

Response to RIIO-3 Consultation

This response relates to SP Energy Network's RIIO-T3 Business Plan 2026-31, specifically to the section on 'Community Benefits' on pages 57 and 58.

Food Train would like to express our support for SP Energy Network's proposal to establish a new £20m Net Zero Fund. As an organisation that benefitted from SPEN's Green Economy Fund in 2019 and Transmission Net Zero Fund in 2024, we cannot express strongly enough the value of such funding for voluntary organisations such as ours. As a community transport operator supporting vulnerable older people across Scotland, Food Train has a significant sized fleet of vans and minibuses across the country, however as a non-profit making organisation, the costs involved in moving towards an all electric fleet are substantial and unaffordable without grant funding. Sadly, these grant funding opportunities are scarce. With the exception of SPEN's two grant funds and EST's Plugged-in Communities Fund, there have been no other opportunities for our organisation to access similar funding and we still have 70% of our fleet to convert to electric. If the Government's Net Zero ambitions are to be realised, we believe continued investment is necessary. Working with SPEN during the delivery of both our Green Economy Fund and Net Zero Fund projects has been a pleasure, with SPEN's position, expertise and connections across sectors and communities providing great added value to the funder relationship. The available funding not only allowed Food Train to both commence and continue our journey towards a fully electric fleet, but also allowed for the expansion of our support services across a wider geographic area, supporting hundreds more older people on a weekly basis. Given the shortage of funding available, we strongly support the establishment of a further Net Zero Fund that has the potential to widely support communities.



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