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Energy Efficiency and Microgeneration Strategy
Energy Efficiency Unit
Scottish Executive
Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department
2nd Floor, Meridian Court
5 Cadogan Street
Glasgow
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Dear Sirs

Energy Efficiency and Microgeneration
Achieving a low carbon future: Draft Strategy for Scotland

We welcome the production of this strategy as the first step in drawing together the Executive's approach to promoting a more sustainable approach to energy use in Scotland.

HICEC is a non-profit distributing voluntary body focused on promoting the development of good practice on sustainable energy at community level. We support community groups and other non-profit distributing bodies and to date have delivered the SCHRI community programme in the Highlands and Islands. We also deliver advice on renewable energy projects for the Big Lottery's Growing Community Assets programme. Finally, we run our own programme to support community groups to develop larger-scale renewable energy generation plant in the HIE area, to gain revenue and contribute to Scotland's renewable energy targets. Currently a subsidiary of Highlands and Islands Enterprise, we are due to become an independent community body later this year.

We do not have many comments on the draft strategy, but would offer the following points:

- We note the intention to establish a 'one-stop shop' managed by the Energy Saving Trust to deliver advice to householders, but at the same time a review has been commissioned to consider the best approach. It is not clear to what extent the review will influence EST's single door proposals;

-Our approach to community projects is to build the capacity of groups to take forward sustainable energy projects in their communities. We believe that this helps to anchor good

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practice at community level and provides a local resource for enquiries from people in the community. We would hope that this more community-based approach will be allowed to continue if the more central, single-door approach is developed.

- In reading the draft strategy, we were disappointed to note that there is no reference to HICEC in the summary of initiatives in Scotland. A great deal has been achieved in the HIE area and this is in part due to the effective support from the Executive, HIE and some of the local authorities.

-As mentioned above, our approach is to develop community-based solutions to sustainable energy requirements. We see a direct link between energy efficiency, micro-renewables and larger-scale generation projects, not least because one typically can lead to another. However, we also see the potential, over time, to create viable streams of finance to support sustainable energy development, via the larger revenue-generating projects. We would be happy to describe this approach in more detail if required.

We look forward to contributing further to the strategy in due course.

Yours faithfully

Nicholas Gubbins
Chief Executive

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