

**7 October 2008**

**Jim Tolson MSP calls for introduction of smart meters for local homes**

Jim Tolson MSP for Dunfermline West is calling on the Scottish Government to put pressure on Westminster to agree a programme for all Scottish homes to receive 'smart' energy meters over the next ten years.

After attending a demonstration of smart meter technology at the Scottish Parliament, Jim said: "Smart meter technology has the potential to have a hugely positive impact on householders across Fife and the wider environment. This is why the UK Government must introduce a mandate for the roll-out of smart meters.

The move towards smart metering can help address issues such as fuel poverty and carbon emissions, thus helping consumers save money in difficult economic times, while at the same time, doing their bit to help the environment. Smart meters allow the householder to view just how much energy they are using and how much that would cost. The technology used in the meters enables the consumers to be more energy efficient, save money on their bills and reduce their carbon footprint. Estimated bills and meter readings will no longer be necessary as there is a two way information flow via the smart meter between the user and their chosen energy supplier."

Dr Garry Felgate, chief executive of the Energy Retail Association added: "Energy suppliers welcome the addition of a clause to the Energy Bill that gives the Government powers to begin a nationwide roll-out of smart meters. However, the energy industry hopes that the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) will quickly finish its impact assessment and give industry a full mandate to begin a roll-out. Once given the go ahead, the move will fundamentally change the way people are billed and use their domestic energy."

The call for a Government mandate on smart meters already enjoys support from the six largest energy suppliers and numerous MPs.