Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Regulatory Impact Analysis

Heat Bill 2024

Prepared by the Department of
Climate, Energy and the Environment
gov.ie/DCEE

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Summary of RIA

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Summary of Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA)

This RIA examines the proposal to implement the District Heating Steering Group recommendation that legislation is required as a priority to support the development and expansion of district heating networks and to attract investment into the sector.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Department: Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications</td><td>Title: Heat (Networks and Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2024</td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage: Heads of Bill</td><td>Date: October 2024</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Related Publications:

National Heat Study: https://www.seai.ie/data-and-insights/national-heat-study/

District Heating Steering Group Report: https://assets.gov.ie/265549/487f6e25-427d-4ba3-acc8-d3b5e6272b46.pdf</td></tr>
<tr><td>Available to view at:</td><td>Contact for enquiries:
HeatPolicy@decc.gov.ie</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">The following options have been considered:

• Do Nothing
• Introduction of Legislation
Preferred option: Introduction of Legislation</td></tr>
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Statement of Policy Context and Objectives

Introduction

The purpose of this Regulatory Impact Assessment is to assess the potential impacts of introducing primary legislation to provide a legislative basis for the development of a district heating sector and to introduce consumer protections.

Policy Background and Context

Policy Background

The District Heating Steering Group was established further to Action 187 of the 2021 Climate Action Plan.The Steering Group assembled expertise from across a wide range of organisations to discuss the development of district heating in Ireland and to make evidence-based recommendations to the Government in relation to the creation of a foundation for the district heating sector in Ireland.

Four specialised Working Groups, reported to the Steering Group, were created which focused on key barriers to the rollout of district heating in Ireland: regulatory regime; planning guidance; required research; and financing options.

The Working Groups and the Steering Group met regularly during 2022 and produced the District Heating Steering Group Report.

The District Heating Steering Group Report provided a range of recommendations to establish the district heating sector in Ireland. Government approved the publication of the Report and implementation of the recommendations in July 2023, including the need to:

a. enable public, private, and utility actors to realise district heating development in Ireland.

a. develop a regulatory system for district heating that ensures consumer protection and a vibrant district heating sector.
b. enable and mandate public bodies to connect to district heating networks.
c. establish a Centre of Excellence for district heating in the SEAI which would support all providers in the development of district heating.
d. financially support the roll out of district heating in Ireland.

The Heat Bill 2024 has been drafted to provide a suitable regulatory and legal environment for the sector, including the facilitation of appropriate competition mechanisms.

Decarbonisation Targets

The heat market in Ireland is dominated by oil, followed by gas. Ireland must radically reduce its reliance on fossil fuels and transition to more sustainable, low-carbon alternatives, particularly to heat its buildings. Ireland has an urgent ambition to meet its target of net-zero emissions no later than 2050, which is established in legislation.

District heating is a proven technology that can play a key role in improving energy efficiency and reducing emissions in Ireland. District heating networks are designed to use renewable sources to decarbonise the heat sector, offer flexibility in heat supply and therefore, can have the ability to adapt to changes in the economic and policy landscape.

Codema (Dublin's Energy Agency) identified that, collectively, there are enough waste heat and renewable heat sources in Dublin to heat over 1 million homes, and that approximately 80% of heat demand in Dublin could be met by district heating by 2050. The 2022 National Heat Study found that district heating has the potential to meet over 50% of heat demand nationally and, crucially, identifies the potential to use this technology in large towns and cities across Ireland where demand is concentrated, and heat sources are prevalent.

District heating currently accounts for a very small share of the Irish heating sector; estimated to be significantly less than 1%, representing one of the lowest shares of district heating in Europe.

To contribute to Ireland remaining within its sectoral ceilings for the built environment, and to meet Climate Action Plan commitments, up to 0.8 TWhr of heat is to be delivered through district heating by 2025 and up to 2.7 TWhr by 2030. The heating targets established for district heating are particularly challenging, given the nascent stage of development of the sector in Ireland.

