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Our Reference: 202400431919

30 September 2024

Dear Sam

Thank you for your letter of 13 September 2024 regarding the possibility of developing a heat network efficiency scheme for Scotland.

As you are aware I met with The Heat Trust on 25 September 2024 to discuss this issue. At that meeting they raised similar concerns to those set out in your letter, in particular the need to ensure Scotland's existing heat networks are able to improve and optimise in order to provide the best outcomes for consumers, as well as meeting future regulatory requirements.

You may be aware that Scotland's Heat Network Fund can provide funding for heat network efficiency improvements, where this work is part of a project also installing clean heating sources to decarbonise the heat network. This may be an option for some existing networks. We are considering options to extend support for existing networks to make efficiency improvements - however, this must be carefully balanced against the challenging pressures on the Scottish budget. More information, such as the scope of efficiency works required and the costs involved, as well as the potential savings for consumers, would be vital if funding is to be carved out for this purpose.

I would welcome Consumer Scotland's input on this issue, as Scotland's future statutory advocate for heat network customers. I would suggest that a meeting with my officials to discuss how Consumer Scotland might help develop and improve our evidence base would be most appropriate in the first instance. If this is agreeable please email Mathew.West@gov.scot so that an appropriate date and time can be identified.

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Tha Ministearanna h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alasdair Allan', with a horizontal line underneath.

ALASDAIR ALLAN
Minister for Climate Action

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