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Deputy Tadier
Chair, Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

BY EMAIL

15 April 2024

Dear Chair,

RE: Panel's comments on P.82/2023

Our thanks to the Panel for providing these comments and recommendations. We wanted to respond ahead of the debate as there is much that we agree on and that we hope can be the basis for a consensus in the Assembly.

The Minister for Environment has, separately, written to the Chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (EHI) Panel and will start by addressing the elements of both Panels comments that were jointly prepared or are closely related. To support continued joint working we have copied each letter to both Panel Chairs, and to the Chair of the Scrutiny Liaison Committee, as well as the Minister for External Relations.

Related points

We welcome the intention, through the Scrutiny Liaison Committee, to establish an Offshore Wind Review Panel (OWRP), should the States Assembly vote in support of P.82/2023.

We believe this combined approach will help provide assurance to the Assembly, and to the public, that detailed consideration is given to the substantial issues that will be raised.

Your Panel's comments note the proactive approach taken to brief both previous and current Panels, and the proposed Review Panel should also benefit from close and on-going engagement from relevant officers. Once you have formed your terms of reference and a scope for the review we would be pleased to liaise with the Panel to agree how best we can support your work.

We note that the Panel's third recommendation, together with the first and second recommendation of the EHI Panel, ask for additional information to be provided within six weeks of a successful debate on P.82/2023. We will be pleased to provide our current position and expectations on these matters (recognising that these will evolve as the work progresses) in the form of a project update that includes, as requested:

- a more detailed timeline of proposed dates when further propositions are intended to be lodged for debate (EHI R1)
- a consultation roadmap outlining the next steps and providing a timeline of the key intervals where there will be opportunity for stakeholders and the public to engage and express their (EHI R2), and

- confirmation of ongoing Ministerial roles and responsibilities within the offshore wind farm project (EIA R3)

Noting the proposed formation of the OWRP within four weeks following the debate, we will seek to provide the requested information within this timeframe (rather than the recommended six weeks).

In addition, your first and second recommendations (respectively, that the Council of Ministers should clearly outline the level of prioritisation it places on each of the potential benefits of the project; and that a clear cost and risk benefit analysis of an offshore wind farm should be produced prior to any further debate to allow for sufficient consideration by Scrutiny and the Assembly) are very similar to the EHI Panel's third recommendation (that scrutiny should be provided with the draft business case and a briefing should be arranged at the earliest opportunity to inform Scrutiny of the options analysis process and to be apprised of the benefits vs. risks for various different options and scenarios under consideration).

We are happy to confirm that work undertaken on strategic options appraisal, including associated costs, risks and potential benefits, will be shared with the Review Panel to provide for timely scrutiny and discussion, and we propose that the project update report, referred to above, should also confirm how and when this can best be provided. This will include providing a position on the prioritisation given to different benefits by December 2024 as requested by the Panel.

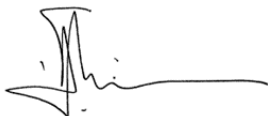
Specific points

We note your considerations on the international relations aspects of the project and can confirm that we will continue to work closely with the Minister for External Relations and his officers to ensure they are properly progressed.

We agree that, should the Assembly support P.82/2023, decisions will be required about the extent and type of work it is appropriate to undertake within government, as well as how this can be best used to increase developer interest. There has been some internal consideration of this already including exploring the different approaches used in other jurisdictions.

In respect of your fourth recommendation, that relevant ministers should ensure that future consultation on the offshore wind farm project provide information outlining both benefits and risks of the project in such a way as to allow informed views to be expressed, we are content to make this commitment but do not accept that consultation undertaken to inform members' debate on P.82/2023 was biased, despite the perceptions of a small number of islanders.

Yours Sincerely,



Deputy Steve Luce

Minister for the Environment



Deputy Kirsten Morel

Minister for Sustainable Economic Development