

Bilateral Meeting Between the Deputy First Minister & Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change & Rural Affairs and Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy & Planning



Irreplaceable Habitats, Peatlands & Wind Farm Developments

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Official Minutes
Tuesday 11 February 2022 at 16:00 by Teams

In Attendance

Attendee	Ref.	Position	Present for Item
Huw Irranca-Davies MS	DFM	Deputy First Minister & Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change & Rural Affairs (Chair)	All
Rebecca Evans MS	CSEEP	Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy & Planning	All
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Director - Local Government & Planning	All
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Deputy Director - Landscapes, Nature & Forestry	All
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Deputy Director - Energy	1, 2 & 3
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Deputy Director - Planning	All
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Head of Renewable Energy	All
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Special Advisor - Economy, Energy & Planning	All
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Special Advisor - Climate Change and Rural Affairs	All
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Senior Private Secretary - Economy, Energy and Planning	All
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Private Secretary - Climate Change and Rural Affairs	All
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Peatland, Soil & Agricultural Land Use Planning	All

Meeting starts 15:58

1.	INTRODUCTION
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DFM opened the meeting and welcomed those present before confirming receipt of the joint briefing (10 Feb) and summarising the issues for discussion.

2.	STEPWISE
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[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] confirmed the stepwise approach which should be taken under current policy, as set out in Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales Edition 12. [REDACTED] & [REDACTED] provided examples of using stepwise in practice.

3.	OPTIONS
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NM explained the options available to ministers as detailed within the joint briefing.

- Option B is being applied in practice.
- Option A is the current planning policy position, but with a package of support and additional actions to provide clarity to developers and help them bring applications forward which are in line with the current policy.
- Option C would be to change the planning policy position, but would involve accepting some loss of peatland resources.

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] highlighted, without prejudice to any future planning decision, refusal of some applications may be necessary under Option A to ensure policy application.



Irreplaceable Habitats, Peatlands & Wind Farm Developments

■ set out the long-term implications of planning and policy decisions on the wider peat and habitat resource.

■ briefly highlighted the potential energy generation implications and the wider need for clarity for stakeholders.

The DFM confirmed the need to resolve matters when considering the wider and long-term implications of decisions and agreed the need for clarity was essential.

CSEEP, ■ & ■ raised the role of guidance for the sector and for PEDW in making decisions.

CSEEP & DFM confirmed the need to seek agreement with the First Minister.

■ left the meeting (16:31).

4.	POINTS AGREED & ACTIONS
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RJC summarised the points for agreement, without prejudice to any future planning decision, confirming:

- Option B was not considered viable.
- Option A should be explored in more detail as an immediate next step, including:
 - i. Further review of wind farm scheme pipeline. To provide the DFM & CSEEP a chronological summary of wind farm schemes; the likely date at which they will come forward for a decision; the energy generation contribution of each proposal; the peat implications; and likely view on compliance with planning policy / ability vary the proposal to remove impacts.
 - ii. CSEEP & DFM to review pipeline briefing (i) and seek agreement on the approach to be taken with the First Minister before meeting again to confirm the long-term approach.

Meeting ended 16:44