



**Media Release**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 14:00 ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 2016**

**Friday, January 22, 2016**

**Chamber outlines demands from business for new Holyrood government**

Affordable housing and retaining a skilled workforce are top of the North-east business's agenda for the new Holyrood parliament.

These were revealed today (Friday) in Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce's Scottish Parliament Election Manifesto which sets out what North-east businesses want from the next Scottish government.

The manifesto was developed in consultation with Chamber members ahead of the Holyrood elections on May 5, and details the support needed from the next Scottish government to drive growth in the region.

Specific requests in the manifesto include focusing on affordable housing for key workers, retaining a skilled workforce in a challenging business environment and supporting international growth.

The Chamber has identified six key areas for action:

- housing
- connectivity
- a competitive fiscal environment
- developing the workforce
- internationalisation
- devolution

Copies of the manifesto will be distributed to all candidates in the North-east as well as party leaders and their likely cabinet members.

Research & policy director at the Chamber James Bream said: "It is a challenging business environment at this time, but members of the Chamber are ambitious for the future.

"They want to grow, they want to keep talent within the region and many want to export.

"Our members want a government that supports them in their ambition.

“It is only by having a strong, confident and sustainable business base that Scotland will be able to ensure a prosperous future for the entire nation and the North-east has a vital role to play in this.”

The manifesto was launched at the first in the Meet the Leader series of events being organised by the Chamber, where the leaders of Scotland’s main political parties visit the Chamber to meet with members.

Mr Rennie’s visit is followed in the next few weeks by visits from First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson and Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale.

Mr Bream believes these engagements sessions are an essential part of what the Chamber does.

“The series is an opportunity for our members to make their voices heard and engage with politicians directly about the investment this region needs to maximise its economic contribution,” he said.

“We work hard to make sure that members’ opinions are heard by politicians but the best person to express these views are the members themselves.

“We all know this region can deliver more for the Scottish economy, and we need to get that message through to politicians.”

## **Ends**

### **Notes to editor**

- Please find attached a copy of the Chamber’s Scottish Election Manifesto and an image of James Bream. Images of Willie Rennie, and images of the manifesto, can be obtained after 2pm on Friday from Newline Media on 01224 594 000.
- Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC) is North-east Scotland’s leading private sector, member-focused, business organisation. The Chamber represents more than 1,300 businesses with almost 130,000 employees in the private sector covering all industry sectors, ranging in size from sole traders to multi-national corporations.

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