The recast Renewable Energy Directive (RED III), which came into force on 20 November 2023, requires EU Member States, for the first time to have specific binding renewable heat targets on which they must deliver. It sets an overall renewable energy target of at least 42.5% binding at EU level by 2030, with a collective effort sought to reach an overall level of 45%. This Directive also increases the ambition for the heating and cooling sector by introducing a binding average annual increase in renewable heat of 0.8% from 2021-2025 and 1.1% from 2026-2030 in terms of national share of gross final energy consumption. RED III will also seek a further indicative average annual increase for Ireland (2.3% for 2021-2025 and 2% for 2026-2030) which, combined with the binding increase, will equal an overall annual increase of 3.1%.

Taking Ireland's starting position into account, this is a significant increase in targets and requires a step-change in ambition and approach. This is borne out by modelling undertaken in the context of RED which suggests that Ireland will require a renewable heat outturn of 37.3% for 2030. Achieving this target will require a concerted effort to deliver across all renewable heating technologies, including district heating.

District Heating in European Union and Ireland

With renewable heat penetration of 5-6%, Ireland lags behind the EU average of 25% and even further behind countries such as Denmark where over 50% of heat is from renewable sources. Ireland relies mainly on imports of oil and gas to fuel existing heating requirements, exposing Irish consumers to the twin risks of security of supply and cost inflation.

Countries across the EU which have existing district heating systems are in a position to more quickly and easily switch away from fossil fuels, due to the diversity of heat sources which could be used by district heating schemes. In Denmark, district heating customers were protected from price increases and security of supply threats caused by the war in Ukraine and the number of new customers connecting to district heating schemes continues to grow.

National policy in Ireland has recognised the contribution that district heating could make to Ireland's energy and climate goals, and this is underpinned by the findings of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's National Heat Study 2022. Local authorities have identified district heating as a viable technology to reduce Ireland's reliance on fossil fuels for heat and schemes are already in operation.

In 2023, for example, a district heating scheme, using waste heat as an energy source, was developed in Tallaght, led by South Dublin County Council working with large public sector bodies, Amazon Web Services, and international experts to deliver the first phase of a project. There is a nationally strategic project under development by Dublin City Council, which will use the waste heat from the waste-to-energy plant at Poolbeg to heat public sector, commercial and residential buildings in the city area.

A further pipeline of schemes has been developed across Ireland in different local authority areas, with potential schemes identified by other local authorities. There is also considerable interest in district heating from Public Sector organisations who are legally obliged to reduce CO_2 emissions.

For Ireland to increase its share of renewable heat, to improve security of supply by using indigenous renewable heat sources and to improve price certainty and affordability to consumers, the delivery of district heating at scale is a key action.

Current Regulatory Framework

The District Heating Steering Group's Economic and Consumer Protection Regulation Working Group undertook a broad exploration of initial economic regulation and consumer protection considerations by discussing key questions. The Group determined that regulatory consideration should be given to all consumers of heating or cooling from district energy systems, whilst policy measures should favour schemes that meet the definition of efficient district heating. It recommends the inclusion of communal heating schemes within a district heating regulatory framework to be developed. Additionally, regulatory requirements should extend to communal heating schemes that provide heat to multi-apartment and multi-purpose buildings.

In line with the requirements of European Directives, the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities (the CRU) has been assigned regulatory functions for district heating and the draft Bill contains further provisions to provide that Commission for the Regulation of Utilities with functions to efficiently regulate the sector. This will require additional resources from the Commission's perspective.

Rationale for Intervention

The absence of developed policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks was identified as a key barrier to the mobilisation of private and public sector investment in district heating. Legislation is required as a priority to support the development and expansion of district heating networks and to attract investment.

Central to the transition from fossil fuels as a fuel supply for heat is the need for a robust regulatory environment, and the development of a regulatory framework for district heating regulation will ensure standards in relation to provision of district heat.

A key challenge facing this nascent sector in Ireland has been its ability to attract private sector financing at this early stage of its development and it was recognised by the District Heating Steering Group that, in the long term, district heating networks must be enabled to become economically viable and self-sustaining, and should be developed using a mix of public, private and utility sector investment.

There is a need to encourage the delivery of district heating at pace to meet Ireland's ambitious energy and climate targets. The District Heating Steering Group's Finance

Working Group noted that public investment will be required to develop district heating because, to date in Ireland, there has been insufficient policy and regulation for district heating to provide reassurance to private investors in relation to the security of investment. Therefore, accelerated delivery of local authority projects that already in train was identified as an immediate priority.

