



**Aberdeen &
Grampian
Chamber of
Commerce**

—
The Hub
Exploration Drive
Aberdeen Energy Park
Bridge of Don
Aberdeen
AB23 8GX

—
T 01224 343900
E info@agcc.co.uk
www.agcc.co.uk

The Rt Hon John Swinney MSP
First Minister
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

4th August 2026

Dear First Minister,

Thank you for taking the time to join us at Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce on Monday evening, alongside the Energy Minister, for what was a constructive and candid discussion with leaders from across Scotland's offshore energy sector. I know everyone around the table appreciated the opportunity to engage directly with you, particularly at such a pivotal moment for the industry.

As we discussed, bp's decision to market its North Sea business has reinforced the urgency of restoring investor confidence. The consistent message from around the table was that Scotland and the UK need a stable fiscal and regulatory environment if we are to retain investment, safeguard jobs and deliver both energy security and a successful energy transition.

I particularly welcome your continued advocacy for the removal of the Energy Profits Levy. As you said during the meeting, and again afterwards, it is having a damaging effect on investment decisions. I would encourage you to continue pressing the new Prime Minister to replace the levy with the Oil and Gas Revenue Levy, which would go some way towards providing the certainty businesses require.

One area I would like to return to is the question of unequivocal political support for new domestic production where projects meet the climate compatibility tests that you have set out.

As we discussed, the Climate Change Committee forecasts that the UK will require between 13 and 15 billion barrels of oil and gas between now and 2050. If those resources are not produced in UK waters, they will inevitably be imported from countries including Norway, Qatar and the United States. Our gas import dependency has already doubled since 2019.

The North Sea Transition Authority estimates that imported liquefied natural gas generates around three times the upstream emissions of UK-produced gas. Replacing imported LNG from the United States with production from the Jackdaw field alone would save the equivalent of around four million tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Coupled with the fact that, under the right fiscal and regulatory conditions, the UK could still produce between eight and nine billion barrels from its own continental shelf, the conclusion is clear. The most beneficial approach for Scotland - economically, environmentally and from an energy security perspective - is to replace imports with domestic production wherever possible.



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For that reason, our members would continue to encourage you to become more explicit in your support for new North Sea developments that satisfy your own climate compatibility tests, including Jackdaw and Rosebank.

I appreciated your observation during our discussion that you would not wish to jeopardise the regulatory process. We fully understand and respect that position. However, we are seeking an informed legal view from within our Chamber membership on the extent to which political advocacy could genuinely be said to interfere with what is ultimately a reserved process, with the ultimate decision-maker the relevant UK Secretary of State and not Scottish Ministers.

Our view is that there is an important distinction between expressing support for strategically important projects and seeking to influence the outcome of an independent regulatory process. We believe there is an opportunity for you to continue acting as a vocal champion for Scotland's offshore energy sector and for the timely determination of nationally significant projects.

I was also encouraged by your commitment to investigate concerns raised during the meeting about planning delays affecting both offshore and onshore renewable energy developments. As discussed, addressing issues such as transmission charging, consenting delays and the Strategic Spatial Energy Plan will also be essential if Scotland is to realise the full economic potential of the energy transition. We can provide specific examples from renewables developers within our membership if that would be of use to your officials.

Thank you again for your time, your openness and your willingness to engage. I hope you found the discussion as valuable as we did. Our door is always open whenever you wish to engage with industry, and you will always be very welcome at the Chamber.

Yours sincerely



Ryan Crighton
Policy Director
Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce

CC: **Stephen Gethins**, Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Energy of Scotland
Jack Middleton, MSP for Aberdeen Central
Jackie Dunbar, MSP for Aberdeen Donside