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Dear Mr Overton

CONSULTATION 199/06 & 06/1952: LICENSING OFFSHORE ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION – A JOINT OFGEM/DTI CONSULTATION

As has been outlined in previous consultation responses to both OFGEM and DTI, the Western Isles have significant resources for the generation of electricity both onshore and offshore and the Comhairle is of the view therefore that the Western Isles has a key role to play in the achievement of the Government's targets and goals for renewable energy.

The Comhairle welcomes the opportunity to comment on the latest consultation on the development of electricity generated from offshore renewable sources. With respect to the 2 options set out in the paper for licensing the transmission connections between generators located in offshore waters on onshore electricity networks, the Comhairle does not necessarily favour one option over the other. Rather, the Comhairle would favour the adoption of an approach which would encourage licencees to develop the renewable resources in and around the Western Isles in such a manner as would allow the most expeditious development of those resources, whilst at the same time giving the greatest economic benefit to the economy and people of the Western Isles.

The Comhairle has noted with interest the proposal from OFGEM as part of the Transmission Price Control Review: Final Proposals Ref 206/06 to initiate a consultation on transmission connections to the Scottish Islands during 2007, and the identification by OFGEM of 2 possible approaches to this issue in this context. It would therefore seem sensible that proposals for licensing of offshore electricity transmission take due account of the outcome of the consultation on transmission connections to the Scottish Islands and vice versa.

Yours sincerely

Derek McKim
Head of External Strategy

