



**Aberdeen &
Grampian
Chamber of
Commerce**

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03 July 2026

Dear James,

Congratulations from the UK Chamber of the Year on your election as MSP for North East Scotland.

As the voice of business in the North-east, Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce looks forward to working constructively with you over the course of the new Parliamentary session to support economic growth, investment and opportunity across our region and Scotland as a whole.

AGCC is Scotland's largest Chamber of Commerce, representing more than 1,350 businesses collectively employing more than 100,000 people across the North-east. Our membership spans every sector of the regional economy, including energy, food and drink, tourism, technology, life sciences, retail, professional services and manufacturing.

Through our events and networking activity, policy and research work, international trade services, workforce development programmes and media platforms, we work to create the conditions in which businesses and communities can thrive. Central to this is our role as a campaigning organisation - listening closely to employers, identifying barriers to growth and advocating for practical policy solutions at every level of government. In addition, we are a key part of Team Aberdeen in facilitating economic development.

Alongside this, the Chamber produces a range of widely recognised research and insight publications, including our Energy Transition Surveys, Quarterly Economic Surveys, Investment Tracker and North Sea Transition Taskforce work, which serve as independent and trusted barometers of industry and regional sentiment.

Ahead of the 2026 Holyrood election, the Chamber published its business manifesto setting out the priorities identified by our members for the next session of Parliament. At the heart of these priorities is the need for a stable, competitive and pro-growth economic environment which gives businesses the confidence to invest, create jobs and support the transition to a lower-carbon economy.

A key priority for the Chamber is investment in the infrastructure critical to the North-east economy. Businesses continue to highlight long-standing concerns around connectivity, including the capacity and resilience of road and rail links, the future of regional air connectivity and the need for more integrated transport planning across the region.

In this context, the Chamber continues to support the Campaign for North East Rail (CNER) proposal to reconnect Aberdeen, Ellon, Peterhead and Fraserburgh by rail, a project specifically referenced in the SNP manifesto. We see this as a strategically important intervention which would significantly strengthen regional connectivity, improve health outcomes, access to labour markets and education, enhance road safety and support long-term economic development across the North-east. Alongside wider improvements in digital and transport infrastructure, such investment will be critical to enhancing productivity, attracting inward investment and ensuring communities and businesses remain effectively connected.



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We are also calling for a pragmatic and economically sustainable approach to the energy transition. The North-east has the skills, supply chain capability and industrial expertise required to lead the transition to a cleaner energy system, but businesses require greater policy certainty and a more supportive investment environment. The Chamber continues to advocate for a more pragmatic approach to licencing and the immediate replacement of the Energy Profits Levy with the long-term Oil and Gas Price Mechanism (OGPM) announced in November. These changes would provide a more stable and predictable fiscal framework for the UK Continental Shelf while supporting continued investment and safeguarding high-value jobs.

Although these are reserved matters, we believe both governments must work in partnership with each other and industry to ensure that Scotland, and in particular the North-east, remains a globally competitive energy region, while accelerating opportunities in offshore wind, hydrogen, carbon capture and other clean energy technologies.

Creating a more competitive business environment remains another significant priority for our members. Businesses are seeking a stable and proportionate regulatory framework, competitive personal and corporate taxation and a clearer focus on economic growth within policymaking. At a time of continued cost pressures and economic uncertainty, it is vital that government policy supports entrepreneurship, encourages investment and enables businesses of all sizes to innovate and grow.

Addressing workforce and skills challenges is equally critical to the long-term success of the regional economy. Employers across multiple sectors continue to experience difficulties in recruiting and retaining people with the skills they need. Greater alignment between industry, education and training providers will be essential to ensuring Scotland develops a workforce equipped for both existing industries and the emerging sectors which will drive future economic growth.

The Chamber is also advocating strongly for the continued regeneration and competitiveness of Aberdeen city centre and town centres across the region. Vibrant commercial centres are essential to economic confidence, investment and quality of life. This will require a new and innovative collaboration model between national and local government, businesses and public agencies to improve infrastructure, support development and create places where people want to live, work and invest.

Underlying all these priorities is the need for stronger and more consistent engagement between government and the business community. Our members want to see policymaking informed by economic realities and practical business experience, with meaningful consultation taking place at an early stage and acted on at pace. AGCC stands ready to play a constructive role in facilitating that dialogue and ensuring the perspective of North-east businesses is clearly represented.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you in the coming weeks to discuss these priorities in greater detail and explore how AGCC can support your engagement with businesses and employers across the North-east.

Please contact heather.morrell@agcc.co.uk to arrange a suitable time.

Congratulations once again on your election. We look forward to working with you constructively in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely



Russell Borthwick
Chief Executive