

# ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

**Issue 1: June 2020**

**IN THIS EDITION WE:**

- Outline the background to the new Energy Strategy
- Provide a short overview of the Call for Evidence
- Indicate the next steps in the process of strategy development



## WELCOME TO THE NEW ENERGY STRATEGY BULLETIN

This is the first in a regular series which will keep key stakeholders updated on progress with developing the new strategy. The Call for Evidence attracted a fantastic range of responses from a wide spectrum of individuals and organisations, and I would like to personally thank everyone involved in contributing to this. I hope you find this bulletin useful. All feedback greatly received!



**Thomas Byrne**  
Director, Energy Strategy

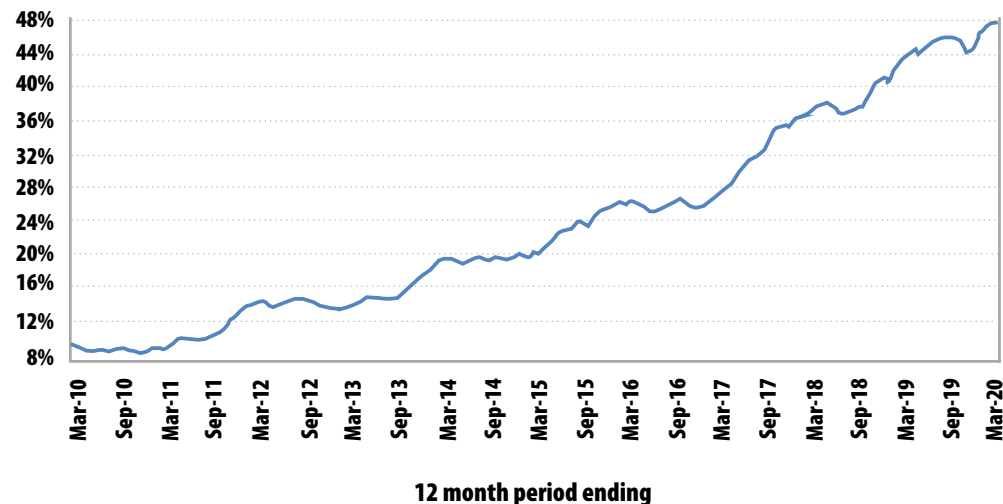
## BACKGROUND TO THE NEW ENERGY STRATEGY

The 2010 Strategic Energy Framework (SEF) set out a framework for energy in Northern Ireland to 2020. In the intervening years, the context for energy has changed substantially, most notably the extent of the climate crisis and levels of public awareness of its causes and impacts. In June 2019 the UK became the first major economy to commit to a 100% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This ‘net zero’ target represents a significant step-change in the commitment to addressing the climate crisis.

### Impact of the SEF

The SEF facilitated a significant increase in low carbon electricity. The target of 40% electricity from renewable sources has been exceeded: in the most recent 12 month period nearly 47% of electricity came from renewables, although policy to achieve the 10% heat target was poorly-designed and the target was not achieved.

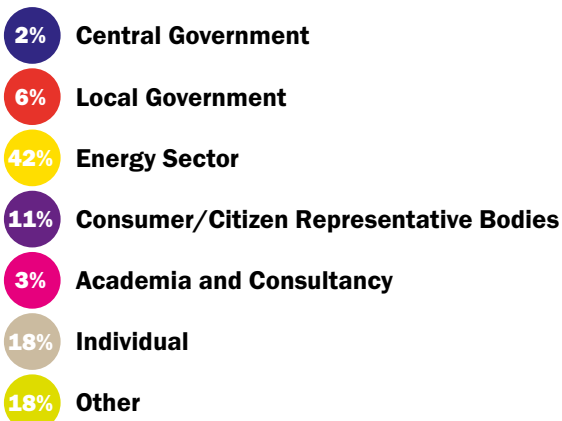
Rolling 12 month Average % of Total Electricity Consumption Generated from Indigenous Renewable Sources



The net-zero target requires DfE to consider greenhouse gas emissions from across the energy sector, and we are therefore developing the next Energy Strategy in conjunction with other government departments.

### Review of the SEF

As part of developing the strategy, the Department will review the impact and delivery of the SEF, as well as identifying lessons from energy strategies elsewhere.



## OVERVIEW OF THE CALL FOR EVIDENCE

The first stage in the development of the Energy Strategy was a Call for Evidence, published on 17 December 2019. It was developed in collaboration across government, with input from the NI Authority for Utility Regulation (NIAUR). It addressed energy through the key themes of Consumers, Energy Efficiency, Heat, Power and Transport, as well as other topics such as data management, security of supply and energy governance. Originally intended to close on 20 March 2020, a two week extension to the Call was granted as a result of Covid-19.

### Stakeholder workshops

Five public 'Stakeholder Workshops' took place across Northern Ireland in February 2020, focused on the above 5 themes. Attendees included consumer groups, academics, the energy industry, government departments and local government. At each workshop, DAERA highlighted energy sector

decarbonisation as a key aspect of the NI climate response. In total, approximately 280 people attended these workshops. Jamie Delargy, who facilitated all 5 workshops, has produced a workshop report, which will be published alongside the Call for Evidence Summary Report in June.

### Engagement and responses

Throughout the period of the Call, the Department met with a wide range of stakeholders such as community groups, business and trade bodies, environmental, manufacturing and energy associations and political parties. In total, 161 responses to the Call for Evidence have been received by the Department, and we welcome the input and engagement from all.

**A full report on the Call for Evidence and all stakeholder engagement will be published in June 2020, alongside all responses received.**

## NEXT STEPS

The Energy Strategy Team has reviewed all responses to the Call for Evidence and identified and categorised responses to each of the 50 questions within the Call. These have now been shared with working groups who will take forward analysis and review of the relevant responses for Consumers, Energy Efficiency, Heat, Power and Transport.

The groups include representatives from other departments, including Department for Infrastructure, Department for Communities, DAERA and Department of Finance, as well as local Council representatives. NIAUR and the Consumer Council NI also participate, as well as external industry representatives and armslength bodies with relevant statutory or delivery responsibilities.

### ENERGY STRATEGY E-BULLETIN

For further information on this bulletin or any other aspect of Energy Strategy, please contact: [energystategy@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:energystategy@economy-ni.gov.uk)

**\*Correction Notice** - Following the identification of an error the Department has changed text from “commissioned” in a previous version to “grant-funded academic research.”

### Evidence and new research

After identifying the key issues for each theme and summarising the evidence, these teams will assess evidence gaps, seek to fill these gaps and produce policy papers on each topic. The teams will continue to coordinate the outputs in order to align policy option development. This will be supported by energy modelling work, which will be taken forward by the recently-created Energy Intelligence Branch.

The department has grant - funded academic research to broaden the evidence base.\* To date, we have grant-funded research into:

- Energy Governance and the Energy Transition – Dr Richard Lowes, University of Exeter

- Mapping the Just Energy Transition – Prof John Barry, QUB
- Demand Side Flexibility and Smart Meters – Dr Patrick Keatley, Ulster University

There will be a draft policy options consultation issued in March 2021, with a final Energy Strategy by November 2021.