Local authorities have been early adopters of district heating in Ireland. Recognising its potential to support community and climate objectives, they have led the way on the delivery of district heating schemes. It is anticipated that local authorities will continue to play a key role in the expansion of district heating, through partnership arrangements with private developers and via their existing statutory functions as planning authorities and road authorities. However, it will remain a matter for the individual local authority to decide upon the appropriateness of deploying district heating in their respective council area – this is particularly relevant as district heating will be focused on city and urban areas and may not be suited to the heating requirements of every local authority.

Government has taken the decision that State ownership of heat networks, in the medium to long term, ought to be possible. Therefore, as part of the regulatory regime, it is envisaged that there will be provisions to enable “step-in” rights for the State, at an agreed point in time to assume ownership of district heating networks both private network.

Policy Objectives

Decarbonising Ireland’s existing stock of residential and commercial buildings - primarily those constructed before 2006, so that they require less energy, and draw on fossil fuels to the lowest extent possible - remains one of the biggest challenges facing Ireland in a renewable energy context.

District heating can play a key role in improving energy efficiency and reducing emissions in Ireland - it is a tried and tested technology that can offer flexibility in fuel choice and is highly suited to wide scale, rapid decarbonisation of heating systems. District heating also allows for alternate combinations of energy resources to be used at different times over the lifetime of a district heating network.

National policy in Ireland has recognised the contribution that district heating can make to Ireland’s energy and climate goals and is underpinned by the findings of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland’s National Heat Study 2022, which found that approximately 50% of heat demand in Ireland could be provided by district heating from renewable heat.

However, Ireland is very far behind other EU countries in its deployment of district heating, which makes up less than 1% of Ireland's heat market.

The Energy Efficiency Directive 2012/27/EU sets out that Member States take adequate measures for efficient district heating and cooling infrastructure to be developed and the Climate Action Plan (CAP) contains focused actions that build upon the Programme for Government commitments relating to district heating.

District heating is critical to each of the decarbonisation scenarios outlined and the National Heat Study and the District Heating Steering Group Report recommendations were focused on establishing conditions to allow for the development of district heating in Ireland. In addition, the development of a General Scheme of a Heat Bill was approved, to put in place the requisite legislative provisions.

The Heat (Networks and Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2024 aims to give effect to the establishment of a regulatory model for district heating that ensures consumer protection and the delivery of a vibrant district heating industry, and to mandate all Public Sector buildings to connect to district heating where available, technically, and economically feasible.

Proposed Legislation

Overview

The General Scheme of the Heat (Networks and Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2024 provides for the establishment of a regulatory model for district heating that ensures consumer protection and the delivery of a vibrant district heating industry, and to mandate all Public Sector buildings and facilities to connect to district heating where suitable.

The main provisions of Bill have been developed to:

- Provide the legislative framework to support the development and expansion of district heating networks and to attract investment.
- Facilitate regulatory provisions to enable customer protections.
- Establish licensing provisions for district heating developers, operators and suppliers.
- Provide that district heating in Ireland has a pathway for eventual State ownership of the district heating network, similar to gas and electricity networks.
- Create a mandate for public sector buildings to connect to available district heating networks where technically and economically feasible.
- Amend Section 32 of the Multi-Unit Development Act, 2011, to enable energy management contracts of longer duration where significant capital investment has been made.

Sectors and Groups Affected

Consumers supplied by District Heating and Communal Heating

Consumer protections are a key outcome of this Bill and the appointment of a regulator for Heat Networks to encompass all District Heating, including Communal Heat Networks is necessary to provide for regulation in a heretofore unregulated sector. The provisions of the Bill are focussed on ensuring ensure clarity in relation to the rights and obligations of consumers. This Bill will build on the regulatory functions assigned to the CRU during transposition of relevant articles of the Renewable Energy Directive and the Energy Efficiency Directive.

The Bill also seeks to amend the current Multi Use Development Act, which currently restricts the length of contracts entered into by management companies in multi-tenanted blocks to 3 years. Longer customer contracts are necessary to make investment by developers economically viable, should they seek to invest in installing or connecting to a district or communal heating network.

Developers

The introduction of this Bill will provide clarity and facilitate market certainty for private developers of district heating schemes through the introduction of licencing and consenting regimes.

