



Department for the

Economy

An Roinn

Geilleagair

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Peter McCallion
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Our ref: CQ DfE 170/25

Your Ref: EC2025:001

Date: 21 01 2025

Dear Peter

Further to your letter dated 09 January 2025 in relation to the Great British Energy Bill, please see response below which has been cleared by Minister Murphy. This submission contains considerations of discussions with UK Government. It may, therefore, be subject to Freedom of Information exemptions under section 36.

The committee sought clarity on a number of areas.

How the renewable energy development of the NI coastal seabed by the new energy company will impact on devolved responsibilities.

Offshore renewable energy development requires a seabed lease and relevant consents, all of which are allocated through NI Departments and therefore subject to Minister and Executive clearance as appropriate. Great British Energy (GBE) cannot develop within NI's marine area without seeking the necessary permissions.

The degree of agency that the Executive will enjoy in respect of the allocation of renewable energy development funding by the new energy company in Northern Ireland.

Officials have held broad discussions with the Department for Energy Security and Net-Zero (DESNZ) GBE transition team to explore potential funding allocations and

been given assurances that the organisation will invest in all four nations/regions. It has been agreed that further discussions will take place on how funding arrangements will operate in practice once the company has been set up.

How and when key energy players in NI will be consulted by the new energy company as it implements its strategy.

We understand from DESNZ officials that GBE intends to meet with NI public bodies and other relevant stakeholders to explore potential partnership opportunities.

DfE officials and DESNZ transition team continue to meet regularly regarding updates on the establishment of Great British Energy.

The Committee would also appreciate any related background policy information that the Department can provide as well as clarity in respect of the LCM's progress through the Executive.

Background policy to how the company intends to operate can be found in its founding statement which is available at: [Great British Energy founding statement - GOV.UK](#)

Discussions with DESNZ officials up to this point, have focussed on assurances around the interaction of the Bill within the devolved sphere and seeking an amendment to clause 5 aimed at protecting Executive strategic interests in how the company operates.

The Executive is considering whether the legislative consent of the Assembly should be sought on those provisions of the Great British Energy Bill that extend to Northern Ireland. Officials will engage with Assembly Business Office around the scheduling of the debate should this be confirmed.

Yours sincerely

GARY FINLAY

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for the Economy

Gary Finlay
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Our Ref: **EC2025:001**

9 January 2025

Dear Gary,

Great British Energy Bill - legislative consent

Please accept the Committee's thanks for the oral and written evidence on the Great British Energy Bill legislative consent motion (LCM), provided by officials at the meeting of 8 January 2025 in Magee Campus, Ulster University.

The Committee discussed a number of key issues including: the need for Executive consent prior to the laying of the relevant motion; the amendment to the Bill requiring the consent of the Department in respect of the strategic statement for the new energy company; and the development of renewable energy resources in NI.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department urgently seeking clarity in respect of:

- how the renewable energy development of the NI coastal seabed by the new energy company will impact on devolved responsibilities;
- the degree of agency that the Executive will enjoy in respect of the allocation of renewable energy development funding by the new energy company in Northern Ireland; and
- how and when key energy players in NI will be consulted by the new energy company as it implements its strategy.

A written response at your earliest convenience would be greatly appreciated.

The Committee would also appreciate any related background policy information that the Department can provide as well as clarity in respect of the LCM's progress through the Executive.

If you require further information or clarification in respect of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Yours sincerely,

Peter McCallion

Peter McCallion

Clerk to the Committee for the Economy