

Antrim Borough Council has agreed its response to the findings and conclusions contained in the Barnett Review of Economic Policy. Council broadly welcomes Professor Barnett's conclusions and recommendations but is disappointed that the role and contributions by local Councils in economic development is not clearly acknowledged either historically or in going forward. Council would also like the Review to support the role that Councils will play in terms of the Community Planning function that is expected as a result of the Review of Public Administration.

More specifically, Council would also like the Review to consider the potential for 'green' energy technologies to stimulate sustained economic growth in Northern Ireland, in particular the so-called 'Smart Grids' that are currently emerging in the USA, Germany and Italy in an effort to reduce electricity costs for both business and residential consumers.

Smart Grids involve a sophisticated meter at the consumer end and sensors throughout the grid with software for data analysis at the utility provider. Huge economic benefits in the US alone \$229 billion dollars over 40 years. Pilots in the US are well advanced and \$3.9 billion was included in the US stimulus package for their development. Germany will have smart meters compulsory in all new build from 2010. Theft of electricity could be almost eliminated by this technology and estimates show that in Europe about 10% of annual electricity output is stolen; Italy introduced smart grid technology in 2000 for this reason. There is less loss of supply and breaks are quickly identified and fixed and power rerouted. The system spots failure without customers having to report black outs. Outages cost the US \$150 billion a year. Peak demands are better managed, peak electricity is especially expensive: in Kilroot Power Station, for example, a jet engine is actually used to deal with surges in demand. Customers can avoid electricity purchase at peak times reducing fuel poverty and course CO2 production is reduced.

The Smart Grid can more easily accommodate input from wind turbines and PV cells. If the future of transport is to include electric

vehicles then these can be charged (and discharged to release electricity) more efficiently.

Thank you

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