The establishment of a Heat Network Authority (HNA) in the SEAI will facilitate a centralised approach to development of a district heating sector. The HNA will support the nascent district heating sector and will ensure balanced and timely delivery of district heating networks.

Public Sector

The introduction of a mandate on the public sector to connect to existing district heating schemes will facilitate decarbonisation of the public sector.

Under all delivery models, local authorities, as planning and road authorities, will play a key role in the planning and roll out of district heating networks in their administrative areas.

The Bill also provides for local authorities, should they wish to do so, to take a lead role in development of a heat network, and provides provisions for data collection for local authorities.

Identification and Description of Options

Two options were considered.

Option 1: Do Nothing

A continuation of existing arrangements and the Regulations to remain unchanged. This would involve not implementing the District Heating Steering Group recommendations, which were approved by Government, including the need for primary legislation.

Option 2: Introduction of Legislation

This option would involve implementing the recommendations of the District Heating Steering Group, approved by Government. The District Heating Steering Group made several recommendations within its report including the need for primary legislation. Introducing primary legislation will allow for a number of the Steering Groups recommendations to be implemented, inter alia, increased customer protection, amendment to the MUD Act, mandates on public buildings, etc.

Analysis of Costs, Benefits, and Impacts of Options

Option 1: No change

Costs

No anticipated additional cost to Exchequer or to businesses.

Following the report of the Steering Group, a district heating Centre of Excellence was established within the SEAI and administrative costs, to fund this additional service, would continue to be required.

There are no support schemes or grants available at this time for district heating that would be impacted by a 'no change' approach.

Benefits/Impacts

Ireland's ability to stay within its sectoral ceilings for the built environment will be impacted if the development of a district heating sector is not provided for on a legislative basis. To meet Climate Action Plan commitments, Ireland must deliver up to 0.8 TWhr of heat through district heating by 2025 and up to 2.7 TWhr by 2030.

Furthermore, in the absence of regulation, should there be a re-occurrence of energy market impacts, similar to those experienced in 2022, consumers of communal heating schemes may face similar steep heating price increases.

Option 2: Introduction of Legislation

Costs

The Steering Group considered that the long-term financing model for district heating systems should be predominantly market based, with the provision of financial supports for the sector (such as domestic connections to a network) consistent with those provided for other decarbonised heat sources.

While the full cost to deliver the Climate Action Plan target of 2.7 TWh of district heat by 2030 will not fall to the Exchequer to pay, it is likely that, while the industry is growing, initial State supports will be required. In this regard, it is worth noting that the UK supports approximately 40% of the upfront capital costs of district heating sources, networks and connections.

Similar to electricity and gas network costs, some of the overall costs would be financed over the long term and repaid as part of the heat price. However, it is likely that while the industry

is nascent, State support will be required. The Steering Group noted that, during the lifetime of the existing National Development Programme (NDP), it will be possible to leverage existing schemes, such as the Support Scheme for Renewable Heat, to underpin State investment in district heating. It may also be necessary to examine the potential to use carbon taxes and the Climate Action Fund. Funding to support expansion of district heating is also being considered through the Infrastructure Climate and Nature Fund.

Future analysis may be required to inform how best to leverage Exchequer funding to maximise private sector investment in district heating and how to utilise European funds to offset the necessity to rely on Exchequer funding.

The Bill also designates the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities as regulator for district heating, and the SEAI as Heat Network Authority. In both instances, additional roles are assigned to the existing entities and relevant costs will be attributable to those additional roles.

It is also expected that, as a result of a reduced reliance on fossil fuels for heating, district heating will contribute to heat pricing stability for all premises connected to a scheme and will offset the impact of international price fluctuations on heating customers

District heating projects will be either State led (by local authorities in Ireland to date) or are market based where a State grant is sought to support the sector in the initial set up phase.

Through the interaction with developers and local authorities, a viability funding gap of 40-50% has been identified, based on the high initial capital costs and long payback periods associated with larger district heating projects. This is in line with international benchmarks.

The State has financially supported the development of district heat networks in Ireland through both the Climate Action Fund and, to a lesser extent, through exchequer funding.

Through the CAF, €4.48m was committed to the Tallaght district heating scheme.

The Dublin District Heating Project has received approval in principle through the Climate Action Fund for €50 million, pending the approval of the business case which is in train.

