate existing and future advice and delivery programmes, and also consider what needs to happen to scale up delivery into a single dedicated Agency by 2025. Progress on this is well advanced and I hope to be in a position to provide details of the Board over the coming months.

I hope this is helpful.



MICHAEL MATHESON

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

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Silver

