

Wales calls on UK Government to do more to support onshore wind and solar development

The Welsh Government together with a large number of Welsh energy and environmental organisations are today making a public statement of continuing support for renewable energy.

The statement builds on the Cabinet Secretary's recently announced targets for renewable energy and urges the UK Government to enable onshore wind and solar technologies to compete in renewable energy generation auction rounds.

Currently renewable energy generation auction rounds, termed Contract for Difference, secure subsidies for technologies including offshore, marine renewables and biomass. The auctions specifically exclude onshore wind and solar, which potentially provide the biggest opportunity for the Welsh renewable energy sector.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“The UK has invested over £9 billion in developing the renewables sector and costs have successfully been driven down.

“However, the rapid changes in UK Government policy have decimated large parts of the renewable sector, with potentially valuable developments to Wales stopped in their tracks by UK Ministers. In 2015 alone, four new wind developments in mid-Wales with an installed capacity of over 300MW were refused by UK Government.

“The bulk of UK Government renewables investment is now going to offshore projects outside of Wales. This investment is paid for by Welsh bill payers, amongst others.

“We believe that lowest cost technologies, such as onshore wind and solar, present the best opportunities to manage the costs of generation to energy bills. They also offer Welsh businesses and our rural economy the opportunity to be more resilient and self sufficient in a future outside of the EU.

“The statement of support we, along with key Welsh organisations, have published today, calls for change. That is why we are urging the UK Government to do more to support onshore wind and solar development.

“A policy framework which enables the most affordable projects to continue to form the bulk of energy supply is fundamentally important to delivering our decarbonisation and prosperity goals.”