It is envisaged that future State funding (2026-2030), particularly with regards to the proposed support of larger district heating projects, will be predominantly financed through the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund (ICNF).

DECC and SEAI are currently preparing a business cases seeking funding from the ICNF to support the mature projects from the pipeline.

The updated Support Scheme for Renewable Heat (SSRH) has been identified as the potential delivery mechanism.

DECC and SEAI have developed proposals for the updating of the SSRH to support funding for district heating. The proposed changes include increases to the levels of grant aid available for public and private organisations to develop district heating projects;

- the specific elements of a district heating system that should be considered for funding; and,
- expansion of the evaluation and monitoring processes associated with large district heating projects, ensuring value for money and the tax-payer is protected.

The Heat Network Authority, proposed under the draft Bill to be established within SEAI, will also examine how best to leverage Exchequer investment to maximise potential sources of private sector and EU funding in district heating.

Benefits/Impacts

Delivery of up to 0.8 TWh of district heating by 2025 has been identified as having a carbon emissions abatement value of 0.23 MtCO2eq (vs 2018), and delivery of up to 2.7 TWh by 2030 will have a carbon emissions abatement value of 0.64 MtCO2eq (vs 2018).

The Heat Bill will support the development and expansion of district heating networks, attract investment by providing developers of district heating projects with the necessary legal powers to operate in the sector, and facilitate the implementation of regulatory provisions to enable customer protections, as well as putting in place licensing and consenting provisions for district heating operators. The amendment to Section 32 of the Multi-Unit Development Act, 2011 and introduction of a mandate on the public sector to connect to DH schemes where possible will also allow for greater decarbonisation opportunities within Ireland's built environment.

Ireland's built environment accounted for 12.3% of our greenhouse gas emissions in 2021, with fossil fuels being used as the heat source in 73% of our dwellings. While the National Heat Study indicates that district heating could supply up to 54% of Ireland's heat demand, the viability of district heating networks is intrinsically linked to the presence of sufficient population densities. Therefore, while district heating may be of relevance to some suitable smaller population settlements, its benefits will be limited, for the most part, to urban areas.

Separately, consideration has been given to ensuring the installation of district heating pipe networks is aligned with the installation of other underground works. Local authorities and private sector entities have advised that installation of pipes should be coordinated with

existing works, where possible. However, it will also be necessary to ensure the regulation, structures and processes require that the installation of district heating networks is managed in tandem with the installation of other services and utilities in so far as is possible, in order to minimise unnecessary roadwork disruption.

Consultation

Public Consultation

The Climate Action Plan 2019 set out a range of actions necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Action 70 sets out the need to develop a policy framework for the development of district heating in Ireland. The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications conducted a consultation to inform a policy framework for the development of district heating in Ireland in February 2020. The public consultation focused on four key areas – namely:

- research;
- regulation;
- planning; and
- financing.

Development of the consultation was informed by a working group, which was chaired by the Department for Communications, Climate Action and Environment and included relevant Government departments, agencies, State bodies and key stakeholders.

A total of eighteen submissions were received, including from members of the public, commercial organisations and industry stakeholder groups, and were subsequently published online. These submissions were considered and have helped inform the policy direction and future development of district heating in Ireland.

Stakeholder consultation and engagement

The District Heating Steering Group was created in 2022. Four working groups were established to explore the following areas:

- Research and Policy Insights
- Economic and Consumer Protection Regulation
- Planning (land use)
- Finance.

The output from the working groups was fed back to the Steering Group who wrote the report setting out recommendations to establish the foundation for the development of district heating in Ireland. In response to the Steering Group's report and recommendations, the Cabinet approved the report on 11 July 2023. The recommendations of the Steering Group set the future policy direction for district heating. In addition, the development of the General Scheme on district heating was approved by Government.

We consulted with departmental and industry stakeholders and we will continue to consult throughout the development of the Bill.

SME Test

In line with the Government decision of 14th May 2024, the Department is conducting an SME test for the Heat (Networks and Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2024 and is adopting a two-step approach consultation.

To facilitate industry involvement, the Department first identified the potential SME categories that may be impacted by the Bill. The initial phase of the consultation was early engagement with interested stakeholders within the Irish District Energy Association (IrDEA) membership. IrDEA is Ireland's only membership organisation dedicated to promoting and supporting the rollout of District Heating and Cooling from sustainable, low carbon, renewable energy sources.

