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Dear Dr. Stoate

Thank you for your letter inviting me to attend the next meeting of the Parliamentary Commission on Childhood Leukaemia and EMF. I have discussed this with our Managing Director of Networks, David Gray. As you know, we are participating in the SAGE process and we feel that, without knowing the eventual outcome of that process, we would be rather limited in what we could say to the Commission.

You asked how the burden of cost from any precautionary measures might fall. If the SAGE group ultimately makes recommendations which lead to proposals for expenditure by National Grid Electricity Transmission and the two Scottish transmission companies, and this expenditure is judged by us to be efficiently and economically incurred, it would in principle be funded by all electricity customers in Great Britain. Similarly, expenditure by the electricity distribution networks would be funded by customers of the relevant distribution business. However, our primary duty is to protect the interests of electricity and gas consumers and it is unlikely that we would be able to allow such funding unless there was a clear cost/benefit case for the expenditure or measures had been taken by the government to place a legal duty on the companies to undertake it. At the moment neither of these conditions exist so the issue remains hypothetical.

We would be happy to discuss these matters with you further once the report of the SAGE group has been produced.

Yours sincerely

T John Benson

Technical Adviser