



Media Information

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Dundalk Officially Becomes Ireland's First Sustainable Energy Zone

First EU Concerto Contract Signed in Ireland

Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) has today announced the signing of the first EU Concerto contract awarded to Ireland. The contract, being led and signed by SEI on behalf of the 23 European Partners in the HOLISTIC Consortium, is worth €10.7 million in total. €3.5 million of this will be specifically allocated to fund the development of the Dundalk Sustainable Energy Zone which will see a part of the Co Louth town become Ireland's first sustainable energy community.

Similar Sustainable Energy Zones to the one in Dundalk are being developed in Mödling (Austria) and in Neuchâtel (Switzerland) within the HOLISTIC project. SEI is the project co-ordinator for the Consortium across the 3 countries.

David Taylor, Chief Executive, SEI said; "SEI is delighted to have signed the EU contract on behalf of the HOLISTIC project consortium. This is a true milestone for Dundalk, its partners and for the international partners. It is also a significant event in Ireland as it is the first Concerto contract awarded to Ireland. This is recognition that what is happening in Dundalk and the other communities is providing leadership not only in Ireland but also across the EU. It will also cement Dundalk's status as an innovation gateway and a demonstration of sustainable energy best practice."

The €3.5 million allocated to Dundalk will be primarily used for demonstration purposes. The project will provide funding support for the installation of a wood chip fired district heating scheme to provide heat to residential, industrial and commercial users. It is also planned to support the installation of a 1.8MW Wind Turbine. Other elements of the project include new energy efficient homes and the refurbishment of existing buildings to a high standard of energy efficiency. There are plans to trial advanced domestic electricity meters to help householders understand and control their electricity usage. In addition there will be renewable energy street lighting and an Energy Bureau will be established to collate energy information for the Zone. The official start date for the project was the 1st of June 2007.

Michael Curran, Chairman of the Project Board said; "In Louth County Council, we recognise the importance of improving the way in which we use energy and see this project bringing great benefits to the whole of the Dundalk community. It should become a model for other communities in Ireland to follow."

The HOLISTIC Project aims to integrate sustainable energy technologies into communities by stimulating a change in energy investment and use in each of the three model communities. The Project Board, which comprises representatives from the three communities (Dundalk, Mödling and Neuchâtel), three observer members Aachen (Germany), Newry and Mourne District Council and the Italian Ministry of Environment, held its inaugural meeting in Dundalk today. Several state agencies are also working together on the project. These include the IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Teagasc, Department of Education, Department of Environment, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources as well as Dundalk Town Council, Louth County Council and Dundalk Institute of Technology.

This is the first time an EU Concerto contract was awarded to an Irish Community. A second project, the village in Cloughjordan, Co Tipperary is currently in negotiations for a similar contract. Results and progress observed in the project will be communicated to the observer communities.

Further details on the project can be found on SEI's website www.sei.ie

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Editors Notes:

About SEI

Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) is the statutory authority charged with promoting and assisting the development of sustainable energy. SEI is funded by the Irish Government under the National Development Plan 2007 – 2013 with programmes part-financed by the European Union.

About Concerto

The Concerto programme is part of the EU's Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development.