Following this, responses were received from different sections of the industry including Heat Network Operators, Heat Network Developers, Manufacturers, and Utility providers. A key point noted from consultations was that the proposed legislation is highly relevant for SMEs.

The implementation of the Heat (Networks and Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2024 was seen to have the *"potential to unlock the most proven technology deployed in Europe to date for the decarbonisation of SMEs in the form of district heating"*. The importance of a regulatory framework, which ensures that residential and SME customers are protected, was highlighted in responses.

Clarity was sought in relation to financial incentives and price regulation to support roll-out and uptake of District Heating, which correlated with points surrounding private sector involvement and investment being critical for achieving targets for District Heating and Renewable Heat Supply.

Industry respondents also referenced the introduction of price regulation having an adverse impact on private investment and having the potential to act as a barrier to Ireland achieving its climate action plan targets. A respondent noted that price regulation does not play a

major role in the success of district heating in other countries. However, multiple respondents also emphasised that customer protections and price regulation are likely to improve the customer experience and reduce costs for SMEs, and are required not only for customers but also for producers. One respondent noted that energy meters should be calibrated every 5 years (in line with German regulations) to ensure a true and fair meter reading both for consumers and Heat Network operators.

Respondents were keen to highlight that the introduction of licencing may take time to develop and in turn may delay district heating projects, and interim measures may be required. In addition, the licencing system needs to be clear and straight forward to encourage SMEs to engage.

The impact of the increased administrative burden and/or additional compliance costs on the district heating sector (including SMEs) created by the regulatory requirements proposed in the Heat (Networks and Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2024 was recorded as being medium to significant. However, respondents noted that the introduction of legislation will also increase employment in the civil, mechanical and electrical engineering trades involved in the delivery of Heat Networks.

Ownership, and the uncertainty regarding consequences for private investments, were a common theme throughout the responses, as was the consequent need for more information and clarity for stakeholders on the topic. Respondents noted that public ownership may slow down progress and not lead to additional customer protection. One of the respondents added that if the continued preference is to retain provisions for State ownership, then it would be more appropriate to implement this for strategic assets and not all assets. Concerns regarding the introduction of the ownership provision within legislation were also raised, with the recommendation given to introduce this under grant funding. It should be noted that limited information could be provided on the ownership of district heat networks at the time of the consultation, but this will be reviewed again.

The consultation respondents also suggested that the amendment of time to the Multi-Unit Development Act could go beyond the 15-year timeframe proposed to see a further benefit to the industry. However, this initial change was welcomed and it was felt that it would have a positive impact, allow for a return on investment for SMEs and encourage them to invest in Heat Network upgrades.

Overall, the responses agreed that the introduction of primary legislation was required to create certainty for the industry. However, it was also suggested that the legislation cannot

be a standalone introduction but rather needs to be coupled with financial incentives to encourage end-user uptake and bring confidence to developers.

Finally, respondents requested to engage further on additional consultations, and more time to consider the legislative introductions was asked for given the impact the Bill will have on SMEs and the district heating industry.

As noted above, the Department is adopting a two-phased approach to this consultation and will hold a further online consultation at a later date, following Cabinet approval for the General scheme, to capture wider inputs and provide more detail on the Heads of Bill.

Oversight and Compliance for each option

No change

The “No change” option has no requirement for oversight and compliance. The CRU has existing regulatory functions for district heating, assigned in the implementation of the Renewable Energy Directive and the Energy Efficiency Directive, and a National District Heating Centre of Excellence has been established within SEAI, to, inter alia, co-ordinate, support and drive delivery of existing and planned district heating projects by public, private and utility developers.

Introduction of Legislation

Under the “Introduction of Legislation” the Bill designates the SEAI as Heat Network Authority and provides for the establishment of a body to be known as the Heat Network Authority (HNA) at some future point.

The Heat Bill also designates the CRU as Heat Network Regulator for district heating.

Review

Following enactment, the legislation will be reviewed as part of the work of the District Heating Working Group led by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications and will be subject to a Post Enactment Scrutiny.

This RIA is currently in draft form and will be finalised in parallel with the development of the legislation.

Publication

In line with section 8 of the RIA guidelines, it is intended to publish the RIA.