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SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE INTENTION TO CLOSE THE FEED-IN TARIFF SCHEME (FITS) TO NEW APPLICANTS AFTER 31 MARCH 2019

Thank you for your letter on 13 December informing of the UK government's decision to close FITS, including the export tariff, to new applicants after 31 March 2019.

I am deeply disappointed to learn that FITS will close, and the decision not to retain the export tariff (even a reformed version), will be particularly concerning to Scottish stakeholders. The UK Government's own FIT closure response document highlights that over 90% of respondents disagreed with the potential closure of the export tariff.

As I outlined in my previous letter, FITS has been resounding success in Scotland and has been a key driver in the uptake of community and small-scale renewable technologies across the country.

The omission of any information surrounding what future support will be in place post-closure will also, no doubt, cause further unease to stakeholders.

Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to urge the UK Government to make clear what future arrangements (if any) will be implemented when the scheme closes to new applicants, as this uncertainty has the potential to disrupt the development of future projects – having a considerable impact on jobs, supply chains and also our transition to a low carbon future.

Preferably, any new support introduced should co-incide with the closure of the scheme to avoid the 'cliff-edge' scenario which our stakeholders highlighted in their response to the FITS closure consultation.

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I do, however, welcome your intention to consult on the future of the small-scale low-carbon electricity generation – although I would also like to seek clarity around when the UK Government intends to launch the consultation process.

I remain committed to working with both yourself and the UK Government to ensure that an environment exists which allows the renewable energy sector to flourish, and one which can deliver real, tangible benefits for consumers, communities, and businesses across Scotland and the UK.

I very much look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Paul Wheelhouse

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