



Rob Atkinson


Our Reference: 202600508623

30 March 2026

Dear Rob Atkinson,

Thank you for your email of 25 February to the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy, Gillian Martin MSP, following the Convention of Community Councils meeting on 24 February. As an official within the Directorate for Energy and Climate Change, I have been asked to respond.

The Scottish Government understands the concerns raised by communities across Scotland in relation to energy infrastructure. For a fair transition to a net zero economy, it is vital that individuals can have their say on proposed new developments and see clear benefits from them.

Planning and Consenting

The Planning and Infrastructure Act has recently afforded new powers to Scottish Ministers to make regulations to mandate developers to engage with local communities and stakeholders during the pre-application stage. Previously, the public and communities could remain unaware of large-scale proposals until an application is submitted.

The Scottish Government is developing the necessary regulations to utilise these new powers, which will ensure that all communities have the opportunity for meaningful engagement at an earlier stage and better align procedures with existing provisions under our fully devolved planning system.

We also understand the complexities for communities in navigating the planning system. In recognition of this, the National Planning Hub has provided additional grant funding to Planning Aid Scotland for training on renewable energy, community engagement and place-based planning. The training is free and open to anyone across Scotland. The Scottish Government has collaborated with Planning Aid Scotland on an [information sheet](#) for communities on navigating planning and consenting processes for renewable energy and it is available on their website: www.pas.org.uk/.



Community Benefits

The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that the transition to net zero delivers real and lasting benefits for communities, not just in terms of infrastructure, but in jobs, investment and local opportunity.

We published a [working paper](#) on 18 February setting out proposals for refreshing our Good Practice Principles for community benefits from onshore renewable energy developments. We would welcome views on these proposals, which can be submitted through the Scottish Government's Dialogue platform: <https://www.ideas.gov.scot/>.

We are producing updated, separate Good Practice Principles for offshore renewable energy developments, so that our community benefits arrangements deliver sustainable, meaningful and long-lasting impacts. The guidance will reflect the distinct context of offshore developments and the need for tailored advice for the sector and communities.

Insights from your Community Council will be invaluable in helping to shape updated guidance that delivers meaningful, long-term benefits for communities across Scotland.

Energy Mix

The Scottish government recognises the importance of energy generated from onshore wind, offshore wind and other technologies, such as solar, in contributing to the decarbonisation of Scotland's energy supply.

Continuing to expand our renewables sector will mean we are less reliant on imported fuels and global fossil fuel markets, strengthen our energy security and produce the power we need to meet increasing demand for clean electricity.

However, developments must be in the right locations. Our planning system and the Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) seeks to ensure the impacts of proposals on communities and nature, including cumulative impacts, are important considerations in the decision-making process.

The Scottish Government agrees that offshore wind presents a transformational opportunity to grow our economy while delivering energy security and supporting our journey to net zero. The Scottish Government is doing everything within its power to ensure that the offshore wind opportunity for Scotland is realised.

We recently published an updated Offshore Wind Policy Statement, setting out an increased offshore wind ambition for Scotland of up to 40 GW of new offshore wind capacity by 2040. To help support this, the Scottish Government is investing up to £500 million over 5 years, which will support thousands of jobs.

Everyone in Scotland must feel the benefits of the transition to a clean, green energy future. This generational shift must benefit everyone in Scotland, not just the few.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

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