Written evidence submitted by the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers

CIBSE is the primary professional body and learned society for those who design, install, commission, operate and maintain the systems and services both mechanical and electrical, which are used in buildings. Our members therefore have a pervasive involvement in the performance of buildings in the UK which makes a key contribution to a sustainable built environment. Our focus is on adopting a co-ordinated approach at all stages of the life cycle of buildings, including conception, briefing, design, procurement, construction, operation, maintenance and ultimate disposal.

CIBSE is one of the leading global professional organisations for building performance related knowledge. The Institution and its members are the primary source of professional guidance for the building services sector on the design and installation of efficient building services systems to deliver healthy, comfortable and efficient buildings.

Objective 1: To understand the objectives of EU environmental policies, and the extent to which they have helped to address the most important environmental issues to the UK.

1. What advantages and/or disadvantages does environmental policy making at the EU level offer for the UK?

1.1 Many environmental issues are transnational in their causes and impacts, therefore regional policy making at an EU level is not only advantageous, it is essential. The UK has benefited from this strong overarching approach, and the consistent focus on the environment has been invaluable in a variable national political climate. It has enabled the UK to take a coherent, long term approach to environmental issues.

1.2 The two EU environmental policies that CIBSE and its membership has significant interaction with are the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) and the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED). Responses to the inquiry questions will be written in the context of these directives.

2. Has the right balance between the objective of setting a flexible common EU framework for tackling cross-border environmental problems, and allowing for distinct national approaches to be taken into account been achieved?

2.1 There has been a good balance between setting a common EU framework and allowing member states to implement Directives in a manner which is suitable for their own particular national situations. For example, the EPBD has been successful in reinforcing building energy policies in the UK. It has raised the profile of energy management in buildings, emphasising
the importance of monitoring and measurement to catalyse improving performance. The UK has been setting energy performance standards for buildings since at least 1990 and reinforcement of this through the EPBD has been welcome.

2.2 A weakness of this devolved approach is poor application and enforcement of EU policies at a national level. Compliance with the EPBD and EED is variable in the UK alone but rather further EU-level control, the UK government needs to see the Directives as an opportunity to help meet carbon reduction targets and stimulate business, therefore encouraging compliance across the country.

3. How successful has the implementation of EU environmental policy and the role of the EU as an international negotiator on environmental issues been for the UK? In areas where this has fallen short, where could improvements be made?

3.1 Success in the implementation of EU environmental policy has been variable, not necessarily due to the policy itself but due to how it has been implemented in the UK. Display Energy Certificates (DECs) have helped the public sector to make energy consumption in public buildings more visible and the Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) will encourage businesses to identify options for saving energy, as well as saving money and reducing CO₂ emissions. But Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) have not had the intended level of impact, partly due to poor levels of enforcement.

3.2 In the non-domestic market, many leading property owners and investors now understand the need for quality energy assessments through EPCs, with energy efficiency being used as a selling point. In the domestic market, EPCs are seen as a tick box compliance exercise and a burden rather than an opportunity to make homes more economically and environmentally sustainable in the long term through better energy performance.

Objective 2: To understand the implications of EU environmental policies on UK environmental protection.

1. Have EU environmental policies taken into account the specific character of environmental issues in the UK?

No response provided.

2. How effective have EU environmental policies been in addressing environmental issues in the UK? What work still needs to be done?

2.1 A focus on measuring and publicising energy consumption has been a key success of the EPBD. It has helped to keep the UK government on track when national legislation around carbon and energy has been withdrawn.

2.2 There is now a greater interest in the performance of existing buildings, and an awareness that there is a need to improve this even further. The implementation of the EPBD in the UK has also had positive knock-on effects on energy security and our ability to meet our legally binding climate change commitments.
2.3 For example, energy performance certificates (a key component of the EPBD) have made energy consumption very visible whilst compelling building owners to focus on energy management. The Display Energy Certificate regime adopted in the public sector is intended to keep up the pressure on this sector to use taxpayers/citizens money wisely on energy and to carefully manage energy use in public buildings.

2.4 Further work is needed to make the most of the EPBD to help maintain this momentum for energy efficiency activity. In England and Wales in particular there is also a need to apply greater focus to delivering the requirements of the Directive effectively.

3. **What impact has EU environmental policy had on the UK’s businesses which are affected by the policies?**

3.1 To help meet the UK’s requirements under Article 8 of the EU Energy Efficiency Directive, the Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) has been set up. This is an energy assessment scheme that is mandatory for organisations in the UK that are classified as large enterprises or are part of a large group enterprise. According to the government, the scheme will identify thousands of energy saving initiatives in buildings, industrial activities, and transportation, which could save organisations more than £31bn between 2015 and 2030 if all the recommendations in the ESOS reports are carried out.

3.2 ESOS could have a huge positive impact on UK businesses and is an example of how EU environmental policy can be delivered effectively at a national level.

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